

Along Came a Spider

A One–Round Dungeons & Dragons® Living Greyhawk™ Regional Adventure set in the Kingdom of Nyrond

Version 1.0

by Jason Clark

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A missing priest, a murdered visionary, an arcane menace, and a city entangled in the sticky strands of political expressionism...can a band of desperate adventurers try their hands at alchemy and turn anarchy into stability by connecting the stray dots that litter Istus's web, or will the dizzying spinnerets of Fate leave them disoriented as the puppeteers descend to feed? This scenario is the third and final chapter in the *Transformations* series, and is recommended for fearless and ambitious PCs of levels 1-15 (APLs 2-16) who can recognize a fly in the ointment...even when they are the ones creating the buzz. "*Freedom is a road seldom traveled by the multitude.*" –Carlton Ridenhour

Resources for this adventure [and the authors of those works] include *The Blithedale Romance* [Nathaniel Hawthorne], *Complete Adventurer* [Jesse Decker], *Complete Divine* [David Noonan], *Democracy in America, Volume 2* [Alexis de Tocqueville], *Libris Mortis* [Andy Collins and Bruce R. Cordell], *Spell Compendium* [Matthew Sernett, Jeff Grubb, Mike McArtor], NMR3-03 *Blind Faith*, *Muted Voices* [Nicholas K. Tulach], NYR3-01 *Curse of Almor* [T. Troy McNemar], NYR6-06 *The Uninvited Guests* [Jason Clark], NYR7-08 *Tinderbox* [Jason Clark], WGR4 *The Marklands* [Carl Sargent], *Nyrond Gazetteer* [Various].

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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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 rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

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

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

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

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

	Mundane Animals Effect on APL	# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
	6	6	8	9	10
	7	7	9	10	11

3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round normally 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.

ROUNDS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round regional adventure, set in the Kingdom of Nyrond. Characters from the Kingdom of Nyrond pay 12 gp for Adventurer's Standard Upkeep per round. All others pay 24 gp per round. Rich and Luxury Upkeep cost 75 gp per round for characters from the Kingdom of Nyrond and 150 gp for all others. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this adventure.

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

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

Acknowledgements

The three scenarios in the *Transformations* series could not have been written without the patience, encouragement, and selfless support (technical, moral, or otherwise) of friends and fellow gamers. The author extends his undying, lich-like thanks to Eric Brittain, Heather Chambers, Mac Chambers, Tiffany Glenn-Hall, the Nyrond Triad, and especially the Nyrond players for

their indulgence throughout the development of this series.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This scenario is the climax of a trilogy detailing Midmeadow's evolution from a corrupt, broken metropolis into a successful, self-sufficient yet ungoverned commune. Two external, separately motivated threats seek to manipulate this evolution for their own agendas, ultimately becoming unknowingly intertwined and drawing the attention and intervention of the PCs.

In the first part of the series, NYR6-06 *The Uninvited Guests*, a powerful, war-mongering necromancer named Zandor who cursed the demise of Sewardndt's Imperium decided to abandon the capricious, peace-loving world of men and transform himself into a lich. He sent minions out across the Flanaess in search of those materials necessary for the construction of a phylactery. His Nyrond agent, Narinn Kirr, contracted a Midmeadow magic item broker named Rowena Livingston to procure a cord of rare bonewood for the housing; Rowena had just been jilted by her lover, Penrys Bonchal, an acolyte in the Pholtan Church of the Bright Path, in favor of a much younger wild elf named Faith, who had sought refuge in the city from her xenophobic Gamboge tribe. Rowena concocted a foolhardy scheme of mostly harmless revenge against Penrys with a traveling bard named Sastrine; unfortunately for Zandor, this scheme was derailed before it could be enacted when goblin minions of Faith's tribal elder attacked the wedding rehearsal dinner of Penrys and Faith. Capable adventurers were fatefully on hand to defeat the goblins, only to learn that the attack was a distraction and that Faith had been abducted by an air elemental and whisked away into the night. Narinn witnessed this from a distance; earlier in the evening his charm had elicited details of Rowena's plan from Sastrine. Suspecting Rowena might be emotionally unbalanced and thus a risk to the secrecy of his master's project, Narinn contacted Zandor and was advised to remain in Midmeadow; a team of Zandor's henchmen would be sent to permanently silence Rowena the following afternoon.

The adventurers tracked the elemental to the Gamboge, where they found Faith's tribe mercilessly slaughtered by a powerful but unknown arcanist; inexplicably, Faith had been left alive. A long-range patrol of wood elves from the Inanilae tribe who had sensed a disturbance in the forest soon arrived to investigate. A tenuous alliance was formed between the two groups, and they traveled back to the Inanilae camp to seek guidance from the tribe's acting chief. Along the way they were viciously ambushed by a gang of forest trolls; working together to repel this threat solidified the alliance between the two groups. The acting chief, Tess'inene-ilae, expressed disappointment at Midmeadow's current state but promised to use her tribe's resources to scour the Gamboge for the rogue arcanist. The adventurers returned Faith to Midmeadow

just in time to be deemed liabilities by Zandor's henchmen, who had teleported into the city. The adventurers soundly defeated these minions and earned a favorable notoriety among the populace. Unwilling to risk another defeat when his transformation was at hand, Zandor arranged to acquire the bonewood from another source and remained in his lair deep within the Gamboge to lick his wounds. The adventurers gained Rowena's trust, urged her to confess her crime, and learned from her of the bonewood transaction with Narinn's mysterious client. Zandor—an unspoken threat of retribution—has not been heard from since.

The second threat to Midmeadow (and potentially the religious stability of the Kingdom) was far more insidious and had its origins in the final, desperate actions of the Valorous League of Blindness (detailed in the *Headwinds* series, NMR5-03, NMR5-05, and NMR5-08) before its expulsion from Nyrond by King Lynwerd in late-595 CY. The clergy of Pholtus had maintained a constant presence in northern Nyrond since 591 CY through various (and often antagonistic) sects of the deity. The most infamous of these was the Valorous League, itself a cavalier and fanatical extension of the Pale's Church of the One True Path; the League's ultra-conservative interpretation of Pholtan dogma, its brutal tactics, and its myopic vision resulted in countless transgressions against often innocent victims, including the erection of a Pale-esque New Dawn Camp north of the city. Some say it was the League's self-centered philosophy that allowed Midmeadow to fall to ruin during the Night of Terror in 593 CY, after which the city deteriorated into a self-contained wasteland with no central governing body, religious or otherwise. Others attribute the decline to a lack of unity among the Pholtan clergy.

By the time Lynwerd could address the situation in late-594 CY, General Zylinchin and his renegade holdouts in the Valorous League were on the move, operating not unlike a rogue gang of moral bandits, and it was then that Sewarndt struck; however, as a result of prior negotiations between Lynwerd and Pale envoys over the long-disputed area around Midmeadow, an agreement was reached (which the Imperium honored) that allowed a less aggressive group of Pholtan Knights to replace the League in Midmeadow (these were the Pholtan Knights Valorous—Order of Celene). These quasi-ambassadorial Knights were tasked with establishing a guild house, providing a garrison for the town, and renovating the former barracks of the Valorous League.

Two other distinct and antagonistic factions of the Pholtan religion—the Church of the Blinding Light (a conservative sect, and Nyrond's version of the Pale's Church of the One True Path) and the Church of the Bright Path (the less rigid Almorian church, which is essentially a splinter sect largely considered heretics by other Pholtans)—had already begun to vie for dominance in Midmeadow as early as mid-594 CY. Without the Valorous League to overshadow them, the rivalry between these two sects was exposed to the masses and

rendered the sects' continued presence awkward at best. Their joint occupation of the city lasted just over a year until *Headwinds* forced Lynwerd's hand and he ordered both sects to withdraw from Midmeadow. In addition, he amended his pre-Imperium decision and demanded that the New Dawn Camp be demolished, as its presence was an unpleasant reminder of times—and attitudes—past. The Camp's remaining prisoners were freed or transferred to the Pale on a case-by-case basis.

Among those who noted the lack of unity among the Pholtan clergy was an ambitious, calculating priest of Pholtus named Hayden Valcroy. Shortly after the Night of Terror he attained the rank of High Priest within the Church of the Blinding Light and was assigned to Woodverge Province. On his first trip to Midmeadow in late-593 CY he witnessed with distaste the utter lack of organization among the Blinding Light and Bright Path acolytes who had begun proselytizing there; the two sects spent more time denouncing each other than ministering to the citizenry, and as a result neither achieved any kind of dominance in the city. Moreover, their rivalry exposed a weakness in the worship of Pholtus itself: how could a priest preach that Pholtus was the one true deity when the deity's followers couldn't even agree on simple doctrine?

Valcroy knew that the answer to this dilemma lay in the distant past. During the Greyhawk Wars a priest (and so-called prophet) of Pholtus named Achda Retaren was wandering through war-torn Almor and stumbled upon an Aerdy tome that detailed an ancient Nehron Oeridian worship of Pholtus that predated the Great Kingdom. The entire doctrine of the Bright Path Church was based exclusively on this tome, which inexplicably came to be known as the *Scrolls of Light*. The Valorous League (without any true authority to do so) ultimately declared Retaren a heretic, caught up with him, and burned him at the stake near Midmeadow in 589 CY. Before he was captured Retaren entrusted the *Scrolls of Light* to his disciples, who fled south toward Narsel Mendred.

The disciples were attacked and robbed by bandits in the open countryside, then left for dead. Not knowing what they had, they sold the *Scrolls* on the black market along with the rest of the disciples' gear. From this point onward the Bright Path sect believed the *Scrolls* to be irretrievably lost. The *Scrolls* remained out of circulation for four years until a traveling Blinding Light priest discovered the tome on a dusty bookstore shelf in Womtham. Stunned at his find, he notified his superior and since that time the *Scrolls* have secretly remained in the custody of the Church of the Binding Light. So many full and partial copies of the original text had been made since Retaren's discovery that it seemed as if no one in the Bright Path sect could any longer recognize the original.

The Blinding Light considered the tome a heretical document and never kept it in one place for long. Upon his promotion to High Priest, Valcroy inherited custodianship of the *Scrolls*. By this time he had recruited several allies within the Bright Path whose misgivings over the fact that their sect's dogma was based

on a lost and possibly specious document made them susceptible to Valcroy's persuasive conversion attempts. One of these allies was Talpin Thorea, who agreed to remain within the Bright Path hierarchy and act as Valcroy's spy, allowing the High Priest to concentrate on the shambles in Midmeadow.

Valcroy spent considerable hours in the temple of Pholtus there; like the sewers themselves, the temple had many sub-basements and rooms that had been unknowingly sealed over by the succession of careless occupants. He found many mundane and materialistic trophies collected by the Valorous League from their victims over the years, but in one room he found something that crystallized his vision of how to unify the worship of Pholtus in Nyronde: a burned, man-sized stake fashioned from bronzewood. Ablaze with curiosity, he used his newly acquired power to *legend lore* the object and learned that it was the very stake used to burn Achda Retaren for heresy. He realized that the stake needed to stay where it was, hidden, until he was ready.

Fortunately, Fate was on his side then: the Imperium struck within a week and drove Valcroy from the city. During the long months of its occupation the High Priest formalized his plans and also created a splinter organization within the Blinding Light called the Penumbral Vanguard. This secret group wore masks, foreswore all weapons except quarterstaves (which they wielded like swords, with the single-tip attack symbolizing their rejection of multiple sect "double worship"), and shared Valcroy's philosophy about the worship of Pholtus: it needed solidarity, by any means. Because not all members of the Blinding Light shared this view, his Vanguard needed to remain clandestine. The Bright Path was the upstart sect among Pholtan worshippers but because their doctrine was based on a mundane item, simply destroying the Scrolls of Light would not suppress or stamp out the sect's followers, which is precisely why no one had done it thus far: its doctrine was too widespread. The Scrolls needed to be denounced as heretical at a deific level. With the discovery of the stake, Valcroy believed he had the means to accomplish this.

After Zylinchin withdrew to the Pale, Valcroy's agents discovered the second New Dawn Camp; rather than report it, the Vanguard began using it as a base. Valcroy designed a ritual, which utilized the summoning circle there, along with the stake and the original copy of the Scrolls of Light. His plan was to "unmake" the legitimacy of the tome by summoning and appealing to a non-evil, Lawfully-aligned outsider (through a *planar ally* spell) to act as an intermediary between himself and Pholtus, further appealing to the deity to denounce the Scrolls as heretical and thus deny spells to all Bright Path clerics, thereby unraveling the entire sect. By doing so, Valcroy felt he could absorb the former Bright Path priests into the Blinding Light. The plan was audacious and, despite Valcroy's sincere devotion to Pholtus and belief in this idea of unity, destined to fail.

Shortly before he was ready to proceed with the ritual, Zylinchin's exploits came to a head at the end of

the *Headwinds* series and drew the attention of the King. When both sects were ordered to withdraw from the city, Valcroy seized upon the chance to install his puppet Thorea as an unofficial city steward and appealed to Lynwerd for a temporary, minimized Pholtan presence, exploiting the King's optimism and concern for his subjects. The King cautiously agreed, noting that his last personal appointee was Sir Weynoud Aspranth, who was killed during the Night of Terror and experienced only limited success in reforming the city, thanks to the Valorous League.

Valcroy had Midmeadow's current Prefect of the Bright Path transferred to Mithat on forged papers and installed Thorea as his own eyes and ears. The original New Dawn Camp was demolished, while startled onlookers whispered amongst themselves at the Blinding Light's unprecedented lack of resistance, and rightly so. Thorea relished his role as a Bright Path impostor and even went against its established custom by publicly embracing the aberrant union of Faith and Penrys, citing how the Bright Path's new degree of tolerance was in keeping with the open-minded environment embodied by Midmeadow itself.

He referred to Midmeadow's evolution into a self-governing, self-sustaining commune that boasted four distinct social and topographical districts: Pholtans and upscale merchants occupied one district; elves and artisans resided in the city's largest park; dwarves and small folk congregated in a third district; but it was the fourth district, known as the Silk Plateau, which posed a threat greater than either Zandor or Valcroy: a social revolution that was anything but natural.

The subversive architect of Midmeadow's evolution was an enigmatic half-elfen seer of Istus and former Tenha refugee known as the Brown Recluse. His philosophy involving the abolition of politics and organized religion was secretly cultivated into a pacifistic movement that revitalized the entire city, fostering growth, trade, and a genuine sense of community. With his very existence kept secret by his followers and his lover—a passionate priestess of Bralm named Aricyn—he guided the Plateau's residents in the ways of fruitful, peaceful coexistence. Outside the city walls, word of Midmeadow's rebirth and renewal had spread across the land, and it once again became an important stopover for merchants and their caravans, lured by the absence of an oppressive church presence or Royal bureaucracy, Imperial or otherwise.

The Recluse was a lynchpin between Zandor and Valcroy (the High Priest had been quietly attempting to pierce the Recluse's veil of secrecy for some time). In the second part of the series, NYR7-08 *Tinderbox*, one member of an adventuring group received a cryptic *sending* that spoke of connections and cocoons; the group visited the Plateau on a hunch and met with the Recluse, who revealed himself as the sender. They learned of his history and his goals for the city. He spoke to them about Fate and their role in it, recounting a disturbing vision he had recently experienced in which an unseen hand attempted to manipulate the delicate strands of Istus.

Though he spoke in near-riddles, his mood seemed resigned; what they could not know was that he had divined his own murder and embraced it as a necessary part of his destiny.

The adventurers then performed a favor for a local gnome named “Rats,” which sent them into the city sewers. During the brief interval they were down there, Zandor struck back, teleporting to the Silk Plateau, slaying the Recluse (who offered no resistance) to wreak maximum havoc, then teleporting back to his lair to begin his transformation. Valcroy’s men stumbled upon the body while trying to spy on Aricyn and immediately reported back to him; this was just the opportunity Valcroy needed to execute the long-delayed project of removing the stake from the temple basement and getting it out of town unseen by any locals. Valcroy hid the body in the temple and had his men kidnap Callidan Estani (who had been a vocal nuisance for too long) and move him to the second New Dawn Camp (disguising their trail with *dust of tracelessness*). Once the PCs emerged from the sewers, Valcroy’s aides announced that Callidan Estani had been murdered; Thorea planted misleading evidence that incriminated a powerful, local bandit gang in the murder, then urged the adventurers to pursue the bandits (Valcroy had known of the bandits for some time but done nothing, not wishing to expose his secret base; sending the expendable PCs after them potentially killed two birds with one stone). Even if the adventurers returned, Midmeadow would by then (secretly) be under Valcroy’s control. Once the adventurers were gone, Valcroy had Thorea declare martial law and summon Nyrondese troops from the Pale border on the grounds that it was Callidan (a priest of Pelor) who had been killed. Declaring martial law also allowed Thorea to place the two Pholtan Knight-Captains under house arrest, effectively getting them out of the way as well. Valcroy made only one crucial error: underestimating Aricyn’s wrath.

The bandit leader, Count Wiczling, convinced the adventurers of his innocence in Callidan’s murder, and they returned to the city with the knowledge that they may have been purposely led astray by Bishop Thorea, whose insular behavior stood in stark contrast to his recent attitude of openness and tolerance. They found Midmeadow besieged by an insect plague unleashed by Aricyn. Once the adventurers left town, Valcroy had Thorea “leak” the news to the populace that magic disguising the Recluse’s body as Callidan’s had expired; when Aricyn found out, she came unglued and retaliated. Valcroy then stood back and watched contentedly as the adventurers turned from heroes to suspects for their alliance with the person who would ultimately become the scapegoat for both the Recluse’s death and Callidan’s disappearance: Dalis Mirivan.

The PCs returned to Midmeadow just in time to pacify Aricyn’s fury. Since then both she and the Bright Path have kept to their respective districts and not engaged in hostilities. Nothing has been heard regarding Callidan, who is still listed as missing. Dalis and the two Knight-Captains remain incarcerated until the

“murderer” of the Recluse is apprehended and Callidan is found. Finally, in the months since Aricyn’s insect plague, Valcroy has secretly withdrawn from the city to finalize his ritual, but a female half-elf spy has infiltrated the Penumbra Vanguard. Who she is, the organization she represents, and her ultimate goals remain mysteries for the present...

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The two external threats overshadowing Midmeadow (Zandor and High Priest Valcroy) have each unknowingly had their elaborate schemes monkey-wrenched by the time this adventure begins. In Zandor’s case, the chaos he sought to unleash upon Midmeadow by murdering the Brown Recluse was nullified when Valcroy’s acolytes discovered the body before Aricyn Maquillan and moved it to the temple of Pholtus for their own purposes. Zandor also did not expect his secret lair to be discovered, especially by Inanilae allies of the same adventurers he sought to destroy. In Valcroy’s case, his flaw was in underestimating the tenacity of adventurers: his plan to pit them against Count Wiczling’s bandits backfired mightily and exposed Bishop Thorea as a suspect. In addition, his manipulation of the Recluse’s corpse stirred up a proverbial hornet’s nest in the Silk Plateau, where adventurers are welcomed as allies. Zandor’s transformation and Valcroy’s ritual are now both in jeopardy as the PCs hurtle heroically forward to stop them.

Encounter One: The PCs join a war party of Inanilae wood elves in flushing out the suspected Gamboge lair of the mysterious mage responsible for so much carnage during NYR6-06. This long encounter culminates with the PCs thwarting his transformation into a lich, as well as discovering his complicity in the Brown Recluse’s murder, the revelation of which should send them back toward Midmeadow and the rest of the adventure.

Encounter Two: The PCs return to the Inanilae camp to rest and spend the night. There, they gain Tess’s counsel and discuss the situation in Midmeadow. Later, one PC experiences a vivid dream in which a tiny spider leads him or her to a secret, nocturnal meeting between Tess and three mysterious visitors in which Midmeadow is the dominant topic. What this means, why it was kept secret from the PCs, and who or what the spider represents are questions left unanswered. Upon waking, the PC discovers that a diminutive monstrous spider with the holy symbol of Istus on its abdomen has appeared amid his or her belongings. How this creature is treated directly affects the PC during the penultimate encounter.

Encounter Three: In possession of incriminating evidence from Zandor’s Lair and having witnessed Tess’s nocturnal meeting, the PCs use this optional encounter to intercept the royal envoy en route to Midmeadow in hopes of persuading them to delay assuming control of the city. A successful argument convinces the Heironean

cleric in charge of the envoy to wait 48 hours for the PCs to uncover what proof they can that something sinister yet unseen is still unfolding in the city.

Encounter Four: Braving martial law and potential arrest in relation to evading interrogation into the disappearance of Callidan Estani, the PCs attempt to sneak into Midmeadow (possibly using contacts and reputations earned in the prequels). Several incursion points are available, and they may also visit the Traders' Bazaar to gather information on recent happenings. PCs who have not played either prequel are given a default point from which to enter the city, which is currently patrolled by a garrison of Nyrondese troops on the lookout for suspicious adventuring types.

Encounter Five: Having infiltrated the city, the PCs attempt to deliver the evidence from Zandor's lair to someone in a position to aid them in further investigations, ideally a district leader or the two Pale Knight-Captains, all of whom have unique favors to ask of the PCs. Fulfilling any of these requests (or failing to do so, which likely results in the PCs' arrest) leads the PCs toward **Encounter 6** and a startling discovery. The PCs may also follow up on rumors gathered in **Encounter 4**.

Encounter Six: The PCs journey northeast of town to the ruins of the original New Dawn Camp erected by General Zylinchin. A successful Track check here yields footprints leading east to a horrific discovery: a second, partially completed New Dawn Camp, inside of which is the kidnapped priest of Pelor, Callidan Estani. He believes that his captors have some kind of congregational area in the woods east of this structure, and urges the PCs onward to expose their identity and their plans.

Encounter Seven: The PCs intrude upon High Priest Valcroy and his Penumbra Vanguard in the middle of their ritual to unmake the Scrolls of Light. Members of the Vanguard (including the spy who has infiltrated it) act swiftly to incapacitate the PCs while the majority of them flee to preserve their identities. Though the PCs have disrupted the ritual, they must also recover the Scrolls.

Encounter Eight: The PCs return to Midmeadow as heroes for having thwarted the machinations of the Penumbra Vanguard. The royal envoy takes control of the city in the name of the King (if it has not done so already), who soon arrives with Tess and announces that she is to be appointed as the new Countess of Woodverge Province. If the PCs recovered the Scrolls of Light, this counts as sufficient proof for the King to reveal that he has long held secret negotiations with the elven tribes of the Gamboge with an express interest in securing the Kingdom's northern border. To this end, and because of

the evidence the PCs have found, the King permanently expels all known traitorous Pholtans from Nyrond.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

PCs who played either (or both) prequel (NYR6-06 and NYR7-08) are aware of certain aspects regarding Midmeadow's recent history. First, all key NPCs from NYR7-08 are still residents of or visitors to the city; none have fled or perished as a result of the finale. The lone exception is the hot-tempered priest of Pelor, Callidan Estani, who went missing at the end of that adventure. Second, the Fharlanghn priest Dalis Mirivan has been arrested as a potential accomplice in Callidan's disappearance due to his association with adventurers who continue to evade questioning by the Bright Path (especially those who played NYR7-08; those who did know they are wanted for questioning by Bishop Thorea).

Take note of any Pholtan PCs, especially if they are members of applicable Nyrond meta-orgs or the Theocracy of the Pale's faction of the Church of Pholtus (the Church of the One True Path), as conflicts could arise between such PCs and some of this scenario's NPCs, who might view each other as "heretics," "pagans," or worse.

For PCs that have played the prequels to this adventure, note any district-specific favors earned from NYR7-08 as well as the "Exile on Main Street" entry from NYR6-06, as these will directly affect the PCs' progress during **Encounter 4**.

Consult DM Aid #2 for the map of Midmeadow (**Encounters 3** through **5**). Note that **Encounters 2** through **5** are potentially optional: **Encounter 1** is long, but the PCs' success at gathering information at the outset of **Encounter 4** could lead them straight to **Encounter 6** and thus make up for any lost time.

The PCs begin **Encounter 1** in the Gamboge Forest, fully expecting combat within the lair of a powerful mage; thus, give them as much preparation time as they desire, allowing for precast spells, the quaffing of potions, skill checks, and the like, but make certain they recognize the limitations on their resources and the uncertainty of the threat. Determine whether or not the PCs used mounts to reach the Gamboge.

Finally, for parties who participate in **Encounter 2**, one PC will be contacted from beyond the grave by the spirit of the Brown Recluse. Glance at each player's character sheet to determine which PC this will be, using the following criteria (in order of importance): a PC who received the Recluse's cryptic *sending* during NYR7-08, Istus cleric or follower, any PC with the Favor of the Silk Plateau from NYR7-08, true Neutral alignment, Fatespinner prestige class, half-elf, Pelor cleric, and bard. If no PCs meet any of these requirements, let Fate decide. You may also wish to print extra copies of DM Aid #4 to hand out to the PCs to read from.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

☛ **Dalis Mirivan:** This affable priest of Fharlanghn has been unjustly arrested in connection with the disappearance of Callidan Estani. The PCs have the option of covertly infiltrating the temple of Pholtus where Dalis is currently detained, and in doing so may learn from him of the eccentric and highly suspicious behavior of Bishop Thorea.

☛ **Penrys Bonchal:** This shallow and petulant Bright Path acolyte epitomizes the figurative blindness often associated with Pholtan doctrine by failing to recognize not only that his Bishop is a puppet and instrument of deception, but also that the initial luster of his own capricious character has dimmed in the eyes of his intended bride, Faith.

☛ **Faith:** This young wild elf has become disillusioned with Penrys's selfish ideology and his general mistrust of adventurers, which to her is too negatively reminiscent of her former tribe's xenophobia. She yearns for some unspecified thing to free her spirit from the bonds of solitude.

☛ **Valandril:** This Inanilae elf ranger functions as the PCs' liaison with Tess and the tribe; as her favored superfluous bodyguard, he is ideally poised to become her viceroy. He aids the PCs in exploring Zandor's lair during **Encounter 1**.

☛ **Tess'inene-ilae:** The new Inanilae chief is disgusted both by the physical state of the city and the still-tainted nature of its so-called stewards. Like Faith, this former adventurer feels shackled by her new tribal duties, but it will take the quintessence of PC persuasion to get her to take a more active role in the city's recovery.

☛ **Bishop Talpin Thorea:** The head of the Bright Path sect in Midmeadow plays the villain in order to mask the true villainy of his master, Hayden Valcroy. The PCs likely meet with the Bishop during **Encounter 5-E**, when he suspiciously exonerates them from any suspected wrongdoing.

☛ **Knight-Captains Talbrith Hemerenn and Quenthe Ilerrio:** The two quasi-ambassadorial Pholtan Knights Valorous leaders have been placed under informal house arrest by Nyronese soldiers via the provisional authority of Bishop Thorea, pending his investigation into Callidan's disappearance. Quenthe's instinct is to send word to the Pale and call for intervention, but Talbrith has overruled him, knowing what a political snafu it would cause. Her mission as an observer is to do just that: so she waits, watching everyone...

☛ **Kirelle/Aricyn Maquillan/"Rats" Rastinattii:** These three respective district figureheads may offer a

secret means of ingress into the city, depending on whether or not PCs earned their favor in NYR7-08. Sneaking into Midmeadow is crucial, as "adventuring types" will be detained on sight for "questioning" by Nyronese troops under the provisional authority of Bishop Thorea.

☛ **Zandor:** This human necromancer is in the process of transforming into a lich. At this stage only the PCs have any chance of stopping him. His arrogance, overconfidence, and willingness to underestimate the potential of an adventurer-Inanilae alliance could prove his undoing.

☛ **Hayden Valcroy:** The High Priest of the Blinding Light sect is the criminal mastermind behind Callidan's disappearance, the manipulation of Aricyn's grief, the martial law edict, and a bold attempt to permanently eradicate the Church of the Bright Path through the deific denunciation of the Scrolls of Light, which the PCs must recover in addition to exposing his Penumbral Vanguard.

☛ **The Brown Recluse:** This murdered seer of Istus foresaw his own death and allowed himself to become a martyr, recognizing that Fate had chosen him as the catalyst for a select group of heroes who had the potential to fulfill his vision of a restored Midmeadow uncomplicated by selfishness and corruption. He appears to one PC in a dream and leaves a totemic spider behind to help guide the PCs on their path to victory.

INTRODUCTION

Chronologically, this scenario is intended to closely follow the events in NYR7-08. The PCs begin the adventure in the Gamboge Forest alongside a war party of Inanilae wood elves led by Valandril, the ranger-escort of Tess'inene-ilae from NYR6-06 and NYR7-08. At the end of NYR7-08, Bishop Thorea re-invoked martial law in Midmeadow under somewhat suspicious circumstances and ordered Tess to submit to questioning concerning the disappearance of Callidan Estani. Barely suppressing her rage and revulsion at being suspected of criminal behavior, the Inanilae chief identified herself and, with an open challenge and dramatic flourish, dared the Bishop to try and arrest her as she and her escorts turned on their heels and left town. PCs who played NYR7-08 are effectively persuaded by Tess not to become mired in human political maneuvering and to instead assist her in dealing with the mage's lair, which is a known and combatable evil versus whatever sordid drama is being enacted by the Bishop. PCs who did not play NYR7-08, but played NYR6-06, hear about the martial law decree and the Recluse's death, and are contacted by Tess' diplomatic envoy to enlist their aid in dealing with the mage's lair. PCs who did not play either prequel are enlisted by those who have, as the mage's lair surely promises acres of treasure. If no PCs have played either of

the prequels, the Six from Stoink (the amateur bandit gang from NYR6-06) mysteriously make contact with them and mention that the Inanilae are infiltrating a lair and are looking for capable heroes to assist; the Six, who do not meet this prerequisite, are avoiding the city at present and have their own reasons for wanting powerful PCs and elves away from the main roads.

ENCOUNTER 1: THE TRANSFORMED MAN

The PCs begin play outside an underground complex in the Gamboge Forest. Inanilae scouts found a carefully hidden entrance and, suspecting it led to the lair of the mysterious mage from NYR6-06, have waited to venture inside pending the PCs' arrival. Valandril is in charge of this war party and recognizes PCs from either prequel. He intends to accompany the PCs in their exploration while the rest of his party guards the rear.

The PCs and Valandril are poised to enter the suspected lair of the powerful mage responsible for the wild elf massacre detailed in NYR6-06. As far as the PCs and Inanilae are aware, the mage has been dormant since the end of 596 CY, but in fact he is the Brown Recluse's murderer. Zandor's lich process and even his name will remain mysteries until the PCs visit the library (Area 18, below); as far as they know, the mage is here, alert, and perhaps even waiting for them. For his part, Zandor is not expecting company of any kind, having arrogantly counted on the Recluse's murder to envelop Midmeadow in a shroud of chaos and thus thwart any pesky, heroic types from investigating him following the sound thrashing his minions received from such sell-swords at the climax of NYR6-06. Zandor's, physical form is in a kind of *temporal stasis* during the transformation process; he will be unable to do anything to harm the PCs and therefore poses no threat. His undead guardians are another matter.

♣ **Valandril:** male wood elf ranger 5; hp 30;
Appendix 1.

Zandor's lair occupies part of the vast system of long dormant, subterranean volcano tubes previously seen in other scenarios, including NYR2-05 *The Silence of the Gnomes* and NMR3-05 *Norebo's Luck and Bralm's Embrace*. The entrance found by the Inanilae scouts is an auxiliary one, a semi-secret escape route for Zandor's minions. This long encounter will likely consume nearly half of a standard four-hour convention slot and is loosely broken up into five sub-encounters, during each stage of which the PCs will discover clues to Zandor's identity, his transformation, and his role in the Recluse's murder. The sub-encounters include a trap to deter intruders; a non-combat encounter with Zandor's undead laborer-minions whose presence suggests the PCs are dealing with a necromancer; the Conduit, who was formerly Tassita Fellhaven (from NYR6-06) and whose corpse now serves

as a means for projecting Zandor's consciousness to unwelcome intruders and is herein used to subtly delay PCs with a question-and-answer ritual while his crypt guardians are silently alerted and prepare themselves in the room beyond; combat with Zandor's undead guardians, who protect his body during the transformation; and finally Zandor's library, where the PCs discover several things, including written materials pertinent to the lichdom transformation, personal notes identifying the necromancer by name along with proof that it was Zandor who sent Narinn Kirr to kill Rowena Livingston in NYR6-06, and Zandor's sketches of Midmeadow which highlight the Silk Plateau and in whose margins are violent scribbles on how best to cause chaos through the murder of the Recluse. This last piece of information is the link the PCs need to realize that there is yet an unseen hand manipulating events in Midmeadow; this revelation is intended to lead them back to the city and from there to the rest of the adventure.

Refer to DM Aid #1 during this encounter, which shows the layout of Zandor's lair; note that Areas 1 and 2 do not appear on the map. Unless otherwise noted, the lava tubes are considered "hard ground", are unlit, and are approximately seven feet high by six feet wide. All rooms herein, unless noted, are ten feet high. The temperature within the complex is mildly cool, and loud noises reverberate mightily (for example, the PCs will hear the zombies in area 7 long before seeing them). The tunnels are relatively level east of area 3 and sit at roughly 70 feet below the forest floor. All doors herein have the following characteristics:

♣ **Strong Wooden Doors:** 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 40; AC 5; Break DC 23.

Area 1: Staging Area

The Inanilae war party is composed of one dozen male and female warriors, all of whom have at least two levels of ranger and are equipped with leather armor, longbows, and short swords, and are further decorated in camouflage face paint which aids in their Hide checks amidst the foliage. They are all hiding in the undergrowth at a distance of 100 feet from the tunnel entrance. At this point the PCs are assumed to have sufficiently prepared themselves for infiltration into the lair. Read or paraphrase the following:

The Gamboge is uneasy this spring morning, restless with the guilt of a terrible secret it impatiently yearns to reveal. A small path has been cleared in the undergrowth ahead: at its terminus is a dark opening and downward-slanting tunnel that burrows into the raised earth. Around the perimeter, a dozen armed and camouflaged Inanilae wood elves silently emerge from concealment. Among their number is the ranger known as Valandril. Gesturing toward the tunnel opening, he nods for you to proceed.

The forkless tunnel stretches for 500 feet between the entrance (Area 1, where this encounter begins) and the Fountain Room (Area 3). Zandor's success at anonymity has relegated this tunnel to auxiliary status; nothing has passed through it in years, including animals of any kind, so there are no tracks to be found, but have PCs with the appropriate skills and feats roll Track checks anyway. Valandril offers his skills if no PCs are qualified, and prefers to take the drag position at the rear of the party. When the PCs are ready, have them arrange their miniatures in a fixed marching order and proceed into the tunnel, taking note of any PC spells that are in effect before they enter. Have the PCs make unnecessary Spot and Listen checks for the first one hundred feet of the tunnel; they reach Area 3 without incident.

