



Paper Chase

A Two-Round D&D® Living Greyhawk™
Verbobonc Introductory Adventure

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Betham the Sage – scholar, librarian, and proprietor of the legendary bookstore of Verbobonc City has put out a call for adventures. The task? A unique opportunity, that's for sure. This is a two-round introductory adventure for first level characters only.

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

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For questions specific to this document and your region, visit the Verbobonc website at www.verbobonc.net and e-mail your triad point of contact (POC). 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 DM (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.

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

PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

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

PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D 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 1st-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

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

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in Verbobonc. Characters native to Verbobonc pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per round. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per round. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per round.

Adventure Background

Betham has been hired by a mysterious Keoish man to pull together all information he can on the lineage of Verbobonc Noble families. The Gnomish scholar has been hard at work sorting through his "children" and has a fairly daunting amount of information already assembled.

Betham's information is not as complete as he would like but at his advanced age he cannot travel to collect the tomes needed. Besides, he would hate to be away from his library for any amount of time.

He has made arrangements with most of the Nobles to gain access to their private libraries and gynecological records. To fulfill his contract Betham has resigned himself to hiring trustworthy adventurers to collect the documents he needs.

The economic and political climate of Verbobonc is in a flux at the moment. The war against the giants is over but the people of Verbobonc have paid a very dear price. Entire crops were destroyed, food is scarce,

and many are starving. Refugees from all over the Viscounty have made their way to the capitol in hopes of finding aid. The Viscount, in conjunction with the Council of Abbots, has opened many soup kitchens but the demand far exceeds the supply.

The Church of Trithereon is laying the blame of the plight of the common man at the feet of the Viscount and is urging the people to revolt and break free of the oppressing shackles of their uncaring ruler.

The military suffered grievous losses in their victory. Banditry on the open road is now commonplace. The Mounted Borderers are not yet recovered from the heavy losses the giants inflicted, and patrols are few and far between.

Nobles are vying for power. They blame each other for whatever they can in an attempt to improve their own standing. And to make matters worse, the druids of the Gnarley have publicly denounced the encroachments that human settlements have made and have refused to come to the aid of the farmers.

Welcome to the new Verbobonc.

Characters Central to the Story

Betham the Sage

Betham is the proprietor of Betham's Books, a long time feature in Verbobonc City. He is a wrinkled, old gnome of some 170 years. Betham cares little for politics and the daily concerns within the Viscounty.

He is obsessed with the written word. His tiny shop is crammed with books, manuscripts, diaries, and treatises. The contents of his shop may only be the tip of the iceberg as it is rumored that many more volumes are stashed away in his private living quarters beneath his shop. Betham is a font of knowledge, legend and rumor, although none of it more recent than 50 years ago and then only if it was rendered on paper. The disorder in the shop is daunting to any observer, but Betham has his own sense of organization and knows the location of each title. Of late, he has taken to talking to his books as though they were children. To customers, Betham seems constantly distracted, and most find they must remind him several times of the reason for their visit.

However, he has an amazing facility for finding answers to puzzles and riddles, especially if they involve events or personages from the dim history of the Flanaess. Betham has a pair of thick spectacles, which he never seems to use; they remain perpetually perched above his brow.

Asanto Moreland

Asanto is a reasonable man. Settle on a price and do the job. Nothing more, nothing less. Asanto is a freelance operative who seeks gainful employment with whomever can meet his price. His reputation and thoroughness entitles him to charge a hefty sum but he is worth it. Asanto is a professional and he takes his reputation very seriously.

In this scenario he is contracted to find out as much as he can about the persons gathering information on the nobles and their motives.

Various Verbobonc Noble Houses

See **Appendix Three: Guide to the Verbobonc Noble Houses**

Adventure Summary

A wealthy Keoish man has hired Betham the sage to recover and collect as much documented history as possible concerning the Noble Families of Verbobonc. Betham has collected what he could from the libraries of Verbobonc, The Wrinkle Academy and his own collection but some key information is still needed. To this end, Betham has sent requests to the heads of each Noble house requesting their assistance. As the time to travel approaches, the old gnome's heart grows with dread; he can't bring himself to leave his "children".

In a quandary, he has decided to do what anyone in his position would do; he'll hire adventurers! As fate would have it, he knows some trustworthy adventurer-types that spend their down time at the Tavern of the Two Foot Traveler. What was that little quirk they live by? Oh yes! Never sit in at a shadowy corner table.

Betham makes his way to this Tavern and lo and behold there, at the well-lit middle table, sits the adventurers. Looking them over they seemed to be the same good-hearted bunch he's met before so he approached them with a job offer. Travel to the noble house and collect the records he needs.

Another group, which is beyond the scope of this adventure, has caught wind that someone is paying Betham handsomely to research the nobles of Verbobonc. Not one to sit back and let things happen, they have dispatched their own operative, Asanto, to find out what is so interesting about the genealogical records.

Encounter Summary

Introduction: While enjoying a drink the Characters are approached by Betham the sage. He has mistaken

them for another group of heroes who regularly meet at this inn, in-between adventures.

Encounter 1: The Characters are able to gather some information prior to meeting Betham at his shop.

Encounter 2: The Characters stumble across a pair of Gentleman of the Watch attempting to dissuade a large group of commoners from attacking a vender in the market.

Encounter 3: The characters learn of the job.

(**Encounters 4, 6, and 7** are meant to be Free form Role-playing the Characters may visit ANY Verbobonc noble.)

Encounter 4: The Characters meet with their choice of Noble.

Encounter 5: On the road to the 2nd noble, bandits looking to take advantage of the reduced Mounted Borderer patrols attack the Characters.

Encounter 6: The Characters meet with the 2nd noble.

Encounter 7: The Characters meet the 3rd noble house.

Encounter 8: Asanto questions the Characters about their work and offers to send them on holiday. If they refuse he states that he will have to visit Betham. Either way he leaves without combat.

Encounter 9: The Characters hurry back to Verbobonc City and find Betham in good health.

Encounter 10: The Characters find that all other nobles have already been visited and finally return to report to Betham.

Conclusion: The Characters are left with more questions than answers.

Roleplaying Mood

Throughout this adventure the character will meet with many NPCs. unless otherwise noted they (Except the Nobles and their representatives) should be played with a bit of melancholy and sadness, as everyday life in Verbobonc is a struggle for survival.

Introduction

Read or paraphrase the following:

The winter's chill bites through your cloak as you make your way through the streets of Verbobonc City. Along the way you spy several large groups of beggars huddled in alleys and doorways. At last, you have reached your destination, the famed

Tavern of the Two Foot Traveler, where better to start your adventuring life!

Easily pushing open the door you take a deep breath and enter. Looking around, you notice that the only table available is in the center of the room, well lit and visible from every vantage in the spacious bar.

A rotund Halfling carrying a tray of drinks smiles as he zips past you "Have a seat. I'll be with you in a sec."

Allow the characters to sit and introduce themselves to each other. The halfling, Lomas, will come by and take their drink order but food is scarce so a cup of watery stew will cost 5 sp. After 10-15 minutes Betham will enter the tavern and approach the Characters mistaking them for some heroes of renown that have helped him in the past.

Read or paraphrase the following:

"I so glad I found you! I see that the adventuring life has treated you well." The old gnome prods (pick the biggest PC) you out of your seat and flops down. "I have a job for you but I would rather not discuss it here as I'm lothe to leave my children alone for much longer. Why don't you walk me to my store and I'll tell you all about it."

If the characters inform him of his error he will pause, squint at them and mention that he always loved their ability to crack a good joke.

