

BIS3-03

Oakstaff

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®] Bissel Regional Adventure

Version 1.1

by Cameron Logan

He stood seven feet tall and had wings like an eagle. His father was a solar and his mother, a fire elemental. He shot lightning from his eyes and no weapon made by mortals could hurt him. His name was Kanner the Tall and he was ... a hero of Bissel? Many are willing to kill for the answer, but are you ready to die for it? A Bissel regional adventure for inquisitive PCs at APLs 2-10.

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

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Introduction

This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three and a half hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least three players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks

during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

Scoring

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM score the game. The RPGA has three ways to score its games. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use for this scenario:

1. No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

When using voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities. It's a good idea to have the players vote while you determine treasure and experience awards for the scenario.

After voting, give the Scoring Packet to your event coordinator.

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them.

If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING

GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the LIVING GREYHAWK Gazetteer.

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

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

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 being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
3. Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will 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 you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Three or four, or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

1. Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

Time Units and Upkeep

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

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

Adventure Background

Yindera Raschid is a woman out to make a point. As the only Baklune to have attained the rank of Master within the prestigious Bardic Circle, Yindera has already made a name for herself by collecting and studying the lore and songs of the Baklunish in Bissel. In her researches she wishes to find evidence of a great Baklunish hero in Bissel's past, something to show all Bisselites that the Baklunish have contributed just as much to Bissel's culture and heritage as the Suel or the Oeridians.

Her researches have led her to an individual named Kanner the Tall, a hero of the so-called "Small War." The "Small War" was a two-year conflict in which the combined forces of Veluna and Furyondy were able to drive the encroaching Kingdom of Keoland southward. Not only were the Keoish driven from western Veluna, but Furyondy was able to take the March of Bissel from them as well.

Native Bisselites were torn during the conflict; some fought for the Keoish and many others fought against them. One who fought against the Keoish was Kanner the Tall, who is referred to as the *Oakstaff* in some of the few stories that have not been lost. By all reports Kanner was a powerful mage and that the name *Oakstaff* came from a tall oaken staff, which he carried into battle. The odd thing about Kanner is that he is only mentioned in accounts dealing with the "Small War," and even then only peripherally. For a wizard who was obviously so powerful, it seems that there should be tales of his deeds before and after the conflict.

Kanner's nationality and race are unknown, but Yindera believes him to be a Baklune who was more interested in fighting against the Keoish than in aiding the combined forces of Furyondy and Veluna. This is something she has not yet been able to confirm; funding for research has not been forthcoming as contributions to the Bardic Circle have declined with taxes being raised to support Bissel's new army. Yindera sees the lack of funding as a racist slight and a plot to keep her work from coming to light. She has not let this be a set back, and has come up with a unique way of funding her researches.

Yindera has already secured financial support from scholars based in Keoland, Furyondy, and Veluna. She has separately claimed that Kanner was a patriot of each of their respective nations, and has gone so far as to separately promise them Kanner's *Oakstaff* if it is recovered! She of course has no intention of keeping her promise, but all's fair in the cutthroat world of scholarly research... at least until certain evil factions find out.

Tocanis Blot is man out to make a point. As a promising young lieutenant in Evard's cadre of necromancers, Tocanis is looking for a way to advance and gain access to more of Evard's twisted knowledge. Tocanis has intercepted communications from Yindera that were meant for the interested scholars from Keoland. He plans to take the *Oakstaff* for himself, and deliver it as a potential weapon for Evard. He will be impersonating a Keolander for the duration of the adventure.

Yindera has meanwhile gone into hiding. She has been able to find the *Oakstaff*, but a late night encounter with a few of Tocanis' undead servants has caused her to hide the staff and booby-trap her office. This is the basic situation when the *PCs* enter the adventure. They must find Yindera and defeat Tocanis, while trying to solve the mystery of who Kanner the Tall really was.

Adventure Summary

PCs begin in the town of Dountham, not knowing anything of Yindera or her troubles. They are staying at an inn called Marma's Flagon. They will notice a gnomish merchant being accosted by a couple of ruffians. Assuming the *PCs* come to the gnome's aid, the ruffians may choose to fight.

The gnome is named Brith Brigscunyon, and is a collector of rare items, mostly books. He is set to make a delivery to Yindera Raschid in Calpius' Craft, and will ask *PCs* to escort him.

The *PCs* and Brith arrive in Calpius' Craft, and Brith insists on making his delivery immediately. It is late afternoon when they find themselves on the grounds of the Bardic Circle. Shortly after they arrive an explosion will occur, and the *PCs* will have to work fast to put out the fires.

Headmaster Garon Dellifin will arrive to either thank the *PCs* for aiding the college or lament the burning of one of their buildings. *PCs* can get some information from Garon, including the fact that it was Yindera's office from which the explosion came.

If the *PCs* decide to investigate Yindera's office, they will find letters from scholars based out of Veluna, Furyondy and Keoland. They will also find the charred remains of a zombie that Tocanis sent to investigate Yindera's office. At this point the *PCs* should begin to get an idea of what is really going on. They will learn of a meeting place that night, at a tavern called the Crystal Web.

There are also a few investigative activities that the *PCs* can try in order to find Yindera or the *Oakstaff*.

If the PCs were able to learn of the existence of Bince Rupel, Yindera's research assistant, they will in all likelihood wish to question him. There they will find one or more of Tocanis' undead servants, attempting to silence Bince for good.

At the Crystal Web, the PCs will be able to spot the scholars from Furyondy and Veluna and may meet Tocanis posing as a scholar from Keoland. Amidst the bedlam of the tavern atmosphere, Yindera will select a subtle way in which to reveal herself, and employ the aid of the PCs..

Provided the PCs have agreed to aid Yindera, she leads them to the hiding place of the *Oakstaff*. Tocanis will follow via his familiar and then force a final showdown over the *Oakstaff*. During the battle the true identity of Kanner, a gnome illusionist, is revealed.

By the end, the final fate of Kanner's *Oakstaff* is determined, and a few people leave Calpius' Craft disappointed.

DM Note: Please note that this adventure contains a great amount of potential role-playing. Feel free to give PCs that role-play it well a circumstance bonus to the social skills required for the adventure.

Introduction

With new trade routes negotiated to the southern Sheldomar valley, trade through the March of Bissel seems more active than ever. This is especially true in the town of Dountham, a nexus of merchant routes and a hub of the caravan business. There seems to be work for every free man willing to do an honest day's labor, but especially in demand are those with the skills and courage necessary to defend outbound caravans from the dangers that wait on the open road. It is here that you find yourself during a warm week in the month of Wealsun, hoping to catch a windfall from all this increased trade activity.

If the PCs are members of the Great Army of Bissel, they have been stationed here, along with a number of other troops, to maintain order at the request of Lord Mayor Amal Del'Bothoff.

Encounter One: Enter the Flagon

Having just arrived in Dountham, you find yourself outside a large two-story building located just off one of the main market streets. A wooden sign depicting an overflowing tankard leaves very little doubt in your mind that a road weary traveler could find some much needed food and drink inside.

As one of Dountham's more popular taverns, Marma's Flagon is renowned as a meeting place for those who are involved in the caravan business. Anyone looking to stuff themselves with a finely prepared meal or to drink themselves into a delighted stupor can find what they need inside. Assuming the PCs enter, describe the common room as being a large room (50ft by 30ft, for the overly paranoid) filled with people seated at tables or standing around the bar. The proprietress, Marma Tefilheim (Female dwarf Exp3/Ftr3) is busy behind the bar serving ale to those who want it and ordering the servers to deliver their orders more quickly. Stairs lead up to a few small meeting rooms and Marma's private quarters (there are no rooms to rent here). A door behind the bar leads to the kitchen, from which can be heard the curses and oaths of Votto Tefilheim (Male dwarf Exp1/Clr4 of Vergadain), Marma's husband and the Flagon's main chef.

If the PCs do not know each other, now is a perfect time for them to meet. If they wish to talk to Marma, she will greet them with a few choice curse words before serving them some "bloody ale." As tavern owners, Marma and her husband are (of course) former adventurers and are willing to talk shop with the PCs if they so desire. The servers are all too busy for conversation, which leaves only the other patrons to talk with. The tavern is very busy at this time (early evening), and it is packed with merchants and mercenaries. Marma's Flagon is known as a place where sell swords can find work as caravan guards, while merchants come here to hire some much needed protection. Allow the PCs time to get their bearings, but before they have too much time to talk with the other patrons, read the following:

As the swarming crowd of tavern patrons continues to grow, you notice out of the corner of your eye two men, a human and a half-orc, who sit down at a table where a gnome in merchant's garb is seated. The three exchange a few words before the gnome makes a motion to stand up. The half-orc's hand comes heavily down on the gnome's shoulder, forcing him to retake his seat. The gnome looks about the room nervously, but none of the other patrons have seemed to notice his situation. His pleading eyes meet with yours; the look of desperation is obvious.