Area 2: Distant Early Warning

A permanent *alarm* (the silent, mental version) has been placed two hundred feet into the tunnel. However, there is no longer anyone living within the lair, as all of Zandor's surviving minions have been given two weeks' furlough while his transformation takes place; in a surprising bout of loyalty to their soon-to-be-undead master, these dozen male human fighter-rogue hybrids plan on returning at the appointed time, as their rewards thus far for loyal service have been fruitful. More importantly, the spell's caster was Zandor's protégé, Shuna, who was slain by adventurers in NYR6-06. For her failure to slay Rowena Livingston, Zandor chose not to recover and reanimate her. The *alarm* may thus produce a curious effect on the PCs. If they fail to locate it and inadvertently trip it, nothing happens and they will likely never become aware of it; even if they do locate and dispel it, nothing happens. Finally, if they intentionally set it off hoping to ambush whoever appears, they do so in vain: with Shuna dead, there is no one to respond to the *alarm*.

Area 3: Fountain Room

After 500 feet the lava tube opens into a carved chamber. Read or paraphrase the following:

This small chamber is dominated by a low, stone fountain. Perhaps once used as a focal point for meditation or as a source of fresh water, the fountain is now dry, chipped, and choked with spider webs. The stonework looks very old even to the untrained eye, and there appears to be an inscription near the base that has long since been defaced by deep gouges. A short hallway leads east to a T-intersection.

There is nothing of value here to find, but do not let that stop the PCs from conducting an exhaustive search. A DC 20 Craft (stoneworking) check dates the stone at roughly 500 years old, and while it may have been of superior quality when it was made, time has taken its toll. The fountain clearly has not been used in ages. The

inscription has also clearly been intentionally obliterated; it is in Undercommon and requires a DC 30 Decipher Script check to recognize it as a prayer to the evil spider-goddess Lolth:

"With Your dark blessing, may our footsteps be swift like the current and our cunning as deep as the flood of our reclamation."

There are no tracks to be found in this room.

Area 4: Trapped Intersection

To deter intruders Zandor ordered this intersection trapped using either mundane mechanical means (courtesy of the late Narinn Kirr) or magical means (courtesy of either the late Shuna, or Zandor himself). As with the *alarm* in area 2, no one comes to investigate if the trap here is triggered. In the case of the pit traps (APLs 2 and 6), the trapped square is marked "T" on DM Aid #1; in the case of the magic traps, the ray spells (APLs 12 and 14, along with the *chain lightning* at APL 16), shoot out of the wall at the end of the intersection and fires toward area 3; the *phantasmal killer* phantasm emerges from area 6; the *fireball* and *greater dispel magic* are centered on the fountain in area 3. Consult the appropriate APL below; once the traps have been negotiated, the PCs are free to explore the rest of the lair.

APL 2 (EL 4)

🔪 **Spiked Pit Trap:** CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 30 ft. deep (3d6, fall); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+3 each, plus poison); poison (greenblood oil, DC 13 Fortitude save resists, 1 Con/1d2 Con); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 20.

APL 4 (EL 5)

🔪 **Phantasmal Killer Trap:** CR 5; magic device; proximity trigger (alarm); automatic reset; spell effect (*phantasmal killer*, 7th-level wizard, DC 16 Will save for disbelief and DC 16 Fortitude save for partial effect); Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29.

APL 6 (EL 7)

🔪 **Spiked Pit Trap:** CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; DC 22 Reflex save avoids; 30 feet deep (3d6, fall); pit spikes (Atk +15 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+3 each); Search DC 23; Disable Device DC 22.

and

🔪 **Ungol Dust Vapor Trap:** CR 6; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in 30-foot deep pit); never miss; onset delay (1 round); poison (ungol dust, DC 15 Fortitude save resists, 1 Cha/1d6 Cha plus 1 Cha drain); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 16.

APL 8 (EL 9)

⚡ **Empowered Fireball Trap:** CR 9; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*empowered fireball*, 9th-level wizard, 10d6x1.5 fire, DC 20 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

APL 10 (EL 11)

⚡ **Heightened Greater Dispel Magic Trap:** CR 11; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*heightened greater dispel magic*, 15th-level wizard, area *dispel magic* centered on the fountain in Area 3); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

APL 12 (EL 13)

⚡ **Polar Ray Trap:** CR 13; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; Atk +15 ranged touch; spell effect (*polar ray*, 16th-level wizard, 16d6 cold); Search DC 33; Disable Device DC 33.

APL 14 (EL 15)

⚡ **Disintegrate Trap:** CR 15; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; Atk +14 ranged touch; spell effect (*disintegrate*, 11th-level wizard, 22d6, DC 22 Fortitude save for 5d6 damage); Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31.

APL 16 (EL 17)

⚡ **Empowered Chain Lightning Trap:** CR 17; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*empowered chain lightning*, 17th-level wizard, 17d6x1.5 electricity, DC 28 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31.

Area 5: Shield Guardian Storeroom

The door to this room is locked but can be bypassed with a DC 30 Open Lock check or by using brute force. If the PCs open or destroy the door, read or paraphrase the following:

Looming within this oversized closet is a large, vaguely humanoid conglomeration of wood and metal. Roughly ten feet tall, it stands impassively before you as if awaiting something. Hanging from its left forearm by a thin silver chain is a leather-bound journal.

A DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check identifies the construct as a shield guardian. It is roughly 10 feet tall, fabricated from bronzewood and adamantine, and coated in a thin layer of dust. The guardian has been disabled by Zandor and poses no threat, but its material value is obvious. The amulet typically used to control such constructs is not here (it can be found in area 22). The journal contains a record of activation and deactivation dates written in Zandor's personal shorthand and decipherable with a DC 30 Decipher Script check. The guardian has been deactivated for ten days, having been active since late CY 597. A DC 15 Wisdom check

confirms that this was around the time that the Brown Recluse was killed. As the PCs are exploring this room, allow a DC 25 Listen check (distance already factored in) to hear the clawing and scratching of the zombies in area 7.

Area 6: Unused Room

This room is empty; its original purpose remains unknown. There is nothing of interest here.

Area 7: New Tunnels

This area has been designated by Zandor as the site of a new maze trap with which he intends to lure treasure-hunters to their doom via disinformation spread in the Nyrond Metaregion's major cities. Currently this area is being excavated by his zombie monkey minions. Zandor hates monkeys so fiercely that his agents travel the meta-region with specific instructions to purchase, steal, or otherwise acquire any and all specimens they find in marketplaces, bazaars, and on caravans. The creatures are returned here, promptly slain, and reanimated as laborers. These 2-Hit Die zombies have instructions only to dig, not to attack intruders; they offer no resistance if attacked and can be turned or obliterated easily.

All APLs (EL 0)

🐒 **Monkey Zombies (30):** hp 21 each; *Monster Manual* 266.

Note: if the PCs made a significant amount of noise in areas 3 or 4, then the zombies are standing idly when the PCs come upon them, looking as if they are awaiting instructions.

Area 8: Common Room

This room is used by Zandor's guards as a dining area and lounge during their off-hours. It contains a table, four chairs, two small kegs of decent ale, a set of dice for gambling, and a wooden dresser full of ceramic mugs and plates.

Area 9: Guard Post

Just north of the opening into area 8 are a wooden chair, a small desk, a barrel containing 2 mundane longswords and a greataxe, and a crate with a hooded lantern and six pints of oil. This area is typically manned by one of Zandor's guards at all times to prevent any incursions from below: the tunnel stretches off into darkness at a slight downgrade for miles before ultimately connecting to the Underdark. Zandor frequently took walks in the unlit depths alone or with Tassita; in early CY 592 he was attacked by something down there, and this guard post has been in place ever since. He never revealed what attacked him, but since that time nothing has emerged from the tunnel.

There is nothing of interest to find in the immediate area, but if the PCs go 200 feet down the tunnel, the solidified lava floor gives way to loose volcanic soil.

There, two sets of Medium-sized, humanoid footprints (one bare, one booted) can be found. They are roughly 12 hours old. The tracks do not lead anywhere specific and eventually only one set (the booted one) is seen to return toward area 8; however, if the PCs go another 300 feet down the tunnel and succeed at a DC 20 Spot check, they notice a (non-magical) woolen cloak on the floor. The cloak is half buried and badly burned but still carries the scent of its owner (Tassita). If a PC has an animal companion with the Scent ability, the cloak can be used to track Tassita to her present location (Area 21). The DC to do so is 20; she was killed last night.

Area 10: Fungus Garden

Once the PCs look down the short hallway leading to this room, read or paraphrase the following:

The diagonal hallway stretches for roughly fifteen feet before opening up into a large chamber. From within, an eerie blue light illuminates a soil-covered floor from which sprout exotic plants of all shapes and sizes. The air wafting from the room is warm, humid, and scented with a pungent, floral aroma.

This room is used as a sort of underground greenhouse by Zandor for the purpose of growing organic, arcane spell components. The floor is covered in two feet of moist, volcanic soil; below this, a series of hairline fissures connect to the lava flowing far below the surface of the forest, and the escaping heat is what warms the room. The blue light aids in plant growth and is emitted by string-like, bioluminescent lichen on the walls. In addition to the obvious plants, there are several varieties of edible (though mildly hallucinogenic) mushrooms growing in the far corners, which Tassita would consume on a regular basis in an effort to commune with her deity, Wee Jas. A DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check confirms that there is nothing in this room which poses any direct threat to the PCs. PCs who eat any mushrooms must succeed on a DC 20 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d4 hours; in addition, a sort of dizziness sets in, and all attack rolls are treated as if their targets were under the effect of a *blur* spell (20% miss chance). Though many bare, humanoid footprints adorn the soil (Tassita's), there is nothing else of value to be found in this room.

Area 11: Main Entrance

This tunnel is the main entrance for Zandor's human guards, and is routinely patrolled when they are present; it slopes gently upward for 2000 feet before emerging in a thick copse of trees surrounded by low shrubbery. Along the tunnel's length are several secondary lava tubes; in addition, there is one large opening in the floor roughly 500 feet from the T-intersection at area 11. This 10-foot wide vertical shaft leads almost straight down into darkness and eventually terminates at a massive lava flow, which is part of this dormant volcano network. This shaft is the original point of entry for the lava flow, and the remainder of the tunnel to the surface was carved

afterward. Neither the shaft nor the secondary tubes have any bearing on this adventure.

Area 12: Barracks

This room houses Zandor's human guards and contains six bunk beds and twelve iron footlockers; the footlockers are unlocked and empty, and the beds look to have been recently used. There is nothing else of value here.

Area 13: Tassita Fellhaven's Room

The door to this room stands ajar; the opulent bedchamber beyond is dominated by a sumptuous, iron-framed, canopied double bed in the northwest corner. The bed is draped with a diaphanous, mesh-like fabric that feels like textured spider webs. In the southwest corner is an ornate mahogany armoire filled with mostly black and dark blue feminine garments. In the southeast corner is an ivory-inlaid, darkwood dresser. Upon the dresser are hairbrushes, a nail file, a large hand-held mirror, a solid-platinum washbasin filled with clear water, and a small holy symbol in the form of a brooch. A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check confirms the holy symbol as that of the Suel goddess Wee Jas. A DC 20 Appraise check accurately estimates the total worth of these personal items at 2,000 gp.

The room does not radiate evil but the bed radiates strong necromancy. This unusual magic item was formerly employed by Tassita to gauge the stamina of her numerous lovers by slowly draining their Constitution during the course of the night. Those who succumbed to the experience were ultimately turned into undead servants for Zandor; those who passed the test had their memories erased and were teleported to random destinations throughout the Nyronde meta-region, as Tassita was notoriously capricious. The bed poses no threat whatsoever to the PCs, as long as they do not elect to spend the night sleeping in it.

Area 14: Shuna's Room

This room was formerly occupied by Shuna. All of her personal effects, magic scrolls, and the like were removed to Zandor's room. This room now contains a stripped bed, a dresser, and a wooden footlocker, none of which in any way compare to the quality of the furniture found in Tassita's room.

Area 15: Narinn Kirr's Room

Like area 14, this bedchamber was formerly occupied on a semi-occasional basis by Narinn Kirr, one of Zandor's elite spies killed along with Shuna in NYR6-06. Narinn's body was also not recovered, and most of his remaining personal effects have since been sold or distributed among Zandor's other agents. This room contains an unremarkable wooden bed, an empty iron footlocker, a large wooden dresser (empty), a pair of fine quality leather boots under the bed, and a silver dagger resting on the pillow.

Area 16: Wee Jas Shrine

This room is dimly lit by the muted glow of a blue-tinted *everburning torch* embedded just below the surface of the floor where the number “16” appears on the map. Part of the eastern floor has been converted into a small reflecting pool, and the sound of gently rippling water (an illusory effect created through a *permanent ghost sound* cast on the pool) can be heard from the archway. The two 5-foot squares flanking the pool each contain a low, darkwood table inlaid with amethysts and sapphires. Upon the southern one is a pair of black velvet, thigh-high boots. Six silver pegs are mounted at a height of five feet on both portions of the western wall flanking the entrance. The entire eastern wall (and the bottom of the pool, which is only 1 foot deep) is coated in a layer of polished onyx, and there is a large etching over the pool; a DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the etching as the holy symbol of Wee Jas. A second DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the ritual this room is designed to enable: worshippers enter and remove all clothing, hanging their garments on the silver pegs (those who embrace the magic aspect of Wee Jas use the north side, while those who embrace the death aspect choose the south; boots are placed on the corresponding table). The worshipper then kneels over the *everburning torch* and prays, invoking the deity’s name in Suloise and then gazing into the pool at their naked reflection. If guidance is sought, the etching glows blue when Wee Jas deigns to respond. Once the prayer is complete, the worshipper splashes water onto his or her face. If their heart is pure and aligned with the aims of Wee Jas, nothing happens, signifying that the deity favors them; if their hearts are not pure, the water burns flesh and deals damage as unholy water. There is nothing else of value here to find. The boots here are Tassita’s but her clothes are not present.

Area 17: VIP Reception Room

Read or paraphrase the following:

This room is furnished with several upholstered chairs of excellent manufacture, a low darkwood table, a polished, solid brass serving cart, and a collection of large tapestries featuring exotic, geometric designs hang upon each of the walls.

This room was used to entertain various Imperium dignitaries, extraplanar nobles, and fellow evil wizards seeking to exchange spells, news, and new discoveries. Refreshments were provided while they waited (Shuna would often entertain and distract them with her feminine wiles, allowing Zandor to spy upon them invisibly from behind the tapestry on the east wall), and these refreshments remain: four crystal goblets and a matching decanter rest on the table. The decanter contains a strong, smoky-flavored, but otherwise high quality brandy. The room radiates no auras, magical or otherwise. The concealed door in the east wall is behind a

tapestry and can be found with a DC 20 Search check. The passage beyond leads to Zandor’s old bedchamber in area 19.

Area 18: Library

Each wall of this room is lined with bookshelves that stretch from the floor to the ceiling fifteen feet overhead. In the center of the room is an immaculate wooden desk that looks to have been carved from a large ash tree. It has a matching chair but no drawers or apertures, and looks to be one solid piece of wood. PC wizards recognize this as the desk of a scholar and almost certainly a scroll-scriver. At the sight of it, Valandril (if present) wrinkles his nose at such a grotesque, cosmopolitan manipulation of nature and mutters something cryptic like, “furniture is evil.”

A DC 20 Search check locates the secret door leading to area 19. The shelves are filled with all manner of tomes: some impressively bound and printed, others dog-eared with use, and most covered with a thin layer of dust. Have the PCs make two DC 20 Spot checks. Success on the first allows PCs to recognize that the hundreds of unique tomes herein are meticulously organized into different subject areas (arcana, history and nobility of Nyrond, extraplanar travel, politics, religious and magical artifacts, and the like; ad-lib titles as necessary). Success on the second Spot check pinpoints gaps on the high shelves, indicating that three tomes are missing (one from each of the following sections: Necromancy, Religious Artifacts, and Extraplanar Travel). One book is in area 19; the other two are in area 20.

On the desk is a map of Midmeadow and northern Nyrond, including the border area with the Theocracy of the Pale. The eastern half of Midmeadow is circled and covered in elegant scribbles and numerical notations in Common, including triangulated distance markings, population figures, speculations on defense magic, and a column in the margin labeled “sCRY” that has no less than a dozen dates from the summer of 597 CY. Several locations are marked with asterisks, including the Temple of Pholtus (with the notation “pregnable”), Rowena Livingston’s shop from NYR6-06 (“risk”), and the ruins at the top of the Silk Plateau (“defenses primitive”). This last area in particular is covered in dense, circular notations: “dbf—too noisy,” “sod—too expensive,” “hw—messy,” and the letter “w,” which is circled.

Allow the PCs a DC 18 Wisdom check if they do not recognize the import of this evidence: that Zandor has been scrying on select Midmeadow residents, and almost certainly murdered the Recluse; what isn’t clear is why. If no PCs succeed at this check, recounting the evidence to Tess or an Inanilae sage allows those NPCs a check (at which they succeed for expediency). Many of the scribbled notes identify the mage, Zandor, by name, and the abbreviated notations above are, of course, powerful arcane spells; more importantly, however, this written material represents tangible, physical evidence that Zandor is responsible for murdering the Recluse, thereby exonerating any PCs (from NYR7-08) and Dalis Mirivan.

Furthermore, it calls into question the actions of Bishop Thorea and the Bright Path in moving the Recluse's body to the temple of Pholtus. What the PCs must do now is present this evidence to someone in authority, and whom they trust. All materials herein can be removed safely. The secret door to area 19 is closed; it can be found with a DC 20 Search check.

Area 19: Zandor's Room

This bedchamber bespeaks a taste for luxury that strives to transcend the bounds of mortal comfort: the floor is covered with dark grey tiles of polished granite, the walls boast more tapestries like those seen in area 18, and the southeast corner holds a large bed suitable for ranking members of the Nyronese monarchy. The secret door to area 18 is closed and can be found with a DC 20 Search check. The room is conspicuously devoid of any other furniture, and the northern half of the room has been left clear to accommodate a 10-foot diameter permanent summoning circle built into the floor using specially cut, alternating black and dark blue tiles. *Detect magic* reveals no lingering Conjunction magic within the circle, as one of the blue tiles has been removed, thereby rendering the circle inoperable. In truth, Zandor has disabled it in favor of a much grander one in the bowels of area 22. This circle poses no threat to the PCs and can be destroyed: Zandor is not expecting this infiltration and has not taken many precautions, being arrogant enough to assume that his impending lichdom will be sufficient to deal with any intruders. *Detect magic* reveals strong Abjuration magic from a *dimensional lock* spell cast four days ago and centered in the middle of the room (a similar effect is in place in area 22).

The trapdoor in the northeast corner of the floor is open, revealing a dark and empty space below. This 20x20 alcove (not pictured on the map) was Zandor's treasury; all valuables therein have been moved to area 22 where the aspiring lich plans to dwell henceforth. Directly under the center of the bed and open to a specific page is one of the three missing tomes from the library; this book can be found with a DC 25 Search check (or automatically if players specifically state that they look under the bed). The book does not radiate magic or evil, and it is from the Necromancy section. Five minutes are required (not withstanding magical acceleration) to ascertain that the book is intended for those of high intellect and deals with theories of energy transference and projecting one's consciousness. Finding this book grants a Sense Motive check to recognize the true nature of the entity at area 21.

Area 20: Laboratory

One glance confirms that this enlarged alcove is the laboratory of an arcanist. A 5x10 wooden worktable occupies the center of the alcove; the north, east, and south walls are lined with tall iron storage cabinets containing all manner of mundane research equipment (glass flasks, strips of cloth, etc). The table is covered with what at first glance appears to be a small-scale lair-

improvement project: tools, pieces of exotic wood, measuring instruments, and the like. However, a DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check identifies the wood fragments as bonewood, a rare material that grows in only a few select locations in the Flanaess. PCs who played NYR6-06 recall that Rowena Livingston initially got involved with Zandor's agent, Narinn Kirr, over the failed acquisition of some bonewood for an unspecified project. This looks to have been that project.

Also on the table (and on the shelf below it) are a variety of skulls, which a Heal check identifies (respectively) as human (DC 11), elf (DC 11), ogre (DC 14), troll (DC 16), young green dragon (DC 21), and gnome (DC 11); this last one has had a hole drilled into the parietal bone and a candle inserted into the hole. Wax covers the rest of this skull, suggesting long nights of deep study.

The table also holds a sort of evaporator: a small, black ceramic dish is mounted over a heat source, which is then ignited and used to dissolve various materials. Mounted above the dish is an inverted glass flask, which looks to be used as a gas or steam collector. The heat source is not lit, and the flask is empty, but the black dish contains two humanoid eyes that a DC 20 Heal check confirms are human and recently removed.

Finally, two of the three missing library books are on the table. They are both closed and do not radiate any evil or magical auras, nor are any specific pages marked. The first details various well-known, religious artifacts (periapts, prayer beads, etc); searching thoroughly through this tome and succeeding on a DC 20 Intelligence check locates an entry on lich phylacteries, and from here the PCs can draw their own conclusions as to what awaits them at the end of the hall.

The second tome is an encyclopedia of things that can be summoned from other planes. A DC 25 Search check through this book locates a torn page corner at the chapter heading labeled "undead." The PCs may "take 20" but doing so carries a penalty, as noted in the Developments section at the end of this encounter. Once the PCs make their way toward area 21, allow a DC 26 Listen check (with a -6 already factored in for distance) to hear the low hum emanating from Zandor's summoning chamber below area 22.

Area 21: The Conduit

Zandor has erected a vain and elaborate trap here to deter intruders during the final stages of his transformation. The diagonal parallel lines between areas 20 and 21 represent a foreshortened distance of 70 feet. A concealed door is shown at area 21; PCs detecting magic or evil as they approach will detect moderate evil and strong necromancy (from a *create greater undead* spell). Once they get within 15 feet of the concealed door, read or paraphrase the following:

A concealed door slides open in the wall ahead, revealing a 5x5 enclosed space. Within and suspended from the ceiling by adamantine manacles

and chains pulsing with an unholy green glow is the body of a human female. Her hands, arms, and feet are bare and pale, suggesting Suloise lineage, but the rest of her frame has been wrapped in sticky strips of white cloth. Her long, blondish-white hair is flecked with bits of blackened debris, and her neck hangs at an unnatural angle. Around it is a holy symbol that has been broken in half and now dangles in two pieces from its silver chain. She raises her head with the sickening sound of snapping vertebrae, revealing a once-lovely face whose entire left side has clearly been ravaged by fire and whose eyes have been pried from their sockets. In a hoarse voice still feminine yet bereft of pity, she fixes her seemingly sightless gaze upon you and intones: "You do not belong here."

The figure is Zandor's former lieutenant and confidant, Tassita Fellhaven, a Wee Jas priestess who some PCs may have encountered during NYR6-06. After snapping her neck in the tunnel at area 9 less than 18 hours ago and thereby severing his last tie to humanity, Zandor set fire to the corpse and dragged it back here to serve as his conduit. He has used a bastardized *create greater undead* spell to turn her into a kind of super-mummy, bypassing the lesser forms of undead to create the ultimate tomb guardian. Because of this non-standard process, Tassita has not yet risen as a mummy; thus, Knowledge (religion) checks will be useless to the party. What they need instead is a successful DC 28 Spellcraft check to recognize the in-place effect Tassita's corpse represents.

Her corpse currently functions as a conduit for Zandor's consciousness: his physical form is in a kind of stasis within area 22 as he undergoes the lich-transformation, and in that state he is unable to harm the PCs either with magic or physical attacks. It is through his metaphysical connection to Tassita that he seeks to anticipate any intrusions on his transformation and give his undead guardians sufficient time to react.

Through the removal of her eyes, Zandor can use his consciousness to sense the PCs: he cannot see them or determine their power level, degree of intellect, or anything so specific, but he can glean the numbers and sizes of any sentient beings, including animal companions and familiars. His normal guards have already been warned of this process, so he does not expect to see them here until their prearranged time of return; thus, to him, the PCs must be intruders.

Using Tassita as a mouthpiece, Zandor seeks to delay the PCs by probing them with questions as to their purpose here. His undead guardians require three rounds to be notified and emerge from their antechamber within area 22. For every question beyond the third, the undead are granted one round of preparation time (to hide, set up an ambush, use spell-like abilities, and so forth). There is no set list of questions that Zandor will ask, and you are encouraged to use your own judgment in devising them as appropriate to the party (for instance, if Zandor senses a tiny life force he will assume it to be a familiar and thus

accompanied by a spellcaster, so his questions could relate to trivial arcane curiosities, etc).

PCs who specifically request and succeed at a DC 25 Sense Motive check anytime during the first two rounds of questioning recognize this artifice for what it is: a delaying tactic (PCs who found Zandor's consciousness-projection tome within area 19 are granted a +2 circumstance bonus on this check). Tassita otherwise poses no threat and can easily be destroyed (though this too consumes precious rounds). PCs who succeeded on their Spellcraft checks above know that she will fully transform into a mummy by sundown.

All APLs (EL 0)

☛ **Tassita Fellhaven:** advanced mummy (inert).

Area 22: Transformation Chamber

This chamber is designed to channel and amplify the necromantic energies unleashed during Zandor's transformation. Currently, his body is in stasis over an altar at the back of the room. Depending on how long the PCs were delayed at area 21, Zandor's guardians may already be prepared and waiting; refer to the Tactics section below. Once the PCs reach the chamber threshold, read or paraphrase the following:

This large room is redolent with the stench of decay. In the center of the north wall a massive altar of black stone rests impassively on the floor, which itself is covered with fine, bone-white sand showing a disarrayed collection of shuffling footprints. A short slope leads down into the room, suggesting that the floor has been excavated and refilled. Suspended from the ceiling high overhead and directly over the altar is a Medium-sized cocoon composed of webbing and a glistening, reflective adhesive. Upon the altar are two items: a tiny, white wooden box and a closed book. A low humming emanates from somewhere below the chamber and a nearby shuffling sound disturbs the unholy stillness...

A *detect magic* spell here reveals strong Transmutation and Necromancy from non-locatable auras. The entire room is protected by a *dimensional lock* centered in the exact middle of the floor. The debris on the floor does not hamper or impede movement. The ceiling is 40 feet high, but appears slightly shorter: the floor has been excavated (and refilled with the sand that hides Zandor's treasure; see below) and slopes down for five feet beyond the threshold. The altar is black granite and too large to fit through the doorway, suggesting teleportation. Zandor is the figure suspended within the webbing and poses no threat: he is mentally aware of the PCs' presence but unable to do anything, and is not a factor in this fight.

Once the PCs cross the threshold grant them a DC 20 Spot check to note the door on the eastern side of the room that leads to the summoning chamber; that door is currently open and cloaked in unearthly black shadows.

Also allow them a second check, opposed by the Hide checks of any undead who have had time to prepare after being alerted by the trap at area 21 (see below). Those undead that were not alerted and did not have a chance to hide, emerge from the summoning chamber 3 rounds after the PCs reach area 21. The summoning chamber itself is shaped like a ziggurat: the center 10x10 foot section is actually a hole in the floor of the antechamber. The base of the ziggurat lies 80 feet below the floor of the antechamber and measures 80x80 feet. The larger, extraplanar undead emerge from its depths, while the mundane undead lurk near the secret door (see below).

The cocoon is composed of something Zandor found on an extraplanar jaunt and is akin to congealed phase spider spittle laced with his own modified *web* spell. The sand on the floor is merely a vanity for the transformation and has no effect in this combat. As proof of his arrogance, he chose the sand (a sort of “purity” for his first footsteps as a lich) over a *desecrate* spell from Tassita. The white box is his phylactery.

The PCs can disrupt the transformation without having to survive the rampaging undead; they may attempt to do so and flee, should the combat prove too challenging. The book on the altar is from Zandor’s treasury, not the library: it details lichdom and contains the means to undo the specific transformation taking place (all lich transformations are unique, and thus the means to unmake each one differs slightly). Combat is certain to erupt once the PCs enter this room, but if one PC can get away from the undead, quickly scan through the tome, and succeed at a DC 20 Intelligence or Knowledge (religion) check (either takes two rounds), they will deduce the means to undo the transformation, whose steps are as follows (NOTE: if the PCs fail this check, do not tell them; instead, consult the Developments section at the end of this encounter):

In any order, the altar must be damaged (it is made of stone; hardness 8), any spell with the Light descriptor must be cast upon the cocoon (it gets no saving throw), a turn check must be made against the cocoon using a Good-aligned holy symbol (there is no true turning effect; it is the attempt that is important, so allow the PCs to roll their check normally without divulging the result), and the phylactery must be removed from the chamber. With the ideal party composition, this can all be accomplished in 1-2 rounds, and the PCs can flee with the certainty that they have thwarted the transformation (consult the Tactics section below). If the Intelligence or Knowledge (religion) checks are unsuccessful and the PCs are forced to fight the undead or flee without disrupting the transformation, proceed to the Developments section below. If, instead, the PCs choose to fight, consult the Tactics section below:

APL 2 (EL 4)

☛ **Wyvern Zombie:** hp 94; *Monster Manual* 267.

APL 4 (EL 6)

☛ **Ghast (3):** hp 29 each; *Monster Manual* 119.

APL 6 (EL 8)

☛ **Bodak:** hp 58; *Monster Manual* 28.

APL 8 (EL 10)

☛ **Mohrg (2):** hp 91 each; *Monster Manual* 189.

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛ **Evolved Wheep:** hp 81; *Appendix 1*.

APL 12 (EL 14)

☛ **Evolved Wheep (2):** hp 81 each; *Appendix 1*.

APL 14 (EL 16)

☛ **Nightwing (2):** hp 144 each; *Monster Manual* 197.

APL 16 (EL 18)

☛ **Thrice-evolved Angel of Decay:** hp 263; *Appendix 1*.

Tactics: If any undead were alerted by the trap at area 21 and had time to prepare, they will have ambush actions independent of simply emerging from the summoning chamber and attacking, as detailed by APL below. If they did not have time to prepare, they emerge from the secret door three rounds after the PCs reached area 21. At APL 8 and above, Valandril will likely be a fragile liability to most parties; it is recommended that he employ ranged attacks or act as a party medic rather than standing toe-to-toe with any foes, though you are encouraged to use your own discretion.

At APL 2 the wyvern zombie lacks any tactics whatsoever, and waits just outside the secret door. Once it sees a PC it moves to attack (single actions only) and fights until destroyed.

At APL 4 two of the ghosts move behind the altar and make Hide checks while the third remains by the secret door in order to distract the PCs and allow the others to attack from behind. They try and paralyze as many foes as possible.

At APL 6 the bodak lacks the cunning to affect any kind of ambush, and thus lurks just inside the antechamber until it sees or hears a PC, at which point it moves to attack and utilize its Death Gaze ability. Be familiar with the rules governing gaze attacks (including PC options for avoiding them) outlined on page 309 of the *Monster Manual*.

At APL 8 the two mohrgs behave as the ghosts at APL 4: though lacking in cunning, their Mobility feat used in tandem with their ability to paralyze foes makes them overconfident.

At APL 10 the lone wheep hides behind the altar and attempts to lure unwary PCs closer by softly crying, as if lamenting the loss of a loved one (overhead). Once a PC is within 5 feet of the altar, the wheep emerges from hiding and uses its *weeping dirge* ability before closing for melee, employing its Dodge and Mobility feats where prudent to disorient and shift between targets.

At APL 12 one weep behaves as at APL 10, while the second hides just inside the antechamber and tries to surprise the PCs with a charge attack. Both creatures use their Dodge and Mobility feats where prudent, but are not coordinated enough to flank and focus on one PC.

At APL 14 the two nightwings fly up from the bottom of the summoning chamber. One attempts to hide behind the cocoon by hanging on the ceiling; the second hangs above the entrance from area 21, and by moving there grants the PCs a Listen check versus its Move Silently skill. Both then employ their *detect magic* ability and wait. If time permits, both also use *see invisibility*, *invisibility*, and *haste*, in that order. Once at least two PCs are in the room, both creatures descend and attack, utilizing Flyby Attack in conjunction with their magic drain ability on any applicable items. Take note of the creatures' sizes: given the room's dimensions, the PCs could make it difficult for them to fly, and in this case the nightwings land and focus melee attacks on a single target. *Confusion* and *hold monster* are favored for use on any fighter-type PCs, while *cone of cold* and *unholy blight* are reserved for clusters of PCs. They will not employ their summon undead ability in this fight, but will *plane shift* away should they both be reduced to 20% of their full hit points.

At APL 16 the angel of decay hides in the antechamber until it sees a PC within area 22. It then casts *haste*, *flies* forward, and enters melee with the closest PC, making sure not to become squeezed within the doorway or trapped in the antechamber. It stays on the ground when attacking to take advantage of its rotting aura ability, and fights until destroyed.

Treasure:

👑**APL 2:** Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 55 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each).

👑**APL 4:** Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 541 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each), rod of viscid globs (167 gp each), necklace of fireballs (Type II; 225 gp each), arcane scroll of break enchantment (94 gp each).

👑**APL 6:** Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 708 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each), rod of viscid globs (167 gp each), necklace of fireballs (Type II; 225 gp each), arcane scroll of break enchantment (94 gp each), slashing sand (167 gp each).

👑**APL 8:** Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 1208 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each), rod of viscid globs (167 gp each), necklace of fireballs (Type II; 225 gp each), arcane scroll of break enchantment (94 gp each), slashing sand (167 gp each), deathguardian bracers (500 gp each).

👑**APL 10:** Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 2041 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each), rod of viscid globs (167 gp each), necklace of fireballs (Type II; 225 gp each), arcane scroll of break enchantment (94 gp each), slashing sand (167 gp each), deathguardian bracers (500 gp each), robe of mysterious conjuration (833 gp each).

👑**APL 12:** Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 3391 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each), rod of viscid globs (167 gp each), necklace of fireballs (Type II; 225 gp each), arcane scroll of break enchantment (94 gp each), slashing sand (167 gp each), deathguardian bracers (500 gp each), robe of mysterious conjuration (833 gp each), +1 magic-eating mithril breastplate (1350 gp each).

👑**APL 14:** Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 5058 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each), rod of viscid globs (167 gp each), necklace of fireballs (Type II; 225 gp each), arcane scroll of break enchantment (94 gp each), slashing sand (167 gp each), deathguardian bracers (500 gp each), robe of mysterious conjuration (833 gp each), +1 magic-eating mithril breastplate (1350 gp each), bone ring (1667 gp each).

👑**APL 16:** Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 10891 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each), rod of viscid globs (167 gp each), necklace of fireballs (Type II; 225 gp each), arcane scroll of break enchantment (94 gp each), slashing sand (167 gp each), deathguardian bracers (500 gp each), robe of mysterious conjuration (833 gp each), +1 magic-eating mithril breastplate (1350 gp each), bone ring (1667 gp each), ring of wizardry (Type III; 5833 gp each).