"Always was a kidder." Standing, he meets all of your gazes with a warm look. "Til this evening then." With that he heads out the doors where he pauses and looks around before heading off.

Betham is looking for competent and trustworthy adventures to complete a simple task for him. He prefers to hire people he has worked with in the past but in his advancing age, he has a difficult time remembering names and faces. He doesn't have much money but will offer 100gp to each adventure if they insist on getting payment. Once the Characters agree to help him he asks the characters to meet him at his store later that afternoon.

Encounter One: First Impressions

Followers of Trithereon are approached by a member of the church in the disguise of a beggar and are handed a missive, Give the player(s) Players hand out one.

Encounter Two: Food Fight!

As the Characters make to the meeting with Betham, they encounter a pair of Gentleman of the Watch attempting to dissuade a mob from attacking a merchant and his warehouse. The group of 60 is made up of farmers and other country-folk that have been displaced by the recent war with the giants. They came to Verbobonc City for protection but instead found that they had nowhere to stay and very little food. They are NOT evil; they are merely hungry and desperate. The unusually long and cold winter has only exacerbated the food shortage. Though the council of Abbots has many soup kitchens running, it is not enough. This particular group has been riled up by a follower of Trithereon sermonizing that the poor are suffering so that the rich do not have to.

If asked Betham will inform the characters that outburst like these are becoming more and more common.

The characters have several options at this point. They may ignore the situation and continue on to encounter three. They may side with the mob and incite them to riot. They may attack the mob. Or they may attempt to calm the angry mob and get them to leave.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The shouts of a mob can be heard as you round the corner. A firm but cautious voice rises above the others "I am giving you your last warning. Cease and desist or you will all be placed under arrest." A heavily accented voice answers, "W'all starvin' an he ain't willin' to sell at a fair price. He be hordin' all the foods in that there warehouse and y'all are protectin' him, not us! Looks like the Viscount has been keeping y'all eatin good. We just lookin' for the same." The last statement is met with a chorus of cheers and both sides draw weapons and stare at each other, waiting for the first move to be made.

If the characters decide to ignore the situation and continue on go to **Encounter Three: The Job**. They do NOT receive the *Thanks of the Watch*, *Civil instigator*, or *Influence with the Church of Trithereon* rewards on the AR.

Instigate the Mob: If the characters choose to instigate the mob they receive the *Civil instigator* award on the AR. Followers of Trithereon also receive the *Influence with the Church of Trithereon* award.

Attack the mob: If the characters attack, remind them that attacking a citizen of Verbobonc is against the law. If they still attack refer to the *Laws of the Viscounty* Document available at www.verbobonc.net for the proper penalty and sentences for their crimes. They do not receive the *Thanks of the Watch*, *Civil instigator*, or *Influence with the Church of Trithereon* rewards on the AR. See Appendix One for stat blocks.

APL 2 (EL 7)

☛ Commoners: (60): HP 5

☛ Watchmen: (2): 20, 20

The Gentleman of the Watch do not use lethal force unless they are targeted with it first. 1d4+1 rounds after combat begins; a patrol shows up and restores order. A patrol consists of four watchmen. See **Appendix One**.

Ideally the Characters will attempt to defuse the situation. The mob starts with an attitude of unfriendly. Allow the Characters a chance to speak before making the skill check. A DC 20 (5 added to the DC due to the size of the crowd) diplomacy check is required to shift the crowd to indifferent and neutralize the threat. If the Characters fail by more than 5 the mob immediately attacks.

The following circumstance modifiers apply in any attempts to resolve this situation.

Member of the Gentleman of the Watch	-4
Member of the Mounted Borderers	-2
Member of a House Guard	-2
Characters offer food	+2
PC offer money	+1/10gp
Obivous clergy of Trithereon	+4
Wanderer of Coldeven	+2
Obivous follower of Saint Cuthbert	+2
Clergy of Saint Cuthbert	+4

Success: If successful, the crowd disperses, at least for now, and the Watchmen thank the Characters for averting the riot. Award them the *Thanks of the Watch* award.

The judge should award a bonus of +/- 2 to the PC making the check, based on the roleplay of the situation. Additional modifiers are listed in the chart below.

Failure: If the Characters fail they do NOT receive the *Thanks of the Watch*, *Civil instigator*, or *Influence with the Church of Trithereon* rewards on the AR

Continue on to **Encounter Three: The Job**

Encounter Three: The Job

Betham was hired by an intermeadiary; a Keoish merchant seeking every bit of information on and concerning the Nobility of Verbobonc as could be found. Betham does not know whom he is working for and even if he did, chances are he would have forgotten by now. He has written to all of the Verbobonc Nobility asking for the records he needs, well, at least he is relatively certain he has.

Betham's tiny shop is crammed with books, manuscripts, diaries, and treatises. The disorder in the shop is daunting to any observer, but Betham has his own sense of organization and knows the location of each title. As the Characters enter, Betham appears to be engrossed by the yellowed scroll he is reading and doesn't even notice the PC's entrance.

Rolepalying notes:

Betham is a wrinkled, old gnome of some 170 years. Betham cares little for politics and the daily concerns within the Viscounty. He is obsessed with the written word. Of late, he has taken to talking to his books as though they were children. To customers, Betham seems constantly distracted, and most find they must remind him several times of the reason for their visit. He has no ulterior motives and is hiding nothing from the Characters.

Read or paraphrase the following:

As you enter the tiny bookstore a bell on the door announces your arrival. All manner of books and manuscripts are stacked haphazardly about.

After several long minutes of mumbling to his books Betham finally addresses you. "Oh, hello there, can I help you with something?"

Allow the Characters to answer before continuing.

"Oh! Right you are. I did hire some trustworthy adventure types this morning. Do you happen to recall why?"

Eventually, Betham will remember the task at hand and explain the job to the Characters.

"A client of mine has commissioned me to collect every bit of record and history concerning the lineage of the Noble Families here in Verbobonc. As you can imagine I was delighted to do so but..." Betham blushes slightly before continuing "but I found that my collection is a bit lacking." The gnome's eyes seem to spark and his gait quickens as he walks around the labyrinth of books. "It's a puzzle and I'm not going to let it beat me so I

figured I'd go right to the source. Right to the Nobles! I mean who better to provide information on their lineage than the families themselves!" Betham wipes the dust from a faded cover and whispers to it. "My only problem is that I can not go traveling around all of the Viscounty. Will you do it?"

Below are the answers to some possible questions the characters may ask.

Who is your client?

A noble from Keoland. He has asked to remain anonymous.

Which Nobles are we to collect information on?

Why all of them of course. I would like to be as complete as possible.

How much does the job pay?

I don't remember you being so concerned with coin before. I don't have much. I have donated most of what the Keoish man paid to help feed the refugees, but if you insist I can offer you a hundred wheatsheaves each.

Why can't you go?

I couldn't leave my children alone for that long. It would be...heartbreaking. I would miss them too much.

Why would someone want this information?

Why would someone want it? Well, history is a noble pursuit and you can learn much from those that have passed before you.

Can I have some books?

No, I could never part with them.

For characters that insist on payment, they do not receive the *Favor of Betham the Sage* at the end of the adventure. Do not inform them of the choice, as Betham will only aid those who are willing to aid other without compensation.

Continue on to **Encounter Four**.