The gnome is named Brith Brigscunyon, a merchant from Sareden who is (unwisely) traveling alone. The two men are Melm and Tabok, two ruffians looking for an easy score. The details of the exact conversation are not necessary, but a PC within 30 feet of the men can attempt to read lips (Spot DC 13 + the APL) as per the *PH*. Those who succeed at the check are given **Player Handout #1**. Those who fail by four or less, glean no information. If

the check fails by five or more, give the PC **Player Handout #2** for a distorted version of the conversation.

🐉 **Brith Brigscunyon**, male gnome Exp2/Wiz(III)1: hp 17; see Appendix I.

Of course, most PCs won't need a check to recognize that Brith is in danger. If the PCs try to get the attention of some of the other mercenaries gathered here to aid them, the other patrons will all be too drunk to be of use. Marma is too busy at this point to even talk to the PCs, so it's up to them to come to Brith's aid.

When the PCs approach, Melm will do all the talking. He will tell the PCs their names and claim that this gnome merchant has just hired them to guard his wares. Melm doesn't even know Brith's name at this point, but he will try to avoid giving away too much information and get the PCs to leave. Brith will say nothing, as Tabok has a dagger against his side underneath the table (Spot DC 15 + the APL, +5 circumstance bonus for small characters).

The PCs can do one of two possible things to come to Brith's aid. They can try to convince Melm and Tabok to leave by talking to them. Since neither of these ruffians will be swayed by a rational argument, it will take either deception or bullying to get them to leave (Bluff or Intimidate DC 20 + the APL). A successful check means that Melm and Tabok will be deceived or cowed into leaving Brith alone.

The other way for the PCs to come to Brith's aid is to remove Melm and Tabok from the table, physically. If the PCs attack, Melm and Tabok will certainly fight back. Note that Tabok is not intelligent enough to take advantage of the fact that he has a handy hostage already. The tavern is very crowded, so only half movement is allowed. Regardless, Melm and Tabok should be a pushover for seasoned adventurers.

APL 2 (EL 2)

🐉 **Melm**: male human (Oeridian) Rog1; hp 6; see Appendix I.

🐉 **Tabok**: male half-orc Bbn1; hp 10; see Appendix I.

APL 4 (EL 4)

🐉 **Melm**: male human (Oeridian) Rog1/Ftr1; hp 14; see Appendix I.

🐉 **Tabok**: male half-orc Bbn1/Rog1; hp 15; see Appendix I.

APL 6 (EL 6)

🐉 **Melm**: male human (Oeridian) Rog3/Ftr1; hp 24; see Appendix I.

🐉 **Tabok**: male half-orc Bbn2/Rog2; hp 30; see Appendix I.

APL 8 (EL 8)

🐉 **Melm**: male human (Oeridian) Rog5/Ftr1; hp 35; see Appendix I.

🐉 **Tabok**: male half-orc Bbn2/Rog2/Ftr2; hp 47; see Appendix I.

APL 10 (EL 10)

🐉 **Melm**: male human (Oeridian) Rog7/Ftr1; hp 45; see Appendix I.

🐉 **Tabok**: male half-orc Bbn4/Rog2/Ftr2; hp 66; see Appendix I.

Tactics: Brith will take the first opportunity available to hide underneath the table. Melm and Tabok will attempt to work together as much as possible, hoping to make flanks and created sneak attack opportunities. If Tabok is taken down first, Melm will attempt to flee leaving his "comrade" behind. If Melm is taken out first, Tabok will rage and focus on whatever PC is handy. After two rounds, other patrons will notice but will be too drunk to think this is anything but a floorshow. After five rounds, Marma will be alerted to a fight in her tavern, and will intervene on the sixth round. Votto will follow on the eighth round, if the fight goes that long. Marma (AC 10, unarmed/grapple +6) will attempt to grapple anyone with a weapon and Votto will cast *hold person* or *calm emotions* (Will DC 15) to end the fight. Marma will demand an explanation, and presuming the PCs explain the situation (and possibly their position in the Army) they will be allowed to stay.

Encounter Two: Brith Meeting

Immediately after he is saved, Brith thanks the PCs profusely:

As the confusion and excitement of the fight begins to ebb, the gnome in merchant's garb emerges from his hiding place. He is bald, with a well-kept gray-colored goatee. "Thank you, gentlemen. I believe those men were attempting some type of 'shady dealing' at my expense. I don't have much experience with these matters... it's not often I leave Sareden in my old age. Please, join me at my table! I would buy

food and drink for those who have come to my aid this evening."

Brith is something of an apologist; almost everything he says will begin or end with the phrase "I'm sorry." His complex will even drive him so far as to apologize for the food preparation or the ale if it's gone bad. Once food and drink have been brought for the PCs, Brith will say the following:

"I'm sorry for pointing this out, as I'd hate to monopolize more of your time. It occurs to me that I may be quite unprepared for the rest of my journey. You see, I am traveling alone with a few sensitive materials. I am a dealer in rare artifacts, especially books, and I am making a delivery of a few such volumes to a woman in Calpius' Craft. Please excuse me for suggesting such a thing, but I would like to hire some protection to escort me to my destination, and make sure my delivery goes as planned. You folk seem more than able to ensure the success of my trip. I'm sorry if I'm doing this wrong, I'm new at this kind of thing. Is this the proper way to hire such help?"

At this point the PCs may wish to ask Brith a few questions. All the answers Brith provides will be completely factual, with one notable exception. Here are a few of the most likely questions to be asked:

- "How much are we going to be paid?"

Brith is willing to pay each PC the following amount in gold, dependent on APL.

APL 2: 50 gp; APL 4: 100 gp; APL 6: 150 gp; APL 8: 200 gp; APL 10: 250 gp.

- "What kind of books/items are you transporting?"

"I'm selling a few choice tomes out of my private collection. They deal mostly with the history of the March. I'm sorry that they aren't more interesting than that."

- "What are the titles of the books you're transporting?"

"Ah, I see you are very interested in Bissel history. Well, I'm selling Ralora Dain's three-volume masterpiece entitled 'March Palatine.' Then there is 'Reman's Guide to the Sheldomar,' I'm sorry but I must say that Reman's is one of the best comprehensive histories ever written. Then I'm also selling a first copy of Ezlen the Old's 'Bissel in My Own Eyes,' which is written in the elf's own hand. Quite rare, oh yes. Very valuable to the right people."

It is true that Brith does own a first copy of Ezlen the Olds' "Bissel in My Own Eyes," which is written in the

elf's own hand. However, this is not the book he is transporting. He is carrying a carefully crafted forgery to give to Yindera. Brith doesn't think this is particularly wrong, since she's only going to use it for scholarly researches and is not actually a collector. Besides, he's not charging too much for it. PCs should NOT be allowed a Sense Motive check unless they specifically feel that Brith is deceiving them about the books he's transporting.

- "Whom are you selling your books to?"

"I've made arrangements with a woman named Yindera Raschid, who is interested in a few of the more obscure historic passages. I'm sorry that I can't tell you more about her, as we've never met before. She contacted me in a letter a few weeks ago. It's all quite exciting; no one has ever expressed interest in my collection before."

- "Why is Yindera Raschid interested in these particular books?"

"Well, she named these books specifically in her letter. I'm sorry but she didn't say exactly why she was interesting in these particular volumes, but you can ask her when we arrive in Calpius' Craft. She's connected with the college there."

- "How far is it to Calpius' Craft?"

Brith will explain that the journey to Calpius' Craft will be less than a day, and he will insist on leaving first thing after breakfast, which will put the party in Calpius' Craft on the afternoon of the next day.

Brith keeps his rare books in a locked, warded chest located in his room at the Pegasus, one of Dountham's most expensive inns. He will not allow any PCs to examine the books unless they can prove themselves to be scholars who know how to handle such delicate items. PCs who have at least 4 ranks in three or more Knowledge skills can attempt a Diplomacy check (DC 18 + the APL) to examine the books. The books won't give the PCs any special knowledge, as they don't know what to look up yet. PCs should not be allowed a Forgery check against any of the books unless they are specifically suspicious of their authenticity. The Forgery check to recognize Brith's copy of Ezlen the Old's "Bissel in My Own Eyes" is DC 30.

Once things have been settled, Brith will take his leave of the PCs and arrange to meet again at Marma's Flagon first thing in the morning. He will ask if the PCs can escort him to his inn, and will even attempt to get them a room at the Pegasus. If at least one PC is paying High lifestyle or better, then the PCs can all find a room to squeeze

into. Otherwise the Pegasus will be allegedly "booked up," and the PCs will end up at a different inn than Brith. This won't be a big deal, as neither the PCs nor Brith are the target of any midnight ambushes.