Detect Magic Results: arcanist's gloves (faint transmutation), unguent of timelessness (faint transmutation), rod of viscid globs (moderate transmutation), necklace of fireballs (Type II; moderate evocation), arcane scroll of break enchantment (moderate abjuration), slashing sand (moderate transmutation), deathguardian bracers (moderate abjuration), robe of mysterious conjuration (moderate conjuration), +1 magic-eating mithril breastplate (faint transmutation and strong abjuration), bone ring (strong abjuration), ring of wizardry (Type III; strong; no school).

Development: Once the PCs have defeated the undead, the encounter is over. Diligent and responsible parties should feel a need to stop Zandor's transformation, but failing to do so (by failing to fully comprehend the tome on the altar) will subtly affect and even contribute to it in ways not readily apparent. If the PCs succeed at either indicated check, give them the proper instructions on how to stop the transformation (if they lack a light-based spell or Good-aligned holy symbol, Valandril offers to run and fetch one of his companions, who returns with the necessary requirements: a light spell and/or a holy symbol of Corellon). If the PCs fail the checks, allow them to entertain any assumptions about how to destroy a lich. For instance: burning and utterly destroying Zandor's body (or Tassita's) has no effect, though it may hint at success. Similarly, destroying the phylactery has no effect because Zandor is not yet a lich, though again this may seem a logical step. Finally, for those PCs who exercised the "take-20" option at area 20, the transformation is already complete by the time they enter area 22. Zandor will not rise as a lich or even emerge from the cocoon until 24 hours hence, nor will his success prevent the PCs from destroying his newly undead physical form, but the

fact that his transformation was successful nevertheless remains significant. For parties that failed to disrupt the transformation or that fled without even trying, the outcome is the same. Take note of how the PCs dealt with this situation and consult the Critical Events Summary at the end of the adventure. From here, Valandril (if alive) urges the PCs to return to the Inanilae camp to rest and relate their experience to Tess.

ENCOUNTER 2: NOCTURNE

This optional encounter assumes the PCs return to the Inanilae camp after their adventure in Zandor's lair (whether successful or not). If the PCs prefer not to return, allow them to go where they wish, but the only other likely destination at this point in the adventure is Midmeadow itself, which the elves advise against until the PCs have spoken with Tess. However, if the PCs are adamant, proceed directly to **Encounter 3**.

The trek back to the Inanilae camp takes two days on foot. There, amid a population of roughly 200, the PCs are treated as esteemed guests (modified by PCs who possess either the Favor or Enmity of the Inanilae from NYR6-06), invited to dine, and given a safe place to spend the night. Tribal adepts and priestesses (there are no male healers) of Corellon offer to heal any PC (though none are of sufficient level to raise the dead). Afterward, the PCs are pressed for details on what they found, and soon find themselves beside a campfire with dozens of attentive elves who are happy to stay up all night and listen.

Tess is among them and at some point subtly intimates that she desires a private audience with the PCs. Assuming they rendezvous with her, she asks about their plans regarding Midmeadow, its martial law edict, and the suspicious behavior of Bishop Thorea. She is wary of the "human politics" on display there, and advises the PCs to exercise caution and prudence if they plan on infiltrating the city. She is incensed at being suspected of criminal activity by Thorea and makes it clear that she has no desire to return despite obvious concern for innocent citizens who are the real victims of whatever is transpiring there. Humans, she allows, have always been the problem. With this cynical lullaby Tess bids the PCs good night and again thanks them for their efforts, extending her invitation to stay as long as they desire.

◆ **Tess'inene-ilae:** female sylvan elf aristocrat 2/ranger 9/sorcerer 3.

Description and personality: Tess is five feet five inches tall and weighs roughly 105 pounds. She is a two-weapon fighter with a lithe, muscular figure and the quickness of youth than many elven chiefs lack. She is 122 years old and has spent the majority of her adulthood as a naturalist and scout. Her favored enemies are dragons and aberrations; she considers Sassy, the Green of the Gamboge, to be her nemesis. The mantle of chief sits heavily with her so soon after the death of her father; she

now seeks balance between her maturing role as the tribe's protector and her youthful desire to study and patrol the forest. Tess has long, copper-hued hair tempered with thin streaks of white; her skin is pale from a life spent under the forest canopy, and her eyes are malachite-green.

The PCs are led by her aides to a secluded place to sleep for the night. The elves have numerous nocturnal guards: archers in trees, rangers patrolling the perimeter, etc. Still, they know that adventurers, like their chief, are a stubborn lot and prone to habit. Thus, though the elves cordially insist it is not necessary, the PCs are not bothered if they elect to set watches for the night.


The night passes comfortably and uneventfully for all but one PC, the PC chosen during Preparation for Play: between 2 and 4 AM, when most of the tribe is in their trance state, this PC experiences a vision, whether asleep or on watch (if the selected PC died in Zandor's lair, improvise as necessary so that one of the surviving PCs experiences what happens next). The PC suddenly feels a slight tingling on his or her face (this is sufficient to "wake" a sleeping PC). They soon discover a diminutive monstrous spider with a glowing mark on its abdomen. The PC can make a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check to identify the mark as a holy symbol of Istus.

Attempts to call out, rouse, or otherwise get the attention of other PCs or any Inanilae elves in the camp fail. The PC cannot be seen, heard, or touched by anyone during this sequence, nor can he or she touch any physical object within range of vision. The PC is allowed a DC 15 Wisdom check to recognize that something surreal is occurring; a DC 20 Knowledge (the Planes) check confirms that the PC is on the Astral Plane. If the PC simply ignores the spider and resumes what he or she was doing, the encounter ends; proceed to the Developments section below; if the PC swats away or kills the spider, the encounter not only ends but the PC also gains the Disfavor of Istus as noted on the AR.

However, if the PC is attentive to the spider, it draws the PC's attention to a very fine web strand stuck to a nearby tree that leads deeper into the camp. The web glistens in the light from the campfires and appears as taut as wire. The spider climbs onto it and begins crawling along its length, leading the PC away from the party. Assuming that the PC follows, he or she finds that the web is indeed whisper-thin but as strong as adamantine filament. During the PC's progress through the camp, time seems to slow down to a crawl, and he or she sees various commonplace activities, even passing near an Inanilae ranger hiding in the foliage and scanning the woods beyond the camp.

The spider dances along the web, past the trees and objects to which it is attached, to a small glade not far from Tess's section of the camp. The web strand ends here at a large bronzedwood tree. The glade is illuminated by a pair of hooded lanterns; four humanoid figures are here. One is Tess; she faces three unknown figures whose backs are to the PC and whose three horses are tied

nearby. Two of these figures hold one of the lanterns each and flank the third figure, who is in the middle of a conversation with Tess. None of the figures or Tess appears to notice the PC, and he or she may now listen in on their conversation, which takes place in Common; refer to DM Aid #4. Once the conversation detailed there is complete, the PC snaps out of the trance abruptly wherever he or she was prior to the spider's appearance: if asleep, the PC is still asleep; if the PC was on watch, only a few moments have passed in real time. The rest of the night passes without incident, but if the PC followed the spider and witnessed Tess's conversation, then in the morning the PC finds that the spider has remained with him or her. The spider is a physical manifestation of the spirit of the Brown Recluse, who now seeks to cryptically remind the PC of his or her part in Fate's design; how the PC treats the spider from this point onward directly affects the PC during the penultimate encounter of the adventure.

 **Aspect of Istus (celestial diminutive monstrous spider):** hp 1.

The presence of the three nocturnal visitors' was intentionally kept secret. If confronted about it, Tess eyes the PCs with guarded surprise but confirms nothing, stating flatly that her nightlife is her own and it is not something with which she wishes to trouble the PCs at this time. Once the morning comes, the PCs are free to go where they wish. In parting, Tess and the Inanilae again extend their thanks, an offer of open friendship, and, if the PCs are headed to Midmeadow, some live plants. According to the tribe's nature experts, these plants should be able to be successfully grafted (pending a series of cooperative skill checks; see **Encounter 8** for more details) onto the existing walls, which may help renew their natural growth after years of almost criminal neglect by the city's human rulers. The plants come in twelve cloth sacks filled with rich volcanic soil, and weigh roughly five pounds apiece. These plants are very delicate, however, and cannot be transported magically; thus, even though high-level parties may have access to teleportation magic, the elves beseech them to travel overland.

Development: Given the sensitive nature of what they uncovered in Zandor's lair, the PCs may wish to journey to Midmeadow's Silk Plateau to inform Aricyn as to who really murdered her lover; they may also wish to investigate Bishop Thorea's misleading bandit-gambit from NYR7-08. However, if a PC witnessed Tess's nocturnal meeting with the three strangers, they may wish to intercept the envoy now en route to the city, as its arrival may frighten any remaining criminals into hiding. Note whether or not the PCs transport the plants. Proceed next to either **Encounter 3** (the envoy) or **Encounter 4** (Midmeadow).

ENCOUNTER 3: ENTREATY

During this optional encounter the PCs choose to intercept the envoy mentioned by Tess's late-night visitor at the end of **Encounter 2**. With only a rough approximation of where this envoy is on the road north to Midmeadow, the PCs' best chance at an intercept is to travel to a point slightly north of where they expect the envoy to be, given standard daily overland movement rates. The Inanilae camp is roughly 70 miles east-by-southeast of Midmeadow itself, not that far inside the confines of the Gamboge. On the morning after the spider-visitation, the envoy will have just crossed the border into Woodverge Province, placing them approximately 60 miles from Midmeadow. The members of the envoy are on horseback, averaging 40 miles per day. Thus, the PCs have about one and one-half days to intercept them. Higher-level parties with access to *teleport*, *air walk*, and *fly* should have little trouble reaching the envoy before it reaches the city (though keep in mind the tribe's restriction on transporting the plants). Lower level parties are liable to have a difficult challenge ahead: the Inanilae are (intentionally) a horseless tribe and possess no mounts, favoring self-reliance over the misuse of nature's creatures as beasts of burden.

Any tribal ranger can suggest that the surest way to intercept the envoy is to ride cross-country straight to the city, then follow the road south until the envoy is encountered. To accomplish this, most parties will have to do a forced march (assuming they possess mounts). Any tribal priestess can sell the PCs a *wand of cure light wounds* to deal with the resulting nonlethal damage. The PCs will have no encounters on their way to the envoy. Estimate their point of intercept based on their speed and mode of travel. Parties who sincerely desire to intercept the envoy should be given every opportunity to do so (within reason), notwithstanding the unfortunate absence of resources. Once the PCs successfully intercept the envoy, read or paraphrase the following:

Ahead is a cadre of armored riders one dozen strong bearing the livery and banner of the King of Nyrond. Their faces are set in expressions of determined confidence. At the center of the group is an Oeridian male of at least forty summers, sporting a grizzled chin and a shining holy symbol of Heironeous.

The King's envoy is composed, mostly, of male human fighters and paladins dedicated to Heironeous; they wear half-plate and carry glaives. The grizzled man, Propheus, is the oldest among them and the ranking member of the group; he rides weaponless, and is dressed befitting a ranking member of the Heironean clergy (it's possible PCs have met Propheus back in NYR4-04 *Heironeous Assumptions*). He has specific instructions from the King concerning what is to be done in Midmeadow: deliver the King's royal decree that the Church of the Bright Path temporarily surrender all provisional authority and the use of the temple of Pholtus to the King's designated

representative (himself) in the name of the Church of Heironeous. The King further wishes martial law lifted immediately. Since Heironeous is the state-sponsored religion, Bishop Thorea would be committing treason in opposing this priest in the execution of his duties.

However, Propheus is not expecting anxious adventurers with urgent news (especially ones he might know). Once the PCs introduce and explain themselves, an intense roleplaying scene should ensue in which the PCs may voice their concerns about the situation in Midmeadow and why they need time to investigate further, perhaps noting that the more subtle and “unofficial” qualities of adventurers may be better suited to exposing whatever plot is afoot than an envoy with a royal decree. Propheus’ starting attitude is Indifferent. To persuade him to delay in his assigned task requires a Diplomacy check in which they must shift his attitude to Helpful (DC 30). For some parties this will be effortless. For others, however, it could be next to impossible. Several modifiers can aid the PCs, modifying the die roll as indicated below:

- For each Nyrond PC in the party: +1
- For each PC that is a member of Nyrond royal meta-org: +2
- For each Pale PC in the party: -1
- For each cleric of Heironeous: +2
- For each member of the Church of Heironeous Nyrond meta-org: +2
- For each paladin or good-aligned cleric: +1
- For each Pholtan cleric or paladin: -2
- For each PC possessing the Influence Point with the Inanilae from NYR6-06: +1
- For each PC possessing the Enmity of the Inanilae from NYR6-06: -1
- For each PC personally known to Propheus: +3

Award a further +2 circumstance bonus for exceptional roleplaying as the PCs relate their tale. If the Diplomacy check is successful, the priest agrees to wait 48 hours for them to procure whatever further proof they need. In the meantime, the envoy will continue onward and camp a few hours outside the city walls while waiting for the PCs. If the PCs fail the check, the priest applauds their concern but insists that the King’s will is more important than mere suspicion, and directs the envoy onward toward Midmeadow.

♣**Propheus, Cleric of Heironeous:** male human cleric 11 (Sense Motive +16).

Development: If the PCs did not intercept the envoy before it reached the city, run this encounter as detailed above at Midmeadow’s south gate just as the envoy arrives, but impose a -2 circumstance penalty for the hasty nature of the PCs’ arriving at the last minute.

Once the PCs have made their Diplomacy check and interacted with the priest, this encounter ends and they

may move on to Midmeadow. Proceed to **Encounter 4** and take note of what time the PCs enter the city. Valcroy completes his ritual roughly 24 hours after either the PCs reach the city, so speed is crucial. Regardless of whether they were successful in their check, the priest of Heironeous casts a *sending* spell to notify the royal court of this encounter and the PCs’ suspicions.

ENCOUNTER 4: INGRESS

During this encounter the PCs return to Midmeadow, and in doing so brave martial law and their potential arrest in relation to evading interrogation concerning the disappearance of Callidan Estani (during NYR7-08). Due to the machinations of High Priest Valcroy and his puppet, Bishop Thorea of the Church of the Bright Path, an entire division of Nyrondese guards from the Theocracy of the Pale’s border now patrols the streets enforcing martial law. These guards are under further orders to apprehend either (a) anyone who is obviously an adventurer as evidenced by dress and behavior, or (b) any PC involved in the events at the end of NYR7-08 (PCs who played that scenario are recognized on sight, barring any disguise they might employ).

For PCs who did not play NYR7-08 the idea that a Pholtan Bishop seeks to detain them for questioning may seem laughable, but a DC 10 Knowledge (local—NMR) check confirms that the martial law dictate is very serious and gives the city’s current Steward—in this case Thorea’s church—nearly unlimited rights with regard to policing the populace and questioning anyone deemed suspicious by its own loosely-defined standards. PCs who played NYR7-08 have by this time earned a kind of “most wanted” infamy from the Church of the Bright Path in Midmeadow, and the descriptions of these PCs (including dress, known familiars and animal companions, holy symbols, meta-organizations, et al) have become common knowledge, to the point where these PCs are recognized with a DC 10 Knowledge (local—NMR) check by any resident. Because of this, merely being seen with PCs who played NYR7-08 is enough to taint the reputations of PCs who did NOT play it, and subjects them to the same infamy as “additional accomplices.” Sneaking into the city is also crucial if the PCs hope to accomplish anything without “official” interference. There are several incursion points that do not involve passing conspicuously through either main gate (and thus passing the guards; see below), but since they are likely to approach from the south (following **Encounter 2** or **3**), offer a hint of what awaits by reading or paraphrasing the following once they approach the South Gate:

The deteriorating walls flanking Midmeadow’s South Gate loom humbly and silently ahead, as if stripped of their dignity and reduced to a pale facade of their former glory. The quiet, orderly scene here—residents dumping garbage and listlessly milling about, shift-eyed merchants shuffling their feet while hauling wares into and out of the city, and

dirty human and half-elven children playing at a discreet distance from the walls, all under the watchful eyes of eight armed, uniformed Nyrondeese soldiers—seems somehow unnatural, almost superimposed, and stands in contrast to the chaotic insect shroud and turmoil that recently enveloped the city. Something here has changed, for better or worse, and the tension on peoples' faces leaves little doubt as to the catalyst. It is as if something were being suppressed, struggling to free itself. As often happens in nature, the way in can be the way out...

Pending a successful Gather Information check at the Traders' Bazaar (see below), the PCs may not need to enter the city to continue the adventure. However, Good-aligned PCs, those sympathetic to Aricyn's loss of the Brown Recluse, those antagonistic to the Church of the Bright Path, and especially those whose suspicions have been keenly aroused by recent events here may wish to brave martial law and sneak into Midmeadow.

The PCs should have three immediate goals based on what they found in Zandor's Lair: to reveal Zandor as the murderer of the Brown Recluse, to discover why the Recluse's body was disguised in the first place (and by whom), and to locate the missing priest of Pelor, Callidan Estani. Doubtless few parties will wish to confront the Bishop with their discoveries, but the respective district leaders (Aricyn, "Rats", and Kirelle) each offer advantages and disadvantages (see below), also, the two Pholtan Knights-Valorous captains are currently under house arrest, and this option could actually prove the most viable for many parties. Though few might ever consider two ranking, conservative Pholtan ambassadors as likely (or even willing) allies, they were arrested by the same person who now seeks to "detain and question" the PCs, and may be willing to assist. First, however, the PCs need to get into the city. The most obvious means of ingress (and their associated benefits and risks) are detailed below:

1. The North Gate

This gate is manned 24 hours daily by eight Nyrondeese guards. Should trouble arise, they use horns to summon their brethren from other parts of the city, which ultimately draws the attention of the Bishop. Intimate that attacking guards or entering by force is not only unwise but potentially counterproductive, especially if the Bishop is tainted. The guards do not ask anyone to sign in or surrender their weapons, but do ask that obvious weapons be peace-tied, and they conduct cursory searches of any wagons. They also briefly explain the parameters of the martial law decree:

- Curfew is one hour after sundown; both gates are closed to all non-official (i.e.: all but members of the Church of the Bright Path) traffic from this point until sunrise.

- All residents are confined to their respective districts from sundown to sunrise; merchants and Bright Path clergy are the exceptions.
- No brawling or combat-related activities are permitted during curfew.
- Residents on the streets during non-curfew hours are not permitted to congregate in groups of more than four.
- Violation of curfew or any of the above parameters is punishable by arrest and detainment within the temple of Pholtus.

If PCs specifically ask to see the two Pholtan Knight-Captains, the guards exchange a glance and summon two of the four guards assigned to the barracks where the Pholtans are held; the PCs are escorted there (see below) and given five minutes alone with the Knight-Captains, but they are also told that the Bishop will be informed. He arrives in ten minutes, so the PCs will need to be brief and then slip away from the barracks unseen.

2. The South Gate

The conditions at this gate mirror those at the North Gate with one exception: prominent district residents whom PCs may have met in NYR6-06 or NYR7-08 are present outside the wall (regardless of what time the PCs arrive) and engaged in mundane tasks (dumping trash, etc). These key NPCs, their respective city districts, and the favors earned from NYR7-08, are noted below:

- Ragnis Halfpint, male dwarf expert 5/fighter 1 (Favor of the Downtown District)
- Towk, male half-orc barbarian 5/expert 1 (Favor of the Silk Plateau)
- Baranal, male high elf bard 3/expert 2 from Blackwater Park (A Tale of Two Cities)

If at least one PC has any of these favors, it entitles the entire party to a kind of free (but highly clandestine and technically illegal where Nyrondeese law is concerned) escort into Midmeadow. Parties with more than one favor are permitted to "split" but should be strongly discouraged from doing so, as it is likely to severely impede play. Each of the NPCs noted above is vehemently opposed to the current state of the city and wishes to see things restored to the way they were before martial law was decreed; thus, they are willing to take a risk and aid the PCs. Once the PCs select a delegate, cross off the favor on the NYR7-08 Adventure Record and proceed to the Developments section below. Parties without any of the favors are soon approached by three Midmeadow residents who do not recognize them but advise against idly standing around so close to the guards, and lead them northwest around the walls toward the

Traders' Bazaar. They explain that the gates and main streets are well patrolled; they advise the PCs not to "tempt Fate" by trying to sneak in, and offer what they think is a safer idea; if the PCs accept, proceed to the Developments section.

3. Disguises

PCs employing magical or mundane disguises have only to succeed against the Spot checks of the guards (see below). A DC 10 Knowledge (local—NMR) check confirms that Disguise Kits are for sale in the Traders' Bazaar; however, such kits are currently selling at 20% above the listed PHB price due to their recent popularity. Additionally, the vendor of such a kit warns PCs of a rumor that Bishop Thorea has gotten wise to this ruse and taken to occasional forays in the city streets with a *true seeing* spell in effect. It is unknown whether or not this is true, but a DC 15 Knowledge (local—NMR) check confirms that the Bishop's rank within the Church of the Bright Path grants him access to the spell; if a PC succeeds at DC 20 on this check, he or she confirms that High Priest Valcroy also has access to the spell.

4. The Traders' Bazaar/Count Wiczling

The PCs are encouraged to visit the Traders' Bazaar and gather information before attempting to enter the city; various rumors are detailed in *DM Aid #5*. One piece of information in particular (available only in the Bazaar, and at DC 30 due to its obscurity and recent disclosure) could nullify their desire to enter the city at all. If the PCs feel they have done poorly on a Gather Information check, remind them by way of any unscrupulous NPC in the Bazaar that coin often loosens tongues; specifically, each 10 gp spent increases the PCs check result by 1 (if any PCs possess the Shady Dealer enmity from NYR6-06, this doubles to 20 gp in addition to the enmity penalties).

PCs possessing the Favor of Count Wiczling from NYR7-08 may contact him (a *sending* spell is the most expeditious means of doing this, and qualified sage-experts are available for hire within the Traders' Bazaar) and call in this favor with the intent of gaining access to the city. Doing so sets in motion a rapid, diplomatic chain of events in which the Bright Path Church (whose members are ignorant of the Count's double identity as a bandit leader) is contacted by the Wiczling Estate in northwestern Nyrond regarding the arrival of an important merchant. This is a ruse; a human merchant arrives outside the city roughly four hours later with two wagons full of stolen goods from the Count's banditry. The gate guards will not know this, and the PCs are intended to hide within the wagons, which will be exempt from any kind of search, since trade is still the one exploitable cornerstone of Midmeadow's continuing prosperity. Cross off this favor once it is used.

5. High Magic

Parties adept with magic (*teleport*, *fly*, etc) can enter the city in relative safety. The only caveat to this occurs to

PCs who have played NYR6-06: in the climax of that adventure, minions of Zandor teleported into the city, and thus it might be (at best) viewed unfavorably by witnesses or (at worst) immediately reported to the Bright Path church. Even so, a party of invisible, flying PCs has little to fear, as it is the gates and walls, not the skies that are being watched. Try to keep the players paranoid about getting caught but allow them to be creative in their efforts.

6. The Walls

PCs sneaking over or through the walls at some point away from either of the two gates (without the aid of *invisibility* or some similar subterfuge) are automatically spotted either by guards or by residents loyal to the Church of the Bright Path. Such PCs are placed under arrest and led to the temple of Pholtus, unless each party member attempting this succeeds at a DC 25 Hide check. Proceed to **Encounter 5-E**.

🗡️ **Nyrondese Guard:** male human warrior 1; hp 7; (Listen +2, Sense Motive +1, Spot +2).

Development: The method by which the PCs enter the city directly affects how and where they can go next during their investigations in **Encounter 5**. Parties who employ Count Wiczling's favor and those who visit the two incarcerated Pholtan Knight-Captains begin **Encounter 5** in the Promenade District (proceed to **Encounter 5-A**). Parties without access to any of the NYR7-08 favors who agree to take part in the residents' plan also begin in this district (proceed to **Encounter 5-A**). Parties employing other NYR7-08 favors begin **Encounter 5** in the respective corresponding district (**Encounter 5-B** for Blackwater Park, **Encounter 5-C** for the Silk Plateau, and **Encounter 5-D** for Downtown). All other parties who successfully infiltrate the city without the use of a NYR7-08 favor or not in a manner already detailed above may begin play in any district they wish; all that remains is to find a suitable authority figure. Finally, PCs who specifically attempt to locate High Priest Valcroy and enlist his authority as a counter against the Bishop learn that he left the city shortly after the climax of NYR7-08 and has not been seen or heard from since. PCs who dare to confront Bishop Thorea over his misleading bandit-gambit from NYR7-08 and present him with the evidence from Zandor's lair are promptly arrested; proceed to **Encounter 5-E**.

ENCOUNTER 5: GOOD SAMARITANS

During this optional encounter the PCs successfully infiltrate Midmeadow and possibly make contact with district leaders or the incarcerated Pholtan Knight-Captains. The four primary authority figures (Knight-Captain Talbrith, "Rats", Aricyn, and Kirelle) each have independent agendas with regard to Bishop Thorea and

the Bright Path, and they seek to enlist the PCs' aid. These respective missions, in the form of sub-encounters, as well as a default sub-encounter for parties who gained access to the city without calling in any specific favors, are detailed below.

Encounter 5—A (Promenade/Wiczling)

This encounter is the default for parties without favors from NYR7-08. It places the PCs in the Promenade, which is home to the Bright Path clergy, the temple of Pholtus, and upscale city merchants. The district leader is technically Bishop Thorea, but the voice of reason belongs to Knight-Captain Talbrith, who is under house arrest in the former barracks of the Valorous League of Blindness (location P2 on DM Aid #2).

The PCs begin this encounter in one of several ways. If they entered through either of the gates and asked for an audience with Talbrith, then the PCs are led directly there. The PCs could also have followed the advice of the residents at the South Gate: in this case, the PCs are asked to change out of their adventuring gear and pose as laborers. In this guise they join twelve other commoners in transporting ale kegs from the Bazaar around the northwest corner of the city to “Mugs” MacGruber’s Topless Tavern in the Promenade (passing through the sunflower fields that border the North Gate). Due to the tavern’s popularity, this process has been performed so often recently that the guards (steady drinkers in their off-hours) no longer question it. So long as no PCs look odd or conspicuous (bleached white, kobolds, centaurs, etc), they reach the tavern without incident. “Odd” PCs require a contingency (disguising a centaur as a horse, hiding a kobold inside an ale keg, etc), but allow exceptional PC creativity to compensate for poor die rolls (versus Spot and Sense Motive checks from the guards).

At the tavern, “Mugs” (who is widely viewed as well-connected with regard to local happenings) recommends the two Knight-Captains as authority figures, citing martial law as “bad for business” and voicing concern over the Bishop’s erratic behavior. He draws a crude back-alley map that leads them to the barracks. PCs who played NYR6-06 and possess Unfavorable or Careless reputations cause “Mugs” to be wary and reluctant to provide assistance, requiring them to make one Hide and one Move Silently check during the trip (opposed by the checks of roving guards). Otherwise, he volunteers to aid their short trek by purposely jamming the cantilevered roof of his tavern, which creates a loud, grinding noise that draws the attention of all guards in the area and allows the PCs to move freely. The barracks guards also hear this noise and come to investigate, allowing the PCs to enter undetected. Getting out is another matter.

Another way into the Promenade involves Count Wiczling, the bandit-noble from NYR7-08. PCs employing his favor soon find themselves hidden inside two richly appointed wagons that pass through the North Gate without being searched. The wagons come to a halt, and the PCs are quietly signaled by the drivers to sneak away. When they are ready to do so, the PCs may milk

the Count’s favor for all it is worth by asking the drivers (with a DC 15 Diplomacy check) to improvise a distraction. A DC 10 Knowledge (local—NMR) check is further required to ascertain where they are in the city in relation to the barracks. If the Diplomacy check succeeds, the barracks-infiltration is automatic; otherwise, the PCs must make one set of Hide and Move Silently checks (opposed by roving guards), then somehow distract the four barracks guards. Reward creativity but, as above, getting out of the barracks is another matter.

Inside the barracks, Knight-Captain Talbrith eagerly questions the PCs as to their motives for being there. As a paladin of Pholtus and an official Pale representative, neither she nor Quenthe advocate or suggest any kind of unlawful activity. She has faith in Pholtus, believing her incarceration has happened for a reason that her deity will soon illuminate. Until then, both Knight-Captains have relegated themselves to remaining patient and observant, resisting the urge to contact their superiors in the Pale for fear of inciting any kind of political incident. If confronted with the evidence from Zandor’s lair, Talbrith adopts a grim expression and advises the PCs to focus instead on something the Bright Path seems to have overlooked: Callidan Estani, the missing priest of Pelor. The Bishop has offered an unspecified reward for information leading to Callidan’s recovery, but as far as Talbrith can tell, the Bright Path has not dedicated any resources toward this search themselves. She finds this both negligent and suspicious, and wishes the PCs to investigate. To aid them, she notes a pattern observed during her daily “exercise strolls” within the last two weeks, wherein four of the elite bodyguards of High Priest Valcroy leave the temple of Pholtus (where they have remained as “observers” of Bishop Thorea on behalf of the High Priest) every three days at precisely two hours before sundown, journey toward the North Gate, and then mysteriously disappear, only to reappear within sight of the temple at sundown. The last time this happened was two days ago.

She mentions a particular gap in the north wall (from NYR7-08), through which someone fled the morning of the Recluse’s murder, but the only notable landmark north of Midmeadow is the ruined New Dawn Camp (demolished just prior to NYR6-06). The evidence from Zandor’s Lair exonerates Count Wiczling’s bandits and hints at a more sinister hand. Talbrith speculates that whoever went through the gap fled north toward the Pale border or north-by-northeast into the Gamboge, and may have used the ruins as a campsite. Whatever High Priest Valcroy’s guards are doing every three days before sunset, they are not “observing” the Bishop while they are away. If the PCs agree to help, proceed to **Encounter 6**.

🐉 **Knight-Captain Talbrith Hemerenn:** LG female human (Oeridian) paladin 12 (Pholtus).

Description and personality: As the head of her order and the unofficial eyes and ears of the Pale in Northern Nyrond, Talbrith is forced to walk a fine line between

justice and non-interference. That line has become razor-thin. She is 29 and of pure Oeridian descent with shoulder-length, light brown hair tied in a loose ponytail, and her soft voice belies years of field experience. She uses her *detect evil* ability at all times, and is wary of exotic races (centaurs, asherati, kobolds, etc).

◆ **Quenthe Ilerrio:** NG male high elf fighter 4/wizard 5/elritch knight 3; (Spellcraft +12).

Description and personality: This handsome fighter-mage has long, flowing black hair and intense, dark green eyes. He defers to Talbrith in conversation and studies any PC holy symbols.

Encounter Five—B (Blackwater Park)

PCs with the Tale of Two Cities favor from NYR7-08 make contact with the high elf Baranal (note that Baranal aspires to nudism and is wearing just enough clothing outside Blackwater Park to prevent his arrest), who recognizes them via bardic knowledge and explains that Kirelle, the elf priestess who effectively rules Blackwater Park, could use their aid. If the PCs agree to help, he leads them toward the Bazaar, then behind some unused wagons and through a concealed gap in the wall, into the deepest recesses of the park. From there, they go to meet Kirelle, who recalls PCs that introduced her to Tess in NYR7-08.

PCs with Unfavorable or Careless reputations from NYR6-06 are given a second chance here to improve their reputation, as Kirelle's distaste for the entire Pholtan "regime" (as she calls it) outweighs any individual PC behavior. She explains that her problem concerns Faith, the wild elf fiancée of Penrys Bonchal who was abducted then rescued during NYR6-06. Since then, Penrys's selfish, petulant antics have demonstrably increased. Kirelle believes that no self-respecting elf (even a wild elf, which she regards as the lowest rung on the elven evolutionary ladder) would consciously tolerate such behavior. She suspects Faith might be held against her will, perhaps even mind-controlled by Penrys and his Bright Path brethren. She has no proof of this, only suspicion, intuition, and decades spent observing other Pholtan factions.

She wants the PCs to question Faith, which involves visiting the temple of Pholtus and possibly even getting her out if she is held against her will. Kirelle's antipathy toward Pholtans is well-known, and she suspects (correctly) that her request to see Faith will be denied; instead, she intends to have Baranal and some other Blackwater Park elves create a distraction to lure the guards away from the temple doors and thereby allow the PCs to approach undetected. She notes that this plan must be executed during daylight hours: one elf will approach the temple and ask to speak with Faith; Baranal and some of his fellow artisans will then initiate the distraction (which he says will be "obvious": they plan to streak through the temple square bereft of clothing and lead the guards on a chase through town).

◆ **Kirelle:** CG female wood elf cleric 11 (Corellon); Heal +17, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (local—Nyrond and Her Environs) +14, Knowledge (religion) +15, Sense Motive +13.

Description and personality: This middle-aged wood elf has bright eyes and a level demeanor. As one of Midmeadow's original inhabitants, she has witnessed all manner of suffering through decades of neglectful human rule of the city.

Assuming the PCs agree to it, the plan succeeds dramatically, and they soon find themselves near the temple square. From here they need only distract the one remaining Bright Path acolyte who summoned Faith. One way to do so is to create a second distraction; indulge PC creativity and treat their ruse as a group Bluff check opposed by the acolyte's Sense Motive skill (+5). If the PCs succeed, the temple square will be empty for five minutes. Another distraction is available to PCs with the Barking up the Wrong Tree favor from NYR6-06. In this case success is automatic, as the Midmeadow kennel master intentionally "loses control" of a pack of his most feral, undisciplined hounds, who race through streets and require all guards and acolytes in the area to corral them.

The PCs find Faith at the top of the steps, standing in the temple doorway with a confused look on her face. They should quickly explain their reason for being there and make any attempts to convince her to leave with them, or to just leave the Pholtans on her own. She admits to having had the same idea since the climax of NYR7-08, but her reason for remaining may surprise the PCs: she has become secretly sympathetic to the plight of Dalis Mirivan, and has even spoken to the priest several times. She confirms that he is alive and unharmed, locked in a makeshift holding cell deep within the temple. Getting in to see him is difficult even for her: she has to do it behind Penrys's back while he is at prayer twice a day. Faith wants to leave but her concern for Dalis's fate is as strong as her growing distaste for Penrys and his church. To convince her to leave, the PCs must succeed at a Diplomacy check (for PCs that think to ask, she also confirms that the Brown Recluse's corpse is indeed here, well-preserved, and well-guarded; "He's so tan!" she squeaks).