Encounter Four: Pick a Noble, Any Noble

Judge note: This encounter, as well as encounter six and seven, is a free-form roleplaying encounter. The Characters may visit any Verbobonc Noble house in any order they wish. It is designed to give the

Characters a small sampling of the attitudes and concerns of the noble houses in post-war Verbobonc. Judges should familiarize themselves with the information provided in **Appendix Three: Guide to the Verbobonc Noble Houses**. The Characters will not be met with anyone of Noble blood but rather with their representatives who will share their liege's point of view.

Remember that Nobles hold sway over their land and that the representatives are empowered to enforce the law on their liege's land as outlined in the *Laws of Verbobonc* document. If any PC is rude or insulting during the meeting award that PC the *Infamy with House* _____ on the AR.

Continue on to **Encounter Five**.

Encounter Five: Toll Road

The war against the giants has left the Mounted Borderers decimated and very short handed. As a result crime is on the rise. Bandits and hi-jackings have forced merchants to hire more guards. This, along with the food shortage and the higher taxes is becoming a huge burden on the common-folk of Verbobonc.

As the Characters travel to whichever noble they choose next, they experience the increased banditry first-hand. A group of bandits are waiting to ambush the Characters along the road. The bandits have jumped many a traveler at this site and are rather good at working together. The bandits realize that the Mounted Borderers do not have the resources to devote to weeding out thugs, but that the situation would change significantly if they murdered a citizen. As such, they prefer to use non-lethal tactics. The thugs have been having great success employing the contents of a recently hijacked wagon.

Set up: The ambush takes place in a small corpse of trees along a bend in the road. The road is 20ft wide. The middle of the ambush site has 10x10 area cover in caltrops beneath a layer of snow. The bandits are hiding behind some rocks along the road and wait for the victims to enter the caltrop to spring their attack. Allow the Characters a spot check DC 20 + distance modifiers to notice the ambushers.

If the Characters fail to spot the ambush

Read or paraphrase the following:

It's cold, very cold and you haven't seen a soul in nearly 4 hours. The isolation of the road has you reconsidering your choice of occupation. When suddenly, deafening booms erupt all around you!

If the PC(s) spot the Ambush

Read or paraphrase the following:

It's cold, very cold and you haven't seen a soul in nearly 4 hours. That is until you caught a glimpse of someone hiding behind a large boulder up ahead. Adrenaline surges through you veins and you realize that your small group was about to walk into an ambush!

APL 2 (EL4)

🗡️Bandits: Human War 2 (4); see appendix one

Tactics: The bandits open with a volley of thunderstones hoping to deafen and slow down the party. Next they let loose with the tanglefoot bags to immobilize their prey before moving in with saps. The bandits use non-lethal force at all times and flee if the party gets the upper hand.

Judge note: The encounter level is raised by one (1) to account for the tactics and home field advantage of the bandits. The judge should familiarize himself with the special rules concerning Alchemical sustains.

After the bandits are defeated, go to **Encounter Six: Second Verse, Same as the First.**

Encounter Six: Second Verse Same as the First

This is basically the same encounter as **Encounter Four** with a different Noble House.

Encounter Seven: Another Visit

This is basically the same encounter as **Encounter Four** with a different Noble House.

Encounter Eight: An Offer You Can't Refuse

As the characters take to the road again, they come across Asanto and his merry gang. Asanto has been hired to find out who and why someone has taken such an interest in the Noble Houses of Verbobonc. Asanto is comfortable in his ability to deal with anything the Characters can throw his way but his contract is to get the information, not to kill anyone. He will refrain from doing so unless the Characters do something stupid like attack him. Even if they draw weapons, he will warn them not to be foolish with a statement akin to "Look around, you're

hopelessly out manned. Do you really want to die here?"

Asanto will stand in the open and address the Characters as his gang emerges from cover and level crossbows at the party. He questions them until it is clear that they do not really know anything and states that he will have to visit Betham to get the information his employer requires. He then uses his *cape of the mountebank* to leave. The crossbow men then step back into the woods and make their way back to their camp.

Read or paraphrase the following:

On the road ahead you see an odd sight. There appears to be a man standing in the middle of the road looking in your direction. As you get closer he smiles at you and waves. "Good day travelers. My name is Asanto and I was hoping that you would be willing to answer a few questions." As he speaks, 18 men and women seem to step out of the trees themselves and level crossbows at you. "Please don't be alarmed, they're only here to make sure our conversation is not interrupted by some unfortunate un-pleasantness." The Rhennee man flashes a cock-sure smile at you and continues, "Shall we get down to brass tacks? My employer wishes to know who has developed such a strong interest in the Nobles of this fine land and why."

Allow the characters a chance to answer. Once it is apparent that they do not know who hired Betham...

Read or paraphrase the following.

"I remember when I was first starting out adventuring. Man how I hated guard work!" Asanto and his gang share a reminiscent laugh thinking back to the old days. "I tell you what, why don't you let us help you? My crew and I will collect the remaining records while you head to a warm bed." The rhennee pulls a purse from under his cloak and tosses it to you. "While you're at it have a few drinks on me."

The purse contains 1800 gp. If the characters agree to Asanto's request he thanks them and the adventure is over. They do not earn the Notice of Asanto, the Favor of Betham the Sage or the Thanks of a Mysterious Stranger. Proceed to the Conclusion.

Refusing the offer: If the characters refuse his offer, Read or paraphrase the following:

Asanto shakes his head and sighs, "Well, I was really hoping not to make a trip into Verbobonc City but you leave me no choice. I'll let the gnome

know how diligently you're working to complete his task." Shooting you a wink he disappears leaving a poof of smoke in his wake.

The crossbow men cautiously step back into the woods and are gone as quickly as they appeared.

If the characters refuse Asanto's Offer they earn the Notice of Asanto.

Asanto is bluffing. He has no intention of visiting Betham but instead is hoping that the Characters will take the bait and rush back to Verbobonc City to check with their employer while his agent collects the records from the other noble houses. If the Characters decide to head back to Verbobonc City to check in with Betham proceed to Encounter Nine: the Race Home

If the Characters wish to continue with their task and ignore the threat Asanto made against Betham allow them to do so. They will travel for another 2 days and when they reach their destination the Noble's agent is surprised to see them. The proxy explains that another group of adventures have already been there to collect the records and that this is to be expected when dealing with the forgetful sage.

Visiting any other noble house reveals the same. If the Characters wish to visit all the nobles they may, but the adventure will cost them one additional TU per two nobles visited rounded down. When they decide to return to Betham proceed to encounter Ten: The Weary Adventure.

APL 2, Untiered, (EL12)

🔪 **Asanto, Human Ftr2/Mnk2/Dvs3/Sct3:** 88hp; See Appendix 1

🔪 **Crew (18) Human Ftrr:** 12hp, See Appedix 1

Judge note: It should be made clear to the players that this is a fight they cannot win. This encounter is a demonstration designed to illustrate that you cannot always succeed by beating things over the head in the new Verbobonc order. If a PC attacks, half the crossbowmen open fire on THAT PC ONLY. If by some act of the dice god the PC manages to make it to Asanto, he will enter his dervish dance and cut the PC to ribbons as a lesson to the others.

Read or paraphrase the following before returning to the encounter:

Sheathing his weapons, the rhenee man eyes each of you sadly as he steps over the bloody lump that was your companion "Please excuses the interruption. Where were we?"

Encounter Nine: The Race Home

How long the trip back to Verbobonc City takes varies depending on where the Characters were when they met Asanto. The judge is encouraged not to dwell on it, as it has no bearing on the adventure outcome.

When they reach Betham's bookstore the Characters find him unharmed. If questioned, he will state that he doesn't recall anyone coming to see him recently and that he has been busy summarizing the data for his client. If Asanto is described, Betham will vaguely recall a historian fitting the discription, who stopped in a couple of day ago to inquire about a job and now that the Characters mention it he thinks they may have spoken about Verbobonc Noble families.