In the morning Brith will meet the PCs at Marma's Flagon and buy them all breakfast. Then they set out. Brith has a donkey to transport the chest containing the books.

Encounter Three: Flaming Bards

Feed on the paranoia of the PCs by having them come up with some marching order while they escort Brith to his destinations. Maybe make them roll a few Spot checks. Then read the following:

Nothing more than the incessant chatter of your employer impedes your journey toward your destination. By mid-afternoon you arrive in Calpius' Craft having suffered no ambushes, but having absorbed a small amount of knowledge about the bookbinding trade. Once you are all just inside the town walls, Brith becomes quite insistent. "All that is left to do now is to deliver these items and meet this mysterious Yindera Raschid. It's all quite exciting, I must admit. Once I've received payment for these items, then you can in-turn receive your payment from me, and all of us leaving the better for having met each other. I'm sorry if this puts you out terribly, but we only have a short way to travel to the Bardic Circle - and then our business is concluded."

Some of the PCs may balk at further travel with Brith to the college. That's fine. Brith will be happy as long as at least one tough-looking PC will accompany him to the Bardic Circle. Only those PCs who go with Brith will be able to confront the troubles that occur in this encounter, and therefore only those PCs should be eligible to receive the *Immortalized in Song* reward if they are successful.

Read the following text for those who choose to go with Brith, unless one of those PCs is a member of the Bardic Circle. Then skip this text and proceed to the next descriptive text.

The stone streets of Calpius' Craft are old and worn, weaving in and out of each other in great serpentine arcs. It's not long before you are completely lost. After having to ask directions more than a few times, you finally encounter two halflings, a young man and a young woman, dressed in long red robes with a single black line across the sleeves. They are more than happy to lead you to the Bardic Circle, as they are going there themselves.

The halflings are named Cail and Ari, and they are Initiates within the Bardic Circle. They move quickly through the streets, explaining that afternoon vespers are about to start.

Attendance at afternoon vespers is required for all members of the Bardic Circle in residence at Calpius' Craft. The vespers are held at the Temple to Lydia, which is located on the campus grounds and involves praises to Lydia as well as musical performances by Circle members.

Soon, the PCs will arrive at the Bardic Circle:

You can hear the Bardic Circle long before you arrive. The sounds of musical instruments and people's voices carry through for several minutes before you can see any visible sign of the famed Bardic College. The buildings around you suddenly become a little more ornate just before you emerge from the narrow streets onto a large circular field of green. Elaborate decorations of musical instruments and bright colors adorn each of the large wood and stone buildings that surround this field. The building on the opposite side of you is the largest of all, with immaculate stained glass windows depicting a spray of colors emanating from an open hand. At the center of the field is a large fountain, with the statue of an older woman from which an obviously magical multi-colored light originates. All around the field are young people dressed in red robes. Many of them are engaged in some type of music-making or spoken performance, and the wash of sound as you enter the grounds of the Bardic Circle is staggering.

The building with the stained glass windows is the Temple of Lydia, goddess of music, knowledge and daylight. The temple is a central structure to the Bardic Circle. The statue at the center of the fountain also depicts the goddess Lydia.

Brith will immediately ask one the circle members around the field how to find Yindera Raschid. There are a lot of Bardic Circle members outside, as they are all waiting to enter the Temple for afternoon vespers.

Some PCs may be right at home in the Bardic Circle; others may be living their worst nightmare. Allow the PCs a brief moment of interaction. But before Brith can find out where Yindera is, read the following:

Suddenly, the idyllic sounds of the Bardic Circle are punctuated by a loud, explosive sound coming from your left. Wood and glass are ejected from one of the smaller buildings off the Circle and flames and smoke begin pouring out of one of the second floor

windows. The previously merry sounds of the gathering of bards are replaced by screams of panic.

The PCs have ten rounds to act before this building will burn completely. The bards gathered here will enter a state of panic, thus it will be up to the PCs to solve this situation.

Luckily there is a handy solution, the fountain at the center of the circle. The problem lies in getting that water from the fountain to the fire. This will take a lot of manpower. PCs should try to organize the panicking crowd into some kind of bucket brigade. It will take about 35 people working together to bring this fire under control. PCs can try Diplomacy, Intimidate or untrained Charisma checks to stop the bards from panicking and get them to begin fighting the fire. One bard will begin fighting the fire for every point above 15 on each check. Each check will use up a standard action for a round. PCs with the Leadership feat can add their Leadership score to their rolls, making quick work of organizing a bad situation.

It's possible that a few crafty PC spellcasters might have a few tricks to aid in putting out the fire. Note that purely cold-based spells will have no effect, so *ray of frost* and *ice storm* are ineffectual. *Ice storm* has the added potential of doing damage to the building. *Create water* is a perfectly viable option, and for every two gallons of water that are conjured into the fire area reduce by one the number of people who need to be recruited into putting the fire out. *Sleet storm* is a special case. When *sleet storm* is first cast, it reduces the number of people that need to be recruited to 75% of its current number. However, the decreased visibility and slickness of the ground makes attempting to put the fire out by mundane means much harder. Decrease the amount of time allotted to putting the fire out by one-half. *Waterball* (from *Masters of the Wild*) will reduce the number of people needed by 1 for every point of damage the *waterball* does. The caster who cast *waterball* must succeed at a ranged touch attack against AC 15 in order to place the spell effectively. Otherwise reduce its effectiveness by half; that is, for every 2 points of damage dealt by the *waterball* reduce the number of people needed by one. Judges should use discretion and logic when allowing any other spells to affect the fire.

In addition to the problems of putting out the fires, there are two Circle Initiates trapped inside the burning building. Their names are Cray and Veria, and they had planned on spending a moment alone while afternoon vespers went on. PCs who immediately rush into the building will hear their screams on the first round of entering the building. Otherwise, Cray and Veria will break open a second story window and cry for help.

Higher-level parties might have access to the spell *fly* or other similar magics to get the young bards out the building without a problem. Other parties will have a tougher time.

PCs entering the building will have to navigate a narrow staircase to reach the second floor, and then find the room where Cray and Veria are trapped. This will take three rounds for characters with a 30 ft. speed, and four rounds for characters with a 20 ft speed. Reduce this time by one round if the PCs thought to cover their nose and mouth with some type of damp cloth to keep out the smoke. Upon reaching the second floor, PCs will have to make Reflex saves (DC 12+ the APL) or take 1d6 fire damage as flames spurt everywhere and walls begin to catch and collapse. Of course, if the fire is put out by this time, no saves are required.

Once PCs have reached Cray and Veria they can lead them out of the building. The time it takes to get Cray and Veria out of the building is one round less than the time it took the PCs to get in (minimum one round). However, if no effort has been made to put out the fires, then the stairs collapse by the seventh round. At that point escapees will have to jump down the stairwell or back out the window. The distance is 20 feet to the ground, and this eventuality will add an additional round to getting out. Note that Cray and Veria (each having a 12 hp total) have taken 10 points of subdual damage from the initial explosion.

If the fire is not put out by the tenth round its spread becomes uncontrollable and the building will burn. Any PCs (and Cray and Veria) will continue to make reflex saves until they are out or the fifteenth round. At that point the building will collapse and anyone inside will be subject to 10d6+30 points of crushing damage in addition to 8d6 points of fire damage. Characters who survive this have no air to breath and are subject to the suffocation rules (see *DMG*).

Once the PCs have at least started some of the locals toward fighting the fire, then those working on it will ensure that the fire does not spread.

Encounter Four: Of Course It Was Yindera That Got Blown Up!

After the business with the fire is taken care of (for good or for ill), read the text below. *Tailor this text to the outcome of Encounter Three.*

Suddenly you hear a very loud, obviously magically amplified, voice saying, "This is Headmaster Garon. All students are instructed to enter the temple at this time." The voice repeats and as the crowd begins to

make their way toward the largest building on the circle, you can finally see the source of the call. A short Oeridian man wearing long robes with three black stripes on his sleeve approaches. His hair is dark brown with streaks of gray above his ears. He greets you with a quiet politeness, in a normal volume. "Thank you for coming to our aid; I am Garon Dellifin and I am headmaster of this college. I'm afraid none of us here have experience dealing with this sort of situation. Before I go tend to the initiates, is there anything I can do?"

Garon is a quiet scholar and performer whose penchant for organization put him in a position of leadership within the Bardic Circle. Compared with most bards, he is very subdued. Besides answering questions he will cast cure spells if any PC is injured.

When the explosion occurred Garon was in his office in a building opposite the one that caught fire. He has no idea how the fire started or why anyone might have wished to do so. The PCs may have other questions for him, either now or at some other point in the module. Here are some likely questions with Garon's appropriate responses:

- "Do you know where we can find Yindera Raschid?"

"Well, her office is in that building that burned. I do hope that she made it out okay, but I'm not particularly worried. I haven't seen her in a few days, so she probably hasn't been to the Circle in that time."