Her starting attitude is Friendly unless a PC has a negative reputation (Unfavorable or Careless) from NYR6-06 or is a Pholtan cleric (or worse, both), in which case her starting attitude is Unfriendly. To convince her to leave the temple, her attitude must be shifted to Helpful. Under no circumstances will she attempt to help free Dalis, as she considers it too risky. She notes that Dalis would immediately be missed, whereas she likely will not for several hours, as she feels like little more than a knickknack to Penrys lately whenever he whines about missing someone named Rowena, whom he describes as "more mature."

If the Diplomacy check fails, Faith is not unkind, but simply states that she prefers to stay and see what becomes of Dalis. She also tells the PCs about something she overheard yesterday from a room adjacent to Bishop Thorea's office, and which she finds extremely odd: she heard the Bishop talking about some kind of "penumbral" ritual taking place "tomorrow" involving some scrolls, but when the door to his office opened he came out alone and there was no one else inside. Allow a DC 25 bardic knowledge check (only, due to its secrecy) to identify "penumbral" as possibly relating to the Penumbral Vanguard. If the check is successful, allow a DC 25 Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (history) check to deduce that "scrolls" might refer to the Scrolls of Light. Success on any of these checks allows PCs to recall the basic details on the Vanguard or the Scrolls (respectively) from the Adventure Background.

◆ **Faith:** N female wild elf commoner 2.

Encounter Five—C (Silk Plateau)

PCs with the Favor of the Silk Plateau are led by Towk around the southeastern side of the city. This is Midmeadow's least domesticated area; the walls have become so overgrown with vegetation from the labors of Plateau residents that they blend seamlessly with citrus trees, hedges, and canopied pathways. No guards patrol this area (by the Bishop's orders, for fear of being overwhelmed by residents whose lingering unrest following NYR7-08 remains an unquantifiable). The usually frenetic buzz of activity in the district is now little more than a low droning; residents are somber and the air is almost reverentially silent.

Towk suggests that PCs with the Enmity of the Silk Plateau remain behind for fear of provoking his mistress. He then leads the PCs halfway up the eastern slope of the Plateau to a small glade where Aricyn sits on a handcrafted wooden bench beside the city stream. She is still in mourning for the Recluse, and her initial fury over the discovery that it was his corpse and not Callidan's (in NYR7-08) has given way to despondency: according to her insect spies, the Bright Path keeps his body preserved via *gentle repose* inside the temple, and without it she cannot give him a proper burial or speak with his spirit, let alone raise him from the dead. This situation is intolerable to her, although muted a bit by the news that the Pholtans are not responsible for his death (this last piece of news provides her some degree of inner peace).

For obvious reasons, though, relations between her and the Bishop are tense at best. His guards patrol the city near the western edge of the Plateau but have not yet entered it; she in turn keeps a low profile and has ordered her followers not to trade within the city but to conduct all such activity outside the walls. She laments that Zandor's motives may never be known, but notes that someone took pains to disguise the Recluse's body as Callidan's, and for this she has no explanation. Moreover, she cannot perform divinations into the matter because her deity, Bralm, has withheld spells until Aricyn seeks

atonement for her injudicious actions at the end of NYR7-08. To redeem herself, Aricyn is planning a trip to the Gamboge to visit Lurilent and Ni'cham'weh, the fey devotees of Bralm.

◆ **Aricyn:** N female half-elf (Suel) cleric 12 (Bralm); Sense Motive +12.

Description and personality: This half-elf is of average height and in her late twenties. She has luminous, greenish-yellow eyes and whitish-blond hair braided with honeycombs. She wears loose, natural fiber golden robes and wears a beehive-shaped holy symbol around her neck.

Aricyn thanks the PCs for the news about Zandor and tells them plainly that what she wants most is the return of the Recluse's body; she knows this involves stealing it from the temple of Pholtus, but at the risk of further offending her deity she cautions against it even if the PCs seem willing. This tactic, she explains ruefully, will only hurt the residents of Midmeadow through ongoing martial law nonsense once Bishop Thorea discovers the theft. Instead, in keeping with the industriousness espoused by Bralm, Aricyn asks them for a different favor: through her unique connection to the insect kingdom, she has recently learned that several dozen wild bee colonies were displaced by the felling of a grove of trees some distance north of the city. To her knowledge, the only landmark north of the city is the former New Dawn Camp; all the trees in that immediate area were cleared long ago when the Camp was built, so if someone is logging nearby then they are likely doing so without permission of the Crown. The bee-displacement situation is interfering with her mental ability to focus on atoning, and she asks the PCs to investigate the matter. If the PCs are willing to do this, proceed to **Encounter 6**.

Encounter Five—D (Downtown/Dalis)

PCs with the Favor of the Downtown District are led by Ragnis around the southeast curve of the city wall to a chimney-like brick sewer vent. Out of sight of the guards, he pulls out a bizarre metal tool that looks like a cross between a kukri and a horseshoe; with this he pries off the vent's lid and gestures for the PCs to climb down inside; Ragnis climbs in last, seals the vent, and leads the PCs down to the sewers and along a dry passage for ten minutes before arriving at an iron rung ladder that leads up to another vent into Downtown.


The key district residents, including Ragnis and "Rats", the gnome tinkerer and proud parent of the Verminflame Portal (which is functioning normally again thanks to the prior assistance of at least one PC), welcome the PCs and ask for one small favor: they want Dalis Mirivan rescued from the temple of Pholtus. In the interval between NYR6-06 and NYR7-08, Dalis became quite popular with Downtown residents for his inexhaustible storytelling prowess and willingness to listen to the stories of others; they consider his

incarceration a gross act of injustice. None of them are adventurers (or very brave), or willing to risk the wrath of the Bright Path, such as it is. They are, however, willing to become accessories to something unspecified by providing the PCs with amazingly accurate (and generally believed to have been “lost”) blueprints that lead through the sewers, right up under the room in the temple where they suspect (by dint of their architectural knowledge) Dalis is being held. Good and Lawful PCs may hesitate at the idea of a jailbreak, but the blueprints might allow them to at least sneak in and speak with Dalis. If the PCs agree to try, they arrive at the bottom of a shaft ten feet below the room where Dalis is being held.

The shaft is a drain chute for the 15x15 foot room above, which used to be a shower area in years past. Dalis is there, tied with silk rope to an iron chair and deprived of his holy symbol, but otherwise not gagged or injured. An iron grate in the floor is the only physical obstacle facing the PCs, and they can see through its framework into the room above, which is lit by a common torch; no faction of Pholtus has ever bothered with this grate since the temple was erected, being keenly aware of the dangers lurking in Midmeadow's sewers. The grate is not locked and can be lifted with a DC 20 Strength check provided the PCs can reach it. If they get his attention from below, however, Dalis bids them to speak quietly (which can be done) and excitedly reveals that he prefers not to be rescued at this time: the story of this experience is, to him, an epic in the making and he wishes to see it unfold. Escaping captivity, as sincerely grateful as he is for the effort, would result in a dull and truncated ending to the story.

Always optimistic, his starting attitude is at worst Indifferent (to those with Unfavorable or Careless reputations from NYR6-06), and Friendly to all others. If the PCs shift his attitude to Helpful via Diplomacy, he agrees to escape with them. The grate is old and rusty, and will make a loud grinding noise unless precautions are taken. This might be heard (DC 15) by a Bright Path acolyte (Listen +5) not far outside the door to the room, who comes to investigate in one round. The PCs being discovered should NOT result in any kind of complex sewer chase; instead, rule that Nyronese troops open every manhole cover in the district and eventually trap the PCs and Dalis. From here, proceed to **Encounter 5-E** below.

If the PCs instead recognize the value of leaving Dalis where he is as an information sponge, he imparts to them something he overheard just yesterday: he distinctly heard Bishop Thorea's voice and the words “New Dawn” and “Achda”. The latter reference eludes him; allow the PCs a DC 25 Knowledge (history), Knowledge (religion), or bardic knowledge check to recall the pertinent information about Achda Retaren from the Adventure Background. Dalis assumes “New Dawn” refers to the old New Dawn Camp outside town, but as far as Dalis knew that structure was demolished two years ago.

 **Dalis Mirivan:** male human (Suel) cleric 8 (Fharlanghn); Diplomacy +12.

Description and personality: This young Suel raconteur still cuts a dashing figure even in captivity: at six feet two inches and two hundred pounds, with deep-set blue eyes, a jaw heavy with stubble, and a dirty scruff of blonde hair, he looks more like a veteran bard than a practicing priest.

Encounter Five—E (Arrested/The Bishop)

PCs who were arrested during **Encounter 5** wind up detained within the temple of Pholtus; they are placed in a makeshift cell and guarded by eight Nyronese troops but are not harmed or physically bound, nor is any of their gear confiscated (animal companions, however, are sent to the city kennels). After an hour they are interrogated by Penrys Bonchal (who proves utterly unskilled at the art of it) as to their involvement in both the death of the Brown Recluse and the disappearance of Callidan Estani; as to the latter, Penrys is an unwitting minion who knows nothing about what really happened to Callidan and, given his frustrations over what he sees as adventurers continually interrupting his wedding, is eager to believe that PCs had a hand in the disappearance. Revealing what they know about Zandor to Penrys earns his scoffing skepticism, but furnishing the physical proof sobers him and he fetches the Bishop (even if the PCs choose not to reveal what they know about Zandor, the Bishop is eventually summoned).

Bishop Thorea appears fifteen minutes later, having secretly contacted Valcroy (via *sending*) for guidance in light of the PCs' arrest. He then goes through an elaborate mimicry of Penrys's interrogation, effectively asking most of the same questions; this time, however, the PCs are taken at their word. Only with a successful Sense Motive check (opposed by Thorea's Bluff, at +15) can they realize that the Bishop is verbally baiting them. He explains that there has been a terrible misunderstanding with regard to their alleged culpability in any wrongdoing. What follows is an elaborate lie peppered with elements of historical truth that give it a thin veneer of credulity: Thorea tells the PCs that scavengers recently rummaging through the ruins of the former New Dawn Camp found something buried in the rubble: a still-festering limb of preserved human flesh, like that of a zombie. As the nearest authority figures, the Bishop's agents were summoned to investigate, and they discovered that the flesh still carried traces of the very same plague that ravaged Midmeadow in 585 CY. Back then the introduction of this plague was linked to a cult of Incabulos; General Zylinchin himself exposed this cult, its dozen members were put to death, and all traces of the plague were supposedly eradicated.

DC 15 Knowledge (local—NMR) and Knowledge (religion) checks, or DC 20 Knowledge (history) and bardic knowledge checks, confirm the basic elements of Thorea's story. He then says that Callidan is not really missing (technically true: the Bishop knows exactly where he is): the feisty priest of Pelor was approached the

morning of Faith and Penrys's last wedding attempt during NYR7-08 and solicited for his status as a servant of Pelor (technically true): since his antagonism toward Pholtans was well-known, the Bishop thought his talents could best be spent away from the wedding and in the service of Midmeadow's citizens, studying the fleshy limb at the New Dawn Camp. The discovery and Callidan's involvement were kept secret in order to prevent public panic; unfortunately, whoever disguised the Recluse's corpse that morning was likely an ally of this Zandor-person and managed to engineer mass chaos regardless. The Bishop has been forced to remain in the city to oversee the troops and maintain order; "that good-for-nothing Valcroy left town shortly after the aborted wedding and has been no help whatsoever, not that he has any authority here anymore." Thus, Callidan has been forced to remain at the Dawn Camp (also technically true) and work with "a minimal staff."

It all sounds plausible, but PCs succeeding on their Sense Motive check recognize the flaw in Thorea's tale: Callidan's reputation as a Pholtan antagonist is too wickedly pervasive for him to have abandoned the chance to heckle Penrys's wedding. This should make the PCs wary of whatever else the Bishop has to say, but he concludes his tame interrogation by suggesting that the PCs are free to visit the ruins and see Callidan for themselves. The Bishop then shoos Penrys away with a dismissive flourish and orders the attendant guards to release the PCs, thanking them for their patience and understanding in this matter. The PCs are free to go. If they wish to follow the Bishop's recommendation and visit the New Dawn Camp ruins, proceed to **Encounter 6**.

Development: Once the PCs leave the temple, Thorea casts a second *sending* to warn Valcroy that the PCs are likely on their way there. Thus, parties that participate in **Encounter 5-E** have no chance of surprising the Penumbral Vanguard at the ruins. Thorea's ploy in sending the PCs to the there is really Valcroy's ploy: the High Priest expects to have completed his ritual before any meddling PCs discover it; even if his secrecy is compromised and the PCs arrive before the ritual is completed, Valcroy has confidence that the Vanguard can defeat any interfering adventurers.

ENCOUNTER 6: BAD MOON RISING

The PCs begin this encounter in one of several ways. Various clues from **Encounters 5-A** through **D** could lead them to the ruins of the former Pholtan New Dawn Camp north of Midmeadow. Alternatively, the PCs could have been arrested (**Encounter 5-E**) and summarily questioned by Bishop Thorea, who spun a delicate lie about Callidan Estani investigating a plague remnant at the ruins, the suspiciousness of which could lead the PCs there in search of the missing priest of Pelor. Finally, the PCs could have made an exceptional Gather Information

check within the Traders' Bazaar during **Encounter 4** that yielded news about a lumber merchant and his discovery of freshly felled and stacked logs some miles northeast of the city; as logging is not permitted in that area without the Crown's permission, the news is worthy of investigation and leads the PCs directly past the ruins.

The unremarkable ruins are located roughly five miles north of the city. No formal road leads to them, but the well-worn trail made by thousands of Tenha refugees during the early CY 590s passes within a few hundred yards of the site. A DC 25 Search check within the ruins yields predictable evidence: bits of cloth torn from scavengers, small animal tracks, remnants from a campfire two days old, and small replica model of a New Dawn Camp.

PCs who played NMR3-03 note that the area looks much the same now as it did then: gently rolling hills covered with light grass and sparse groves of middle aged trees stretching away as far as the eye can see, with the Gamboge Forest to the east being the nearest dominant landmark. More importantly, Callidan Estani is nowhere to be found, nor is there any evidence of a fleshy human limb or any trace of the 585 CY plague.

There are two ways for the PCs to find the new New Dawn Camp from here. The first is to succeed at a DC 22 Track check, which locates two sets of heavy, Medium-sized boot prints leading north-by-northwest away from the ruins (two days old, firm ground, moving at half speed to hide the trail). It is important to note that these tracks do not lead to or from Midmeadow, but simply exit the ruins in the direction indicated; PCs who played NYR7-08 are allowed a DC 10 Wisdom check to recall that the exact same phenomenon occurred near the gap in the north wall the morning Callidan disappeared.

The tracks lead for two miles into ever-thickening groves before a new type of tree appears, which matches those noted by the lumber merchant in **Encounter 4**; the tracks of his oxen are also visible here (these can be found with a DC 10 Search check), having approached from the northwest and making it unlikely that he visited the ruins but instead came from the north and went back the same way. The PCs also find the large indentation in the ground where those logs were presumably stacked.

The second way is to spend some time studying the model of the New Dawn Camp. A thorough examination of the model, a DC 12 Int or Search check, will reveal both a number of physical differences between the model and the layout of the ruined new dawn camp as well as some short hand notes on the bottom. It should be obvious to the PCs that the model is not of this camp, but likely another camp somewhere (perhaps even in the Pale). At this point, a DC 10 Decipher Script check will sort out the notes as compass directions, north-by-northwest, and miles, three. A DC 15 Knowledge (geography) or Survival check will allow the PCs to find the new New Dawn camp if they choose to go looking for it, in lieu of following the tracks.

After following the original tracks one more mile, or having stumbled on the location by examining the model

and its notes, the PCs enter a particularly dense copse of trees and are soon fully concealed beneath its canopy. Read or paraphrase the following:

Densely packed trees huddle together to preserve their secret. The ground here, carpeted with decaying leaves and twigs, shows boot prints and the unmistakable drag marks of logs taken from the interior. After a few hundred yards the hint of a trail ends at a sight no less ominous than Zandor's crypt: an incomplete, two-storied structure whose semi-exposed, skeletal interior is as wooden as the expressions of those stoic personalities its predecessor once sheltered.

Pale PCs, those who have adventured in the Theocracy, those who have played NMR3-03, those succeeding on a DC 10 Knowledge (local—NMR) check, and especially those who have been incarcerated within one will instantly recognize the structure as a new New Dawn Camp. The very existence of this structure is effectively a crime against Nyron and the edict of the King, but whoever is responsible for its construction remains unknown for the moment.

It was intended as a second, secret New Dawn Camp whose construction began in late 596 CY, around the time that the Valorous League of Blindness was expelled from Nyron. Zylinchin and the League are the original planners and architects but were forced to abandon it when they withdrew to the Pale. A DC 15 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check notes that the construction is not only crude but effected in two stages: though the League may have started the project, Valcroy's Penumbra Vanguard has (since mid-597 CY) been using it as a temporary base and continued its own unskilled attempts at construction. The second story is little more than a skeleton, with no exterior walls and the barest hint of rooms; the first floor is more complete, with a complete roof and three intact exterior walls.

The PCs will most likely approach from the west, emerging into the clearing and peering into the dim interior through the uncompleted fourth wall. Consult DM AID #3 for the remainder of this encounter as well as **Encounter 7** (but note that the lower map of the clearing on DM AID #3 is used as a guideline only and does not represent actual distances. The clearing should measure roughly 200 feet in diameter, and the foes should start at least 100 feet away from the PCs).

Allow the PCs to explore the structure as they will. Callidan is in the room indicated on DM AID #3, the window of which is boarded over to block light; he is gagged, bound to a wooden support beam with silk rope, and has an old Valorous League banner draped over him to obscure his vision. He has not eaten or had anything to drink in 24 hours, is desperately in need of a bath and a shave, but is otherwise unharmed; he has not had a chance to pray for spells and is missing his holy symbol (the Bishop has it). Unlike Dalis, Callidan is grateful to be rescued: once the PCs free him and quench his thirst, he

thanks them profusely and tries to answer any questions. Despite what the PCs may suspect, his kidnappers are Pholtans, but definitely not the Valorous League.

He has much experience mocking Pholtans, but this particular branch of their religion is unknown to him. He relates being ambushed in Midmeadow the morning of Faith and Penry's last wedding attempt (during NYR7-08) by two muscular men wearing the colors of the Blinding Light. He lost consciousness and awoke exactly the way the PCs found him; he knows weeks if not months have passed, and in that time he has not had visual contact with anyone (removing the banner or the introduction of any bright light source leaves him slightly blind and disoriented for a moment). Roughly every two days a strong pair of gauntleted hands reaches under his banner, removes the gag, and stuffs a large hunk of fresh bread into his mouth. This has invariably been followed by a second pair of hands tilting his head back while a waterskin is put into his mouth.

The crude procedure has kept him alive (and narrowly skirted the effects of thirst and starvation detailed on p. 304 of the DMG), so his captors are clearly not interested in killing him. Through attentive listening he estimates that they are a band of at least one dozen men; he has also smelled horses, heard the heavy clanking of metal armor, and the voice of one woman speaking in Elven (a language he also knows). He suspects by the noise he has heard that they have some kind of retreat outside the wall of his chamber (east of the clearing), and that they congregate there. Callidan strongly advocates stealth, but tells the PCs that he is not physically prepared for a fight, nor does he have any spells available. His Heal skill, however, is respectable, and he wants to see the looks on his captors' faces when the PCs confront them. Thus, Callidan will aid in what way he can. When the PCs are ready to explore east of the structure, proceed to **Encounter 7**.

♣ **Callidan Estani:** male half-elf (Rhennee) cleric 7 (Pelor); Heal +12.

Development: The combat in **Encounter 7** can happen one of two ways. High Priest Valcroy and members of the Penumbra Vanguard are in the clearing east of this structure engaged in their ritual with the Scrolls of Light. If the PCs participated in **Encounter 5-E**, Thorea will have warned Valcroy via *sending*; in this case the combatants from **Encounter 7** emerge from the woods east of this area just as the PCs are about to head in that direction, and thus the combat takes place here, allowing the PCs to use the new structure to their advantage, if desired. If, however, the PCs made it here without alerting the Bishop or Valcroy (most notably by avoiding **Encounter 5-E**), then they will have the element of surprise, as Valcroy believes this base is unknown to anyone outside of the Vanguard.

ENCOUNTER 7: ECLIPSE

During this encounter the PCs venture (with or without Callidan) east (provided they have the element of surprise) in search of Callidan's abductors and an explanation for their rash, criminal acts. Exiting the clearing, the PCs enter another thick copse of trees whose rigid, razor-straight trunks have had the bark stripped away. This copse extends for 900 feet to another man-made clearing. Once the PCs make their presence known, read or paraphrase the following:

The trees ahead part to reveal a second clearing, this one almost perfectly circular, slightly smaller than the previous one, and filled with dozens of men gathered in a crescent shape whose tips point to the south; their bowed heads and closed eyes suggest they are engaged in prayer. The grass here has been burned and treated with some kind of alchemical substance that gives the ground a glossy black sheen, except at the very southern edge of the clearing: in this one spot is a glowing green circle fifteen feet in diameter. The men are variously dressed in heavy and light armor, and a few wear robes, yet all are armed with quarterstaves and wear black masks that cover their eyes and noses. Beneath the trees on the far side of the clearing is a collection of light warhorses watched over by more similarly attired men.

Upon each of the masks is a glowing blue sigil that resembles a crescent moon. Leading the men in their chant is another masked, male human wearing heavy armor under purple-trimmed black robes, to which is fastened a stylized holy symbol of Pholtus in the form of a brooch. To his right is a masked female half-elf in tight-fitting leather armor that looks up at your approach and interrupts the chanting man. His face contorts into a scowl as he shouts a quick succession of orders, whereupon the assembled men, instead of swarming your party, scramble east into the trees, mount up, and ride away, while the half-elf and the remaining men move in your direction.

The PCs have interrupted a ritual of the Penumbral Vanguard in which their leader, who is none other than Hayden Valcroy, High Priest of the Blinding Light sect of Pholtus, seeks to enlist the service of a Lawfully-aligned outsider as an intermediary between himself and Pholtus for the purpose of permanently invalidating the Scrolls of Light on a deific scale. The Vanguard is a secret society within the Church of the Blinding Light; so secret, in fact, that most members of the sect are unaware of its existence. Indoctrination is solely at Valcroy's discretion. Despite his dedication to secrecy, meticulous orchestration, and clarity of purpose, Valcroy's plan is fated to fail for two reasons. In the first place, there is an impostor within the Vanguard in the form of the female half-elf, who is not the sympathizer and advisor she pretends to be but a spy whose masters seek to recover

the tome for their own ends. She planned to betray Valcroy and flee when the outsider appeared to negotiate, but the PCs have now forced her to fight in order to preserve her cover identity and scheme to recover the tome later. Valcroy and the Vanguard are unaware of her spellthief abilities; the High Priest and his minions are considered unwilling targets of her abilities.

The second reason Valcroy's plan will fail is that no extraplanar emissary of Pholtus will endorse it and thus betray the deity by aiding the High Priest. What Valcroy overlooked in his quest to solidify worship by eliminating a specious sect is that his own Blinding Light sect is but a pale reflection of the success of the Theocracy's One True Path church. Despite the insular nature of religion in the Pale, ongoing debate there between Progressives and Conservatives over doctrine and dogma prevents a uniform degree of worship. Valcroy's plan, at best, would have severed one head of the hydra that is the Pholtan religion; in time, another, much like the Bright Path or the Penumbral Vanguard, will grow to take its place.

Valcroy's fate depends on both how and when the PCs arrived here. If more than 24 hours have passed since the PCs first reached the city (during **Encounter 3** or **4**), then the ritual has already failed and the outsider has departed; if the PCs participated in **Encounter 5-E**, then Valcroy has been warned of their coming by Thorea and consequently hurried the ritual in time to complete it and deal with the PCs, which also causes it to fail (the outsider equated haste with malfeasance and departed); finally, if the PCs surprise Valcroy in the clearing (by avoiding **Encounter 5-E**), their mere presence aborts the ritual and the outsider never even appears.

In each case, though the ritual has failed, Valcroy (or the remaining acolyte; see below) still has possession of the Scrolls of Light, which technically do not belong to any particular individual or organization but which would be incriminating if discovered with a member of the Blinding Light, as the tome is believed to have been destroyed in 589 CY. Moreover, Valcroy and the Vanguard are additionally guilty of kidnapping, inciting chaos, endangering the public's trust, and aiding and abetting banditry (by not initially reporting Wiczling's gang), so their goal now is simply to escape. Once the PCs are spotted, the majority of the Vanguard mounts up and flees, as Valcroy's standing order is preserve the secrecy of their identities, especially to uninitiated members of the Blinding Light. At APLs 2-10, the PCs face two or three Vanguard members (one Bright Path acolyte, one defender, and, above APL 2, the half-elf agent) who volunteer to hold off the PCs while their own brethren flee; at APLs 12-16 Valcroy replaces the acolyte and there are additional fighters in the rear guard force. The half-elf flees at APL 2 but remains to fight at all other APLs.

Recovering the Scrolls of Light would aid the PCs in explaining the plot they have discovered here. The green circle at the south edge of the clearing is a functioning summoning circle and a remnant of the Valorous League's last days here, when it was used in their

misguided cause (notably in the *Headwinds* series). It radiates the appropriate magical auras. It, and the black alchemical substance on the ground (which is simply used to darken the grass for this ceremony), both play no role in this combat.

Creatures:

APL 2 (EL 4)

✦ **Bright Path Acolyte:** male human cleric 3 (Pholtus); hp 21; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Penumbral Vanguard Defender:** male human fighter 1; hp 9; *Appendix 1*.

APL 4 (EL 7)

✦ **Bright Path Acolyte:** male human cleric 5 (Pholtus); hp 35; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Penumbral Vanguard Defender:** male human fighter 3; hp 28; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Agent Provocateur:** female half-elf spellthief 3; hp 16; *Appendix 1*.

APL 6 (EL 9)

✦ **Bright Path Acolyte:** male human cleric 7 (Pholtus); hp 49; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Penumbral Vanguard Defender:** male human fighter 5; hp 47; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Agent Provocateur:** female half-elf spellthief 5; hp 27; *Appendix 1*.

APL 8 (EL 11)

✦ **Bright Path Acolyte:** male human cleric 9 (Pholtus); hp 72; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Penumbral Vanguard Defender:** male human fighter 7; hp 66; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Agent Provocateur:** female half-elf spellthief 7; hp 38; *Appendix 1*.

APL 10 (EL 13)

✦ **Bright Path Acolyte:** male human cleric 11 (Pholtus); hp 88; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Penumbral Vanguard Defender:** male human fighter 9; hp 85; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Agent Provocateur:** female half-elf spellthief 9; hp 49; *Appendix 1*.

APL 12 (EL 15)

✦ **Hayden Valcroy:** male human cleric 14 (Pholtus); hp 112; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Penumbral Vanguard Defender (2):** male human fighter 9; hp 85; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Agent Provocateur:** female half-elf spellthief 9; hp 49; *Appendix 1*.

APL 14 (EL 17)

✦ **Hayden Valcroy:** male human cleric 14 (Pholtus); hp 112; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Penumbral Vanguard Defender (2):** male human fighter 13; hp 123; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Agent Provocateur:** female half-elf spellthief 13; hp 84; *Appendix 1*.

APL 16 (EL 19)

✦ **Hayden Valcroy:** male human cleric 14 (Pholtus); hp 112; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Penumbral Vanguard Defender (3):** male human fighter 13; hp 123; *Appendix 1*.

✦ **Agent Provocateur:** female half-elf spellthief 17; hp 127; *Appendix 1*.

Tactics: The Vanguard are NOT the Valorous League: they are not fanatical lunatics and do not wish to permanently harm the PCs. They employ nonlethal damage whenever possible and, if time permits during the heat of combat, attempt to stabilize fallen PCs to prevent their accidental death. At the same, they strive to preserve their secrecy by defeating the PCs and escaping, and thus do not engage in idle banter, taunts, or any explanation of their actions, instead using teamwork and efficiency to neutralize as many PCs as quickly as possible. Vanguard clerics have at least one *darkness* spell (or equivalent) prepared at all times as part of their dogma. The Vanguard boasts no paladins, but the fighters in its ranks wield their quarterstaves like swords and always attack with a single end, never employing them as double weapons.

At APL 2 the acolyte uses *heat metal* and *hold person* on obvious fighter-types in heavy armor. He also uses *command* in an attempt to briefly reduce the number of opponents ("flee" is the preferred choice) and allow the fighter to focus on one or two targets. The fighter drinks his *potion of shield of faith* and moves to attack obvious spellcasters, especially other clerics (after attempting to identify their holy symbols with his meager knowledge of religion). At this APL the half-elf spy cuts her losses and flees, mounting a horse and riding away. She is not a combatant.

At APL 4 the acolyte attempts to diffuse the situation with *calm emotions* (ideally targeting the entire party, if possible), following it up (if successful) with a Diplomacy check to pacify the PCs, all of which allows his fleeing brethren a greater chance of escape. If this attempt fails, the tactics are identical to those at APL 2. The half-elf spy joins the combat at this APL, quaffing her *potion of blur* and working with the fighter as a flanking partner on PC spellcasters. She initially uses normal sneak attack damage on such targets, but if such a target casts a spell, she then tries her Steal Spell ability to drain the PC's spells. Be sure to apply her Spellgrace bonus (+1 or +2) to all of her saving throws against PC spells.

At APL 6 these tactics remain the same, except that the acolyte follows a failed *calm emotions* attempt with *freedom of movement* and *prayer*, further using *darkness* to separate and isolate the PCs. The spellthief readies her *scroll of fireball* and uses it if the PCs begin to gain the upper hand (her UMD check is DC 25).

At APL 8 the acolyte's tactics are modified by his casting of *fire shield* after *prayer*, and the use of *deeper darkness* instead of *darkness*. Both he and the fighter drink their potions of *haste* as soon as possible to maximize their movement and attacks. The spellthief readies her scroll of *cone of cold* (UMD DC 29) and uses the same tactics noted above; at this APL and above her wavering morality and sense of self-preservation are heightened, and she is more likely to apply her full sneak attack damage to a weakened target instead of channeling some to her abilities.

At APL 10 the acolyte follows a failed *calm emotions* attempt with *greater command* ("flee"), *spell resistance*, and *true seeing*. All three foes drink their potions of *haste* as soon as possible. The spellthief tries to goad any casters into targeting her with spells in order to trigger her Absorb Spell ability. She readies her scroll of *flesh to stone* to eliminate rogues or resilient casters.

At APL 12 and above it is High Priest Valcroy himself and not an acolyte who stays behind to neutralize the PCs. Valcroy was an accomplished two-weapon fighter long before he envisioned the Vanguard, so he is just as likely to enter melee as he is to cast spells depending on PC tactics (Valcroy prefers using Spellcraft and waiting until one PC has several buffs in effect before striking with his *quarterstaff of spell storing* in an attempt to dispel the buffs). He has several spells prepared that were intended to counter a hostile outsider, and which may now be swapped out for curing spells. Note whether or not the PCs surprised Valcroy in this encounter; if they did, he still has his *planar ally* spell prepared. Otherwise, cross it off his spell list. He keeps to his word and does not intentionally try to kill any PCs, though *flame strike* is an option if they prove too aggressive. Valcroy leads off with *freedom of movement*, *prayer*, and *repulsion* before buffing himself with *divine power* and *spell resistance*. If things look bleak, he uses *word of recall* to retreat to Narsel Mendred, the center of Bright Path worship and (so he thinks) the last place anyone would think to look for him. The fighters work to keep PCs away from Valcroy; they, along with the spellthief, employ the tactics noted in APL 10.

At APL 14 the only change in tactics involves the spellthief, who leads off with her own spells (*mirror image* or *see invisibility*, followed by *displacement*) before closing for melee. At this APL she also readies her scroll of *prismatic spray* (UMD DC 30) and is equally like to steal spells from Valcroy (especially healing) as from the PCs.

At APL 16, the spellthief is actually a super-spy who could pose a significant challenge to Valcroy had she any goal other than the theft of the Scrolls of Light. She leads off with *greater invisibility* followed by *see invisibility*, *crushing despair*, and *haste*. If the PCs start to gain the advantage, she wastes no time and attempts to use her scroll of *greater teleport* (UMD DC 30).

Finally, for the PC visited by the tiny spider in **Encounter 2**, the spirit of the Brown Recluse now manifests. If the PC was benevolent, followed the spider to Tess's nocturnal meeting, and allowed the spider to

remain afterwards, the PC gains the Blessing of Istus. This favor has two benefits, each of which is usable only once. The first bestows the grace of Istus and confers *freedom of movement* on the PC for a number of consecutive rounds equal to the Recluse's total class level at the time of his death (12th). The second allows the PC to Tempt Fate by granting divine prescience in the form of a +12 insight bonus to one future saving throw. This effectively allows the PC to sense danger before any harmful effect occurs, and he or she must apply the bonus before the saving throw is rolled. In this case the favor is marked off of the Adventure Record. However, if the PC wishes to Tempt Fate, he or she may choose to forego the bonus and roll normally. If the saving throw is successful, the PC may apply the difference between the target DC and his or her actual save to a celestial saving throw pool, which stacks with the Recluse's original bonus. The PC retains this favor and may use it for any future saving throw, applying the new bonus or once again tempting fate and possibly increasing the pool further. The tiny spider remains with the PC until both favors are used.

Treasure:

👑**APL 2:** Loot: 136 gp; Coin: 3 gp; Magic: 120 gp – *potion of shield of faith* +2 (4 gp each), *potion of cure light wounds* (x3; 4 gp each), *cloak of resistance* +1 (83 gp each), *dust of tracelessness* (21 gp each).

👑**APL 4:** Loot: 209 gp; Coin: 7 gp; Magic: 520 gp – +1 *half-plate* (146 gp each), *cloak of resistance* +1 (x3; 83 gp each), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (x2; 25 gp each), *divine scroll of sound burst* (13 gp each), *potion of shield of faith* +2 (4 gp each), *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp each), *potion of blur* (25 gp each), *potion of invisibility* (25 gp each).

👑**APL 6:** Loot: 156 gp; Coin: 4 gp; Magic: 1126 gp – +1 *studded leather armor* (98 gp each), *cloak of resistance* +1 (x3; 83 gp each), *potion of cure serious wounds* (63 gp each), *potion of blur* (25 gp each), *potion of invisibility* (25 gp each), *scroll of fireball* (CL 5th; 31 gp each), +1 *half-plate* (x2; 146 gp each), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (x3; 25 gp each), *potion of haste* (63 gp each), *ring of protection* +1 (167 gp each), *potion of shield of faith* +3 (25 gp each).