When the Characters turn over whatever information they have collected, Betham will be somewhat disappointed as it is not complete. His deadline is quickly approaching so it will have to do. He thanks them and pays them. They have earned the *Thanks of a Mysterious Stranger* award on the AR.

If they did not ask to be paid for their services the also receive the *Favor of Betham the Sage* award and he gifts them with 200gp each.

Encounter Ten: The Weary Adventurers

The Characters return to find Betham engrossed in a musty tome. He is very disappointed and confused as to why they could not collect more records. Betham hasn't had any visitors and doesn't recall anyone fitting Asanto's description.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The walls of Verbobonc City are a welcome sight to your eyes after weeks on the road. Making your way to Betham's store you can't help but wonder how he will react to your lack-luster performance. Pushing open the door of the small shop is like stepping back in time. Betham is so emersed in some old book that once again it takes him several minutes to notice you. Looking up he smiles "Hello, Can I help you?"

It takes Betham several reminders before he recognizes the Characters. He listens to their story intently until he is given the records. Once he has the records he thanks the Characters for their effort and pays them the full amount promised out of pity.

They have earned the Thanks of a Mysterious Stranger award of the AR.

If they did not ask to be paid for their services the also receive the Favor of Betham the Sage award and he gifts them with 200gp each.

Conclusion

Read or paraphrase the following;

The adventuring life was supposed to be filled with fame and fortune but all you have is unanswered questions. Who is the Keoish Noble? Who is Asanto working for?

Your contemplation is cut short as you hear news of several more riots that have broken out all over Verbobonc City. It seems the cold wind has stirred up more than just the stinging snow.

The End

Experience Point Summary

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

Encounter 2:

Dealing with the mob.

APL 2: 150xp

Encounter 5:

Defeating the bandits.

APL 2: 225xp

Encounter 8:

Dealing with Asanto

APL2: 365xp

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 2: 160xp

Total possible experience:

APL 900xp

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 3:

APL 2: L: 200gp; C: 0gp; M: 0gp

Encounter 5:

APL2: L: ogp; C: ogp; M: ogp

Encounter 8:

APL2: L: ogp; C: 180ogp; M: ogp

Conclusion

APL 2: L: ogp; C: 20ogp; M: ogp

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: Total: 400 gp (160ogp in mod)

Reward Notes

Thanks of the Watch: You helped avert a riot on the streets of Verbobonc City. The Gentleman of the Watch are in your debt. This is an influence point with the Gentleman of the Watch.

Civil Instigator: For having a hand starting a riot on the streets of Verbobonc City you have earned the ire of the Gentleman of the Watch. Any time you are in Verbobonc City there is a 5% chance you are detained for 1 TU being questioned by the Watch. In addition, you are forever banned from joining the Gentleman of the Watch, Mounted Borderer or Church of Saint Cuthbert meta-organizations. Current members are immediately expelled. In addition, you have earned 5 infamy points with the Gentleman of The Watch and the Church of Saint Cuthbert.

Influence with the Church of Trithereon: For your help in bring attention to the plight of the common man you have improved your standing in the eyes of the Church of Trithereon. This is an influence point with the church.

Favor of Betham the Sage: For helping Betham without asking for monetary compensation he allows you access to his "children". You may expend this favor to gain a +10 bonus to any one-knowledge skill check while in Verbobonc City. Cross off when used.

Thanks of a Mysterious Stranger: Betham's Client is impressed with your dedication and completeness. He will remember you and may seek you out in the future.

Notice of Asanto: you have earned the notice of Asanto. What this means is uncertain at this time.

Infamy with _____

Infamy with _____

Infamy with _____

Appendix One: NPC Characters

Encounter 2: Food Fight!

Gentleman of the Watch: Male Human Exp2/War2; Medium Humanoid; CR 2; HD 2d6+2d8+12; hp 35; Init +1; Spd 30 ft/x4; AC 15 (+4 armor, +1 dex), touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk/Grapple +3/+5; Full Atk +5 One-handed (1d8+2;19-20/x2, Longsword), or +6 One-handed (1d6+2;20/x2, Masterwork sap); AL LG; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +4; Str 14(+2), Dex 12(+1), Con 16(+3), Int 10(+0), Wis 12(+1), Cha 12(+1);

Skills and Feats: Appraise¹ +3, Climb¹ +2, Diplomacy¹ +10, Forgery¹ +3, Gather Information¹ +6, Heal¹ +3, Intimidate¹ +8, Knowledge (local) +4, Profession (Law Enforcement) +5, Sense Motive¹ +11, Swim¹ +0; Negotiator, Skill Focus [Sense Motive], Toughness

Possessions: Chainshirt, Sap, Longsword, Dagger, Potion of Cure Light Wounds, Signal Whistle, Tabard

Refugee: Male, Female Human Com1; Medium Humanoid; CR 1; HD 1d4+1; hp 5; Init +1; Spd 30 ft/x4; AC 11 (+1 dex), touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk/Grapple +0/+0; Full Atk +0 One-handed (1d6;20/x2, Club), +0 One-handed (1d3;20/x2, Unarmed Strike); AL LG; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 10(+0), Dex 12(+1), Con 12(+1), Int 10(+0), Wis 10(+0), Cha 10(+0);

Skills and Feats: Craft (various)¹ +7, Handle Animal +1, Listen¹ +1, Profession (various) +7, Spot¹ +1, Swim¹; +1; Skill focus [craft (any)], Skill focus [profession (any)]

Possessions: Club, 3cp, worn clothing, pride

Encounter 5: Toll Road

Bandits(4): Male Human War2; Medium Humanoid; CR 2; HD 2d8+4; hp 17; Init +4; Spd 30 ft/x4; AC 16 (+3 armor, +1 shield, +2 dex), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk/Grapple +2/+4; Full Atk +4 One-handed (1d6+2;20/x2, masterwork Sap), +4 ranged (by type;20/x2, Thrown weapon); AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 14(+2), Dex 14(+2), Con 14(+2), Int 12(+1), Wis 10(+0), Cha 12(+1);

Skills and Feats: Climb¹ +5, Handle Animal +3, Intimidate¹ +6, Hide +4, Jump¹ +4, move silently +4, Ride¹ +3, Swim¹ +1; Stealthy, Improved Initiative

Possessions: sap (2). Master work Studded leather armor, shield, light wooden, dagger, Thunderstone (3), tanglefoot bag (3), Smokesticks (2).Dagger

Encounter 8: An Offer You Can't Refuse

Asanto: Male Human Ftr2/Mnk2/Dvs3/Sct3; Medium Humanoid; CR 10;HD 5d8+5d10+30; hp 88;Init +4; Spd 45 ft/x4;AC 22 (+6 armor, +4 dex, +2 misc), touch 16, flat-footed 22;Base Atk/Grapple +8/+9; Full Atk +11/+6 One-handed (1d6+2;18-20/x2, +1 *Scimitar*), +9/+4 Two-Weapon (primary) (1d6+2 + 1d6 Electrical;18-20/x2, +1 *Scimitar*) and +9/+4 Two-Weapon (secondary) (1d6+1 + 1d6 Acid;18-20/x2, +1 *Scimitar*), or +9/+4 One-handed (1d6+1;20/x2, Unarmed Strike); SA: Flurry of blows, Dervish Dance 2/day(6rds), Skirmish +2d6, Slashing Blades; SQ: Uncanny dodge, Trackless Step, Evasion, Trap Finding, Movement