- "When was the last time you saw Yindera Raschid?"

"I suppose the last time I saw her was at a meeting of Circle Masters. That would have been four days ago. "

- "What does Yindera do at the Circle?"

"Yindera specializes in the history of the March. She is also involved in collecting the legends and songs of the Baklunish. "

- "Do you know what Yindera has been working on recently?"

"Several months ago Yindera came to me with an intriguing project; a research project into the so-called 'Small War,' though I find that label to be inherently contradictory. Yindera was especially interested in learning more about an individual named Kanner the Tall. It was an interesting proposal, and I wish I could have found funding for it. Unfortunately, under the Margrave's tax policies, donations to our college have been at an all time low. She hasn't spoken to me about the project since then,

I've no idea whether or not she's continued to pursue it. "

- "Do you know if Yindera had any enemies?"

(laughter) "The idea that scholarly research can lead to the gaining of enemies is preposterous. I know of no one who would wish Yindera ill will."

- "What do you know of the Kanner the Tall or the 'Small War'?"

"Well, the 'Small War' ran from 436 to 438. During that time the combined forces of Veluna and Furyondy were able to drive out the Keoish from western Veluna. They were then able to conquer the March of Bissel, driving the Keoish border further south. A new Margrave sympathetic to our eastern 'allies' was installed. Eventually, Furyondy would declare Bissel a 'March Palatine,' meaning an independent state."

Kanner the Tall was a hero of that war, though little is known of him. His nationality, age and race are a complete mystery, though it is told that he was a mage of great skill, who wielded his magics through a great Oakstaff."

After meeting the PCs, Garon will be in a rush to leave and address the Circle members gathered at the temple. After he leaves, the circle grounds will be eerily quiet and deserted, as everyone is now in the temple.

Brith will come out of his hiding place, having found cover during the fire in Encounter Three. But before he does he will inform the PCs that Yindera is missing, if they don't know already. Read the following at the appropriate time, as it is the closest thing to an adventure hook in this scenario.

Brith removes his spectacles and holds his temples; obvious consternation crosses his face. "This is most terrible. My buyer has disappeared, perhaps burned in that horrific fire. Now I've put you poor souls out, since I am unable to pay you until I've received payment for my volumes." Brith replaces his spectacles and looks at each one of you, as if slowly appraising your individual bearing. "I'm sorry to call upon your skills once again, but would it be possible for you to look into Yindera's disappearance? I'm afraid that if you do not, no one will. These bards are transitory folk; a disappearance like this is not unusual to them. Yet Yindera promised to be here today. I'm quite worried that something 'shady' is going on. Will you look into it?"

Assuming the PCs agree, Brith thanks them and leaves to find a nearby inn to rest and guard his belongings. If the

PCs became separated in Encounter Three, now would be a good time to allow them to regroup, as they now have a new purpose: finding Yindera Raschid. The PCs have (at this point) two viable options: investigate the burned out building for any clues once it is safe or question some of the Bardic Circle members for any leads. An investigation of the building where the explosion occurred can only happen if the building did not collapse, so as long as the PCs were able to stop the fire they can look for clues in the wreckage. Details for this are covered in Encounter Five.

The PCs may elect to question members of the Bardic Circle, but they will only be able to do so once Afternoon Vespers have concluded. They can question Garon if they have not done so already; his responses are included in this Encounter. The results of Gather Information and other investigative endeavors are covered in Encounter Six.

A Note on Divinations: High-level spell casters may be able to cast certain divinations to help them locate Yindera Rashid. Note that Yindera is currently on the run from a competent lieutenant of Evard, and is doing everything within her power to avoid discovery. She has in her possession an *amulet of proof against detection and location*.

Those casters who do succeed and are able to cast an effective divination spell against Yindera will have different results depending on when the spell is cast. If the spell is cast sometime before sundown (note that the explosion in Encounter Three occurs in the late afternoon) then the caster receives the image of a Baklunish woman sitting at a desk in a small, non-descript room. She is writing, though it will be unclear what exactly. The room has no windows or other clues as to its location. If the spell is cast sometime after sundown then the caster will get the image of many people in a crowded tavern. The scene is one of utter chaos, with masked people dancing and moving around one another, drinking and laughing. This is a scene from the Crystal Web (see Encounter Seven). For reasons that will be described in Encounter Seven, it will be impossible to distinguish Yindera from other patrons of the unique tavern.

Clever PCs might think they can try *locate object* on Kanner's *Oakstaff*, rather than finding Yindera herself. *Locate object* explicitly states that the caster cannot use it to find a specific object unless the caster has seen that object first hand, so using this spell to find "Kanner's *Oakstaff*" won't work. PCs may try to use it to find any *Oakstaff*, which might yield some object fitting that description, but not Kanner's *Oakstaff*. The *Oakstaff* is at a secret hiding place outside of Calpius' Craft (see

Encounter Nine), and as such is well out of the *locate object* spell's range.

Encounter Five: Getting the Shaft

This encounter describes what occurs when PCs try to explore the flaming wreckage of the recently burned out building. Fortunately some clues still exist for the PCs to discover.

What really happened: The following is a complete account of how the explosion occurred. The judge should not let the full story come to light, but should instead let the clues lead the PCs to their own conclusions. On the night before the day the PCs arrive in Calpius' Craft (i.e. the night when the PCs meet Brith), Yindera had a battle with the undead servants of Tocalis Blot. Yindera was able to barely escape, and decided to go into hiding. Before doing so she took some, but not all, pertinent notes for her researches from her office and then booby-trapped her own desk. The next day (i.e. when the PCs arrive at the Bardic Circle), Tocalis sent a disguised ghoul (using the *disguise undead* spell from *Tome and Blood*) to the Circle with orders to investigate Yindera's office. The ghoul, staving off the hated daylight as well as curbing a desire to feast on the brains of the young bards gathered at the college, broke into the office and promptly set off the trap that Yindera set. This is the explosion and subsequent fire that the PCs fight in Encounter Three.

Once the PCs decide to investigate the burned out building, read the following:

The smell of smoke fills your nostrils as you enter the burned out building. A slight temperature rise in your surroundings remind you of the devastation you just recently witnessed and are now seeing first hand in the charred wood and ash all around. Using what you witnessed from outside you are able to find what you feel is the center of the explosion. A ruined wood door hangs limply in its frame and bears on the front a small brass plaque that reads "Yindera Raschid, Master of Historical Lore." The room itself is in complete ruin; what was once probably a bookshelf is now just a mound of charred ash. The remains of what appears to have been a solid desk is overturned against the left wall, and opposite it is the charred and burnt remains of a humanoid body, its particular stench swiftly fills your lungs and replaces the smoke-smell that you had just become accustomed to.

Yindera's office yields two obvious points of investigation: her desk and the dead body. PCs who wish

to Search the body will find nothing useful in the way of items. PCs who wish to examine the body with Heal checks might discover something more useful. A Heal check that beats a DC 5 will reveal that the body is charred and burned. A Heal check that beats a DC 10 will reveal that the body, when it was living, was male. A Heal check that beats a DC 15 will reveal that the body had been dead for several weeks before it came to be found in Yindera's office. From this, if the PCs figure out that the body is undead allow any PC with the Knowledge (religion) skill to make a check (DC 15) to determine that the body is that of a ghoul. If any of the PCs begin to speculate on how a ghoul, or any undead creature for that matter, was able to get onto the grounds of the Bardic Circle without detection, then allow either a Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) for the PC to realize the possibility of the *disguise undead* spell, a spell long forbidden in Bissel.

PCs who Search the desk may find some interesting clues. Those who succeed at a Search check (DC 15 + the APL) will find a metal box hidden within the desk. The box is simple, and unadorned, and has a solid lock on it. PCs who wish to open it must succeed at an Open Lock check (DC 20 + the APL). If PCs wish to break the box open by dealing damage, note that it has hardness 10 and 15 hit points. The Break DC for a Str check is 20, but due to its size no more than two PCs can attempt a Break check together.

Inside the box are three letters (**Player Handout #3, 4, and 5**), written from foreign scholars to Yindera regarding the *Oakstaff*. The letters should give the PCs some inkling as to what Yindera was up to. Note that the second Earthday of Wealsun is the same day that the PCs arrive in Calpius' Craft. Yindera made a blatant error when sending out the letters as she suggested the same time and place to meet the foreign scholars. This is something she thinks she can handle (see Encounter Seven).

Player Handout #4 is unusual, in that it is a forgery. The Royal Explorer's Society never received a letter from Yindera, because Tocanis Blot, who is not a member of the Society but a necromancer working for Evard, intercepted the communiqué. Using an entire month to prepare, Tocanis found a copy of the seal of the Royal Explorer's Society as well as a rogue unscrupulous enough to use his forgery skills to make the document look official. PCs should only be allowed an opposed Forgery check if they specifically state that they suspect this letter as being fake. The Forgery check needed to recognize **Player Handout #4** as a fake must beat a DC 30. In the event that one of the PCs is a member of the Royal Explorer's Society (it could happen), then they are

allowed a +5 circumstance bonus to their check, as they will have never heard of Tocanis Blot before.