👑**APL 8:** Loot: 208 gp; Coin: 61 gp; Magic: 1894 gp – +1 *studded leather armor* (98 gp each), *cloak of resistance* +1 (x2; 83 gp each), *cloak of resistance* +2 (333 gp each), +1 *half-plate* (x2; 146 gp each), *potion of cure serious wounds* (x3; 63 gp each), *potion of shield of faith* +4 (50 gp each), *potion of blur* (25 gp each), *potion of invisibility* (25 gp each), *ring of protection* +1 (x2; 167 gp each), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (x3; 25 gp each), *potion of haste* (x2; 63 gp each), *potion of displacement* (63 gp each), *scroll of cone of cold* (CL 9th; 94 gp each), *brooch of shielding* (125 gp each).

👑**APL 10:** Loot: 212 gp; Coin: 165 gp; Magic: 3155 gp – +1 *studded leather armor* (98 gp each), *cloak of resistance* +1 (x2; 83 gp each), *cloak of resistance* +2 (333 gp each), +1 *half-plate* (146 gp each), +2 *half-plate* (396 gp each), *potion of cure serious wounds* (x6; 63 gp each), *potion of shield of faith* +5 (75 gp each), *potion of blur* (25 gp each), *potion of invisibility* (25 gp each), *ring of protection* +1 (x2; 167 gp

each), potion of haste (x3; 63 gp each), potion of displacement (63 gp each), scroll of flesh to stone (CL 11th; 138 gp each), brooch of shielding (125 gp each), bracers of arcane freedom (192 gp each), periapt of wisdom +2 (333 gp each).

☞ **APL 12:** Loot: 237 gp; Coin: 178 gp; Magic: 6215 gp – +1 studded leather armor (98 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x3; 83 gp each), cloak of resistance +3 (750 gp each), +1 half-plate (x2 146 gp each), potion of cure serious wounds (x6; 63 gp each), potion of shield of faith +5 (x2; 75 gp each), potion of haste (x3; 63 gp each), potion of blur (25 gp each), potion of invisibility (25 gp each), brooch of shielding (x2; 125 gp each), ring of protection +1 (167 gp each), bracers of arcane freedom (192 gp each), scroll of flesh to stone (CL 11th; 138 gp each), periapt of wisdom +4 (1333 gp each), +2 chainmail of light fortification (775 gp each), +1/+1 darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing (887 gp each).

☞ **APL 14:** Loot: 186 gp; Coin: 178 gp; Magic: 12177 gp – potion of shield of faith +5 (x2; 75 gp each), cloak of resistance +2 (x3; 333 gp each), cloak of resistance +3 (750 gp each), potion of cure serious wounds (x7; 63 gp each), potion of blur (25 gp each), potion of invisibility (25 gp each), bracers of arcane freedom (192 gp each), ring of protection +1 (167 gp each), potion of haste (63 gp each), brooch of shielding (x2; 125 gp each), periapt of wisdom +4 (1333 gp each), +2 chainmail of light fortification (775 gp each), +2 studded leather armor (347 gp each), +2 half-plate (x2; 396 gp each), amulet of health +2 (333 gp each), pink and green sphere ioun stone (667 gp each), scroll of prismatic spray (CL 13th; 190 gp each), boots of speed (x2; 1000 gp each), +1/+1 darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing (887 gp each), +1 merciful quarterstaff (x2; 717 gp each).

☞ **APL 16:** Loot: 273 gp; Coin: 111 gp; Magic: 21288 gp – potion of shield of faith +5 (x3; 75 gp each), cloak of resistance +2 (x3; 333 gp each), cloak of resistance +3 (750 gp each), potion of cure serious wounds (x9; 63 gp each), potion of blur (25 gp each), potion of invisibility (25 gp each), bracers of arcane freedom (192 gp each), ring of protection +3 (1500 gp each), brooch of shielding (x3; 125 gp each), periapt of wisdom +4 (1333 gp each), +2 chainmail of light fortification (775 gp each), +3 studded leather armor (765 gp each), cloak of resistance +5 (2083 gp each), +2 half-plate (x3; 396 gp each), boots of speed (x3; 1000 gp each), scroll of prismatic spray (CL 13th; 190 gp each), scroll of greater teleport (CL 13th; 190 gp each), pink and green sphere ioun stone (667 gp each), amulet of health +4 (1333 gp each), divine scroll of freedom of movement (CL 7th; 58 gp each), ring of mind shielding (667 gp each), +1/+1 darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing (887 gp each), +1 merciful quarterstaff (x3; 717 gp each), +1 thundering cold iron dagger (1359 gp each).

Detect Magic Results: potion of shield of faith +2 (faint abjuration), potion of shield of faith +3 (moderate abjuration), potion of shield of faith +4 and +5 (strong abjuration), potion of cure light wounds (faint conjuration), cloak of resistance +1, +2, +3 and +5 (faint abjuration), dust of tracelessness (faint transmutation), +1 and +2 half-plate (faint abjuration), potion of cure moderate wounds (faint conjuration), divine scroll of sound burst (faint evocation), potion of blur (faint illusion), potion of invisibility (faint illusion), +1 +2 and +3 leather armor (faint abjuration),

potion of cure serious wounds (faint conjuration), scroll of fireball (CL 5th, faint evocation), potion of haste (faint transmutation), ring of protection +1 and +3 (faint abjuration), potion of displacement (faint illusion), scroll of cone of cold (CL 9th; moderate evocation), brooch of shielding (faint abjuration), scroll of flesh to stone (CL 11th; moderate transmutation), bracers of arcane freedom (moderate abjuration), periapt of wisdom +2 and +4 (moderate transmutation), +2 chainmail of light fortification (faint abjuration and strong abjuration), amulet of health +2 and +4 (moderate transmutation), pink and green sphere ioun stone (moderate transmutation), scroll of prismatic spray (CL 13th; strong evocation), boots of speed (moderate transmutation), scroll of greater teleport (CL 13th; strong conjuration), divine scroll of freedom of movement (CL 7th; moderate abjuration), ring of mind shielding (faint abjuration), +1/+1 darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing (faint evocation, faint evocation and strong evocation), +1 merciful quarterstaff (faint evocation and faint conjuration), +1 thundering cold iron dagger (faint evocation and faint necromancy).

Development: If the PCs are all incapacitated, Valcroy and the half-elf spy escape (especially at APL 2, where neither of them are combatants) with the Scrolls of Light. However, if the PCs are victorious, the Scrolls can be recovered from whichever NPC possesses them (Valcroy or the acolyte, depending on APL). Any surviving combatants can be marched back to Midmeadow and the priest of Heironeous as proof of what the Vanguard has done (recovery of the Scrolls and the PCs' willingness to submit to a *discern lies* formality also qualifies as proof and success in their mission). Finally, if any PCs were killed as the Vanguard escaped, the members prove not to be a completely immoral, heartless bunch, and they leave behind sufficient funds (in the form of gear) to pay for a *raise dead* spell for one PC. The PCs should now return to Midmeadow to report the events here. Proceed to **Encounter 8**.

ENCOUNTER 8: ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER PLACE

During this encounter the PCs return to Midmeadow and deliver any evidence recovered from the new New Dawn Camp that implicates the Penumbral Vanguard and/or High Priest Valcroy in any recent wrongdoing. Such evidence could include defeated Vanguard prisoners, the Scrolls of Light, the half-elf spy, or Callidan Estani. Upon their return the PCs find that Propheus from **Encounter 3** is (depending on their Diplomacy check with him) either still waiting one hour outside the South Gate or has already moved the envoy into Midmeadow, temporarily assumed control of the temple of Pholtus, and lifted the martial law decree in the name of the King (if the PCs skipped **Encounter 3**, this latter effect is the current situation). In either case, the PCs are easily able to make contact with him, and the evidence is enough for him to decisively wrest control of the city

from Bishop Thorea and summarily dismiss the Nyrondese troops back to their post at the Pale border. Victorious PCs are lauded as heroes not only by the priest, but also by Midmeadow residents for exposing the Vanguard and restoring some stability to the city, especially if Callidan has been rescued. Propheus immediately casts a *sending* to contact his superiors, who are with the King.

Within minutes he receives a response and informs the PCs that the King himself is en route to the city, and will be there within three days. He urges the PCs to remain in the city so that the King can thank and likely reward them personally. In the meantime, the PCs are free to do what they wish, but parties who transported the Inanilae plants from **Encounter 2** may wish to attempt to graft them to the deteriorating city walls in hopes of effecting a reversal of decay. Doing so requires at least two cooperating PCs who between them possess at least one rank in Heal, Knowledge (nature), Survival, and Use Magic Device (the soil in which the Inanilae plants are nestled is volcanic and was taken from an area near Zandor's lair; it is tainted and radiates faint Transmutation magic). The graft process takes a minimum of 24 hours, after which the PCs must roll a modified skill check: one PC rolls the primary d20 while the others assist, and all PCs may use any of their applicable skills to do so. For instance, a PC with a good Heal skill can act as the primary, while the others use any of the other skills to assist (assisting requires a DC 10). The graft-DC is 30 (PCs who think to cast *speak with plants* before rolling gain a +5 insight bonus to the roll). The PCs effectively get two chances to succeed at this check before the King arrives.

Roughly two days later the King and his entourage arrive at the South Gate. There is no boxed text for this encounter, but you are encouraged to use dramatic flourish in describing it. Accompanying the King is a contingent of Inanilae elves being led by Tess and her female aides. She is formally attired in a full-length green gown, made of ash tree leaves, and a matching falcon-feather headdress, looking more like a noble than a fighting tribal chief. Within the hour, the gates are sealed by the King's royal guards, royal arcanists hover over the city, the entire Bright Path clergy (including Bishop Thorea) are assembled on the temple steps, the two Knight-Captains and Dalis Mirivan are released from captivity, and the King (flanked by Tess) delivers several proclamations from the temple steps:

- As a result of recent discoveries by heroic adventurers, all known members of the Penumbra Vanguard, joining the Valorous League of Blindness, are hereby permanently banished from Nyrond, effective immediately. Local leaders of the Blinding Light sect and the Bright path sect, including Bishop Thorea and High Priest Valcroy, are bound over for trial (if captured and alive), facing charges of treason. (The two Knight-Captains are politely asked to return to the Pale.)

- The Bright Path sect is hereby evicted from the temple, which will be rededicated to Heironeous before sundown tomorrow. No sect of Pholtus will be allowed an official presence within the Woodverge province, forthwith. Reassignment of the remaining church officials will be left to their respective organizations.
- A permanent shrine to Corellon is to be erected on the eastern shore of Blackwater Park; the King's men will assist with this task.
- Tess'inene-ilae is hereby appointed as the new Countess of Woodverge and the official Steward of Midmeadow (effectively returning control of the city to the elves after decades of human negligence, abuse, and self-interest).

Following these proclamations a general celebration takes place, in which Tess (and Valandril, if he survived **Encounter 1**, who has become her viceroy) stroll through the city and mingle among their new constituents. If the PCs recovered the Scrolls of Light, they learn that the King has long been in negotiations with the elven tribes of the Gamboge concerning Nyrond's northern border, and that this situation with the Vanguard was the final nail in the Pholtan coffin, so to speak. Adherents of that deity have proven time and again that they cannot be trusted where the Pale is involved, and Nyrond is not a playground for their petty, internal power schemes. Aiding in the King's decision to appoint Tess is her experience as a tribal leader, her youth, and the word of adventurers (from NYR6-06 and NYR7-08, especially those who introduced her to Kirelle). Finally, if the Scrolls of Light were recovered and presented as evidence, the priest of Heironeous recommends having them returned to the Bright Path sect. If the PCs agree to this, it entitles them to the Favor of the Bright Path on the Adventure Record.

Development: The King and his entourage depart within two hours, after ensuring that the Bright Path members vacate the temple. After that, Tess warmly thanks the PCs for their efforts and tells them that they are welcome here anytime; she will be dividing her time between her tribal duties in the Gamboge and Midmeadow's restoration.

CONCLUSION

The Brown Recluse's corpse is returned to Aricyn, who thanks the PCs, promptly departing with Towk and the body for the Gamboge and cryptically announcing that they will be back soon. She asks Callidan to watch over the Silk Plateau in the interim. The Six from Stoink discover an abandoned, underground lair in the Gamboge and take up residence, where a voice soon speaks to them from the darkness. Faith and Dalis elope,

joining a caravan bound for Greyhawk City. Finally, a brooding Penrys Bonchal is last seen in the company of some Cuthbertians as they departed the city for parts unknown...

Critical Events Summary

Please take a moment to review the following questions and submit the relevant responses and any feedback (positive or negative) to the Nyronde Triad at triad@nyrond.org and/or the author at eteignoir@yahoo.com:

1. Did the PCs stop Zandor's transformation into a lich?
2. Did the PCs successfully graft the Inanilae plants onto Midmeadow's deteriorating walls?
3. Did the PCs recover the Scrolls of Light and allow them to be returned to the Bright Path?
4. Did the PCs capture or kill High Priest Valcroy?
5. Did the PCs capture the half-elf spellthief spy?

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

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

Encounter 1: The Transformed Man

Disable/survive the trap in Zandor's lair:

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	330 XP
APL 12	390 XP
APL 14	450 XP
APL 16	510 XP

Encounter 1: The Transformed Man

Defeat Zandor's guardians:

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	420 XP
APL 14	480 XP
APL 16	540 XP

Encounter 7: Eclipse

Defeat the Penumbra Vanguard:

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP
APL 8	330 XP
APL 10	390 XP
APL 12	450 XP
APL 14	510 XP
APL 16	570 XP

Story Award

Successfully stopping Zandor's transformation:

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP
APL 10	90 XP
APL 12	105 XP
APL 14	120 XP
APL 16	135 XP

Story Award

Successfully grafting the Inanilae plants onto Midmeadow's walls:

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	45 XP

APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP
APL 10	90 XP
APL 12	105 XP
APL 14	120 XP
APL 16	135 XP

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP
APL 10	90 XP
APL 12	105 XP
APL 14	120 XP
APL 16	135 XP

Total possible experience:

APL 2	450 XP
APL 4	675 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1125 XP
APL 10	1350 XP
APL 12	1575 XP
APL 14	1800 XP
APL 16	2025 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a "treasure" section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast identify, analyze dweomer or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may

attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate.

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

Encounter 1: The Transformed Man

APL 2: Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 55 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each).

APL 4: Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 541 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each), rod of viscid globs (167 gp each), necklace of fireballs (Type II; 225 gp each), arcane scroll of break enchantment (94 gp each).

APL 6: Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 708 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each), rod of viscid globs (167 gp each), necklace of fireballs (Type II; 225 gp each), arcane scroll of break enchantment (94 gp each), slashing sand (167 gp each).

APL 8: Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 1208 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each), rod of viscid globs (167 gp each), necklace of fireballs (Type II; 225 gp each), arcane scroll of break enchantment (94 gp each), slashing sand (167 gp each), deathguardian bracers (500 gp each).

APL 10: Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 2041 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each), rod of viscid globs (167 gp each), necklace of fireballs (Type II; 225 gp each), arcane scroll of break enchantment (94 gp each), slashing sand (167 gp each), deathguardian bracers (500 gp each), robe of mysterious conjuration (833 gp each).

APL 12: Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 3391 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each), rod of viscid globs (167 gp each), necklace of fireballs (Type II; 225 gp each), arcane scroll of break enchantment (94 gp each), slashing sand (167 gp each), deathguardian bracers (500 gp each), robe of mysterious conjuration (833 gp each), +1 magic-eating mithril breastplate (1350 gp each).

APL 14: Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 5058 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each), rod of viscid globs (167 gp each), necklace of fireballs (Type II; 225 gp each), arcane scroll of break enchantment (94 gp each), slashing sand (167 gp each), deathguardian bracers (500 gp each), robe of mysterious conjuration (833 gp each), +1 magic-eating mithril breastplate (1350 gp each), bone ring (1667 gp each).

APL 16: Loot: 11 gp; Coin: 333 gp; Magic: 10891 gp – arcanist's gloves (42 gp each), unguent of timelessness (13 gp each), rod of viscid globs (167 gp each), necklace of fireballs (Type II; 225 gp each), arcane scroll of break enchantment (94 gp each), slashing sand (167 gp each), deathguardian bracers (500 gp each), robe of mysterious conjuration (833 gp each),

+1 magic-eating mithril breastplate (1350 gp each), bone ring (1667 gp each), ring of wizardry (Type III; 5833 gp each).

Encounter 7: Eclipse

APL 2: Loot: 136 gp; Coin: 3 gp; Magic: 120 gp – potion of shield of faith +2 (4 gp each), potion of cure light wounds (x3; 4 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (83 gp each), dust of tracelessness (21 gp each).

APL 4: Loot: 209 gp; Coin: 7 gp; Magic: 520 gp – +1 half-plate (146 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x3; 83 gp each), potion of cure moderate wounds (x2; 25 gp each), divine scroll of sound burst (13 gp each), potion of shield of faith +2 (4 gp each), potion of cure light wounds (4 gp each), potion of blur (25 gp each), potion of invisibility (25 gp each).

APL 6: Loot: 156 gp; Coin: 4 gp; Magic: 1126 gp – +1 studded leather armor (98 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x3; 83 gp each), potion of cure serious wounds (63 gp each), potion of blur (25 gp each), potion of invisibility (25 gp each), scroll of fireball (CL 5th; 31 gp each), +1 half-plate (x2; 146 gp each), potion of cure moderate wounds (x3; 25 gp each), potion of haste (63 gp each), ring of protection +1 (167 gp each), potion of shield of faith +3 (25 gp each).

APL 8: Loot: 208 gp; Coin: 61 gp; Magic: 1894 gp – +1 studded leather armor (98 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x2; 83 gp each), cloak of resistance +2 (333 gp each), +1 half-plate (x2; 146 gp each), potion of cure serious wounds (x3; 63 gp each), potion of shield of faith +4 (50 gp each), potion of blur (25 gp each), potion of invisibility (25 gp each), ring of protection +1 (x2; 167 gp each), potion of cure moderate wounds (x3; 25 gp each), potion of haste (x2; 63 gp each), potion of displacement (63 gp each), scroll of cone of cold (CL 9th; 94 gp each), brooch of shielding (125 gp each).

APL 10: Loot: 212 gp; Coin: 165 gp; Magic: 3155 gp – +1 studded leather armor (98 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x2; 83 gp each), cloak of resistance +2 (333 gp each), +1 half-plate (146 gp each), +2 half-plate (396 gp each), potion of cure serious wounds (x6; 63 gp each), potion of shield of faith +5 (75 gp each), potion of blur (25 gp each), potion of invisibility (25 gp each), ring of protection +1 (x2; 167 gp each), potion of haste (x3; 63 gp each), potion of displacement (63 gp each), scroll of flesh to stone (CL 11th; 138 gp each), brooch of shielding (125 gp each), bracers of arcane freedom (192 gp each), periapt of wisdom +2 (333 gp each).

APL 12: Loot: 237 gp; Coin: 178 gp; Magic: 6215 gp – +1 studded leather armor (98 gp each), cloak of resistance +1 (x3; 83 gp each), cloak of resistance +3 (750 gp each), +1 half-plate (x2 146 gp each), potion of cure serious wounds (x6; 63 gp each), potion of shield of faith +5 (x2; 75 gp each), potion of haste (x3; 63 gp each), potion of blur (25 gp each), potion of invisibility (25 gp each), brooch of shielding (x2; 125 gp each), ring of protection +1 (167 gp each), bracers of arcane freedom (192 gp each), scroll of flesh to stone (CL 11th; 138 gp each), periapt of wisdom +4 (1333 gp each), +2 chainmail of light fortification (775 gp each), +1/+1 darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing (887 gp each).

APL 14: Loot: 186 gp; Coin: 178 gp; Magic: 12177 gp – potion of shield of faith +5 (x2; 75 gp each), cloak of resistance +2 (x3; 333 gp each), cloak of resistance +3 (750 gp each), potion of cure serious wounds (x7; 63 gp each), potion of

blur (25 gp each), *potion of invisibility* (25 gp each), *bracers of arcane freedom* (192 gp each), *ring of protection +1* (167 gp each), *potion of haste* (63 gp each), *brooch of shielding* (x2; 125 gp each), *periapt of wisdom +4* (1333 gp each), +2 *chainmail of light fortification* (775 gp each), +2 *studded leather armor* (347 gp each), +2 *half-plate* (x2; 396 gp each), *amulet of health +2* (333 gp each), *pink and green sphere ioun stone* (667 gp each), *scroll of prismatic spray* (CL 13th; 190 gp each), *boots of speed* (x2; 1000 gp each), +1/+1 *darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing* (887 gp each), +1 *merciful quarterstaff* (x2; 717 gp each).

APL 16: Loot: 273 gp; Coin: 111 gp; Magic: 21288 gp – *potion of shield of faith +5* (x3; 75 gp each), *cloak of resistance +2* (x3; 333 gp each), *cloak of resistance +3* (750 gp each), *potion of cure serious wounds* (x9; 63 gp each), *potion of blur* (25 gp each), *potion of invisibility* (25 gp each), *bracers of arcane freedom* (192 gp each), *ring of protection +3* (1500 gp each), *brooch of shielding* (x3; 125 gp each), *periapt of wisdom +4* (1333 gp each), +2 *chainmail of light fortification* (775 gp each), +3 *studded leather armor* (765 gp each), *cloak of resistance +5* (2083 gp each), +2 *half-plate* (x3; 396 gp each), *boots of speed* (x3; 1000 gp each), *scroll of prismatic spray* (CL 13th; 190 gp each), *scroll of greater teleport* (CL 13th; 190 gp each), *pink and green sphere ioun stone* (667 gp each), *amulet of health +4* (1333 gp each), *divine scroll of freedom of movement* (CL 7th; 58 gp each), *ring of mind shielding* (667 gp each), +1/+1 *darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing* (887 gp each), +1 *merciful quarterstaff* (x3; 717 gp each), +1 *thundering cold iron dagger* (1359 gp each).

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: Loot: 147 gp; Coin: 336 gp; Magic: 175 gp; Total: 658 gp

APL 4: Loot: 220 gp; Coin: 340 gp; Magic: 1061 gp; Total: 1621 gp

APL 6: Loot: 167 gp; Coin: 337 gp; Magic: 1834 gp; Total: 2338 gp

APL 8: Loot: 219 gp; Coin: 394 gp; Magic: 3102 gp; Total: 3715 gp

APL 10: Loot: 223 gp; Coin: 498 gp; Magic: 5196 gp; Total: 5917 gp

APL 12: Loot: 248 gp; Coin: 511 gp; Magic: 9606 gp; Total: 10365 gp

APL 14: Loot: 197 gp; Coin: 511 gp; Magic: 17235 gp; Total: 17943 gp

APL 16: Loot: 284 gp; Coin: 444 gp; Magic: 32179 gp; Total: 32907 gp

Special

☛ **Hero/Heroine of the Realm:** This favor is awarded for thwarting the machinations of the Penumbra Vanguard and entitles the PCs to a weapon upgrade sponsored by the Church of Heironeous, in which they are willing to enchant a weapon with the *divine wrath* ability. Cross off this favor once it is used.

☛ **Favor of the Church of Pelor:** For rescuing Callidan Estani, his superiors reward the PC with a discount on future spellcasting services. Any time the PC is in a

Nyrond city containing a temple of Pelor, this favor may be redeemed for a 50% discount on any spell (including the component costs) of 6th level or less. This favor may be used three times.

☛ **Favor of the Church of the Bright Path:** For returning the *Scrolls of Light* to the Bright Path, its leaders in Narsel Mendred offer to assist with one future Knowledge check (any subject), which grants a +10 insight bonus to the check.

☛ **Blessing of Istus:** This boon is awarded to the PC visited by the celestial spider, provided he or she was benevolent. This favor has two benefits, each of which is usable only once. The first bestows the grace of Istus and confers *freedom of movement* on the PC for up to 12 consecutive rounds. The second allows the PC to Tempt Fate by granting divine prescience in the form of a +12 insight bonus to one future saving throw. This effectively allows the PC to sense danger before any harmful effect occurs, and he or she must apply the bonus before the saving throw is rolled.

☛ **Disfavor of Istus:** For harming the celestial spider of Istus, the Brown Recluse reaches out from beyond the grave and rewards violence and cowardice with adhesiveness and viscosity: for the PC's next 12 combats, he or she suffers a -4 profane penalty to Initiative checks and moves at half-speed as he or she is impeded by Astral Webbing (PCs on the Astral Plane are immune).

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Item Access

APL 2:

- *Arcanist's gloves* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Dust of tracelessness* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Unguent of timelessness* (Adventure; DMG)

APL 4 (all of APL 2 plus the following):

- *Arcane scroll of break enchantment* (CL 9th) (Adventure; PHB)
- *Necklace of fireballs* (Type II; Adventure; DMG)
- *Rod of viscid globs* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)

APL 6 (all of APLs 2-4 plus the following):

- *Slashing sand* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)

APL 8 (all of APLs 2-6 plus the following):

- *Deathguardian bracers* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Scroll of cone of cold* (CL 9th; DMG)

APL 10 (all of APL 2-8 plus the following):

- *Bracers of arcane freedom* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Potion of shield of faith* +5 (Adventure; DMG)
- *Robe of mysterious conjuration* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)

APL 12 (all of APLs 2-10 plus the following):

- +1 *magic-eating mithril breastplate* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Scroll of flesh to stone* (Adventure; DMG)

APL 14 (all of APLs 2-12 plus the following):

- +1/+1 *darkwood quarterstaff of spell-storing* (single-tip spell-storing; Adventure; DMG)
- +1 *merciful quarterstaff* (single-tip enhancement only; Adventure; DMG)
- *Bone ring* (Adventure; Magic Item Compendium)
- *Ioun stone, pink and green sphere* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Scroll of prismatic spray* (CL 13th) (Adventure; DMG)

APL 16 (all of APL 14 plus the following):

- *Ring of mind shielding* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Ring of wizardry*, Type III (Adventure; DMG)
- *Scroll of greater teleport* (CL 13th) (Adventure; DMG)

APPENDIX 1: ALL APLS

VALANDRIL

CR 5

Male wood elf ranger 5

CG Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +9, Spot +9

Languages Common, Elven, Giant

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Dodge, Mobility
(+2 Dex, +4 armor)

hp 30 (5 HD)

Immune sleep

Fort +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4; +2 racial bonus against
enchantment spells or effects

Speed 30 ft. in +1 *studded leather* (6 squares)

Melee masterwork longsword +10 (1d8+6/19-20) or

Melee masterwork longsword +8 (1d8+4/19-20) and
masterwork short sword +8 (1d6+2/19-20) Two-
Weapon Fighting or

Ranged masterwork composite (+4) longbow +8
(1d8+4/x3)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +9

Atk Options favored enemy +2 (dragons), favored
enemy +2 (giants)

Combat Gear *wand of cure light wounds* (46 charges)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 2nd):

1st—*longstrider*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ animal companion, link with companion, wild
empathy +4

Feats Dodge, Endurance^B, Mobility, Track^B, Two-
Weapon Fighting

Skills Climb +6, Heal +4, Hide +5, Knowledge
(geography) +1, Knowledge (local—NMR) +1,
Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +9, Move Silently +5,
Search +2, Speak Language (Giant), Spot +9,
Survival +10

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork longsword,
masterwork short sword, masterwork composite (+4)
longbow, quiver with 20 arrows, +1 *studded leather*,
cloak of resistance +1, *Quaal's feather token* (bird), 9
gp.

ENCOUNTER 7: ECLIPSE**BRIGHT PATH ACOLYTE****CR 3**

Male human cleric 3

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +2**Languages** Common**AC** 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16

(-1 Dex, +7 armor)

hp 21 (3 HD)**Fort** +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6**Speed** 20 ft. in masterwork half-plate (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.**Melee** masterwork quarterstaff +4 (1d6+1) or**Melee** masterwork quarterstaff +0/-4 (1d6+1) two-weapon fighting or**Ranged** light crossbow +1 (1d8/19-20)**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +3**Special Actions** turn undead 5/day (+4, 2d6+5)**Combat Gear** flask of acid, flask of alchemist's fire, *potion of cure light wounds***Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 3rd):2nd—*darkness*, *heat metal*^D (DC 14), *hold person* (DC 14)1st—*bless*, *command* (DC 13), *detect secret doors*^D, *shield of faith*0—*create water*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *read magic***D:** Domain spell. Deity: Pholtus. Domains: Knowledge (cast Divination spells at +1 caster level), Sun (greater turning once per day)**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 14**Feats** Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes**Skills** Concentration +5 (+9 when casting defensively), Heal +4, Knowledge (arcana) +1, Knowledge (history) +1, Knowledge (religion) +5, Knowledge (the planes) +1, Spellcraft +4**Possessions** combat gear plus masterwork quarterstaff, light crossbow, bolt (10), masterwork half-plate, silver holy symbol of Pholtus, *cloak of resistance* +1, 9 gp.**PENUMBRAL VANGUARD DEFENDER****CR 1**

Male human fighter 1

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1**Languages** Common, Elven**AC** 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16

(+6 armor)

hp 9 (1 HD)**Fort** +4, **Ref** +0, **Will** +1**Speed** 20 ft. in masterwork banded mail (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.**Melee** quarterstaff +4 (1d6+3) or**Ranged** bolas +1 (1d4+2 nonlethal)**Base Atk** +1; **Grp** +3**Atk Options** Power Attack**Combat Gear** *dust of tracelessness* (1 dose), flask of alchemist's fire (2), *potion of cure light wounds* (2), *potion of shield of faith* (+2), tanglefoot bag**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 8**Feats** Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bolas), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff)**Skills** Escape Artist -3, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (religion) +3, Sense Motive +3**Possessions** combat gear plus quarterstaff, bolas, masterwork banded mail, 5 gp.

ENCOUNTER 7: ECLIPSE**BRIGHT PATH ACOLYTE****CR 5**

Male human cleric 5

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +3, Spot +3**Languages** Common**AC** 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17

(-1 Dex, +8 armor)

hp 35 (5 HD)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +8**Speed** 20 ft. in +1 *half-plate* (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.**Melee** masterwork quarterstaff +5 (1d6+1) or**Melee** masterwork quarterstaff +1/-3 (1d6+1) two-weapon fighting or**Ranged** masterwork light crossbow +3 (1d8/19-20)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +4**Special Actions** turn undead 5/day (+4, 2d6+7)**Combat Gear** flask of acid, flask of alchemist's fire (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of sound burst*, tanglefoot bag, thunderstone**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 5th):3rd—*blindness* (DC 16), *dispel magic*, *searing light*^D (+2 ranged touch)2nd—*calm emotions* (DC 15), *darkness*, *heat metal*^D (DC 15), *hold person* (DC 15)1st—*bless*, *command* (DC 14), *detect secret doors*^D, *sanctuary* (DC 14), *shield of faith*0—*create water*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*, *read magic***D:** Domain spell. Deity: Pholtus. Domains: Knowledge (cast Divination spells at +1 caster level), Sun (greater turning once per day)**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 14**Feats** Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes**Skills** Concentration +6 (+10 when casting defensively), Heal +5, Knowledge (arcana) +2, Knowledge (history) +2, Knowledge (religion) +6, Knowledge (the planes) +2, Spellcraft +5**Possessions** combat gear plus masterwork quarterstaff, masterwork light crossbow, bolt (10), silver holy symbol of Pholtus, +1 *half-plate*, *cloak of resistance* +1, 9 gp.**PENUMBRAL VANGUARD DEFENDER****CR 3**

Male human fighter 3

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1**Languages** Common, Elven**AC** 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17

(+7 armor)

hp 28 (3 HD)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3**Speed** 20 ft. in masterwork half-plate (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.**Melee** masterwork quarterstaff +7 (1d6+3) or**Ranged** bolas +3 (1d4+2 nonlethal)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +5**Atk Options** Cleave, Power Attack**Combat Gear** flask of alchemist's fire (2), *potion of cure light wounds* (2), *potion of shield of faith* (+2), tanglefoot bag**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 8**Feats** Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bolas), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff)**Skills** Escape Artist -3, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (religion) +4, Sense Motive +4**Possessions** combat gear plus masterwork quarterstaff, bolas, masterwork half-plate, *cloak of resistance* +1, 5 gp.**AGENT PROVOCATEUR****CR 3**

Female half-elf (Rhennee) spellthief 3

N Medium humanoid (half-elf)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +4, Spot +4**Languages** Common, Elven, Rhopan**AC** 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13

(+2 Dex, +3 armor)

hp 16 (3 HD)**Immune** sleep spells and similar effects**Fort** +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5; +1 competence bonus against spells, +2 racial bonus against enchantment spells or effects**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** masterwork cold iron dagger +5 (1d4-1/19-20) or**Ranged** dagger +4 (1d4-1/19-20)**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +1**Atk Options** sneak attack +1d6**Special Actions**, steal energy resistance 10, steal spell (0 or 1st), steal spell effect**Combat Gear** *potion of blur*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of invisibility***Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 3rd):2/day—*detect magic***Abilities** Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 15**SQ** spellgrace +1, trapfinding**Feats** Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Appraise +1, Bluff +3, Concentration +2, Decipher Script +1, Diplomacy +4, Disable Device +1 (+3 with tools), Escape Artist +3, Gather Information +9, Hide +3, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (local-NMR) +5, Listen +4, Move Silently +3, Open Lock +3 (+5 with tools), Search +2, Speak Language (Rhopan), Spellcraft +5, Spot +4, Tumble +4, Use Magic Device +5**Possessions** combat gear plus masterwork cold iron dagger, dagger (2), masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork thieves tools, *cloak of resistance* +1, 22 gp.**Detect Magic (Sp)** A spellthief of 2nd level or higher can use *detect magic* a number of times per day equal to her Charisma bonus, if any (minimum 1). Her caster level is equal to her spellthief class level.

Spellgrace (Su) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher gains a +1 competence bonus on her saves against spells. This bonus improves to +2 at 11th level and to +3 at 20th level.

Steal Energy Resistance (Su) Beginning at 3rd level, a spellthief can siphon off some or all of a target's resistance to an energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic). A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead temporarily gain resistance 10 to an energy type to which her target is resistant (or immune). If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. Simultaneously, the target's resistance to that energy type is reduced by 10 (to a minimum of 0). A creature with immunity to an energy type retains that immunity. If the target has more than one type of energy resistance, the spellthief can choose which kind to steal, otherwise the type is determined randomly. Stolen energy resistance lasts for 1 minute (or until the effect expires). A spellthief can use this ability multiple times, but its effects do not stack unless they apply to different types of energy.