AL LN; SV Fort +12, Ref +14, Will +9; Str 12(+1), Dex 18(+4), Con 16(+3), Int 14(+2), Wis 12(+1), Cha 12(+1);

Skills and Feats: Balance¹ +11, Climb¹ +8, Diplomacy¹ +7, Escape Artist¹ +8, Hide¹ +6, Intimidate¹ +9, Jump¹ +12, Knowledge [Dungeoneering] +3, Knowledge [Geography] +3, Knowledge [Nature] +3, Listen¹ +10, Move Silently¹ +7, Search¹ +7, Sense Motive¹ +12, Speak Language +6, Spot¹ +5, Swim¹ +1, Tumble +18; Combat Expertise, Dodge, Mobility, Two-weapon Fighting, Improved Two-weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus [scimitar], Spring Attack

Possession: +1 *shocking scimitar*, +1 *acidic scimitar*. *gloves of dexterity* +2, *amulet of health* +2, *vest of resistance* +1, *boots of striding and springing*

Crew (18): Male Human Ftr1; Medium Humanoid; CR 1; HD 1d10+2; hp 12; Init +2; Spd 30 ft/x4; AC 14 (+2 armor, +2 dex), touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk/Grapple +1/+3; Full Atk +4 Two-handed (1d8;19-20/x2, Crossbow, Light) or +3 Two-Handed (1d8+3; 19-20/x2, longsword); AL LN; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 14(+2), Dex 14(+2), Con 15(+2), Int 10(+0), Wis 12(+1), Cha 10(+0);

Skills and Feats: Climb¹ +4, Handle Animal +1, Intimidate¹ +3, Jump¹ +3, Profession (Soldier) +2, Ride¹ +3, Swim¹ +4; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus [crossbow, light]

Possessions: leather armor, light crossbow, bolt (20), Longsword, Dagger(2)

Appendix Two: New Rules

Dervish [New Prestige Class](from Complete Warrior)

Hit Die: d10

Requirements

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Skills: Perform [Dance] 3 ranks, Tumble 3 ranks.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Focus [any slashing melee weapon].

Class Skills: The dervish's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features: All of the following are class features of the dervish prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Dervishes gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

AC Bonus (Ex): A dervish gains this bonus to Armor Class as long as she is wearing no armor or light armor and not carrying a shield. This bonus to AC applies even against touch attacks or when the dervish is flat-footed. She loses this bonus when she is immobilized or helpless, when she wears any armor heavier than light, when she carries a shield, or when she carries a medium or heavy load.

Dervish Dance (Ex): A dervish can become a whirling dancer of death a certain number of times per day. While in this dervish dance, she can take a full attack action (for melee attacks only) and still move up to her speed. However, the dervish must move a minimum of 5 feet between each attack when using this ability, and she cannot return to a square she just exited (though she may return to that square later during her full attack). The dervish is subject to attacks of opportunity while dancing, but may tumble normally as part of her move. A dervish

prevented from completing her move is also prevented from finishing her full attack.

If a dervish wields a slashing weapon while in a dervish dance, she gains a bonus on her attack and damage rolls. This bonus is +1 at 1st level, and it increases by an extra +1 at every odd-numbered level thereafter.

A dervish may only perform a dervish dance while wielding a slashing weapon (she may use a double weapon, or multiple weapons, only if both ends of the weapon or all weapons are of the slashing type). She cannot perform a dervish dance in any armor heavier than light or if she is using a shield. While dancing, a dervish cannot use skills or abilities that involve concentration or require her to remain still, such as Move Silently, Hide, or Search. A dervish with the bardic music ability can, however, sing while she dances, and a dervish can also use the combat Expertise feat while in a dance. A dervish cannot perform a dervish dance while under the effect of a rage or frenzy ability.

A dervish can perform a dervish dance only once per encounter. A dervish dance lasts 1 round for every two ranks of Perform (dance) that the character has. At the end of a dervish dance, the character becomes fatigued for the duration of the encounter (unless she is a 9th-level dervish, at which point this limitation no longer applies).

Movement Mastery (Ex): A dervish is so certain of her movements that she is unaffected by adverse conditions. When making a Jump, Perform (dance), or Tumble check, she may take 10 even if stress and distraction would normally prevent her from doing so.

Slashing Blades: A dervish treats the scimitar as a light weapon (rather than a one-handed weapon) for all purposes, including fighting with two weapons.

Fast Movement (Ex): At 2nd level and higher, a dervish gains an enhancement bonus to her speed. A dervish in any armor heavier than light or carrying a

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	AC Bonus	Special
1	+1	+0	+2	+2	+0	Dervish dance 1/day, movement mastery, slashing blades
2	+2	+0	+3	+3	+1	Fast movement +5 ft.
3	+3	+1	+3	+3	+1	Spring Attack, dervish dance 2/day
4	+4	+1	+4	+4	+1	Dance of death
5	+5	+1	+4	+4	+2	Fast movement +10 ft., dervish dance 3/day
6	+6	+2	+5	+5	+2	Improved reaction
7	+7	+2	+5	+5	+2	Elaborate parry, dervish dance 4/day
8	+8	+2	+6	+6	+2	Fast movement +15 ft.
9	+9	+3	+6	+6	+3	Tireless dance, dervish dance 5/day
10	+10	+3	+7	+7	+3	A thousand cuts

medium or heavy load loses this bonus.

Spring Attack: At 3rd level, a dervish gains the Spring Attack feat, even if she does not meet the prerequisites.

Dance of Death: At 4th level, a dervish gains the use of the Cleave feats while performing a dervish dance, even if she does not meet the prerequisites for the feat. She does not have to move 5 feet before making the extra attack granted by this ability.

Improved Reaction (Ex): When she attains 6th level, a dervish gains a +2 bonus on initiative rolls.

Elaborate Parry (Ex): When she attains 7th level, a dervish gains an extra +4 bonus to Armor Class when she chooses to fight defensively or use total defense in melee combat.

Tireless Dance: When a dervish reaches 9th level, the character no longer becomes fatigued for the duration of the encounter at the end of a dervish dance.

A Thousand Cuts (Ex): When a dervish reaches 10th level, once per day she may double the number of melee attacks she makes while performing a full attack action (whether in a dervish dance or not). If a dervish uses this ability in conjunction with her dervish dance, she can make up to two attacks between moves.

The dervish also gains the benefit of the Great Cleave feat with slashing weapons while performing a thousand cuts, even if she does not meet the prerequisites. She does not have to move 5 feet before making any extra attacks granted by this ability.

A dervish using this ability can receive an extra attack from the haste spell, but the bonuses provided by the spell do not stack with the bonuses provided by the class.

Appendix Three: Guide to the Verbobonc Noble Houses

House Milinous

Since his recent ordeal, Lord Milinous has been regaining his strength. With all that is happened, the Lord and Lady are hoping for peace so that the goodly people may prosper and enjoy life in Verbobonc. Lady Milinous has resigned her post as Liasion to the Order of the Celestial Moons in order to spend more time with her husband and subjects. They feel the Viscount is doing a fine job, as are the other nobles. This is a trying time and everyone is doing the best they can.

NPC receiving the party: Arround, the long time seneschal of House Asbury, has been named the seneschal of House Milinous since the recent wedding between Lady Elinor Asbury and Lord Simon Millinous. He's a tall human, of flannish descent, appearing roughly in his late 50's. Arround is very mindful of his duties and absolutely loyal to Elinor and Simon.