Finally, PCs investigating the desk who have the Trapfinding ability and who succeed at a Search check (DC 15 + the APL) will discover the trap that set off the explosion. PCs who discover the trap will note that the trigger was the act of opening one of the desk drawers.

Encounter Six: Gathering Information

This encounter details some of the investigative options open to the PCs. At this point there should be a lot of leads for the PCs to explore, and these can be covered under three separate operations. First, The PCs can utilize their own Knowledge skills to try to discern some information about what Yindera was after, namely the *Oakstaff* of Kanner the Tall. Second, the PCs may try to get a hold of the books Brith was transporting. As these books were meant for Yindera they might have some interesting information in them. Third, the PCs may try to question the locals regarding Yindera, Kanner, or any other lead they might find pertinent.

Use your noggin!

PCs can attempt to use his or her own Knowledge skills for information about the "Small War," Kanner the Tall, or his *Oakstaff*, but not Yindera or anything current. The appropriate skills or abilities, associated DCs, and the information gained are described under the headings below.

- The "Small War"

A successful Knowledge (history) or Bardic Knowledge check (DC 15 + the APL) reveals the information below. Apply a +2 circumstance bonus if the PC has 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley Meta-Region).

Much of the fighting in the last year of the war was done in the Lorridges separating the current borders between Veluna and Bissel. Here, heavy cavalry and large forces were ineffective, and smaller, mobile units were used for combat. During many skirmishes, Kanner the Tall made the difference between victory and defeat for the combined forces of Veluna and Furyondy.

- Kanner the Tall

A successful Knowledge (history), Knowledge (arcana), or Bardic Knowledge check (DC 15 + the APL) reveals the information below. Apply a +2 circumstance bonus if

the PC has 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley Meta-Region).

During one skirmish in what is now the present day Barony of Gerorgos, Kanner the Tall was able to conjure huge fonts of flame to separate and confuse the Keoish, making them easy targets for the driving forces of Veluna and Furyondy. The tactic is still studied by spellcasters today, though there is very little personal information on Kanner or his spell repertoire.

- *The Oakstaff*

A successful Knowledge (history), Knowledge (religion), or Bardic Knowledge check (DC 15 + the APL) reveals the information below. Apply a +2 circumstance bonus if the PC has 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley Meta-Region).

Some say that Kanner the Tall was a follower of the teachings of Joramy, and that the Oakstaff was a quarterstaff wielded to honor the fire goddess. Still others say that Kanner revered Beory, and that the Oakstaff was in fact an oak cudgel (club) and that Kanner may have been a druid, not a wizard.

Consult the books!

If the PCs wish, they can appeal to Brith to examine the tomes that he has transported to Calpius' Craft. Brith will be more willing now to have the PCs examine the books, and will allow it provided the PCs promise to be careful with the books. Examining the books will take four hours of study and cross-referencing, so by the time they are finished it will be at least sundown if not later (this is important to note as encounter seven and the rest of the module occurs during the night). After the PCs have spent the requisite time studying the books, hand them **Player Handout #6**.

Ask the Locals!

There are more than a few people to ask for information regarding the "Small War," Kanner the Tall and his *Oakstaff*, or Yindera Raschid and her current whereabouts. Garon Dellifin is available to answer questions, if the PCs have not already questioned him; his answers appear in Encounter Four. The PCs may use Gather Information checks to find more pertinent news, and they may either ask bards of the Bardic Circle or the local townsfolk with different results. Note that Afternoon Vespers must end before the PCs can question any Circle members.

Gather Information from the Bards:

- Yindera Raschid

DC 10 + the APL: *"Yindera Raschid! Everyone wants to study history with her. She's the only Baklunish Master at the Circle. That reminds me of a story, you see once I was in Tusmit looking for a horse when all of a sudden..."* (bard continues ad lib, with no further information)

DC 12 + the APL: *"Yindera Raschid! She's been doing some research into the 'Small War.' I know because her assistant, Bince Rupel told me. He's a Oeridian, just like my friend Jorvel. That reminds me of a poem: 'there was a lady from Sareden, who was..."* (bard continues ad lib, with no further information)

DC 15 + the APL: *"Yindera Raschid! I heard from her assistant Bince Rupel that she received a package recently that came all the way from Highfolk. Bince wouldn't tell me what was in there, but he did say that those fools in up north didn't know what they had parted with. Isn't that great! It reminds me of this time I was fighting for my life against minions of ol'Stumpy. You know, the V-Man! Anyway, these guys were really after my sack of turnips. Now these were magic turnips mind you, and they..."* (bard continues ad lib, with no further information)

DC 17 + the APL: *"Yindera Raschid! You're the second person to be asking questions about her today. Earlier a few guys (I don't remember how many) asked me where she was. They looked like City Watch, so I didn't tell them much. Not that I would know where she is, probably out living the good life somewhere out there. That reminds me of a trip I once took to Hookhill. There I ran into some trouble with..."* (bard continues ad lib, with no further information)

- the "Small War"

DC 15 + the APL: *"The 'Small War!' You know that native Bisselites were split as to whom to side with during the conflict. Some fought to alongside the Keoish while others welcomed the combined forces of Veluna and Furyondy as they crossed into our lands. Still others stayed out of it all together. That reminds me of a story from that era, it's about two brothers who joined the opposing armies and when they next met..."* (bard continues ad lib, with no further information)

- Kanner the Tall

DC 10 + the APL: *"Kanner the Tall! That reminds me of a poem: Hero from the South/Driving toward the West/His foes from the East/In the North is where*

he rests. It's about Kanner! I know because my brother told me a story once about a curious merchant from Verbobonc..." (bard continues ad lib, with no further information)

DC 15 + the APL: *"Kanner the Tall! That reminds me of a story. You see, the reason Kanner was so tall was through some magic experiment that altered his height in a way that made him very shy. My theory is that's why he remained in obscurity before and after the war. It's very similar to what happened to me last time I was in Hochoch, you see it was late at night and my friend had cast an illusion of..."* (bard continues ad lib, with no further information)

- *The Oakstaff*

DC 10 + the APL: *"Kanner's Oakstaff! That's just a misconception. I heard that Oakstaff is actually a mistranslation from the original Kanner story, which is in Flan. Oakstaff really should be Oakbow, you see Kanner was really a great archer. A lot like myself, you see one time I was in the Barrier Peaks and these hoch jebline were about to ambush this carriage, well I saw..."* (bard continues ad lib, with no further information)

DC 15 + the APL: *"Kanner's Oakstaff! I've heard stories that the staff never left his hand, and even when he was at rest, which wasn't often, it was at least tied to his wrist. Real paranoid about losing it I guess. That reminds of a song: Paranoid/Paranoid/They're out to kill you for no good reason..."* (bard continues ad lib, with no further information)

DC 17 + the APL: *"Kanner's Oakstaff! You're the second person to be asking questions about that today. Earlier a few guys (I don't remember how many) asked me about the staff. They looked like City Watch, so I didn't tell them much. Of course, everyone knows that Kanner took his staff to the grave. They say he's buried somewhere far north of here. You know that reminds me of a song: Buried alive in the halls of Svernel/I met my true love most Infernal..."* (bard continues ad lib, with no further information)

Gather Information from the Townsfolk:

(The townsfolk will not be able to provide any new information on the "Small War," Kanner or his *Oakstaff*, but they might know something about Yindera and her current whereabouts)

- Yindera Raschid

DC 15 + the APL: *"Yindera Raschid! What do you want with her? Most of those bards are scoundrels, but*

she's one of the worst. The local watch has arrested her more times than I can count, but she never spends one day in jail. She's a friend of the Baron up there. That's why. It pays to have friends, it does."

DC 17 + the APL: *"Yindera Raschid! She hangs out at a tavern called the Crystal Web. It's a weird place. They hold a fancy Masque there every night. I've heard the bards gather there and practice magic on each other. Mighty suspicious stuff, I tell you. If you're trying to find her, she's probably there if she's in town. Of course, it's only open at night. Mighty suspicious I tell you."*

Once the PCs have exhausted all avenues of investigation, they will probably do one of two things. Eventually they will want to go to the Crystal Web Tavern, as it is a likely place for Yindera to be. Before they go they may want to locate Bince Rupel, if they found out about his existence through Gather Information checks. The Crystal Web encounter is detailed in Encounter Eight, whereas the Bince encounter is detailed in Encounter Seven.