Steal Spell (Su) A spellthief can siphon spell energy away from her target and use it herself. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can choose to forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead steal a spell, or the potential to cast a specific known spell, from her target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell with a touch as a standard action. The target of a steal spell attack loses one 0-level or 1st-level spell from memory if he or she prepares spells ahead of time, or one 0-level or 1st level spell slot if a spontaneous caster. A spontaneous caster also loses the ability to cast the stolen spell for 1 minute. If the target has no spells prepared (or has no remaining spell slots, if a spontaneous caster), this ability has no effect. A spellthief can choose which spell to steal. If she tries to steal a spell that isn't available, the stolen spell (or spell slot) is determined randomly from among those the target has available. After stealing a spell, the spellthief can cast the spell herself on a subsequent turn. The stolen spell is treated as if it were cast by the original owner for the purpose of determining caster level, DC, and so forth. A spellthief can cast this spell even if she doesn't have the minimum ability score normally required to cast a spell of that level. The spellthief must supply the same components (including verbal, somatic, material, xp, and any focus) required for the stolen spell. At any one time, a spellthief can possess a maximum number of stolen spells equal to her class level (treat 0-level spells as ½ level for this purpose). A spellthief cannot apply metamagic feats or other effects to the stolen spell unless it was prepared with such an effect. This ability works only against spells. It has no effect on spell-like abilities.

Steal Spell Effect (Su) Beginning at 2nd level, a spellthief can siphon an active spell effect from another creature. A spellthief who hits an opponent

with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain the effect of a single spell affecting the target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. The spellthief can choose which effect to steal, otherwise the effect is determined randomly from among those currently in effect on the target. A spellthief cannot steal a spell effect if its caster level exceeds her class level + her Charisma modifier. Upon stealing a spell effect, she gains the stolen effect (and the target loses that effect) for 1 minute per class level (or until it's duration expires). A spellthief can steal the effect of a spell only if the spell could be cast on her by the original caster (for instance, *shield* has a range of personal and thus could not be stolen). If a spellthief tries to steal the effect of a spell not allowed to her, the effect is still suppressed on the original target of the spell for 1 minute per spellthief class level. This ability does not work on spell effects that are immune to *dispel magic*.

ENCOUNTER 7: ECLIPSE**BRIGHT PATH ACOLYTE****CR 7**

Male human cleric 7

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +3, Spot +3**Languages** Common**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18

(-1 Dex, +8 armor, +1 deflection)

hp 49 (7 HD)**Fort** +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +9**Speed** 20 ft. in +1 *half-plate* (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.**Melee** masterwork quarterstaff +8 (1d6+1) or**Melee** masterwork quarterstaff +4/+0 (1d6+1) two-weapon fighting or**Ranged** masterwork light crossbow +5 (1d8/19-20)**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +6**Special Actions** turn undead 5/day (+4, 2d6+9)**Combat Gear** flask of acid, flask of alchemist's fire (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2), *potion of haste*, *scroll of sound burst*, tanglefoot bag, thunderstone**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 7th):4th—*fire shield*^D, *freedom of movement*3rd—*blindness* (DC 16), *dispel magic*, *prayer*, *searing light*^P (+4 ranged touch)2nd—*bull's strength*, *calm emotions* (DC 15), *darkness*, *heat meta*^P (DC 15), *hold person* (DC 15)1st—*command* (DC 14), *detect secret doors*^D, *divine favor*, *magic weapon*, *sanctuary* (DC 14), *shield of faith*0—*create water*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*, *read magic* (2)**D:** Domain spell. Deity: Pholtus. Domains: Knowledge (cast Divination spells at +1 caster level), Sun (greater turning once per day)**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 14**Feats** Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff)**Skills** Concentration +7 (+11 when casting defensively), Heal +6, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (history) +2, Knowledge (religion) +7, Knowledge (the planes) +3, Spellcraft +6**Possessions** combat gear plus masterwork quarterstaff, masterwork light crossbow, bolt (10), silver holy symbol of Pholtus, +1 *half-plate*, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1, 9 gp.**PENUMBRAL VANGUARD DEFENDER****CR 5**

Male human fighter 5

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +3**Languages** Common, Elven**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18

(+8 armor)

hp 47 (5 HD)**Fort** +7, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3**Speed** 20 ft. in +1 *half-plate* (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.**Melee** masterwork quarterstaff +10 (1d6+6) or**Ranged** masterwork bolas +6 (1d4+3 nonlethal)**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +8**Atk Options** Cleave, Power Attack**Combat Gear** flask of alchemist's fire (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of shield of faith* (+3), tanglefoot bag**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 8**Feats** Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bolas), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff), Weapon Specialization (quarterstaff)**Skills** Escape Artist -2, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (religion) +5, Sense Motive +5**Possessions** combat gear plus masterwork quarterstaff, masterwork bolas, +1 *half-plate*, *cloak of resistance* +1, 5 gp.**AGENT PROVOCATEUR****CR 5**

Female half-elf (Rhennee) spellthief 5

N Medium humanoid (half-elf)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +4, Spot +4**Languages** Common, Elven, Flan, Rhopan**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14

(+2 Dex, +4 armor)

hp 27 (5 HD)**Immune** sleep spells and similar effects**Fort** +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6; +1 competence bonus against spells, +2 racial bonus against enchantment spells or effects**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** masterwork cold iron dagger +6 (1d4-1/19-20) or**Ranged** dagger +5 (1d4-1/19-20)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +2**Atk Options** sneak attack +2d6**Special Actions**, steal energy resistance 10, steal spell (0, 1st, or 2nd), steal spell effect, steal spell-like ability**Combat Gear** *potion of blur*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of invisibility*, *scroll of fireball* (CL 5th, DC 14)**Spellthief Spells Known** (CL 2nd):1st (1/day)—*expeditious retreat*, *shield***Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 5th):3/day—*detect magic***Abilities** Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 16**SQ** spellgrace +1, trapfinding**Feats** Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Appraise +1, Bluff +5, Concentration +3, Decipher Script +1, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +1 (+3 with tools), Escape Artist +4, Gather Information +11, Hide +3, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (local-NMR) +6, Listen +5, Move Silently +3, Open Lock +3 (+5 with tools), Search +3, Speak Language (Flan), Speak Language (Rhopan), Spellcraft +6, Spot +5, Tumble +5, Use Magic Device +7

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork cold iron dagger (2), dagger (2), +1 *studded leather armor*, masterwork thieves tools, *cloak of resistance* +1, 7 gp.

Detect Magic (Sp) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher can use *detect magic* a number of times per day equal to her Charisma bonus, if any (minimum 1). Her caster level is equal to her spellthief class level.

Spellgrace (Su) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher gains a +1 competence bonus on her saves against spells. This bonus improves to +2 at 11th level and to +3 at 20th level.

Steal Energy Resistance (Su) Beginning at 3rd level, a spellthief can siphon off some or all of a target's resistance to an energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic). A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead temporarily gain resistance 10 to an energy type to which her target is resistant (or immune). If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. Simultaneously, the target's resistance to that energy type is reduced by 10 (to a minimum of 0). A creature with immunity to an energy type retains that immunity. If the target has more than one type of energy resistance, the spellthief can choose which kind to steal, otherwise the type is determined randomly. Stolen energy resistance lasts for 1 minute (or until the effect expires). A spellthief can use this ability multiple times, but its effects do not stack unless they apply to different types of energy.

Steal Spell (Su) A spellthief can siphon spell energy away from her target and use it herself. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can choose to forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead steal a spell, or the potential to cast a specific known spell, from her target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell with a touch as a standard action. The target of a steal spell attack loses one 0-level or 1st-level spell from memory if he or she prepares spells ahead of time, or one 0-level or 1st level spell slot if a spontaneous caster. A spontaneous caster also loses the ability to cast the stolen spell for 1 minute. If the target has no spells prepared (or has no remaining spell slots, if a spontaneous caster), this ability has no effect. A spellthief can choose which spell to steal. If she tries to steal a spell that isn't available, the stolen spell (or spell slot) is determined randomly from among those the target has available. After stealing a spell, the spellthief can cast the spell herself on a subsequent turn. The stolen spell is treated as if it were cast by the original owner for the purpose of determining caster level, DC, and so forth. A spellthief can cast this spell even if she doesn't have the minimum ability score normally required to cast a spell of that level. The spellthief must supply the same components (including verbal, somatic, material, xp, and any focus) required for the stolen spell. At any one time, a spellthief can possess a maximum number of stolen spells equal to her class

level (treat 0-level spells as ½ level for this purpose). A spellthief cannot apply metamagic feats or other effects to the stolen spell unless it was prepared with such an effect. This ability works only against spells. It has no effect on spell-like abilities.

Steal Spell Effect (Su) Beginning at 2nd level, a spellthief can siphon an active spell effect from another creature. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain the effect of a single spell affecting the target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. The spellthief can choose which effect to steal, otherwise the effect is determined randomly from among those currently in effect on the target. A spellthief cannot steal a spell effect if its caster level exceeds her class level + her Charisma modifier. Upon stealing a spell effect, she gains the stolen effect (and the target loses that effect) for 1 minute per class level (or until it's duration expires). A spellthief can steal the effect of a spell only if the spell could be cast on her by the original caster (for instance, *shield* has a range of personal and thus could not be stolen). If a spellthief tries to steal the effect of a spell not allowed to her, the effect is still suppressed on the original target of the spell for 1 minute per spellthief class level. This ability does not work on spell effects that are immune to *dispel magic*.

Steal Spell-Like Ability (Su) At 5th level and higher, a spellthief can use a sneak attack to temporarily steal a creature's spell-like ability. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain one use of one of the target's spell-like abilities. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. This spell-like ability can originate from the target's class, race, template, or any other source, and can be of any level up to a maximum of one-third the spellthief's class level. A spellthief can select a specific spell-like ability to steal, otherwise the ability is determined randomly. If the ability has a limited number of uses per day, the target must have at least one such use left, or the spellthief cannot steal it. If the target cannot use its ability at the present time, the spellthief cannot steal it.

ENCOUNTER 7: ECLIPSE**BRIGHT PATH ACOLYTE****CR 9**

Male human cleric 9

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +3, Spot +3**Languages** Common**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18

(-1 Dex, +8 armor, +1 deflection)

hp 72 (9 HD)**Fort** +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** +11**Speed** 20 ft. in +1 *half-plate* (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.**Melee** masterwork quarterstaff +9/+4 (1d6+1) or**Melee** masterwork quarterstaff +5/+0/+1 (1d6+1) two-weapon fighting or**Ranged** masterwork light crossbow +6 (1d8/19-20)**Base Atk** +6; **Grp** +7**Special Actions** turn undead 5/day (+4, 2d6+11)**Combat Gear** flask of acid, flask of alchemist's fire (2), *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of displacement*, *potion of haste*, *scroll of sound burst*, tanglefoot bag, thunderstone**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 9th):5th—*spell resistance*, *true seeing*^D4th—*divine power*, *fire shield*^P, *freedom of movement*3rd—*blindness* (DC 16), *deeper darkness*, *dispel magic*, *prayer*, *searing light*^P (+5 ranged touch)2nd—*bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *calm emotions* (DC 16), *heat metal*^P (DC 15), *hold person* (2) (DC 16)1st—*detect secret doors*^D, *divine favor*, *entropic shield*, *magic weapon*, *sanctuary* (DC 14), *shield of faith*0—*create water*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*, *read magic* (2)**D:** Domain spell. Deity: Pholtus. Domains: Knowledge (cast Divination spells at +1 caster level), Sun (greater turning once per day)**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 14**Feats** Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Weapon Focus (quarterstaff)**Skills** Concentration +9 (+13 when casting defensively), Heal +7, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Knowledge (history) +3, Knowledge (religion) +8, Knowledge (the planes) +3, Spellcraft +7**Possessions** combat gear plus masterwork quarterstaff, masterwork light crossbow, bolt (10), silver holy symbol of Pholtus, +1 *half-plate*, *cloak of resistance* +2, *ring of protection* +1, 159 gp.**PENUMBRAL VANGUARD DEFENDER****CR 7**

Male human fighter 7

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1**Languages** Common, Elven**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18

(+8 armor)

hp 66 (7 HD)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6**Speed** 20 ft. in +1 *half-plate* (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.**Melee** masterwork quarterstaff +12/+7 (1d6+6) or**Ranged** masterwork bolas +8 (1d4+3 nonlethal)**Base Atk** +7; **Grp** +10**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, Cleave, Power Attack**Combat Gear** flask of alchemist's fire (2), *brooch of shielding* (100 charges), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of haste*, *potion of shield of faith* (+4), tanglefoot bag**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 8**Feats** Blind-Fight, Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bolas), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff), Weapon Specialization (quarterstaff)**Skills** Escape Artist -1, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (religion) +6, Sense Motive +6**Possessions** combat gear plus masterwork quarterstaff, masterwork bolas (2), +1 *half-plate*, *cloak of resistance* +1, 50 gp.**AGENT PROVOCATEUR****CR 7**

Female half-elf (Rhennee) spellthief 7

N Medium humanoid (half-elf)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +5, Spot +5**Languages** Common, Elven, Flan, Rhovan**AC** 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15

(+2 Dex, +4 armor, +1 deflection)

hp 38 (7 HD)**Immune** sleep spells and similar effects**Fort** +6, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7; +1 competence bonus against spells, +2 racial bonus against enchantment spells or effects**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** masterwork cold iron dagger +8 (1d4-1/19-20) or**Ranged** dagger +7 (1d4-1/19-20)**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +4**Atk Options** sneak attack +2d6**Special Actions**, steal energy resistance 10, steal spell (0-3rd), steal spell effect, steal spell-like ability**Combat Gear** *potion of blur*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of invisibility*, *scroll of cone of cold* (CL 9th, DC 17)**Spellthief Spells Known** (CL 3rd):1st (2/day)—*color spray* (DC 14), *expeditious retreat*, *shield***Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 7th):3/day—*detect magic***Abilities** Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 16**SQ** absorb spell, spellgrace +1, trapfinding**Feats** Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Appraise +1, Bluff +6, Concentration +5, Decipher Script +1, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +2 (+4 with tools), Escape Artist +4, Gather Information +12, Hide +4, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (local-

NMR) +6, Listen +5, Move Silently +4, Open Lock +4 (+6 with tools), Search +3, Speak Language (Flan), Speak Language (Rhopan), Spellcraft +8, Spot +5, Tumble +6, Use Magic Device +8 (+10 involving scrolls)

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork cold iron dagger (2), dagger (2), +1 *studded leather armor*, masterwork thieves tools, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1, 157 gp.

Absorb Spell (Su) Beginning at 7th level, if a spellthief makes a successful save against a spell that targets her, she can attempt to absorb the spell energy for later use. This ability affects only spells that have the spellthief as a target, not effect or area spells. She cannot absorb a spell of a higher level than she can steal with her Steal Spell ability. To absorb a spell, she must succeed on a level check (1d20+ spellthief class level) against a DC of 10+ the spell's caster level. Failure indicates that the spell has its normal effect. Success means that the spellthief suffers no effect from the spell and can cast the spell later (or use its energy to cast one of her own) as if she had stolen the spell with her Steal Spell ability. Her normal limit of total spell levels stolen still applies.

Detect Magic (Sp) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher can use *detect magic* a number of times per day equal to her Charisma bonus, if any (minimum 1). Her caster level is equal to her spellthief class level.

Spellgrace (Su) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher gains a +1 competence bonus on her saves against spells. This bonus improves to +2 at 11th level and to +3 at 20th level.

Steal Energy Resistance (Su) Beginning at 3rd level, a spellthief can siphon off some or all of a target's resistance to an energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic). A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead temporarily gain resistance 10 to an energy type to which her target is resistant (or immune). If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. Simultaneously, the target's resistance to that energy type is reduced by 10 (to a minimum of 0). A creature with immunity to an energy type retains that immunity. If the target has more than one type of energy resistance, the spellthief can choose which kind to steal, otherwise the type is determined randomly. Stolen energy resistance lasts for 1 minute (or until the effect expires). A spellthief can use this ability multiple times, but its effects do not stack unless they apply to different types of energy.

Steal Spell (Su) A spellthief can siphon spell energy away from her target and use it herself. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can choose to forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead steal a spell, or the potential to cast a specific known spell, from her target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell with a touch as a standard action. The target of a steal spell attack loses one 0-level or 1st-level spell from memory if he or she prepares spells ahead of

time, or one 0-level or 1st level spell slot if a spontaneous caster. A spontaneous caster also loses the ability to cast the stolen spell for 1 minute. If the target has no spells prepared (or has no remaining spell slots, if a spontaneous caster), this ability has no effect. A spellthief can choose which spell to steal. If she tries to steal a spell that isn't available, the stolen spell (or spell slot) is determined randomly from among those the target has available. After stealing a spell, the spellthief can cast the spell herself on a subsequent turn. The stolen spell is treated as if it were cast by the original owner for the purpose of determining caster level, DC, and so forth. A spellthief can cast this spell even if she doesn't have the minimum ability score normally required to cast a spell of that level. The spellthief must supply the same components (including verbal, somatic, material, xp, and any focus) required for the stolen spell. At any one time, a spellthief can possess a maximum number of stolen spells equal to her class level (treat 0-level spells as ½ level for this purpose). A spellthief cannot apply metamagic feats or other effects to the stolen spell unless it was prepared with such an effect. This ability works only against spells. It has no effect on spell-like abilities.

Steal Spell Effect (Su) Beginning at 2nd level, a spellthief can siphon an active spell effect from another creature. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain the effect of a single spell affecting the target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. The spellthief can choose which effect to steal, otherwise the effect is determined randomly from among those currently in effect on the target. A spellthief cannot steal a spell effect if its caster level exceeds her class level + her Charisma modifier. Upon stealing a spell effect, she gains the stolen effect (and the target loses that effect) for 1 minute per class level (or until it's duration expires). A spellthief can steal the effect of a spell only if the spell could be cast on her by the original caster (for instance, *shield* has a range of personal and thus could not be stolen). If a spellthief tries to steal the effect of a spell not allowed to her, the effect is still suppressed on the original target of the spell for 1 minute per spellthief class level. This ability does not work on spell effects that are immune to *dispel magic*.

Steal Spell-Like Ability (Su) At 5th level and higher, a spellthief can use a sneak attack to temporarily steal a creature's spell-like ability. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain one use of one of the target's spell-like abilities. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. This spell-like ability can originate from the target's class, race, template, or any other source, and can be of any level up to a maximum of one-third the spellthief's class level. A spellthief can select a specific spell-like ability to steal, otherwise the ability is determined randomly. If the ability has a limited number of uses

per day, the target must have at least one such use left, or the spellthief cannot steal it. If the target cannot use its ability at the present time, the spellthief cannot steal it.

ENCOUNTER 1: THE TRANSFORMED**MAN****EVOLVED WHEEP****CR 12**

LE Medium undead

Init +2; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8**Languages** Common**AC** 31, touch 18, flat-footed 29

(+2 Dex, +6 deflection, +13 natural)

hp 81 (9 HD); **fast healing** 10; **DR** 5/magic and piercing**Immune** undead immunities**Resist** turn resistance +4**Fort** +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +14**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** 2 claws +17 (1d8+12 plus poison tears) and bite +14 (1d6+6 plus poison tears)**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** +16**Special Actions** weeping dirge**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 9th):1/day—*haste***Abilities** Str 35, Dex 15, Con --, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 22**SQ** undead traits, unholy grace**Feats** Dodge, Mobility, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (claws)**Skills** Hide+8, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Spot +8

Poison Tears (Ex) The poison tears that continually pour from a wheep's empty eyes are actually an injury poison that coats the creature's claws and fills its mouth. Whenever a wheep succeeds on a claw or bite attack, its foe is subject to that poison—injury, Fortitude DC 20, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. The save DC is Charisma based. After an hour, the poisonous bile decomposes and evaporates, losing all efficacy.

Unholy Grace (Su) A wheep adds its Charisma modifier as a bonus on all its saving throws and as a deflection bonus to its Armor Class.

Weeping Dirge (Su) When it chooses (which is almost always, unless moving silently), a wheep can spend a free action each round crying and blubbering. All who hear the wheep's awful, grave-born sorrow must make DC 20 Will saves or be shaken for the duration of the encounter. Once a particular creature saves against a wheep's dirge, that creature cannot be affected again by the same wheep for 24 hours. This is a sonic effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

ENCOUNTER 7: ECLIPSE**BRIGHT PATH ACOLYTE****CR 11**

Male human cleric 11

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +4, Spot +4**Languages** Common**AC** 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19

(-1 Dex, +9 armor, +1 deflection)

hp 88 (11 HD)**Fort** +11, **Ref** +6, **Will** +13

Speed 20 ft. in +2 *half-plate* (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.

Melee masterwork quarterstaff +11/+6 (1d6+1) or**Melee** masterwork quarterstaff +7/+2/+3 (1d6+1) two-weapon fighting or**Ranged** masterwork light crossbow +8 (1d8/19-20)**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +9**Special Actions** turn undead 5/day (+4, 2d6+13)

Combat Gear flask of acid, flask of alchemist's fire (2), *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of displacement*, *potion of haste*, *scroll of sound burst*, tanglefoot bag, thunderstone

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 11th):6th—*fire seeds*^D (+7 ranged touch), *greater dispel magic*5th—*greater command* (DC 20), *spell resistance*, *true seeing*^D4th—*divine power*, *fire shield*^D, *freedom of movement*, *repel vermin* (DC 18), *sending*3rd—*blindness* (DC 17), *deeper darkness*, *dispel magic* (2), *prayer*, *searing light*^D (+7 ranged touch)2nd—*bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *calm emotions* (DC 17), *heat metal*^D (DC 16), *hold person* (2) (DC 17)1st—*bless*, *detect secret doors*^D, *divine favor*, *entropic shield*, *magic weapon*, *sanctuary* (DC 15), *shield of faith*0—*create water*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*, *read magic* (2)

D: Domain spell. Deity: Pholtus. Domains: Knowledge (cast Divination spells at +1 caster level), Sun (greater turning once per day)

Abilities Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14**Feats** Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Weapon Focus (quarterstaff)

Skills Concentration +10 (+14 when casting defensively), Heal +7, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (religion) +9, Knowledge (the planes) +4, Spellcraft +10

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork quarterstaff, masterwork light crossbow, bolt (10), silver holy symbol of Pholtus, +2 *half-plate*, *cloak of resistance* +2, *periapt of wisdom* +2, *ring of protection* +1, 159 gp.

PENUMBRAL VANGUARD DEFENDER**CR 9**

Male human fighter 9

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1**Languages** Common, Elven**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18

(+8 armor)

hp 85 (9 HD)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7

Speed 20 ft. in +1 *half-plate* (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.

Melee +1 *quarterstaff* +14/+9 (1d6+7/19-20) or**Ranged** masterwork bolas +10 (1d4+3 nonlethal)

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +12

Atk Options Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Power Attack

Combat Gear flask of alchemist's fire (2), *brooch of shielding* (100 charges), *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of haste*, *potion of shield of faith* (+5), tanglefoot bag (2)

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

Feats Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bolas), Improved Critical (quarterstaff), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff), Weapon Specialization (quarterstaff)

Skills Escape Artist +0, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (religion) +7, Sense Motive +7

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork bolas (2), masterwork half-plate, +1 *half-plate*, +1 *quarterstaff*, *cloak of resistance* +1, 200 gp in gems.

AGENT PROVOCATEUR

CR 9

Female half-elf (Rhennee) spellthief 9

N Medium humanoid (half-elf)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +6, Spot +6

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Flan, Rhopan

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15
(+2 Dex, +4 armor, +1 deflection)

hp 49 (9 HD)

Immune sleep spells and similar effects

Fort +7, **Ref** +8, **Will** +9; +1 competence bonus against spells, +2 racial bonus against enchantment spells or effects

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee masterwork cold iron dagger +9/+4 (1d4-1/19-20)
or

Ranged dagger +8 (1d4-1/19-20)

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

Atk Options sneak attack +3d6

Special Actions, steal energy resistance 10, steal spell (0-4th), steal spell effect, steal spell-like ability

Combat Gear *potion of blur*, *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of haste*, *potion of invisibility*, *scroll of flesh to stone* (CL 11th, DC 19)

Spellthief Spells Known (CL 4th):

2nd (1/day)—*cat's grace*, *mirror image*

1st (2/day)—*color spray* (DC 14), *expeditious retreat*, *mount*, *shield*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th):

3/day—*arcane sight* (swift), *detect magic*

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

SQ absorb spell, spellgrace +1, trapfinding

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Finesse

Skills Appraise +1, Balance +4, Bluff +6, Concentration +5, Decipher Script +1, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +2 (+4 with tools), Escape Artist +6, Gather Information +14, Hide +4, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (local-NMR) +8, Listen +6, Move Silently +4, Open Lock +4 (+6 with tools), Search +3, Speak Language (Draconic), Speak Language (Flan), Speak

Language (Rhopan), Spellcraft +10, Spot +6, Tumble +7, Use Magic Device +10 (+12 involving scrolls)

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork cold iron dagger (2), dagger (2), +1 *studded leather armor*, masterwork thieves tools, *bracers of arcane freedom*, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1, 632 gp in gems.

Absorb Spell (Su) Beginning at 7th level, if a spellthief makes a successful save against a spell that targets her, she can attempt to absorb the spell energy for later use. This ability affects only spells that have the spellthief as a target, not effect or area spells. She cannot absorb a spell of a higher level than she can steal with her Steal Spell ability. To absorb a spell, she must succeed on a level check (1d20+ spellthief class level) against a DC of 10+ the spell's caster level. Failure indicates that the spell has its normal effect. Success means that the spellthief suffers no effect from the spell and can cast the spell later (or use its energy to cast one of her own) as if she had stolen the spell with her Steal Spell ability. Her normal limit of total spell levels stolen still applies.

Arcane Sight (Sp) Beginning at 9th level, a spellthief can use *arcane sight* as a swift action a number of times per day equal to her Charisma modifier. Her caster level is equal to her spellthief level.

Detect Magic (Sp) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher can use *detect magic* a number of times per day equal to her Charisma bonus, if any (minimum 1). Her caster level is equal to her spellthief class level.

Spellgrace (Su) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher gains a +1 competence bonus on her saves against spells. This bonus improves to +2 at 11th level and to +3 at 20th level.

Steal Energy Resistance (Su) Beginning at 3rd level, a spellthief can siphon off some or all of a target's resistance to an energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic). A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead temporarily gain resistance 10 to an energy type to which her target is resistant (or immune). If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. Simultaneously, the target's resistance to that energy type is reduced by 10 (to a minimum of 0). A creature with immunity to an energy type retains that immunity. If the target has more than one type of energy resistance, the spellthief can choose which kind to steal, otherwise the type is determined randomly. Stolen energy resistance lasts for 1 minute (or until the effect expires). A spellthief can use this ability multiple times, but its effects do not stack unless they apply to different types of energy.

Steal Spell (Su) A spellthief can siphon spell energy away from her target and use it herself. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can choose to forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead steal a spell, or the potential to cast a specific known spell, from her target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell with a touch as a standard action. The target of

a steal spell attack loses one 0-level or 1st-level spell from memory if he or she prepares spells ahead of time, or one 0-level or 1st level spell slot if a spontaneous caster. A spontaneous caster also loses the ability to cast the stolen spell for 1 minute. If the target has no spells prepared (or has no remaining spell slots, if a spontaneous caster), this ability has no effect. A spellthief can choose which spell to steal. If she tries to steal a spell that isn't available, the stolen spell (or spell slot) is determined randomly from among those the target has available. After stealing a spell, the spellthief can cast the spell herself on a subsequent turn. The stolen spell is treated as if it were cast by the original owner for the purpose of determining caster level, DC, and so forth. A spellthief can cast this spell even if she doesn't have the minimum ability score normally required to cast a spell of that level. The spellthief must supply the same components (including verbal, somatic, material, xp, and any focus) required for the stolen spell. At any one time, a spellthief can possess a maximum number of stolen spells equal to her class level (treat 0-level spells as ½ level for this purpose). A spellthief cannot apply metamagic feats or other effects to the stolen spell unless it was prepared with such an effect. This ability works only against spells. It has no effect on spell-like abilities.

Steal Spell Effect (Su) Beginning at 2nd level, a spellthief can siphon an active spell effect from another creature. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain the effect of a single spell affecting the target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. The spellthief can choose which effect to steal, otherwise the effect is determined randomly from among those currently in effect on the target. A spellthief cannot steal a spell effect if its caster level exceeds her class level + her Charisma modifier. Upon stealing a spell effect, she gains the stolen effect (and the target loses that effect) for 1 minute per class level (or until it's duration expires). A spellthief can steal the effect of a spell only if the spell could be cast on her by the original caster (for instance, *shield* has a range of personal and thus could not be stolen). If a spellthief tries to steal the effect of a spell not allowed to her, the effect is still suppressed on the original target of the spell for 1 minute per spellthief class level. This ability does not work on spell effects that are immune to *dispel magic*.

Steal Spell-Like Ability (Su) At 5th level and higher, a spellthief can use a sneak attack to temporarily steal a creature's spell-like ability. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain one use of one of the target's spell-like abilities. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. This spell-like ability can originate from the target's class, race, template, or any other source, and can be of any level up to a maximum of one-third the spellthief's class level. A spellthief can select a specific spell-like

ability to steal, otherwise the ability is determined randomly. If the ability has a limited number of uses per day, the target must have at least one such use left, or the spellthief cannot steal it. If the target cannot use its ability at the present time, the spellthief cannot steal it.

ENCOUNTER 1: THE TRANSFORMED**MAN****EVOLVED WHEEP****CR 12**

LE Medium undead

Init +2; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8**Languages** Common**AC** 31, touch 18, flat-footed 29
(+2 Dex, +6 deflection, +13 natural)**hp** 81 (9 HD); **fast healing** 10; **DR** 5/magic and piercing**Immune** undead immunities**Resist** turn resistance +4**Fort** +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +14**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** 2 claws +17 (1d8+12 plus poison tears) and bite +14 (1d6+6 plus poison tears)**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** +16**Special Actions** weeping dirge**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 9th):1/day—*haste***Abilities** Str 35, Dex 15, Con --, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 22**SQ** undead traits, unholy grace**Feats** Dodge, Mobility, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (claws)**Skills** Hide+8, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Spot +8**Poison Tears (Ex)** The poison tears that continually pour from a wheep's empty eyes are actually an injury poison that coats the creature's claws and fills its mouth. Whenever a wheep succeeds on a claw or bite attack, its foe is subject to that poison—injury, Fortitude DC 20, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. The save DC is Charisma based. After an hour, the poisonous bile decomposes and evaporates, losing all efficacy.**Unholy Grace (Su)** A wheep adds its Charisma modifier as a bonus on all its saving throws and as a deflection bonus to its Armor Class.**Weeping Dirge (Su)** When it chooses (which is almost always, unless moving silently), a wheep can spend a free action each round crying and blubbering. All who hear the wheep's awful, grave-born sorrow must make DC 20 Will saves or be shaken for the duration of the encounter. Once a particular creature saves against a wheep's dirge, that creature cannot be affected again by the same wheep for 24 hours. This is a sonic effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.**ENCOUNTER 7: ECLIPSE****HAYDEN VALCROY****CR 14**

Male human cleric 14

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5**Languages** Common**AC** 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18; Two-Weapon Defense
(+2 Dex, +7 armor, +1 shield [TWD])**hp** 112 (14 HD)**Fort** +14, **Ref** +11, **Will** +17**Speed** 20 ft. in +2 *chainmail of light fortification* (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.**Melee** +1/+1 *darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing* +13/+8 (1d6+1) or**Melee** +1/+1 *darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing* +11/+6/+11 (1d6+1) two-weapon fighting**Base Atk** +10; **Grp** +11**Atk Options** Two-Weapon Fighting**Special Actions** turn undead 2/day (+1, 2d6+13)**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 14th):7th—*dictum*^D, *mass cure serious wounds*, *repulsion* (DC 22)6th—*greater dispel magic*, *hold monster*^D (DC 21), *planar ally*, *word of recall*5th—*break enchantment*, *flame strike* (DC 20), *mass cure light wounds*, *spell resistance*, *true seeing*^D4th—*dismissal*, *divination*, *divine power*, *freedom of movement*, *order's wrath*^D (DC 19), *tongues*3rd—*blindness* (DC 18), *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *magic circle against chaos*^D, *prayer*, *protection from energy*2nd—*bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *darkness*, *calm emotions*^D (DC 17), *hold person* (2) (DC 17)1st—*command* (DC 16), *deathwatch*, *detect chaos*, *entropic shield*, *protection from chaos*^D, *sanctuary* (DC 16), *shield of faith*0—*create water* (2), *detect magic* (2), *guidance*, *light***D:** Domain spell. Deity: Pholtus. Domains: Knowledge (cast Divination spells at +1 caster level), Law (cast Law spells at +1 caster level)**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 20, Cha 8**Feats** Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (knowledge [religion]), Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff)**Skills** Concentration +10, Diplomacy +4, Heal +9, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (religion) +13, Knowledge (the planes) +2, Spellcraft +11**Possessions** silver holy symbol of Pholtus, +1/+1 *darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing* (*dispel magic* currently stored), +2 *chainmail of light fortification*, *cloak of resistance* +3, *periapt of Wisdom* +4, 35 gp.**PENUMBRAL VANGUARD DEFENDER****CR 9**

Male human fighter 9

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1**Languages** Common, Elven**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18

(+8 armor)

hp 85 (9 HD)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7**Speed** 20 ft. in +1 *half-plate* (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.**Melee** +1 *quarterstaff* +14/+9 (1d6+7/19-20) or**Ranged** masterwork bolas +10 (1d4+3 nonlethal)**Base Atk** +9; **Grp** +12

Atk Options Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Power Attack

Combat Gear flask of alchemist's fire (2), *brooch of shielding* (100 charges), *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of haste*, *potion of shield of faith* (+5), tanglefoot bag (2)

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

Feats Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bolas), Improved Critical (quarterstaff), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff), Weapon Specialization (quarterstaff)

Skills Escape Artist +0, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (religion) +7, Sense Motive +7

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork bolas (2), +1 *half-plate*, +1 *quarterstaff*, *cloak of resistance* +1, 200 gp in gems.

AGENT PROVOCATEUR

CR 9

Female half-elf (Rhennee) spellthief 9

N Medium humanoid (half-elf)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +6, Spot +6

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Flan, Rhopan

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15

(+2 Dex, +4 armor, +1 deflection)

hp 49 (9 HD)

Immune sleep spells and similar effects

Fort +7, **Ref** +8, **Will** +9; +1 competence bonus against spells, +2 racial bonus against enchantment spells or effects

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee masterwork cold iron dagger +9/+4 (1d4-1/19-20) or

Ranged dagger +8 (1d4-1/19-20)

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

Atk Options sneak attack +3d6

Special Actions, steal energy resistance 10, steal spell (0-4th), steal spell effect, steal spell-like ability

Combat Gear *potion of blur*, *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of haste*, *potion of invisibility*, *scroll of flesh to stone* (CL 11th, DC 19)

Spellthief Spells Known (CL 4th):

2nd (1/day)—*cat's grace*, *mirror image*

1st (2/day)—*color spray* (DC 14), *expeditious retreat*, *mount*, *shield*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th):

3/day—*arcane sight* (swift), *detect magic*

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

SQ absorb spell, spellgrace +1, trapfinding

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Finesse

Skills Appraise +1, Balance +4, Bluff +6, Concentration +5, Decipher Script +1, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +2 (+4 with tools), Escape Artist +6, Gather Information +14, Hide +4, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (local-NMR) +8, Listen +6, Move Silently +4, Open Lock +4 (+6 with tools), Search +3, Speak Language (Draconic), Speak Language (Flan), Speak Language (Rhopan), Spellcraft +10, Spot +6, Tumble +7, Use Magic Device +10 (+12 involving scrolls)

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork cold iron dagger (2), dagger (2), +1 *studded leather armor*, masterwork thieves tools, *bracers of arcane freedom*, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1, 632 gp in gems.