Roleplay Notes: Arround is above all else a dedicated servant of House Milinous. He believes that he must always put the house in a good light and refuses to say anything negative. This goes as far as not discussing any of the past events with Lord Milinous and his imposter. If pressed for information on either Lady or Lord Milinous he will state that they are both fine and enjoying the time together after so many years apart.

How are the Characters Received: Warmly. They are offered refreshments and seats; Arround will treat the adventurers like visiting dignitaries.

House position on Viscount: They are loyal subjects of the office of the Viscount and feels he is doing an adequate job of serving.

House Avgustin

Rumors of Lady Brandenburg's worship of Trithereon have been spreading throughout Verbobonc. Captian Yronl, who shares in this worship, will politely dismiss any questions related to the subject. If pushed, he will remind the Characters that they have no right to question a noble of Verbobonc and have them escorted to their land's border. (Award the Characters Infamy) The Viscount needs to remember that without the commonfolk Verbobonc would be nothing. The Nobles are too concerned with their own agendas to see the plight of the people.

NPC receiving the party: Captian Yronl, regent to Lady Elise Brandenburg, is a very serious man. Having

achieved the highest rank within the house guard, all servants defer to him. He was very close to the late Baron and sees the protection of Elise above all else especially considering the string of deaths the family has recently suffered.

Roleplay Notes: Captain Yronl believes that the adventurers have no reason to meet with Elise. In fact, he is of the opinion that she should distance herself from strangers for the time being. He will not speak of anything to do with the vandalism that took place on his property or the allegations that a shrine to Trithereon was located on the estate. He will communicate that such things are of no importance compared to the starving and suffering of the commonfolk. He will mention the muded bodies that were found near a river on their lands and that he is still investigating the said event. While he believes that the Mounted Borderers have done all they could do, he does communicate disappointment that they showed up late and haven't been able to contribute resources to finding those responsible.

How are the Characters Received: Courteous, but distant. Captain Yronl will try to keep the meeting formal and politely cooperative.

House position on Viscount: The formal position is that of the previous Lord Avgustin, which is that House Avgustin is loyal to the office of the Viscount. Though pressed for his opinion, Captain Yronl will express dissatisfaction with the Viscount and what he deems as his "priorities."

House Deleveu

House Deleveu is firmly allied and loyal to Viscount Langard. His location and proximity to the Gnarley Forest make his noble court and estate seem more elven than human. Waldgraf Deleveu maintains his manor, Deleveu Woods, under the protective boughs of the Gnarley Forest, and rangers, both human and elven arrive and leave his manor as they see fit. Waldgraf Deleveu's wife is known for her kindness and willingness to care for any wounded creature appearing at Deleveu Woods seeking aid. In his position, far to the south away from most civilization, Waldgraf Deleveu continually faces incursions from the humanoids of the Gnarley Forest, and he maintains an uncomfortable border with the isolationist realm of Celene. Deleveu's lands contain the large town of Ostverk. As the Lord Mayor of Ostverk, Lord Deleveu has the traditional title of "Waldgraf". Waldgraf Deleveu currently occupies the important post of Knight Captain of the Mounted

Borderers. This position, along with Ostverk's large population, makes Waldgraf Deleveu a much more influential noble in Verbobonc than his distant holdings would indicate.

NPC receiving the party: Lady Seremela Deleveu, wife of Waldgraf Deleveu and protector of the children of the Gnarley. As a well-educated (and long lived) female head of the house, she is an Enlanefel clan member. As a high elf descended from the noble courts of Celene, she settled in Verbobonc after the Hateful Wars.

Roleplay Notes: She is concerned about the exploding urbanization of the Gnarley and the impact it is having on nature. She believes that many of the bigger towns do not respect the forest and believes that if they do not turn from this path, nature will take her revenge. She is friendly and gracious.

How are the Characters Received: Graciously and friendly. Offer the adventurers to stay the night.

House position on Viscount: They are loyal subjects of the office of the Viscount and feels he is doing an excellent job, even with the lackluster support of the other nobles.

House Langmuir

House Langmuir and its small parcel of land are situated right in the viscounty's heartland. The real power of House Langmuir resides with Godeleva Langmuir, known in some circles as the "Iron Lady." Rumors of Ludovic's dalliance with one of the maids ended with the poor lass's tragic fall down the stairs, and it's best to not discuss implications of such an inappropriate and scandalous topic further. House Langmuir is rumoured to be currently tantalizing factions in Veluna with prospects of alliance, which makes them less than popular in many Verbobonc circles.

NPC receiving the party: Lohin the stable boy. Lohin has been charged with dealing with the "riff-raff" that have been sent to annoy the house. He has been told that the adventurers want information about the genealogy of the noble house. He has been ordered to make the situation as difficult as possible, while not coming right out and denying the request. When the party arrives and asks to speak with a representative, they will be told to wait out on the front steps. Here they will wait for almost an hour. While waiting, a middle age woman and her children will approach the party. She will ask for alms, or for some spare food, intimating that food is short here in Langmuir lands. Whether the party offers her coin or some food, she will thank them profusely just as a

Lohin strolls out. Upon seeing the lady and her children begging, he will chase them off the property, waving a half eaten turkey leg at them in the process. If the Characters ask why they had to wait for an hour, Lohin wipes his hands on his greased stained shirt and comments that "you just can't rush good cooking."

Roleplay Notes: Lohin is very happy to harass the party as much as possible. He will start by acting as if he does not know why they are here and during discussions he will make sarcastic observations about the male members of the party and lewd comments about the females. Eventually, he will ask them to fill out a request for the information. Upon submitting it, he will look it over and shake his head, saying "You're all stupid, fill it out right." This will go back and forth several times until the party realizes that the stable boy can't read (Spot or sense motive check DC 10.)

How are the Characters Received: Rudely, verging on humiliation.

House position on Viscount: House Langmuir puts on a public face of support for Langard and pays its taxes to the viscounty in full and on time, which allows the house a great deal of latitude.

House Saflynd

The Saflynd family had been the first to deal with a lycanthrope threat in their own lands. This house is famous for their exhaustive training in attacks, which allow them to do massive damage to lycanthropes while at the same time minimizing their exposure to the enemy's teeth and claws. Many members of the Saflynd family and their retainers, train with rangers specializing in dealing with lycanthropes. Rumors swirl that lycanthropy has been found in some of the cadet branches of the family and this is the reason for their vigorous pursuit of all lycanthropes. House Saflynd has committed one part in 20 of all their lands to be set aside for the growing of herbs. All of which are to be used in the repelling of lycanthropes and are critical in the treatment of the disease. The house motto is "Mercy for the Unfortunates, Death to Evil." House Saflynd is a relatively new noble line, the current lord being only the second to inherit the title.

NPC receiving the party: Dafydd, oldest son of Lord Saflynd and heir to the title. A young man in his early 20s, he appears to be of Oeridian descent with a clean-shaven face and hair brought off the shoulders by a ponytail.

Roleplay Notes:

Upon arriving at the Saflynd estate, the adventurers will be escorted to a sitting room and be told that

their arrival will be announced. After several minutes of waiting, a young man will enter, introducing himself. Once the party makes introductions, he will ask what they need. He will seem somewhat impatient, as if he has better things to do, but will not be impolite. If anyone in the party mentions the subjects of Lord Shannus, lycanthropes or the Ironwood, his demeanor will change. He will openly denounce Shannus and his collection of misfits and murderers that he calls servants. He will point out the Brewfest Massacre of Humming's End as an example of Lord Shannus's "justice." He will espouse that if the Viscount were truly noble in intentions, he would intervene into the Ironwood himself before it becomes a blood bath.