Encounter Seven: Bince So Long Since We Had Any Action

Once the PCs have found out that Bince Rupel, a Bardic Circle initiate, is Yindera Raschid's assistant, they may wish to question him. Getting a description (young Oeridian male) and a location (lives at the East dormitory) is a simple matter, and if the PCs wish to pay Bince a visit after Afternoon Vespers, then read the following text:

As the sun begins to sink closer to the horizon, the grounds of the Bardic Circle are bathed in an idyllic red and purple glow. Elsewhere in Calpius' Craft shops are closing and tradesmen are returning home, but the bards of the Circle are still going strong. Talk is a little less jovial considering the excitement of earlier, but the strains of a dozen different songs clash as you make your way across the grounds toward the East Dormitory, where Yindera's assistant Bince Rupel is said to live. The building is three stories tall and easily as noisy as any market you can remember. You are not questioned as you enter.

The East Dormitory is where the Circle initiates live when they stay in Calpius' Craft. The cells are very small, almost monastic in size. PCs who found out that Bince lives here will know where to find his room, located on the third floor.

As you ascend the stairs and enter the third floor hallway off of which Bince's room is supposed to be,

you hear an ear-splitting scream that might conceivably have come from a female as likely as a male. This sound is followed by the sound of shattering glass, as apparently things continue to be unusually violent at the Bardic Circle.

Tocanis and undead servants have found Bince, and Tocanis has used coercion to find out the information that he has been seeking: namely that Kanner's *Oakstaff* is in Calpius' Craft and Yindera more than likely has it. Tocanis has left via the window (and a handy *ring of feather fall*) leaving his undead servants to kill Bince, unless the PCs can stop them. Note that Tocanis has used scrolls of *disguise undead* to make the ghosts (and possible a ghoul) appear to be human city watchmen, which should make for some confused PCs at the opening of the combat.

☛ **Bince Rupel:** male human (Oeridian) Brd2/Rog1; hp 16; see Appendix I.

Combat: At the beginning of the combat Bince will be cowering in the corner, awaiting death from the pointy claws of a ghost. Once the party has begun to intercede he may begin to Inspire Courage to aid his new best friends.

APL 2 (EL 4)

☛ **Ghost:** hp 39; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Ghoul:** hp 18; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 6)

☛ **Spellstitched Ghost Rgr1:** hp 45; see Appendix I.

☛ **Ghost:** hp 39; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 8)

☛ **Spellstitched Ghost Rgr1 (3):** hp 45 each; see Appendix I.

APL 8 (EL 10)

☛ **Spellstitched Ghost Rgr1/Ftr1 (2):** hp 52 each; see Appendix I.

☛ **Spellstitched Ghost Rog1/Ftr1 (2):** hp 51 each; see Appendix I.

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛ **Spellstitched Ghost Rgr1/Ftr3 (2):** hp 67 each; see Appendix I.

☛ **Spellstitched Ghost Rog3/Ftr1 (2):** hp 60 each; see Appendix I.

Tactics: The servants have been ordered to kill Bince, and will try their best to do this unless the PCs can be a sufficient distraction. The roguish ghosts will attempt to flank to take advantage of sneak attack, whereas the ghost rangers will try to target humans, its favored enemy.

The spellstitched ghosts do the following: first and foremost, any spell-stitched ghost will have cast *mage armor* before the combat. The bonus to AC has already been factored in their stats. If any one PC seems to be a particular problem, a ghost may cast *cause fear*. If low on hit points, the ghost may use *vampiric touch* in conjunction with a claw attack to gain hit points. Otherwise they will focus on melee combat and use the rest of their spell-like abilities as appropriate.

The corridor on the dorm is 15 feet wide and about 80 feet long. It is 30 feet from the staircase to Bince's open door, where PCs can easily see one or more ghosts attempting to kill him. Note that Bince's cell is 15 feet long and 10 feet wide, which doesn't leave a lot of room for tactical movement. This can be both an advantage and a disadvantage to the PCs.

One minute after the ghosts are destroyed the *disguise undead* spell expires and they are revealed to be what they are. Of course, PCs interacting with the ghosts are allowed a Will save (DC 15) to see through the illusion.

Assuming Bince has survived the combat he will thank the PCs and tell them the following:

"Some men came claiming to be from the city watch. Only one of them spoke, a tall man with dark hair and a beard. He asked me where Yindera was, and I said I didn't know. Which is the truth, I don't know where she is. Then he started asking me about this package that arrived a few days ago. I wouldn't tell him about it, but then he commanded me to and I couldn't help but tell him: the package contained Kanner's Oakstaff. It came from Highfolk four days ago. Yindera found it on a recent trip and had it sent separately for safekeeping. I don't know where it is, or where she is, but I think she's in a lot of danger."

Bince will be in a hurry to get out of there so he can leave Calpius' Craft and go into hiding. He honestly doesn't know where Yindera is or how to find her, that will be up to the PCs to discover. His description of the man who escaped through the window will be a tall Baklunish man. This is not actually Tocanis' true form, as he drank a potion of *alter self* when he was posing as City Watch.

At this point Tocanis will attempt to keep tabs on the PCs via his Owl familiar. When the PCs exit the East Dormitory, allow a Spot check (DC 31) to spot an owl in a

nearby tree, looking at them. If the owl is spotted it will immediately fly away.

Encounter Eight: Den of Debauchery, Web of Intrigue

This encounter details what occurs within an unusual tavern called the Crystal Web, the arranged meeting place of Yindera and her sordid benefactors. The Crystal Web is a tavern that is only open at night, and likewise only open to those who are "dressed properly." In this case this means the wearing of "glamour," or minor illusions and transformations. This is facilitated either by one's own illusory magics, or the house provides masks which provide the necessary glamour to enter.

There is a reason that the Crystal Web sponsors a nightly Masque in which no one can be recognized: so that bards can safely drink wine within Calpius' Craft. A law within the city exists that prohibits the drinking of wine by bards during their stay. However, most bards are able to find ways to circumvent this law. The Crystal Web is only one such method. The city watch does little to enforce the law; it is in a sense unenforceable.

The end result is that every patron of the Crystal Web is, to some degree or another, in disguise. This will make locating Yindera nigh impossible, so she will choose the time and method of revealing herself.

When the PCs decide to head to the Crystal Web, read the following:

Attempting to use the directions you obtained for finding the Crystal Web has been less than successful, and the labyrinthine streets of Calpius' Craft have scarcely helped in any way. The sun, already low in the sky, hides its heavy face below the horizon and night falls long before you come to what you think might be the right place. At the end of a long alleyway stands a two story, stone and wood building. It is unmarked, but the sound of laughter, conversation, and music can be heard as far away as where you stand.

Allow the PCs a brief amount of time to prepare before going into the Crystal Web. Allow their paranoia to run its course as they cast as many buff spells as they like. Once they are ready to proceed, read the following:

You open the heavy wooden door to reveal a small room, obviously some type of anteroom, with the entrance to the tavern on the other side of the tiny chamber. In between you and the actual entry is a large half-orc wearing studded leather. He face appears to have been painted white with dainty red

spirals on his cheeks. He greets you as you open the door: "TARTHAK WELCOMES YOU TO THE CRYSTAL WEB! COME IN OUT OF NIGHT, BUT BEFORE YOU ENTER YOU MUST BE DRESSED PROPERLY! ENTER OR NOT, BUT IF YOU NO WANT IN CRYSTAL WEB YOU MUST LEAVE!"

Tarthak is actually a half-elf illusionist, subject to an *alter self* spell, who "guards" the door. Tarthak is not selective, anyone is allowed inside, but not without proper glamour and the cursory checking of weapons. Tarthak will instruct the PCs (in his best impression of a half-orc, i.e. a monotone, ungrammatical shout) to first disarm and place their items in a weapons closet, and then to "get dressed." He will explain that to enter one must wear glamour and that they can either use their own or he will give them glamour.

Those who wish to cast spells to meet the unusual requirement have a number of options; *Disguise self* or *alter self* are the most obvious choices. *Prestidigitation* is also an option; basically anything magic that will alter one's appearance is fair game.

Those who don't have access to their own magics will have to wear the glamour on hand. These come in the form of special masks. The masks operate as a strange combination of *disguise self* and *dancing lights*, and they have three concurrent effects. When the masks are placed on the face they shimmer and disappear, leaving the appearance that the face has been painted random colors. Second, the wearer will appear to be of a different race: elves become dwarf-looking and vice-versa, halflings become gnome-like and vice versa, half-elves appear as half-orcs and vice-versa, and humans appear as a subrace other than their own, possibly as the more rare Rhenee or Olman, though any differing subrace will do. Lastly, the mask causing the appearance of floating, colored lights to appear around the wearer's head. The masks only operate within the Crystal Web tavern, and nowhere else.