Absorb Spell (Su) Beginning at 7th level, if a spellthief makes a successful save against a spell that targets her, she can attempt to absorb the spell energy for later use. This ability affects only spells that have the spellthief as a target, not effect or area spells. She cannot absorb a spell of a higher level than she can steal with her Steal Spell ability. To absorb a spell, she must succeed on a level check (1d20+ spellthief class level) against a DC of 10+ the spell's caster level. Failure indicates that the spell has its normal effect. Success means that the spellthief suffers no effect from the spell and can cast the spell later (or use its energy to cast one of her own) as if she had stolen the spell with her Steal Spell ability. Her normal limit of total spell levels stolen still applies.

Arcane Sight (Sp) Beginning at 9th level, a spellthief can use *arcane sight* as a swift action a number of times per day equal to her Charisma modifier. Her caster level is equal to her spellthief level.

Detect Magic (Sp) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher can use *detect magic* a number of times per day equal to her Charisma bonus, if any (minimum 1). Her caster level is equal to her spellthief class level.

Spellgrace (Su) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher gains a +1 competence bonus on her saves against spells. This bonus improves to +2 at 11th level and to +3 at 20th level.

Steal Energy Resistance (Su) Beginning at 3rd level, a spellthief can siphon off some or all of a target's resistance to an energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic). A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead temporarily gain resistance 10 to an energy type to which her target is resistant (or immune). If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. Simultaneously, the target's resistance to that energy type is reduced by 10 (to a minimum of 0). A creature with immunity to an energy type retains that immunity. If the target has more than one type of energy resistance, the spellthief can choose which kind to steal, otherwise the type is determined randomly. Stolen energy resistance lasts for 1 minute (or until the effect expires). A spellthief can use this ability multiple times, but its effects do not stack unless they apply to different types of energy.

Steal Spell (Su) A spellthief can siphon spell energy away from her target and use it herself. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can choose to forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead steal a spell, or the potential to cast a specific known spell, from her target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell with a touch as a standard action. The target of a steal spell attack loses one 0-level or 1st-level spell from memory if he or she prepares spells ahead of

time, or one 0-level or 1st level spell slot if a spontaneous caster. A spontaneous caster also loses the ability to cast the stolen spell for 1 minute. If the target has no spells prepared (or has no remaining spell slots, if a spontaneous caster), this ability has no effect. A spellthief can choose which spell to steal. If she tries to steal a spell that isn't available, the stolen spell (or spell slot) is determined randomly from among those the target has available. After stealing a spell, the spellthief can cast the spell herself on a subsequent turn. The stolen spell is treated as if it were cast by the original owner for the purpose of determining caster level, DC, and so forth. A spellthief can cast this spell even if she doesn't have the minimum ability score normally required to cast a spell of that level. The spellthief must supply the same components (including verbal, somatic, material, xp, and any focus) required for the stolen spell. At any one time, a spellthief can possess a maximum number of stolen spells equal to her class level (treat 0-level spells as ½ level for this purpose). A spellthief cannot apply metamagic feats or other effects to the stolen spell unless it was prepared with such an effect. This ability works only against spells. It has no effect on spell-like abilities.

Steal Spell Effect (Su) Beginning at 2nd level, a spellthief can siphon an active spell effect from another creature. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain the effect of a single spell affecting the target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. The spellthief can choose which effect to steal, otherwise the effect is determined randomly from among those currently in effect on the target. A spellthief cannot steal a spell effect if its caster level exceeds her class level + her Charisma modifier. Upon stealing a spell effect, she gains the stolen effect (and the target loses that effect) for 1 minute per class level (or until it's duration expires). A spellthief can steal the effect of a spell only if the spell could be cast on her by the original caster (for instance, *shield* has a range of personal and thus could not be stolen). If a spellthief tries to steal the effect of a spell not allowed to her, the effect is still suppressed on the original target of the spell for 1 minute per spellthief class level. This ability does not work on spell effects that are immune to *dispel magic*.

Steal Spell-Like Ability (Su) At 5th level and higher, a spellthief can use a sneak attack to temporarily steal a creature's spell-like ability. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain one use of one of the target's spell-like abilities. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. This spell-like ability can originate from the target's class, race, template, or any other source, and can be of any level up to a maximum of one-third the spellthief's class level. A spellthief can select a specific spell-like ability to steal, otherwise the ability is determined randomly. If the ability has a limited number of uses

per day, the target must have at least one such use left, or the spellthief cannot steal it. If the target cannot use its ability at the present time, the spellthief cannot steal it.

ENCOUNTER 7: ECLIPSE**HAYDEN VALCROY****CR 14**

Male human cleric 14

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5**Languages** Common**AC** 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18; Two-Weapon Defense (+2 Dex, +7 armor, +1 shield [TWD])**hp** 112 (14 HD)**Fort** +14, **Ref** +11, **Will** +17**Speed** 20 ft. in +2 *chainmail of light fortification* (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.**Melee** +1/+1 *darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing* +13/+8 (1d6+1) or**Melee** +1/+1 *darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing* +11/+6/+11 (1d6+1) two-weapon fighting**Base Atk** +10; **Grp** +11**Atk Options** Two-Weapon Fighting**Special Actions** turn undead 2/day (+1, 2d6+13)**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 14th):7th—*dictum*^D, *mass cure serious wounds*, *repulsion* (DC 22)6th—*greater dispel magic*, *hold monster*^D (DC 21), *planar ally*, *word of recall*5th—*break enchantment*, *flame strike* (DC 20), *mass cure light wounds*, *spell resistance*, *true seeing*^D4th—*dismissal*, *divination*, *divine power*, *freedom of movement*, *order's wrath*^D (DC 19), *tongues*3rd—*blindness* (DC 18), *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *magic circle against chaos*^D, *prayer*, *protection from energy*2nd—*bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *darkness*, *calm emotions*^D (DC 17), *hold person* (2) (DC 17)1st—*command* (DC 16), *deathwatch*, *detect chaos*, *entropic shield*, *protection from chaos*^D, *sanctuary* (DC 16), *shield of faith*0—*create water* (2), *detect magic* (2), *guidance*, *light***D:** Domain spell. Deity: Pholtus. Domains: Knowledge (cast Divination spells at +1 caster level), Law (cast Law spells at +1 caster level)**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 20, Cha 8**Feats** Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (knowledge [religion]), Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff)**Skills** Concentration +10, Diplomacy +4, Heal +9, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (religion) +13, Knowledge (the planes) +2, Spellcraft +11**Possessions** silver holy symbol of Pholtus, +1/+1 *darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing* (*dispel magic* currently stored), +2 *chainmail of light fortification*, *cloak of resistance* +3, *periapt of Wisdom* +4, 35 gp.**PENUMBRAL VANGUARD DEFENDER****CR 13**

Male human fighter 13

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +2**Languages** Common, Elven**AC** 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19

(+9 armor)

hp 123 (13 HD)**Fort** +12, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10**Speed** 20 ft. in +2 *half-plate* (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.**Melee** +1 *merciful quarterstaff* +19/+14/+9 (1d6+9 plus 1d6/19-20 nonlethal) or**Ranged** masterwork bolas +14 (1d4+3 nonlethal)**Base Atk** +13; **Grp** +16**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Power Attack**Combat Gear** flask of alchemist's fire (2), *brooch of shielding* (100 charges), *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of shield of faith* (+5), tanglefoot bag**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 8**Feats** Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bolas), Greater Weapon Focus (quarterstaff), Greater Weapon Specialization (quarterstaff), Improved Critical (quarterstaff), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff), Weapon Specialization (quarterstaff)**Skills** Escape Artist +2, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (religion) +9, Sense Motive +10**Possessions** combat gear plus masterwork bolas (2), +2 *half-plate*, +1 *merciful quarterstaff*, *boots of speed*, *cloak of resistance* +2, 200 gp in gems.**AGENT PROVOCATEUR****CR 13**

Female half-elf (Rhennee) spellthief 13

N Medium humanoid (half-elf)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +7, Spot +7**Languages** Common, Draconic, Elven, Flan, Gnome, Rhopan, Sylvan**AC** 18, touch 13, flat-footed 16

(+2 Dex, +5 armor, +1 deflection)

hp 84 (13 HD)**Immune** sleep spells and similar effects**Fort** +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +12; +2 competence bonus against spells, +2 racial bonus against enchantment spells or effects**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** +1 *cold iron dagger* +12/+7 (1d4/17-20) or**Ranged** dagger +11 (1d4-1/17-20)**Base Atk** +9; **Grp** +8**Atk Options** sneak attack +4d6**Special Actions**, steal energy resistance 20, steal spell (0-6th), steal spell effect, steal spell-like ability**Combat Gear** *potion of blur*, *potion of cure serious wounds* (3), *potion of haste*, *potion of invisibility*, *scroll of prismatic spray* (CL 13th, DC 20)**Spellthief Spells Known** (CL 6th):3rd (2/day)—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *heroism*2nd (2/day)—*cat's grace*, *mirror image*, see *invisibility*, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 16)

1st (2/day)—*color spray* (DC 15), *expeditious retreat*, *mount, shield*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th):

4/day—*arcane sight* (swift), *detect magic*

Abilities Str 9, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 18

SQ absorb spell, discover spells, spellgrace +2, trapfinding

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (dagger), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Finesse

Skills Appraise +2, Balance +4, Bluff +9, Concentration +8, Decipher Script +2, Diplomacy +8, Disable Device +2 (+4 with tools), Escape Artist +6, Gather Information +16, Hide +4, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (local-NMR) +10, Listen +7, Move Silently +4, Open Lock +4 (+6 with tools), Search +3, Speak Language (Draconic), Speak Language (Flan), Speak Language (Gnome), Speak Language (Rhopan), Speak Language (Sylvan), Spellcraft +12, Spot +7, Tumble +9, Use Magic Device +14 (+16 involving scrolls)

Possessions combat gear plus dagger (2), +2 *studded leather armor*, masterwork thieves tools, +1 *cold iron dagger*, *amulet of health* +2, *bracers of arcane freedom*, *cloak of resistance* +2, *pink and green sphere ioun stone*, *ring of protection* +1, 632 gp in gems.

Absorb Spell (Su) Beginning at 7th level, if a spellthief makes a successful save against a spell that targets her, she can attempt to absorb the spell energy for later use. This ability affects only spells that have the spellthief as a target, not effect or area spells. She cannot absorb a spell of a higher level than she can steal with her Steal Spell ability. To absorb a spell, she must succeed on a level check (1d20+ spellthief class level) against a DC of 10+ the spell's caster level. Failure indicates that the spell has its normal effect. Success means that the spellthief suffers no effect from the spell and can cast the spell later (or use its energy to cast one of her own) as if she had stolen the spell with her Steal Spell ability. Her normal limit of total spell levels stolen still applies.

Arcane Sight (Sp) Beginning at 9th level, a spellthief can use *arcane sight* as a swift action a number of times per day equal to her Charisma modifier. Her caster level is equal to her spellthief level.

Detect Magic (Sp) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher can use *detect magic* a number of times per day equal to her Charisma bonus, if any (minimum 1). Her caster level is equal to her spellthief class level.

Discover Spells (Ex) A spellthief of 13th level or higher who steals from a spellcaster with her Steal Spell ability automatically learns the names of all other spells prepared or known by the spellcaster that are of the same spell level as the stolen spell. This knowledge allows the spellthief to better choose which spells to steal on subsequent attacks.

Spellgrace (Su) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher gains a +1 competence bonus on her saves against spells. This bonus improves to +2 at 11th level and to +3 at 20th level.

Steal Energy Resistance (Su) Beginning at 3rd level, a spellthief can siphon off some or all of a target's resistance to an energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic). A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead temporarily gain resistance 10 to an energy type to which her target is resistant (or immune). If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. Simultaneously, the target's resistance to that energy type is reduced by 10 (to a minimum of 0). A creature with immunity to an energy type retains that immunity. If the target has more than one type of energy resistance, the spellthief can choose which kind to steal, otherwise the type is determined randomly. Stolen energy resistance lasts for 1 minute (or until the effect expires). A spellthief can use this ability multiple times, but its effects do not stack unless they apply to different types of energy.

Steal Spell (Su) A spellthief can siphon spell energy away from her target and use it herself. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can choose to forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead steal a spell, or the potential to cast a specific known spell, from her target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell with a touch as a standard action. The target of a steal spell attack loses one 0-level or 1st-level spell from memory if he or she prepares spells ahead of time, or one 0-level or 1st level spell slot if a spontaneous caster. A spontaneous caster also loses the ability to cast the stolen spell for 1 minute. If the target has no spells prepared (or has no remaining spell slots, if a spontaneous caster), this ability has no effect. A spellthief can choose which spell to steal. If she tries to steal a spell that isn't available, the stolen spell (or spell slot) is determined randomly from among those the target has available. After stealing a spell, the spellthief can cast the spell herself on a subsequent turn. The stolen spell is treated as if it were cast by the original owner for the purpose of determining caster level, DC, and so forth. A spellthief can cast this spell even if she doesn't have the minimum ability score normally required to cast a spell of that level. The spellthief must supply the same components (including verbal, somatic, material, xp, and any focus) required for the stolen spell. At any one time, a spellthief can possess a maximum number of stolen spells equal to her class level (treat 0-level spells as ½ level for this purpose). A spellthief cannot apply metamagic feats or other effects to the stolen spell unless it was prepared with such an effect. This ability works only against spells. It has no effect on spell-like abilities.

Steal Spell Effect (Su) Beginning at 2nd level, a spellthief can siphon an active spell effect from another creature. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain the effect of a single spell affecting the target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a

standard action. The spellthief can choose which effect to steal, otherwise the effect is determined randomly from among those currently in effect on the target. A spellthief cannot steal a spell effect if its caster level exceeds her class level + her Charisma modifier. Upon stealing a spell effect, she gains the stolen effect (and the target loses that effect) for 1 minute per class level (or until it's duration expires). A spellthief can steal the effect of a spell only if the spell could be cast on her by the original caster (for instance, *shield* has a range of personal and thus could not be stolen). If a spellthief tries to steal the effect of a spell not allowed to her, the effect is still suppressed on the original target of the spell for 1 minute per spellthief class level. This ability does not work on spell effects that are immune to *dispel magic*.

Steal Spell-Like Ability (Su) At 5th level and higher, a spellthief can use a sneak attack to temporarily steal a creature's spell-like ability. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain one use of one of the target's spell-like abilities. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. This spell-like ability can originate from the target's class, race, template, or any other source, and can be of any level up to a maximum of one-third the spellthief's class level. A spellthief can select a specific spell-like ability to steal, otherwise the ability is determined randomly. If the ability has a limited number of uses per day, the target must have at least one such use left, or the spellthief cannot steal it. If the target cannot use its ability at the present time, the spellthief cannot steal it.

ENCOUNTER 1: THE TRANSFORMED**MAN**

THRICE-EVOLVED ANGEL OF DECAY **CR 18**
CE Large undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +34, Spot +34

Aura rotting aura (15 ft.)

Languages Common, Abyssal

AC 34, touch 18, flat-footed 32

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +7 deflection, +16 natural)

hp 263 (26 HD); fast healing 3; **DR** 10/adamantine and magic

Immune undead immunities

SR 24

Fort +17, **Ref** +19, **Will** +29

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 50 ft. (poor)

Melee 2 claws +28 (2d6+16 plus rotting touch) and 2 wing slams +23 (1d6+8 plus rotting touch)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +13; **Grp** +33

Atk Options Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, rotting touch

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 26th):

1/day—*greater dispel magic*, *haste*, *see invisibility*

Abilities Str 43, Dex 14, Con —, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 24

SQ undead traits, unholy grace

Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Concentration +29, Diplomacy +6, Hide +27, Knowledge (arcana) +34, Listen +34, Move Silently +31, Search +34, Sense Motive +34, Spellcraft +36, Spot +34+5 *ability*, Survival +5 (+7 following tracks)

Fast Healing (Ex) An evolved undead heals 3 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point.

Rotting Aura (Su) When the creature is not flying, rivulets of vile corruption stream from an angel of decay's body, constantly regenerating and renewing a pool of odiferous rot all around the creature. This pool is a 15-foot radius spread. Any corporeal creature standing on the ground within that area must make a DC 30 Reflex saving throw each round or take 5d6 points of damage (save for half) as its flesh begins to succumb to decay. The creature must also succeed on a subsequent DC 30 Will saving throw (regardless of whether it succeeds on the first save) or be nauseated for 1 round. In each round that a creature takes damage from this rotting aura, the angel of decay heals 5 points of damage per victim.

Rotting Touch (Su) An angel of decay that hits a single foe with more than one attack in a round rots its opponent's flesh. This automatically deals an extra 1d6+6 points of damage and heals the angel of decay of 5 points of damage.

Unholy Grace (Su) An angel of decay adds its Charisma modifier as a bonus on all its saving throws and as a deflection bonus to its AC.

ENCOUNTER 7: ECLIPSE

HAYDEN VALCROY

CR 14

Male human cleric 14

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages Common

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18; Two-Weapon Defense (+2 Dex, +7 armor, +1 shield [TWD])

hp 112 (14 HD)

Fort +14, **Ref** +11, **Will** +17

Speed 20 ft. in +2 *chainmail of light fortification* (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.

Melee +1/+1 *darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing* +13/+8 (1d6+1) or

Melee +1/+1 *darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing* +11/+6/+11 (1d6+1) two-weapon fighting

Base Atk +10; **Grp** +11

Atk Options Two-Weapon Fighting

Special Actions turn undead 2/day (+1, 2d6+13)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 14th):

7th—*dictum*^D, *mass cure serious wounds*, *repulsion* (DC 22)

6th—*greater dispel magic*, *hold monster*^D (DC 21), *planar ally*, *word of recall*

5th—*break enchantment*, *flame strike* (DC 20), *mass cure light wounds*, *spell resistance*, *true seeing*^D

4th—*dismissal*, *divination*, *divine power*, *freedom of movement*, *order's wrath*^D (DC 19), *tongues*

3rd—*blindness* (DC 18), *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *magic circle against chaos*^D, *prayer*, *protection from energy*

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *darkness*, *calm emotions*^D (DC 17), *hold person* (2) (DC 17)

1st—*command* (DC 16), *deathwatch*, *detect chaos*, *entropic shield*, *protection from chaos*^D, *sanctuary* (DC 16), *shield of faith*

0—*create water* (2), *detect magic* (2), *guidance*, *light*

D: Domain spell. Deity: Pholtus. Domains: Knowledge (cast Divination spells at +1 caster level), Law (cast Law spells at +1 caster level)

Abilities Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 20, Cha 8

Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (knowledge [religion]), Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff)

Skills Concentration +10, Diplomacy +4, Heal +9, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (religion) +13, Knowledge (the planes) +2, Spellcraft +11

Possessions silver holy symbol of Pholtus, +1/+1 *darkwood quarterstaff of spell storing* (dispel magic currently stored), +2 *chainmail of light fortification*, *cloak of resistance* +3, *periapt of wisdom* +4, 35 gp.

PENUMBRAL VANGUARD DEFENDER

CR 13

Male human fighter 13

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +2

Languages Common, Elven

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19
(+9 armor)

hp 123 (13 HD)

Fort +12, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10

Speed 20 ft. in +2 *half-plate* (4 squares), base movement 30 ft.

Melee +1 *merciful quarterstaff* +19/+14/+9 (1d6+9 plus 1d6/19-20 nonlethal) or

Ranged masterwork bolas +14 (1d4+3 nonlethal)

Base Atk +13; **Grp** +16

Atk Options Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Power Attack

Combat Gear flask of alchemist's fire (2), *brooch of shielding* (100 charges), *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of shield of faith* (+5), tanglefoot bag

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

Feats Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bolas), Greater Weapon Focus (quarterstaff), Greater Weapon Specialization (quarterstaff), Improved Critical (quarterstaff), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff), Weapon Specialization (quarterstaff)

Skills Escape Artist +2, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (religion) +9, Sense Motive +10

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork bolas (2), +2 *half-plate*, +1 *merciful quarterstaff*, boots of speed, cloak of resistance +2, 200 gp in gems.

AGENT PROVOCATEUR

CR 17

Female half-elf (Rhennee) spellthief 17

N Medium humanoid (half-elf)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +8, Spot +8

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Flan, Gnome, Rhopan, Sylvan

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 19
(+2 Dex, +6 armor, +3 deflection)

hp 127 (17 HD)

Immune sleep spells and similar effects

Fort +14, **Ref** +14, **Will** +17; +2 competence bonus against spells, +2 racial bonus against enchantment spells or effects

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +1 *thundering cold iron dagger* +15/+10/+5 (1d4+1/17-20 plus 1d8 sonic) or

Ranged dagger +14 (1d4/17-20)

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

Atk Options sneak attack +5d6, steal spell resistance

Special Actions, steal energy resistance 20, steal spell (0-8th), steal spell effect, steal spell-like ability

Combat Gear *potion of blur*, *potion of cure serious wounds* (3), *potion of haste*, *potion of invisibility*, *scroll of freedom of movement* (divine), *scroll of prismatic spray* (CL 13th, DC 20), *scroll of greater teleport* (CL 13th)

Spellthief Spells Known (CL 8th, spell pen 10th):

4th—(2/day): *crushing despair* (DC 18), *dimensional anchor*, *greater invisibility*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 18)

3rd (3/day)—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *haste*, *heroism*

2nd (3/day)—*cat's grace*, *mirror image*, *see invisibility*, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 16), *touch of idiocy* (+14 melee touch)

1st (3/day)—*color spray* (DC 15), *expeditious retreat*, *mount*, *shield*, *true strike*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 17th):

4/day—*arcane sight* (swift), *detect magic*

Abilities Str 10, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 18

SQ absorb spell, discover spells, spellgrace +2, trapfinding

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (dagger), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Penetration, Weapon Finesse

Skills Appraise +2, Balance +4, Bluff +10, Concentration +11, Decipher Script +2, Diplomacy +8, Disable Device +4 (+6 with tools), Escape Artist +10, Gather Information +18, Hide +5, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (local-NMR) +10, Listen +8, Move Silently +5, Open Lock +6 (+8 with tools), Search +3, Speak Language (Draconic), Speak Language (Flan), Speak Language (Gnome), Speak Language (Rhopan), Speak Language (Sylvan), Spellcraft +15, Spot +8, Tumble +13, Use Magic Device +18 (+20 involving scrolls)

Possessions combat gear plus dagger (2), +3 *studded leather armor*, masterwork thieves tools, +1 *thundering cold iron dagger*, *amulet of health* +4, *bracers of arcane freedom*, cloak of resistance +5, *pink and green sphere ioun stone*, *ring of mind shielding*, *ring of protection* +3, 32 gp in gems.

Absorb Spell (Su) Beginning at 7th level, if a spellthief makes a successful save against a spell that targets her, she can attempt to absorb the spell energy for later use. This ability affects only spells that have the spellthief as a target, not effect or area spells. She cannot absorb a spell of a higher level than she can steal with her Steal Spell ability. To absorb a spell, she must succeed on a level check (1d20+ spellthief class level) against a DC of 10+ the spell's caster level. Failure indicates that the spell has its normal effect. Success means that the spellthief suffers no effect from the spell and can cast the spell later (or use its energy to cast one of her own) as if she had stolen the spell with her Steal Spell ability. Her normal limit of total spell levels stolen still applies.

Arcane Sight (Sp) Beginning at 9th level, a spellthief can use *arcane sight* as a swift action a number of times per day equal to her Charisma modifier. Her caster level is equal to her spellthief level.

Detect Magic (Sp) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher can use *detect magic* a number of times per day equal to her Charisma bonus, if any (minimum 1). Her caster level is equal to her spellthief class level.

Discover Spells (Ex) A spellthief of 13th level or higher who steals from a spellcaster with her Steal Spell ability automatically learns the names of all other

spells prepared or known by the spellcaster that are of the same spell level as the stolen spell. This knowledge allows the spellthief to better choose which spells to steal on subsequent attacks.

Spellgrace (Su) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher gains a +1 competence bonus on her saves against spells. This bonus improves to +2 at 11th level and to +3 at 20th level.

Steal Energy Resistance (Su) Beginning at 3rd level, a spellthief can siphon off some or all of a target's resistance to an energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic). A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead temporarily gain resistance 10 to an energy type to which her target is resistant (or immune). If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. Simultaneously, the target's resistance to that energy type is reduced by 10 (to a minimum of 0). A creature with immunity to an energy type retains that immunity. If the target has more than one type of energy resistance, the spellthief can choose which kind to steal, otherwise the type is determined randomly. Stolen energy resistance lasts for 1 minute (or until the effect expires). A spellthief can use this ability multiple times, but its effects do not stack unless they apply to different types of energy.

Steal Spell (Su) A spellthief can siphon spell energy away from her target and use it herself. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can choose to forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead steal a spell, or the potential to cast a specific known spell, from her target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell with a touch as a standard action. The target of a steal spell attack loses one 0-level or 1st-level spell from memory if he or she prepares spells ahead of time, or one 0-level or 1st level spell slot if a spontaneous caster. A spontaneous caster also loses the ability to cast the stolen spell for 1 minute. If the target has no spells prepared (or has no remaining spell slots, if a spontaneous caster), this ability has no effect. A spellthief can choose which spell to steal. If she tries to steal a spell that isn't available, the stolen spell (or spell slot) is determined randomly from among those the target has available. After stealing a spell, the spellthief can cast the spell herself on a subsequent turn. The stolen spell is treated as if it were cast by the original owner for the purpose of determining caster level, DC, and so forth. A spellthief can cast this spell even if she doesn't have the minimum ability score normally required to cast a spell of that level. The spellthief must supply the same components (including verbal, somatic, material, xp, and any focus) required for the stolen spell. At any one time, a spellthief can possess a maximum number of stolen spells equal to her class level (treat 0-level spells as ½ level for this purpose). A spellthief cannot apply metamagic feats or other effects to the stolen spell unless it was prepared with

such an effect. This ability works only against spells. It has no effect on spell-like abilities.

Steal Spell Effect (Su) Beginning at 2nd level, a spellthief can siphon an active spell effect from another creature. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain the effect of a single spell affecting the target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. The spellthief can choose which effect to steal, otherwise the effect is determined randomly from among those currently in effect on the target. A spellthief cannot steal a spell effect if its caster level exceeds her class level + her Charisma modifier. Upon stealing a spell effect, she gains the stolen effect (and the target loses that effect) for 1 minute per class level (or until it's duration expires). A spellthief can steal the effect of a spell only if the spell could be cast on her by the original caster (for instance, *shield* has a range of personal and thus could not be stolen). If a spellthief tries to steal the effect of a spell not allowed to her, the effect is still suppressed on the original target of the spell for 1 minute per spellthief class level. This ability does not work on spell effects that are immune to *dispel magic*.

Steal Spell Resistance (Su) Beginning at 15th level, a spellthief can use a sneak attack to temporarily steal some or all of a creature's spell resistance. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego 3d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead reduce the target's spell resistance by 5. The spellthief also gains spell resistance equal to 5+ her class level (up to a maximum value equal to the original spell resistance of the target). If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal spell resistance with a touch as a standard action. The stolen spell resistance benefits the spellthief for a number of rounds equal to her Charisma modifier and then returns to the target creature. If the spell resistance is derived from a temporary effect, it disappears when the effect elapses. A spellthief cannot use this ability on the same creature again until the stolen spell resistance returns.

Steal Spell-Like Ability (Su) At 5th level and higher, a spellthief can use a sneak attack to temporarily steal a creature's spell-like ability. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain one use of one of the target's spell-like abilities. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action. This spell-like ability can originate from the target's class, race, template, or any other source, and can be of any level up to a maximum of one-third the spellthief's class level. A spellthief can select a specific spell-like ability to steal, otherwise the ability is determined randomly. If the ability has a limited number of uses per day, the target must have at least one such use left, or the spellthief cannot steal it. If the target cannot use its ability at the present time, the spellthief cannot steal it.

APPENDIX 2: NEW RULES

NEW CLASSES

Spellthief (Complete Adventurer)

Spellthieves use skill and arcane magic to drain the abilities of their opponents and turn their foes' own powers against them. Spellthieves love the challenges that adventure brings, and they relish finding unique and inventive ways to use their abilities. Because they have such a wide variety of abilities, spell thieves can adapt themselves to overcome nearly any challenge, but they have neither the overpowering arcane might of wizards, nor the brute force of fighters. Spellthieves never cast two spells when one will do, and they excel at using misdirection and deception to overcome seemingly stronger opponents.

Good spellthieves use their skills and magic to entertain themselves, protect those less gifted than themselves, and occasionally serve a cause or nation as a spy. Evil spellthieves use their versatile skills to trick and deceive, or plague large cities as daring cat burglars.

CLASS FEATURES

Spellthieves can fill any number of diverse roles in an adventuring group, depending on the skills and abilities of the other members of the party. They can at times function as a group's expert on arcane magic. With the right skill selection, a spellthief can act as a group's primary scout and its master of stealth. Because his abilities overlap with those of arcane spellcasters and rogues, a spellthief might have a hard time finding a niche in a group that already includes one character of each kind. In such a case, a spellthief usually concentrates on using spells to augment his class abilities and combat prowess and ends up pairing with the rogue in most endeavors. The two can scout almost anywhere with little chance of being detected, and their ability to flank an opponent and both deal sneak attack damage makes them a deadly duo in combat.

The Spellthief

Hit Die: d6

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Special	Spells per Day			
						1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Sneak attack +1d6, steal spell (0 or 1st), trapfinding	--	--	--	--
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Detect magic, spellgrace +1, steal spell effect	--	--	--	--
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	Steal energy resistance 10	--	--	--	--
4th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Steal spell (2nd)	0	--	--	--
5th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Sneak attack +2d6, steal spell-like ability	0	--	--	--
6th	+4	+2	+2	+5	Steal spell (3rd)	1	--	--	--
7th	+5	+2	+2	+5	Absorb spell	1	--	--	--
8th	+6/+1	+2	+2	+6	Steal spell (4th)	1	0	--	--
9th	+6/+1	+3	+3	+6	Arcane sight, sneak attack +3d6	1	0	--	--
10th	+7/+2	+3	+3	+7	Steal spell (5th)	1	1	--	--
11th	+8/+3	+3	+3	+7	Spellgrace +2, steal energy resistance 20	1	1	0	--
12th	+9/+4	+4	+4	+8	Steal spell (6th)	1	1	1	--
13th	+9/+4	+4	+4	+8	Discover spells, sneak attack +4d6	1	1	1	--
14th	+10/+5	+4	+4	+9	Steal spell (7th)	2	1	1	0
15th	+11/+6/+1	+5	+5	+9	Steal spell resistance	2	1	1	1
16th	+12/+7/+2	+5	+5	+10	Steal spell (8th)	2	2	1	1
17th	+12/+7/+2	+5	+5	+10	Sneak attack +5d6	2	2	2	1

Class Skills (6+Int modifier per level, x4 at 1st level): Appraise, Bluff, Concentration, Craft, Decipher Script, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Gather Information, Hide, Jump, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (local), Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Search, Speak Language, Spellcraft, Spot, Swim, Tumble, and Use Magic Device.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Spellthieves are proficient with all simple weapons and with light armor but not with shields. Because the somatic components required for spellthief spells are simple, a spellthief can cast spellthief spells while wearing light armor without incurring the normal arcane spell failure chance. However, a spellthief wearing medium or heavy armor or using a shield incurs a chance of arcane spell failure (*Player's Handbook*, page 123) if the spell in question has a somatic component (most do). A multiclass spellthief still

incurs the normal spell failure chance for arcane spells received from other classes, including those stolen from arcane casters (see the steal spell ability below).

Spells Beginning at 4th level, a spellthief gains the ability to cast a small number of arcane spells, which are drawn from a subset of the sorcerer/wizard spell list. To learn or cast a spell, a spellthief must have a Charisma score equal to at least 10 + the spell level. He receives bonus spells per day if he has a high Charisma score. When a spellthief is indicated as having 0 spells per day,

he gains only the bonus spells he would be entitled to based on his Charisma score for that spell level. He can cast any spell she knows without preparing it ahead of time, just as a sorcerer. A spellthief can learn any sorcerer/wizard spell from the following schools: abjuration, divination, enchantment, illusion, and transmutation.

Upon reaching 12th level, and at every third spellthief level after that, a spellthief can choose to learn a new spell in place of one he already knows, just as a sorcerer can (see page 54 of the *Player's Handbook*). At 4th level and higher, a spellthief's caster level for spells is one-half his spellthief level.

Spellthief Spells Known

Level	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1st	--	--	--	--
2nd	--	--	--	--
3rd	--	--	--	--
4th	2	--	--	--
5th	2	--	--	--
6th	3	--	--	--
7th	3	--	--	--
8th	4	2	--	--
9th	4	2	--	--
10th	4	3	--	--
11th	4	3	2	--
12th	4	4	3	--
13th	4	4	3	--
14th	4	4	4	2
15th	4	4	4	3
16th	4	4	4	3
17th	5	4	4	4
18th	5	5	4	4
19th	5	5	5	4
20th	5	5	5	5

Sneak Attack (Ex): A spellthief deals an extra 1d6 points of damage when flanking an opponent or at any time when the target would be denied its Dexterity bonus. This extra damage applies to ranged attacks only if the target is within 30 feet. If a spellthief gets a sneak attack bonus from another source (such as rogue levels), the bonuses on damage stack.

Steal Spell (Su): A spellthief can siphon spell energy away from his target and use it himself. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can choose to forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead steal a spell, or the potential to cast a specific known spell, from his target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell with a touch as a standard action.

The target of a steal spell attack loses one 0-level or 1st-level spell slot if she is a spontaneous caster. A spontaneous caster also loses the ability to cast the stolen spell for 1 minute. If the target has no spells prepared (or has no remaining spell slots, if she is a spontaneous caster), this ability has no effect. A spellthief can choose which spell to steal; otherwise, the DM determines the

stolen spell randomly. If a spellthief tries to steal a spell that isn't available, the stolen spell (or spell slot) is determined randomly from among those the target has available.