How are the Characters Received: Politely, though looking to conduct business quickly.

House position on Viscount: They were supportive of the Viscount until he made Shannus a lord and noble of the Ironwood. Since that time, tensions have been strained with Castle Greyfist. As a relative new comer to noble politics, house Saflynd is eager to increase their holdings and secure more wealth and influence.

House Haxx

The noble house of Haxx is relatively new compared to the other noble houses of Verbobonc. In fact, house Haxx wouldn't garner much respect if it weren't for the fact that they are wealthy. Considered one of the biggest trade merchants in the area, Haxx's fortune began with a family shipping business. His shipping company, The Gentle Tradewinds, has been lucrative. This, combined with his position as a noble, has put him in an interesting situation.

NPC receiving the party: Commador Bibblesfoot, head of Lord Haxx's commissioned merchant marines. He is a male gnome in his early 60s, dressed in the appropriate and highly tacky garb of a theatric admiral. He sports a handlebar mustache and can always be found with a pastry in hand.

Roleplay Notes: Commador Bibblesfoot, a very powerful archmage, is very friendly and completely glib. Bibble will attempt to recruit the Characters into the service of Lord Haxx and the Merchant Marines. If any Characters agree, Bibble will state "Great! How do you do that?" He will produce (by magic) any documents or information they require, as Lord Haxx has instructed him to assist them in any way necessary.

How are the Characters Received: Friendly, with offerings of pastries. A feel of absurdity should accompany the encounter.

House position on Viscount: House Haxx believes that the Viscount is doing a good job if he is capable of increasing trade and keeping shipping lanes open and caravans moving. At this time these things are not happening, as he is concerned with the unusual freezing over of the rivers and the banditry that has hampered overland trade.

House Velysin

Lord Velysin is the current Lord Mayor of Verbobonc, and the house maintains extensive holdings east of Verbobonc City on the Low Road to Dyvers. Lord Velysin upholds a hard line against crime and corruption, and as Lord Mayor, he has the full support of the Church of St. Cuthbert and Viscount Langard. Lord Velysin's ties with the Church of St. Cuthbert are particularly close, and the Church has exercised substantial political control in Verbobonc in Lord Velysin's first term as Lord Mayor. Lord Velysin was elected to a second term early in 593 CY, amid an election fraught with intrigue and violence. They were awarded lands in Verbobonc based on their support and defense of a church of Rao. It is rumoured that some family members have worshipped an evil deity in the past.

NPC receiving the party: Adetar, a Chapeaux of Saint Cuthbert assigned to the Velysin lands. He is an advisor to the House when it comes to matters of commonfolk.

Roleplay Notes: Adetar will take this chance to promote church doctrine and policy, while trying to figure out what faith the adventurers are. He will attempt to get heroes of non-lawful alignments to swear off their evil ways and get on the straight path. He will mention that in trying times such as these, only the truly devote will overcome hardship and be prosperous. The faithful will survive, whether here or in the afterlife, but any hardship encountered will but a test of their resolve.

How are the Characters Received: Strictly, and by some regard as sinners unless they worship Saint Cuthbert, Rao, or another recognized lawful good deity.

House position on Viscount: Pro Viscount. Believes that Langard has done a great job and believes that through church guidance all things are possible.

House Galans

House Galans maintains two very distant holdings: fertile fields in the southern Viscounty, and an immense shipping yard in the northeastern tip of the Viscounty. Lord Galans stays very informed about the goings-on in both of his holdings, but he actually spends most of his time in Verbobonc City. House Galans has become one of the wealthiest nobles in Verbobonc, second only to House Haxx. Galans is not popular with other nobles of the Viscounty. He is very independent and does not mince words. He is impossible to intimidate. House Galans carefully navigates a political position that lies between Viscount Langard's attempts to pacify the Kron Hills gnomes, and the extremist nobles who would like to see the gnomes forced to submit; Lord Galans is on no one's side in the matter. In addition, he is a keen judge of horses and his holdings produce fine mounts for the Mounted Borders and the Knights of the Faithful Defender.

NPC receiving the party: "Big" Fet, House Galans trail boss and head of the stables who is also one of its longest serving subjects.

Roleplay Notes: Fet will greet the group with a large amount of swagger and salt of the earth wisdom. When he disagrees with someone's statement, he will say "that dog don't hunt." He will not humour cowards or fools.

How are the Characters Received: Before they are allowed to meet with anyone, the house guards will ask to inspect their belongings and will help themselves to the most exotic materials they can find. This usually starts with spell components, wine or fine textiles. If the Characters protest they will reply that all citizens are required to pay "taxes" upon their Lord's land.

House position on Viscount: Opposed to the Viscount and in fact does not particularly care for any of the other noble houses.

House Chondell: Not much is known about Castle Chondell or its residents. The only commonly known fact is that Castle Chondell is the home of Lord Chondell. The Chondell family has been ruling this region for as long as anyone can remember. House Chondell has never had a major conflict with another noble family, and has no public alliances with any other noble family. House Chondell maintains a presence in the courts of Verbobonc and Veluna. House Chondell's resources come in a variety of locations: they own several small sliver mines in the Lortmils, a trading company based out of Verbobonc City that runs from Dyvers to Veluna, a textile mill

in Verbobonc City and a winery in Rhynehurst. These diverse resources, and the income from their lands, keep House Chondell wealthy even during the roughest of times. House Chondell's land is beautiful and well tended. The commoners that work the land are hard-working but strangely quiet.

NPC receiving the party: Pelligro DuVequor, the current procurator for house Chondell. He is charged with managing the day-to-day affairs of Castle Chondell. A master in the art of diplomacy and etiquette, Pelligro is the face most people meet when they wish to do business with House Chondell. On those rare occasions, when a visiting dignitary or guildmaster must be entertained, Kosak Chondell (the current head of House Chondell) makes an appearance.

Roleplay Notes: Pelligro DuVequor is first and foremost, polite and highly accomodating. When asked questions he rather not answer, he will deflect with humor and compliments. It is at these times that he will draw away attention from the question.

How are the Characters Received: They are received as important individuals and are attended to with grace and style.

House position on Viscount: House Chondell has no real position on the Viscount. If pressed, Pelligro DuVequor will state that his Lords and Ladies are pleased with Langard.

House Stefania

Lady Stefania was born the daughter and only child of the late Marquis of Visengart, and inherited her title from him. Lady Stefania prefers to be found among her people, and is just as comfortable in the local inn as in her private chambers. She knows every man, woman and child in the immediate vicinity of the town of Visengart on a first name basis. She acts with an authority that belies her age, knowing she has the full support of her people. Lady Stefania is a half-elf and unwed. However, all suitors must be approved by her father's formal general, who is Lady Stefania's closest friend and confidante—and also a centaur.

NPC receiving the party: Lady Stefania. Flaming red hair is the crown that adorns her beautiful slender frame. Gracefulness is a word that does not do her justice: she is poised and appears unruffled no matter the circumstance.

Roleplay Notes: Although she is quite formal with strangers, she is not stuffy or pompous, and that is reflected in her easygoing attitude. In private

conversations with her people, Lady Stefania prefers to forgo her title and be simply known as Mirabella.

How are the Characters Received: Warmly and openly. Lady Stefania is the only actual Noble the Characters will meet.

House position on Viscount: They are loyal subjects of the Viscount and feels he is doing a fine job.