The door into the actual tavern area is magically warded so that only those who are "properly dressed" may enter. Any PC foolish enough to try to force his way into the tavern area "undressed" will be the subject of defensive spells cast by the sixty or so bards present. It would be a will-save nightmare as *charm person*, *hold person*, *suggestion*, *hypnotic pattern*, and many others come flying in, and that would be only the beginning of the disgraces heaped upon the offending PC. Judges are encouraged to use their imagination in this eventuality, and are reminded that the shiv is a "regional weapon" for Bissel.

Once the PCs are dressed and ready to enter, read the following:

Tarthak opens the door and motions inside the common room of the Crystal Web. As you enter you are struck by the absolute bedlam; this is easily one of the most chaotic scenes you've ever witnessed. The room is lit by more than a dozen swirling colored spheres floating near the ceiling, giving the effect of sometimes being in shadow and sometimes being in bright light. The faces of the other patrons fade and then come into view in an eerie fashion, and the other people are dressed in outlandish costumes with gaudy masks. Minor magical effects cause smoke to dance around their bodies, cause strange phosphorescence to glow from their eyes, or a dozen other supernatural effects. All around there is laughter and music, and patrons drink wine freely. A few patrons dance in a number of discordant styles, some waltz, others jig, still others just spin with no regard to anything or anyone. The Crystal Web has barely been open an hour and already it is packed shoulder to shoulder with people.

The PCs should now understand that finding Yindera in this mess will be downright impossible. Paladins or clerics who cast *detect evil* will find a number of evil auras within the room, just not any related to their current problems. Tocanis Blot is in the room, but will not read as he is the recipient of an *undetectable alignment* spell. However, if they search for just a short while, read the following:

Making your way through the crowd, you spot three circles of people that seem slightly out of place: near the bar a group of younger-looking patrons look with interest at a bearded man who seems to be telling a story. His coat bears the heraldry of the Kingdom of Furyondy. Against one wall you spot a half-elf who shows the seal of the Royal Explorer's Society on his collar. Every so often another patron will approach, but each time he turns them away. At a corner table sit four men each wearing the holy symbol of Rao. At their table is a Baklunish woman, and the five of them seem to be in a heated discussion.

These are the three backers that Yindera has separately promised Kanner's *Oakstaff*. PCs will likely be suspicious of each of the foreign backers, and will probably request to roll numerous Sense Motive checks on the NPCs. Roll opposed Bluff checks even when the NPCs are not lying, just to keep up the semblance of mystery. The only NPC to openly lie will be Tocanis, and his Bluff check is currently +40 due to a *potion of glibness*. What follows are descriptions of what happens when the PCs talk to each of them, and what happens if they are brought together.

Caderan Lorgrave and the great debate:

Caderan is a low-ranking clerk in the hierarchy of the Church of Rao. He has brought a few of his lay brothers from Veluna at this moment of what he perceives to be the great triumph that Rao has delivered him: the finding of Kanner's *Oakstaff*. He sits with his colleagues at a table awaiting Yindera to come. Meanwhile, a young bard named Melowin has joined them for a lively discussion on religion. She is actually a Suel woman who wears a glamour to appear as a Baklune. She is a devotee of Charmalaine, Goddess of Keen Senses and Narrow Escapes. She constantly questions the delegation from Veluna on the practicality of Rao worship, trying in vain to get a rise out of them.

When the PCs approach, read the following:

As you approach the corner table you notice that each of the men who display holy symbols of Rao wear masks fashioned to appear as the serene god that they revere. Sitting with them is a Baklunish woman who wears a holy symbol of a boot print that seems to have been enchanted to give off an un-burning, un-consuming fire. They appear to be discussing the heavy topic of religion. You hear the following as you approach:

"Ah, but inner serenity can lead to a number of benefits, including heightened perception," calmly says one of the men in a Rao mask.

The woman replies saying: "This is in concordance with the teachings of my goddess, for a mind cluttered by excessive emotions such as fear will not be totally aware of their environment. Still, no person could possibly believe that serenity could be a worthwhile end to itself. That's just foolish."

The men in Rao masks seems unfazed, and one calmly replies by saying, "I can certainly see your point of view, but serenity leads to a divine union with the most holy presence of Rao."

The discussion continues, with the woman making barbed comments against the doctrines of Rao, and the men in Rao masks replying in a calm, reasonable fashion. When they notice you approaching, one of the Rao worshippers turns to you and says, "Ah, hello there, would you care to join our discussion?"

Caderan is the one who greets the PCs, and will start a polite conversation introducing himself and his companions, Eom, Yiral, and Yiruc, who nod in turn when introduced. He will also introduce Melowin, who belongs to a "new and very amusing faith."

If the PCs ask Melowin if she is Yindera Raschid, she will coyly say "Maybe, maybe not." She will give a similar response if asked if she knows where Yindera is. Basically, she is not Yindera and doesn't know where Yindera is. Melowin's main concern is talking about the doctrines of Charmalaine and she will attempt to steer any conversation toward that.

Caderan is very patient man and will answer the PCs questions to the best of his ability. He does not know where Yindera is and is waiting patiently for her to arrive so they can discuss some business. If the PCs tell him that Yindera has been missing for awhile, then he will express genuine concern, saying: "I will pray to Rao for her safety." He will say something similar if the PCs inform him that undead are involved; basically he will urge the PCs to find her quickly.

If the PCs inform Caderan that Yindera has made business arrangements with other foreign nationals, then he will say the following:

"Ah, that is most curious. I am unsure why Yindera would resort to a deception such as this. When you find her you should bring her and her other patrons to a meeting with us tomorrow morning. We are staying at the Yarn and Wheel Inn. There we can discuss the matter in a rational fashion and peacefully negotiate the fate of Yindera and this Oakstaff, if it exists."

Shortly after this, Caderan will depart, fully expecting to see the PCs the next morning.

Tocanis Blot and the great deception:

Tocanis is a servant of Evard, posing as a Keoish member of the Royal Explorer's Society. Currently he is disguised as a half-elf via a *potion of alter self*.

When the PCs approach Tocanis, read the following:

A half-elf leans against a wall, sipping sparingly from an almost full glass of wine. A few dancing lights flutter around his brow and he swats at them in frustration. A half-orc with a painted face approaches, and the half-elf immediately snaps at him: "No! For the last time, I will not tell you any stories from the Society! I am here on business! Now in the name of Heironeous's Holy Halls, get out of my face!" The half-orc walks away dejected.

When Tocanis notices the PCs approach, he will give them similar treatment, i.e. he will attempt to brush them off with the excuse that he is here on business. This is of course an act, as Tocanis will be attempting to lure the PCs into giving him some pertinent information on Yindera's whereabouts. When the PCs mention Yindera

he will ask questions like "What brought you here? Who are you working for?"

Important Note: Tocanis will ask if the PCs have seen Yindera tonight. He will NOT make reference to the fact that he knows she is missing, but if the PCs tell him that she's been gone for a few days, then he express suspicion, commenting that she is probably trying to welch on their deal.

Tocanis will not read as evil, for he is the subject of an *undetectable alignment* spell, as mentioned above. It's actually not uncommon in the Crystal Web for patrons to use this spell. If the PCs mention the presence of undead, Tocanis will appear become concerned (an act) and ask the PCs if they think she is still alive.

One thing Tocanis doesn't know about is Yindera's backers from Veluna and Furyondy. If alerted to their existence, his surprise will be genuine:

"What?! Yindera has promised the Oakstaff to others?! This is an outrage! I didn't travel here all the way from Niole Dra to be made a fool! But apparently this trip was a mistake. I should have known never to trust these bardic types. I am an explorer and a scholar; these people are merely ne'er do wells, posing as masters of lore. Well, if you find any information on dear Yindera, please alert me. I will make it worth your while. If you need me, I am staying in the Lighted Hand Tavern."

With that, Tocanis will make a hasty exit. He will leave his owl familiar to watch the exit, in case the PCs or Yindera exit (see Encounter Nine for details).

Rechart Molender and the great love:

Rechart Molender is a middle-aged human who is approaching the twilight years of his life. He is a member of College of Conrescent Lore in Furyondy, and has met Yindera before. The two were involved in a short tryst in Hardby four years ago, and Rechart still carries a torch. Rechart is here to check up on the researches that he has helped fund as well as rekindle something between him and Yindera.

When the PCs decide to approach Rechart, read the following:

Leaning against the bar is a man with a dark beard surrounded by people half his age. Tiny horns sprout from his forehead, doubtless the product of the type of minor illusion that is common in the Crystal Web. His deep voice carries through the crowd as you approach: "And that, my young friends, is how I escaped near execution at the hands of Gillistek of the Coldflame tribe. Of course, none of this compares

to my escapades on the Astral Plane..." The bearded man begins to recount a fantastical tale, even by Bardic standards. Once he has finished, the bearded man takes another long draught from a bottle of wine and asks those gathered around him, "Now then, my young friends: have you seen another friend of mine? A Baklunish woman, who goes by the name Yindera Raschid?"