For example, a 1st-level spellthief who uses this ability against a 1st-level sorcerer could choose to steal a *magic missile*. Assuming the sorcerer knew that spell, a successful steal spell attack would eliminate one 1st-level spell slot and temporarily prevent her from casting *magic missile*. If the same spellthief stole *magic missile* from a wizard who had it prepared, the wizard would lose one prepared *magic missile* (but wouldn't lose any other *magic missile* spells she might have also prepared).

After stealing a spell, the spellthief can cast the spell himself on a subsequent turn. Treat the stolen spell as if it were cast by the original owner of the spell for the purpose of determining caster level, save DC, and so forth. A spellthief can cast this spell even if he doesn't have the minimum ability score normally required to cast a spell of that level. The spellthief must supply the same components (including verbal, somatic, material, xp, and any focus) required for the stolen spell. Alternatively, a spellthief of 4th level or higher can use the stolen spell power to cast any spellthief spell that he knows of the same level or lower (effectively, this gives the spellthief one free casting of a known spell). As spellthief must cast a stolen spell (or use its energy to cast one of his own spells) within 1 hour of stealing it; otherwise, the extra spell energy fades harmlessly away.

As a spellthief gains levels, he can choose to steal higher-level spells. At 4th level, he can steal spells of up to 2nd level, and for every two levels gained after 4th the maximum spell level stolen increases by one (up to a maximum of 9th-level spells at 18th level).

At any one time, a spellthief can possess a maximum number of stolen spells equal to her class level (treat 0-level spells as ½ level for this purpose). For instance, a 4th-level spellthief can have two stolen 2nd-level spells, or one 2nd-level spell and two 1st-level spells, or any other combination of 0-level, 1st-level, and 2nd-level spells. If he steals a spell that would cause him to exceed this limit, he must choose to lose stolen spells sufficient to reduce his total number of stolen spell levels to no more than his maximum.

A spellthief cannot apply metamagic feats or other effects to the stolen spell unless the specific spell stolen was prepared with such an effect. For example, a spellthief of 6th level or higher could steal a wizard's empowered *magic missile*, but only if he specifically chose to steal an empowered *magic missile*. If he chose to steal an unmodified *magic missile*, he couldn't steal an empowered *magic missile*, a silent *magic missile*, or any other metamagic form of the spell. A spellthief couldn't steal an empowered *magic missile* from a sorcerer, since the sorcerer applies metamagic effects upon casting and thus has no prepared empowered *magic missile* spell.

This ability works only against spells. It has no effect on spell-like abilities.

Trapfinding (EX) A spellthief can use the Search skill to locate traps with a DC higher than 20, and he can use Disable Device to bypass a trap or disarm magic traps.

Detect Magic (Sp) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher can use *detect magic* a number of times per day equal to his Charisma bonus, if any (minimum 1). Her caster level is equal to her spellthief class level.

Spellgrace (Su) A spellthief of 2nd level or higher gains a +1 competence bonus on her saves against spells. This bonus improves to +2 at 11th level and to +3 at 20th level.

Steal Spell Effect (Su) Beginning at 2nd level, a spellthief can siphon an active spell effect from another creature. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain the effect of a single spell affecting the target. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action.

The spellthief can choose which effect to steal; otherwise the effect is determined randomly from among those currently in effect on the target. A spellthief cannot steal a spell effect if its caster level exceeds her class level + her Charisma modifier.

Upon stealing a spell effect, he gains the stolen effect (and the target loses that effect) for 1 minute per class level (or until it's duration expires, whichever comes first). If the spell effect's duration hasn't expired by this time, the spell effect returns to the creature that originally benefited from it.

A spellthief can steal the effect of a spell only if the spell could be cast on him by the original caster (for instance, *shield* has a range of personal and thus could not be stolen). If a spellthief tries to steal the effect of a spell not allowed to her, the effect is still suppressed on the original target of the spell for 1 minute per spellthief class level.

This ability does not work on spell effects that are immune to *dispel magic*.

Steal Energy Resistance (Su) Beginning at 3rd level, a spellthief can siphon off some or all of a target's resistance to an energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic). A spellthief who hits an opponent with a successful sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead temporarily gain resistance 20 to an energy type to which her target is resistant (or immune). If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action.

Simultaneously, the target's resistance to that energy type is reduced by 20 (to a minimum of 0). A creature with immunity to an energy type retains that immunity.

If the target has more than one type of energy resistance, the spellthief can choose which kind to steal; otherwise the type is determined randomly from among those possessed by the target.

Stolen energy resistance lasts for 1 minute (or until the effect expires).

A spellthief can use this ability multiple times, but its effects do not stack unless they apply to different types of energy. For example, a spellthief could not use

this ability on a creature resistant to fire to gain twice as much resistance to fire or to lower the creature's resistance by twice as much.

Steal Spell-like Ability (Su) At 5th level and higher, a spellthief can use a sneak attack to temporarily steal a creature's spell-like ability. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can forego dealing 1d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead gain one use of one of the target's spell-like abilities. If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal a spell effect with a touch as a standard action.

This spell-like ability can originate from the target's class, race, template, or any other source, and can be of any level up to a maximum of one-third the spellthief's class level. A spellthief can select a specific spell-like ability to steal; otherwise the ability is determined randomly. If the ability has a limited number of uses per day, the target must have at least one such use left, or the spellthief cannot steal it. If the target cannot use its ability at the present time, the spellthief cannot steal it.

A spellthief can use a stolen spell-like ability once. For all purposes (caster level, save DC, and so on), treat the spell-like ability as if it were being used by the original possessor of the ability. A spellthief must use the stolen spell-like ability within 1 minute of acquiring it, or it is lost harmlessly. Until the spellthief uses the ability (or until the minute elapses), the target cannot use the stolen ability.

Absorb Spell (Su) Beginning at 7th level, if a spellthief makes a successful save against a spell that targets him, she can attempt to absorb the spell energy for later use. This ability affects only spells that have the spellthief as a target, not effect or area spells. A spellthief cannot absorb a spell of a higher level than he can steal with his Steal Spell ability.

To absorb a spell that targets him, a spellthief must succeed on a level check (1d20+ spellthief class level) against a DC of 10+ the spell's caster level. Failure indicates that the spell has its normal effect. Success means that the spellthief suffers no effect from the spell and can cast the spell later (or use its energy to cast one of his own spells known) as if he had stolen the spell with her Steal Spell ability. His normal limit of total spell levels stolen still applies.

Arcane Sight (Sp) Beginning at 9th level, a spellthief can use *arcane sight* as a swift action a number of times per day equal to his Charisma modifier (minimum 1). His caster level is equal to his spellthief level.

Discover Spells (Ex) A spellthief of 13th level or higher who steals from a spellcaster with his Steal Spell ability automatically learns the names of all other spells prepared or known by the spellcaster that are of the same spell level as the stolen spell. This knowledge allows the spellthief to better choose which spells to steal on subsequent attacks.

Steal Spell Resistance (Su) Beginning at 15th level, a spellthief can use a sneak attack to temporarily steal some or all of a creature's spell resistance. A spellthief who hits an opponent with a sneak attack can

forego 3d6 points of sneak attack damage and instead reduce the target's spell resistance by 5. The spellthief also gains spell resistance equal to 5+ his class level (up to a maximum value equal to the original spell resistance of the target). If the target is willing, a spellthief can steal spell resistance with a touch as a standard action.

The stolen spell resistance benefits the spellthief for a number of rounds equal to his Charisma modifier (minimum 1 round) and then returns to the target creature. If the spell resistance is derived from a temporary effect, it disappears when the effect elapses. A spellthief cannot use this ability on the same creature again until the stolen spell resistance returns.

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

Bracers of Arcane Freedom

(*Magic Item Compendium*, page 80)

Price (Item Level): 2,300 gp (6th)

Body Slot: Arms

Caster Level: 7th

Aura: Moderate; (DC 18) abjuration

Weight: 1/2 lb.

Bracers of arcane freedom allow you to cast arcane spells without the normal complex gestures required. When you activate these bracers, you omit the somatic component of the next arcane spell you cast before the end of your next turn (as if applying the Still Spell feat to it, but without altering the spell's level or casting time).

This effect functions two times per day.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *freedom of movement*.

Cost to Create: 1,150 gp, 92 XP, 3 days.

NEW MONSTERS

Angel of Decay

(*Libris Mortis*, page 83)

A repulsive, extremely tall, humanlike creature with long, rotting wings and peeling flesh, this monstrosity continually sheds rivulets of filth and decay, creating a pool of rot in which it stands.

ANGEL OF DECAY

CR 15

Always CE Large undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +34, Spot +34

Aura rotting aura (15 ft.)

Languages Common, Abyssal

AC 28, touch 15, flat-footed 26

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +4 deflection, +13 natural)

hp 263 (26 HD); **DR** 10/adamantine and magic

Immune undead immunities

SR 24

Fort +14, **Ref** +16, **Will** +26

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 50 ft. (poor)

Melee 2 claws +25 (2d6+13 plus rotting touch) and 2 wing slams +20 (1d6+6 plus rotting touch)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +13; **Grp** +30

Atk Options Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, rotting touch

Abilities Str 37, Dex 14, Con —, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 18

SQ undead traits, unholy grace

Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Concentration +29, Diplomacy +6, Hide +27, Knowledge (arcana) +34, Listen +34, Move Silently +31, Search +34, Sense Motive +34, Spellcraft +36, Spot +34+5 [ability], Survival +5 (+7 following tracks)

Advancement 27-36 HD (Large); 37-63 HD (Huge)

Rotting Aura (Su) When the creature is not flying, rivulets of vile corruption stream from an angel of decay's body, constantly regenerating and renewing a pool of odiferous rot all around the creature. This pool is a 15-foot radius spread. Any corporeal creature standing on the ground within that area must make a DC 27 Reflex saving throw each round or take 5d6 points of damage (save for half) as its flesh begins to succumb to decay. The creature must also succeed on a subsequent DC 27 Will saving throw (regardless of whether it succeeds on the first save) or be nauseated for 1 round. In each round that a creature takes damage from this rotting aura, the angel of decay heals 5 points of damage per victim.

Rotting Touch (Su) An angel of decay that hits a single foe with more than one attack in a round rots its opponent's flesh. This automatically deals an extra 1d6+6 points of damage and heals the angel of decay of 5 points of damage.

Unholy Grace (Su) An angel of decay adds its Charisma modifier as a bonus on all its saving throws and as a deflection bonus to its AC.

Strategy and Tactics

An angel of decay prefers to wade into combat, literally, since when it touches down, it produces a constantly renewing pool of liquid corruption.

Wheep

(*Libris Mortis*, page 132)

The empty orbs of the wizened corpse leak a vile, black ichor that streaks the creature's face and body, coating its clawed limbs. As the ichor runs into the creature's mouth, it bubbles and pos, so that its constant wailing emerges as a gurgling keen.

WHEEP

CR 11

Always LE Medium undead

Init +2; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8

Languages Common

AC 29, touch 17, flat-footed 27

(+2 Dex, +5 deflection, +12 natural)

hp 81 (9 HD); **fast healing** 10; **DR** 5/magic and piercing

Immune undead immunities

Resist turn resistance +4

Fort +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +13

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee 2 claws +16 (1d8+11 plus poison tears) and bite +13 (1d6+5 plus poison tears)

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

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +15

Special Actions weeping dirge

Abilities Str 33, Dex 15, Con --, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 20
SQ undead traits, unholy grace

Feats Dodge, Mobility, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (claws)

Skills Hide+8, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Spot +8

Advancement 10-16 HD (Medium); 17-24 HD (Large)

Poison Tears (Ex) The poison tears that continually pour from a wheep's empty eyes are actually an injury poison that coats the creature's claws and fills its mouth. Whenever a wheep succeeds on a claw or bite attack, its foe is subject to that poison—injury, Fortitude DC 19, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. The save DC is Charisma based. After an hour, the poisonous bile decomposes and evaporates, losing all efficacy.

Unholy Grace (Su) A wheep adds its Charisma modifier as a bonus on all its saving throws and as a deflection bonus to its Armor Class.

Weeping Dirge (Su) When it chooses (which is almost always, unless moving silently), a wheep can spend a free action each round crying and blubbering. All who hear the wheep's awful, grave-born sorrow must make DC 19 Will saves or be shaken for the duration of the encounter. Once a particular creature saves against a wheep's dirge, that creature cannot be affected again by the same wheep for 24 hours. This is a sonic effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Strategy and Tactics

Those close enough to hear a wheep's cries may be taken aback, but they are likely to be far more threatened by the creature's poison-coated claws and maw.

NEW TEMPLATE

Evolved Undead

(*Libris Mortis*, page 99)

An evolved undead is an undead whose body is flushed with more negative energy than normal due to an exceptionally long lifetime. Any undead may gain this template, and in doing so, it retains all its previous abilities, but becomes more powerful than before.

When an intelligent undead creature survives for 100 years or more (or when the DM decides to create an undead monster with a twist), there is a 1% chance that its connection to the Negative Energy Plane grows more mature. When this "evolution" occurs, the undead gains this template. Each additional 100 years of existence affords an additional 1% chance of a more mature connection, plus an additional 1% chance for each previous evolution. For example, if an undead creature's connection to the Negative Energy Plane evolved three times previously, it has a 4% chance to gain one more step of maturation the next time its age requires an evolution check. Every step of evolution means that the

evolved undead template can be applied again to the undead creature (setting this template apart from most other templates, which can be applied only once).

Creating an Evolved Undead

"Evolved Undead" is an acquired template that can be added to any undead with an Intelligence score (referred to hereafter as the base creature). An evolved undead uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Note: Unlike most templates, an evolved undead can potentially acquire this template more than once, evolving more with each application.

Challenge Rating: Same as base creature +1.

Type: This template does not alter the creature's type.

AC: The base creature's natural armor bonus improves by 1. If the creature is incorporeal, its deflection bonus to AC improves by 1.

Spell-Like Abilities: An evolved undead gains one spell-like ability from the following list. You can choose this ability from the list below, or roll randomly. The spell-like ability gained herein can be used once per day. If the undead already has the indicated ability, it gains another use; if it already has the ability as an at-will ability, choose another ability. The spell-like ability has a caster level equal to the evolved undead's HD (if the caster level is too low to cast the spell in question, choose another). The save DCs are Charisma-based:

d12 Spell-Like Ability

1	<i>circle of death</i>
2	<i>cloudkill</i>
3	<i>cone of cold</i>
4	<i>confusion</i>
5	<i>contagion</i>
6	<i>creeping doom</i>
7	<i>greater dispel magic</i>
8	<i>greater invisibility</i>
9	<i>haste</i>
10	<i>hold monster</i>
11	<i>see invisibility</i>
12	<i>unholy blight</i>

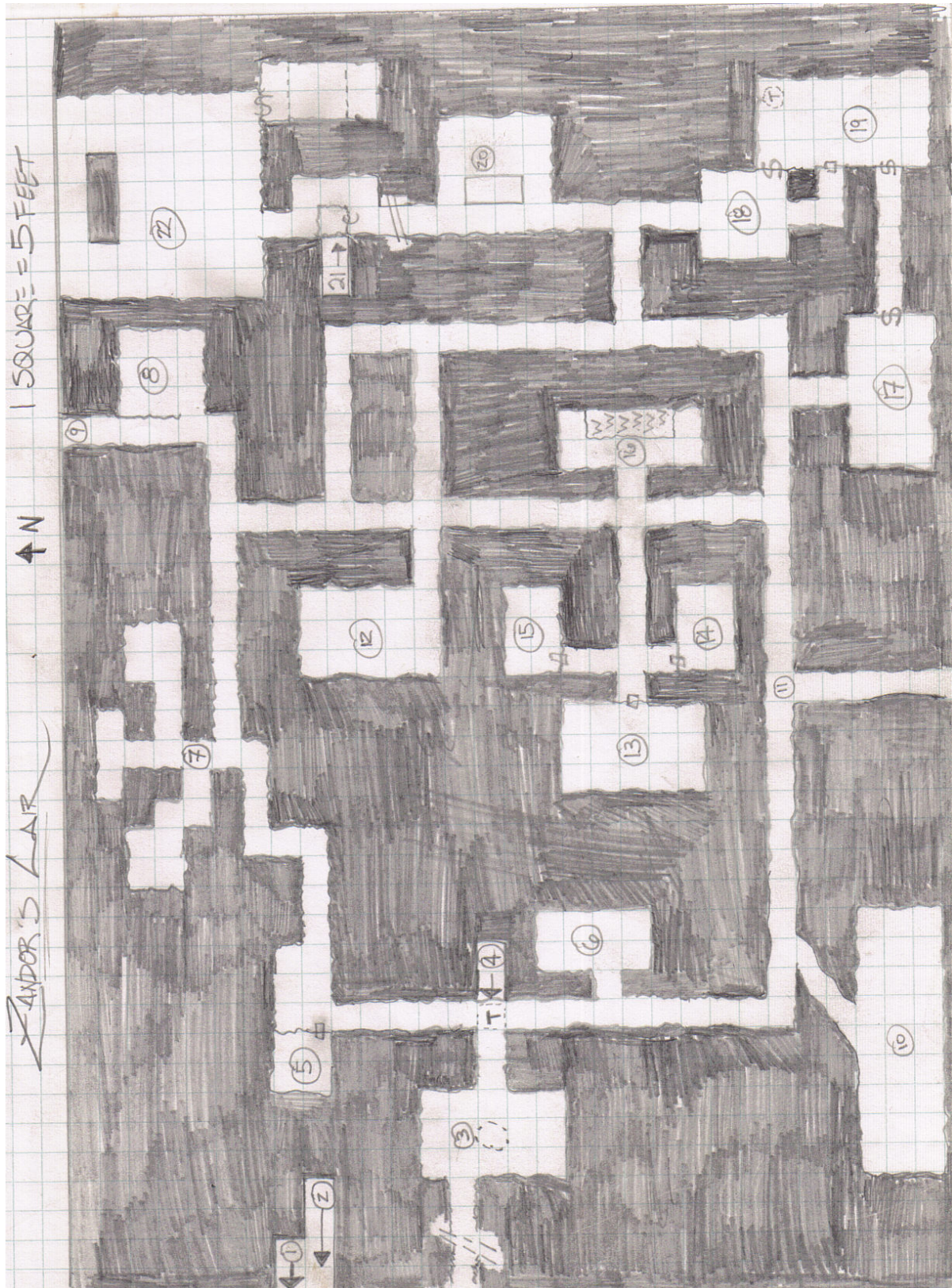
Abilities: An evolved corporeal undead gains +2 Strength and +2 Charisma. An evolved incorporeal creature gains only +2 Charisma.

Special Qualities: An evolved undead retains all the special qualities of the base creature and gains the one described below:

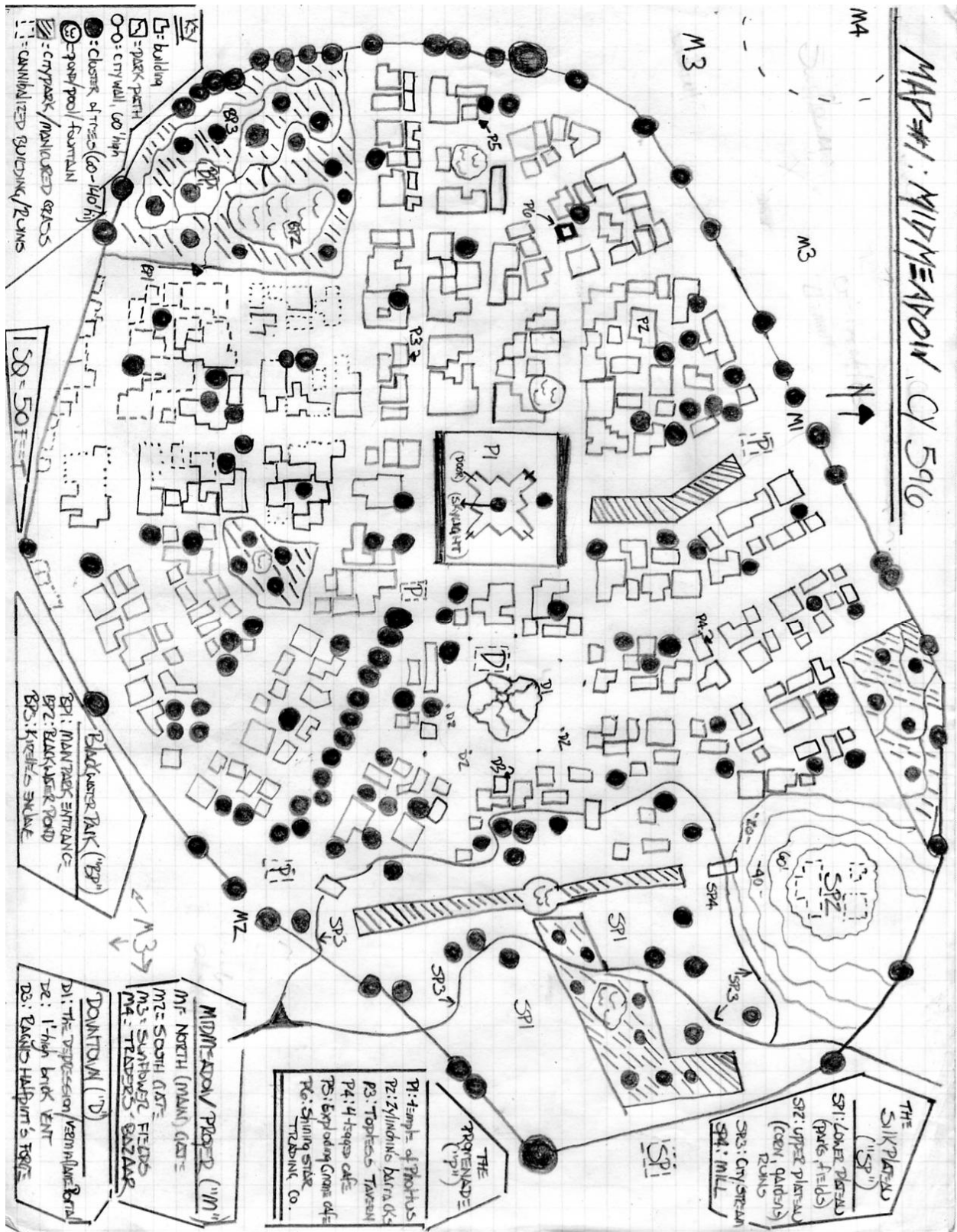
Fast Healing (Ex): An evolved undead heals 3 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point.

Level Adjustment: Same as base creature +1.

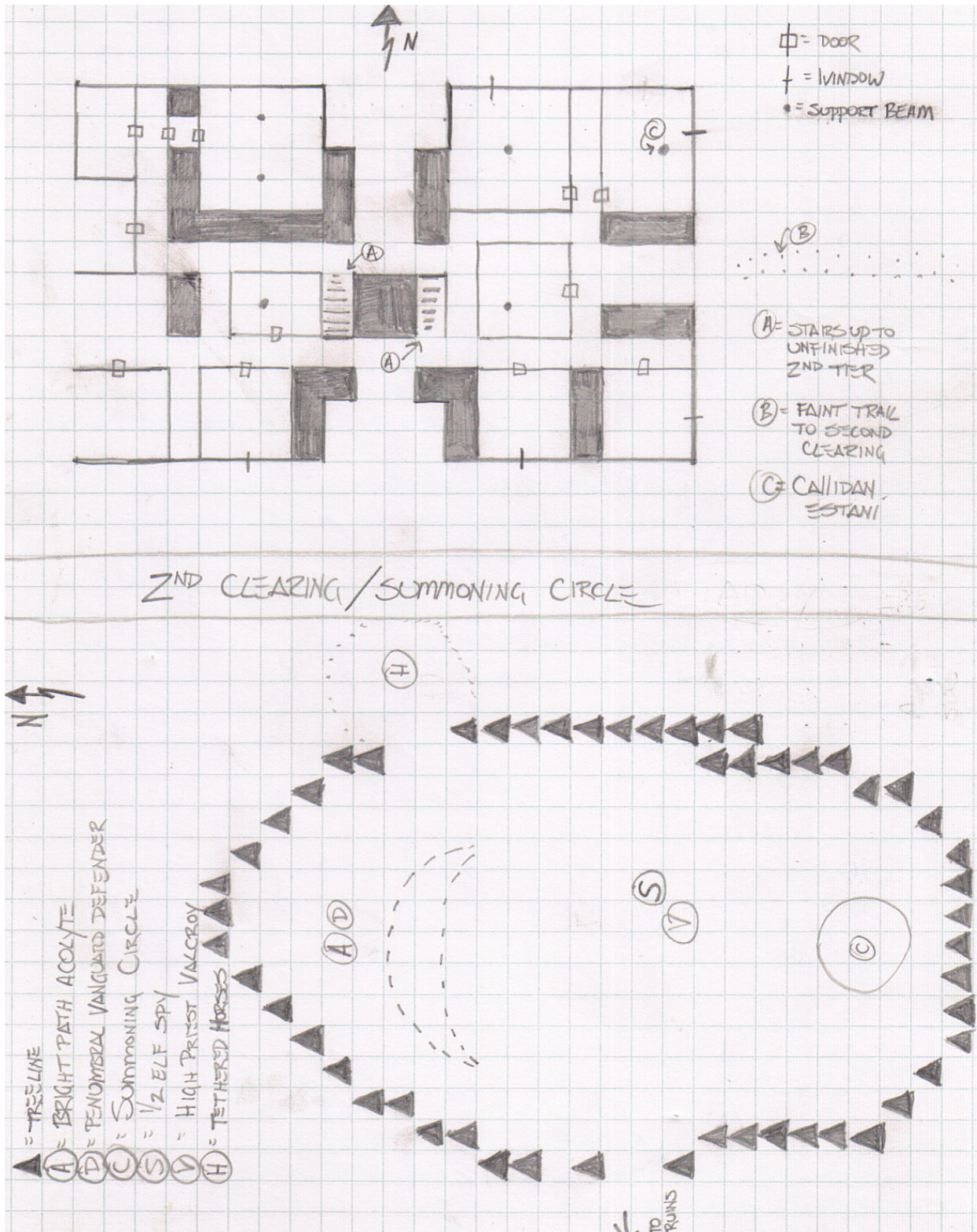
DM AID #1: MAP OF ZANDOR'S LAIR



DM AID #2: MAP OF MIDMEADOW



DM AID #3: MAP OF THE UNFINISHED NEW DAWN CAMP



DM AID #4: NOCTURNE

The following dialogue takes place in the small hours of the night after the PCs' return from Zandor's Lair. The Inanilae chief, Tess, is part of a secret, nocturnal meeting with three male, human visitors. Due to the mysterious appearance of a tiny monstrous spider, one PC is able to witness this from a discreet distance. One of the male visitors is in conversation with Tess when the PC arrives. Give a copy of this DM Aid to two of the players; have one of them (ideally a female) read Tess's dialogue (in **bold text**) and the other read for the male visitor (in normal text) while the other players follow along. Words bracketed in parentheses indicate expression and gestures, and should not be read aloud.

Tess: "You should not have come here. My position has not changed."

Visitor: "Change is a funny thing. Often we do not recognize it until it is occurring."

Tess: (wearily) "It is late and I've no patience for riddles. Speak plainly."

Visitor: "But you know what we would say: that you are destined for greater things. The offer is repeated. Your pardon, but some would consider this a great honor."

Tess: "Again, the offer is declined, despite your bludgeoning diplomacy; and honor is not a thing one person gives to another. It is kindled from within. There are other tribal chiefs. Offer it to them. The grey, perhaps, who look down on everyone. An ideal choice. Or the wild ones, mongrels who can't even trace their lineage beyond the last backstabbing."

Visitor: "They are...elder, milady. None have your youth, your vitality, your...reputation. Your people respect you. Adventurers speak highly of you. Bandits fear you. You are uniquely qualified. He *knows* this. He places great faith in you."

Tess: "Then he must also know that my place is with my tribe. He isn't likely to break with precious tradition unless doing so was simply the means to an end, an act of showmanship, a temporary bandage until the wound could be properly dressed...by another human healer. If he doesn't think this way, then certainly those closest to him, those with influence, do."

Visitor: "Milady..." (the three visitors exchange nervous glances), "this simply is not true."

Tess: (eyeing each of them keenly) "No? My intuition begs me to believe otherwise."

Visitor: (hesitantly) "...remember what we said about change. Times also change. You are his *first* choice, the only *real* choice as far as he is concerned. Past failures have shown him that he *must* break with tradition and adopt a new approach in order to solve this dilemma."

Tess: (warily) "...you speak for him on this?"

Visitor: "We do."

Tess: "Then bid him ask me himself, instead of sending silver-tongued lackeys to dull the edge."

Visitor: (nervously) "M-milady, that will never happen. This forest is too dangerous, too exposed—"

Tess: "Hah! Yet you would have me abandon my tribe to its dangers on a whim!"

Visitor: "B-but Milady, the *people*—they *need*—"

Tess: "Which people? Yours or mine? You seek to stretch me like a garrote across the throat of this Kingdom. Your arrogance is like an elven trance: it gives you a kind of strength. You are not so much different, I think, from that fool Bishop, Thorea."

Visitor: (slowly) "We have plans for him, if it pleases you."

Tess: (mildly curious) "Go on..."

Visitor: (the three exchange another glance) "As we speak, an envoy marches toward the city with a priest of the Arch-Paladin to wrest control from this Bishop. They should be there in three days."

Tess: (surprised) "Well, then you do not need me after all. This meeting is concluded."

Visitor: "No! Milady, please...it was at the petition of adventurers that this Bishop's recent activity was brought to our notice, the same adventurers who speak so highly of you. This is why he wants you, the people are tired of churches. They need someone they can trust, someone selfless, someone..."

Tess: (quietly, thoughtfully) "Not human." (she is silent for a moment before continuing) "I would be allowed to do things my way? Free to move between one and the other, unbound?"

Visitor: "I should think so, yes. The old ways have proven tragically ineffective. A change is needed."

Tess: "A monarch, like the butterfly of the same name, should stand for change. Bid him come and make the request himself. I do not negotiate with intermediaries. Those are my terms."

(With this, the scene clouds over and goes dark. The spider leads the PC back to where he or she was)

DM AID #5: GATHER INFORMATION RESULTS

The rumors here can be obtained within the Traders' Bazaar most notably during **Encounter 4**. As noted in the adventure text, coin can be used to loosen the tongues of the merchants and customers within the Bazaar (remember that each Gather Information check takes 1d4+1 hours):

- DC 5: "Martial Law is still in effect. Ugh!! Months of this nonsense is more than enough for me!! Why doesn't the King come in and take charge? These Bright Path types can't even agree with other Pholtans on which doctrine of Pholtus is correct! How can they possibly be controlling the city, much less leading a successful investigation into Callidan Estani's disappearance? No wonder he's still missing, with their degree of organization! I miss that Pelorite. At least he spoke his mind"
- DC 7: "I can't believe the Bishop arrested Dalis Mirivan as a suspect. If anything, that guy is guilty of being a good listener. I saw the way he was looking at Faith during the wedding last year...say, do you think he's shrewd enough to have gotten himself arrested on purpose?!? You know how those priests of Fharlanghn are...well, anyway, Penrys isn't paying much attention to her. Now that I think about it, I haven't seen her around town too much lately..."
- DC 10: "The Blackwater Park elves have been rather quiet lately, and they stay mostly within the park except to trade their arts and crafts outside the South Gate. I notice that the Pholtans do not go into the park, just like they don't go into the Silk Plateau. Maybe it has something to do with the fact that both of those districts are ruled by non-humans? Maybe the elves are plotting something. Kirelle IS the oldest original Midmeadow resident...maybe she knows something no one else knows."
- DC 13: "I REALLY can't believe that the Bishop had those two Pholtan Knight-Captains placed under house arrest. I thought all those Pholtans were on the same side of...whatever it is they do. Worship the sun, or call other priests heretics, or whatever. What's really hard to believe is that there hasn't been some kind of retaliation by the Pale. I mean, those Knight-Captains are, like, ambassadors or something. Remember when that Nyron ambassador got killed in the Pale two years ago? People here were furious! Now, it's like the Pale treats these two Knights as if they were expendable. I wonder why they haven't tried complaining to the Pale...unless they really are guilty of something."
- DC 15: "Did you hear about Rowena Livingston? She finally finished her atonement in Rel Mord and was reinstated by the Church of Mouqol. I wonder what she'll do. Her shop is still here in town, and there is no shortage of adventurers looking for magic items. Maybe she will come back to make amends with Penrys, even though he jilted her. MAYBE she will have something to say to Faith..."
- DC 17: "That bee-priestess on the Plateau has been awfully quiet these past few months...TOO quiet. I hope she isn't planning some hot-tempered act of vengeance. I get scared each time I see an insect or a spider now. Each time I pass one, I have to take a step back and wonder...what next?"
- DC 20: "I heard there was a bookseller in the Bazaar last month! Can you imagine?! No one in Midmeadow reads anymore! We're like a walled compound of sorcerers! With litter! And gnomes. Anyway, I heard she was looking for some book about light. Probably a Pelor groupie from Mithat."
- DC 22: "High Priest Valcroy kept his word: I haven't seen any Blinding Light members since the wedding attempt last year. He left town a week later and no one has seen him since. Probably didn't want to be associated with the Bishop and this martial law thing. Smart man. Someone saw him remove a large package from the temple of Pholtus. I hope it was Penrys's wedding present."
- DC 25: "Those downtown residents are really upset about Dalis getting arrested. They pretty much control the sewer system here in the city, which goes everywhere, and they had the skill to create that Verminflame Portal. If I were a Bright Path cleric, I'd be worried. Did I mention the gnomes?"
- DC 27: "Some followers of St. Cuthbert arrived on a caravan from the County of Urnst last week; they had a handsome cleric among them with cute little stars on his beret who asked me if I wanted to go clubbing, but I had to turn him down. My partying days are over since those sanitation workers went missing at the Heironean temple

opening a few years back. I haven't been able to learn where they are staying. Hey, help me with this puzzle. What's a 13-letter word for "nightmare"?

- DC 30: "A lumber merchant passed through the Bazaar a few days ago with a cache of old-growth elm trees he said he'd found felled and neatly stacked in the woods five miles north of town. No one is supposed to be logging in that area without a Royal Permit." (DC 20 Knowledge [geography]).
- DC 33+: "I thought I saw that troublemaking elf bard, Sastrine, near Blackwater Park a few days ago, you know, the one who helped Rowena plot against Penrys? I was mistaken. It was a half-elf, a female I hadn't seen before. Still, the Recluse turned out to be a half-elf...so did Aricyn..."