House Vaswell

This smallholding is situated on the northwestern banks of the Velverdyva River and stretches south some ten miles. In terms of power, House Vaswell is generally overlooked, as it has no connections with any of the churches, armies, or organizations of the Viscounty. House Vaswell runs a small fleet of ships, used to transport goods and people on Verbobonc's many rivers. It has been rumored that House Vaswell is on friendly terms with many of the Rhennee bargefolk. In fact, the house openly employs Rhennee in some of its businesses. The majority of people know Lord Vaswell for his parties. They are said to be lowbrow affairs, attracting merchants and the older children of nobles. He's been known to pick up a lute and satirize the church, other nobles, and even the Viscount.

NPC receiving the party: Muurloi, a magical marionette disturbingly dressed as a Billet of Saint Cuthbert. Lord Vaswell expects the party to visit and has decided that other things required his attention. In his stead, he has left Murrloi.

Roleplay Notes: Muurloi has been partially imbued with a personality and some memory to draw from. He will berate the party on their clothes, the low quality of weapons they carry and their general smell. If a party member comes into reach, he will smack them with a tightly rolled parchment. He will answer each question with a question. This will go on until the party gives up and prepares to leave. At which point, Muurloi will get serious and tell them he apologizes. If they come back he will ask what they want and start the process all over again. The parchment is the information they are looking for.

How are the Characters Received: The party will be insulted and berated, though in good clean fun.

House position on Viscount: If asked this question or something similar, Muurloi will say the following as if he is talking to someone up in the air next to him, "a war orphan told a noble, "I haven't tasted food all week", the Lord replied, "Don't worry, it still tastes the same!"

House Rhynehurst

House Rhynehurst has a very relaxed attitude toward many things, which has brought easy growth to their lands, happiness to their vassals, and a gentle truce with some of the unsavory elements of society. The general populace is easy-going and enjoys a good day's work combined with a good night's fun. Rhynehurst's cultural offerings are second only to Verbobonc City in both size and quality. Many a young Rhynehurst lad and lass have strolled and hummed and strummed away the hours while working in the fields, watching the herds, laboring in the bakeries, or enjoying the Riverwalk. Music and lyrical poetry seem almost second nature to those from Rhynehurst, and these abilities are encouraged by Lord Rhynehurst, who often not only attends but sometimes acts in the local plays and pageantry. Socially, Rhynehurst is often viewed as something of a backwater part of the Viscounty.

NPC receiving the party: Curlys, male human bard,. A charming smile and quick wit are trademarks of Curlys Lord Rhynehurst's personal head of entertainment.

Roleplay Notes: Curlys, care not for politics. He works just hard enough to evade attention from his lord. Curlys will meet the character at a local inn and encourage them to sample the local flavor. He will provide the wil wine and women.

How are the Characters Received: The party will be winned and dined.

House position on Viscount: All of house rhynehurst are loyal to the Viscount. Curlys will take offense if they insult the Mounted Borderers, the church of Saint Cuthbert, or the Viscount. If asked how he can live this way when so many are suffering he fakes a shocked expression and will state that "If we change the way we live the giant won."

House Jimm

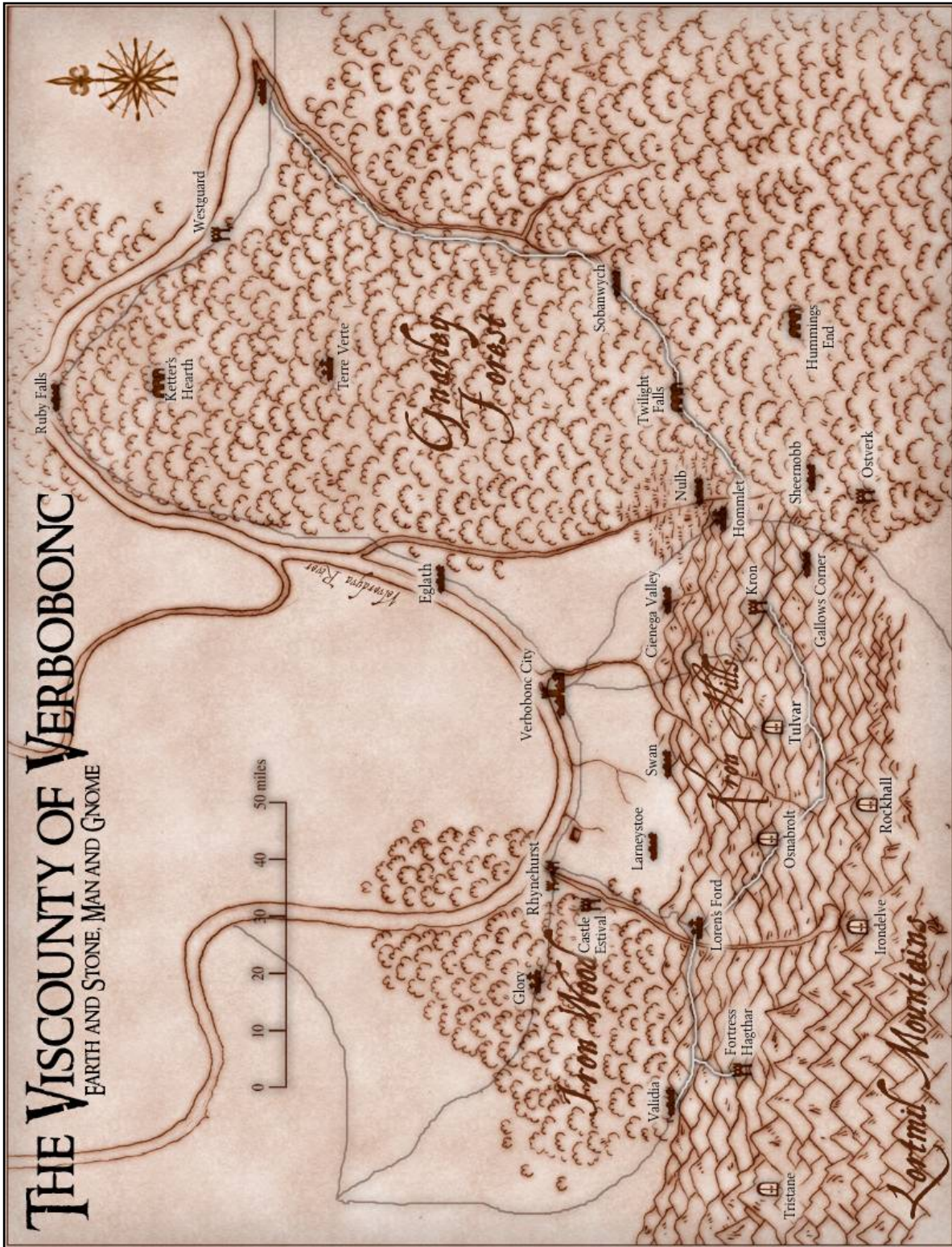
The PC are unable to meet with Prince Jimm at this time. No explanation is given.

House Shannus

The order of the Platinum Scale, Lord Shannus' newly formed guard, refuses anyone entry on penalty of death.

Appendix Four: Maps

Map of Verbobonc



Map of Verbobonc Noble Boundaries



Map of Verbobonc City



Player Handout #1

Dear Brother/Sister of Liberty,

For too long have the so called Nobles of this land stood on the backs of the common man. We will no longer stand by and watch the rich get richer as the poor starve. The time is upon us! We will encourage the masses to shrug off the shackles of oppression and fight for their freedom. If the opportunity arises you are urged to persuade the common man to take the fight to the lap dogs of the uncaring. We will be free!

Retribution shall be ours!

Brothers of the Rune,