The young bards who have gathered to hear the tales of Rechart who tell him that they have not seen Yindera, but they will do their best to find her. The audience will then scatter, giving the PCs an opportunity to question Rechart.

Rechart has been around for a number of years, and has had at least half as many adventures as he claims, which is saying something. He is an odd mix of jovial and scholarly, quick of wit, and quite charming. The illusory horns on his head are exactly that: fake. There is nothing fiendish about the man.

Rechart will be very friendly; after introducing himself he will ask the PCs if they have any interesting stories to tell. If asked about Yindera, Rechart will immediately ask the PCs if they have seen her. He does not know where she is, but fervently hopes that she will appear shortly. If asked about his past relationship with Yindera, Rechart will just say, "That is a story best kept private." If the PCs tell him that Yindera is missing, he will express genuine concern. If the PCs tell Rechart of the involvement of undead, he will become very worried and ask if they (the PCs) still think Yindera is alive. If the PCs tell Rechart that Yindera has made arrangements to sell the *Oakstaff* to others, read the following:

A thin smile begins to cross Rechart's face, which widens until the bearded man begins to laugh uncontrollably. "I should have seen this coming. Of course she promised the Oakstaff to many patrons, I taught her this trick! No doubt she plans to sell the Oakstaff to someone rich and then reimburse those who funded her work from the sale. A harmless enough ruse, except my fellow backers and I have just wasted our time and effort getting here." Rechart laughs again. "Still, this trip may not be a total waste. When you find Yindera, would you please convince her to come see me? I'm staying at Fallon's Inn, here in Calpius' Craft."

After his exchange with the PCs, Rechart will quickly knock back another bottle and leave, trusting that the PCs will tell Yindera to come see him, and that she will do so.

Yindera Raschid and the great plea for help:

Yindera Raschid has been monitoring the PCs since they first walked in. Compared with the Crystal Web regulars, the PCs will for the most part appear out of place. They will also, in all likelihood appear to be competent mercenaries, and as such Yindera will be interested in them for the help they may provide. She will observe the PCs talk to Caderan, Tocanis, and Rechart, and will assume that the PCs are here looking for her.

☛ **Yindera Raschid:** female human (Baklunish) Brd4/Rog3; hp 32; see Appendix I.

Yindera has been hiding at the Crystal Web for a while now. The tavern does not have rooms to rent, but it does have a few private rooms for certain select patrons to use as they wish when the tavern is open. Yindera is good friends with the Crystal Web's owners, and has been hiding in one of these private rooms for most of this day.

Yindera has an intuitive knack for magic items (through a high Use Magic Device skill), and has employed a scroll of *alter self* to disguise herself as a gray elf. She will mark the PCs and pick the one she surmises to have the weakest willpower (i.e. lowest Will save). Yindera will have a preference for selecting a male PC, though appealing to a fellow woman is also an option. Which ever she believes will be most easy to convince to help her.

Once Yindera has selected her "target," she will then blend with the crowd, pass by said PC and cast *suggestion* on him. Take that PC aside and read the following:

If it is at all possible, the Crystal Web seems to have become even more crowded during your time here. The flow of the crowd causes you to be shoulder to shoulder with the other patrons. Suddenly you hear someone whisper in your ear, "I suggest you follow me so you and I can talk privately." You turn to the speaker, a slender gray elf who may or may not be female; it is difficult to tell.

The appropriately weak-willed PC must now make a Will save (DC 20), or follow the suggestion. If the PC makes the save, then Yindera will make a break for the private room where she has been staying. The PC may try to follow, or may try to reunite with his companions, who have become lost in the crowd. If the PC tries the latter, then it will be very difficult to find Yindera. The PCs will need to make a Search check (DC 30) to find the private room, which is now locked. Yindera is on the other side, and the PCs may be able to appeal to her to open the door. If the PC tries to follow Yindera to the private room without his companions, then his companions can attempt to try and see what is going on with a Spot check

(DC 30) due to the constantly shifting crowd. Regardless, tailor the below text to the situation, which assumes that the PC failed the save for the *suggestion*:

You enter a small room off the side of the common room of the Crystal Web. Inside there is a bed, a desk, and a shelf on which rests more than a few bottles of wine. The door, obviously operating under some type of hidden mechanism, closes behind you. The gray elf that spoke to you now stands before you in front of the bed. "Please," the gray elf says, "My life is in danger, and I am in dire need of your help. Four days ago I was attacked by undead just outside the city." As the gray elf speaks, her features soften; her skin begins to shift from gray to a dark tan color. "Some man and his undead servants have been chasing me since then, so I have had to go into hiding." The figure before you now grows a few inches, her hair darkens to black until it is apparent that you are now facing a Baklunish woman. "I believe you know my name; I am Yindera Raschid, and I need your help."

The PC (or PCs as the case may be) will probably have many questions for Yindera. Here are a few of the likely ones, and her responses:

- "Did you set the trap in your office?"

"Yes. It was a necessary precaution, but I had no idea the fire would be so large. I heard you were able to be on hand to fight it. You are truly the hero(s) I require to help me in my current troubles."

- "Why did you promise the *Oakstaff* to three different patrons?"

"I assure, I am the unfortunate victim here of a racist slight. Garon could not promise me the funding to continue my researches, because I am Baklunish! It is a plot to keep the stories and lore of those in power at the forefront, while the rich culture of the Baklunish is quashed underneath their boot."

- "I heard you were friends with Baron Besselar. If you are such good friends then why didn't he just give you the money to fund your researches?"

"I did appeal to Darius, but the heavy taxes he must now give to support the military mean that his patronage has been much less than it has before. He did offer some aid, but not enough."

- "Who was Kanner the Tall? Was he from Veluna/Furyondy/Keoland/Bissel?"

"Kanner was one of my people, a Baklune. Those in power do not want this information to get out, but if the people of Bissel could see that a Baklunish native

of Bissel was a celebrated war-hero of the past, it would do much to heal some of the misunderstandings between the populace. If only those few in power weren't bent on stopping me."

- "I'm taking you to the City Watch. You've committed too many crimes today."

"You are correct, I have perhaps violated a few minor laws, but I assure you I did this only to preserve my life. An insane man with his undead servants hunts me still, were you to take me to the City Watch, then this necromancer would have no trouble finding me."

- "Why do you think you are being hunted by undead?"

"It is obvious that their master covets Kanner's Oakstaff. He wishes to use it for himself, but I will be damned if I see the weapon of such a hero be turned to such a vile purpose. That is why you must help me. We must retrieve the Oakstaff and make sure that it does not fall into the wrong hands."

- "How do you want me(us) to help you?"

"My plan is simple, you adventurers will escort me to the Oakstaff's hiding place. With your protection we will be able to auction it off to the foreigners. The Church of Rao, the College of Conrescent Lore, or one from the Royal Explorer's Society will be able to see that it is protected for a long while. The money from the sale can be used to reimburse those who did not end up with the Oakstaff, and everyone can leave happy."

- "What about Brith and the books you requested?"

"Ah, it turns out I did not need Brith's books to locate the Oakstaff, but I would still be interested in purchasing those volumes. We will work something out, once the business with the Oakstaff is taken care of."

If the PC (or PCs) has no forthcoming questions, Yindera will describe her situation and her plan to them. If only one PC has heard Yindera's pleas then it will be up to him to convince his companions to aid Yindera. Yindera will stay in the private room until it is time to leave. She will put on her studded leather, her weapons, and a heavy cloak before leaving.

The PCs have a few options. First, they could go along with Yindera's plan. In other words retrieve the *Oakstaff* tonight and guard it until the morning when it can be auctioned to one of the foreign backers (or perhaps a PC). The PCs may decide to bring Yindera to the authorities, or they may decide to bring her immediately to one of

the foreign backers. Yindera will follow the PCs outside, with her hood drawn tightly over her head. Once outside have the PCs roll Spot checks (DC 31) to determine whether or not they notice Tocanis' owl familiar spying on them. If the PCs spot the owl, it will immediately fly away, only to later pick a better hiding spot from which to spy on the PCs.

If the PCs decide to take Yindera to the City Watch, she will not resist and merely point out that they are wasting their time. Once at the headquarters of the City Watch, the Watchman on duty will record the complaint but will not arrest Yindera. He will explain that it's not worth it, as her friend the Baron will pardon her anyway. The watchman will then send Yindera and the PCs on their way, and she will again appeal to them to retrieve the *Oakstaff* immediately as per her plan.

If the PCs decide to take her to one of the foreign visitors, they will find that navigating the labyrinthine streets of Calpius' Craft is nigh impossible at night. They will not be able to find the location of the Inns in which the foreigners are staying. Yindera will be uncooperative in giving directions to the PCs. She will reiterate that the best course of action is to retrieve the *Oakstaff* so they can guard it until it can be put into safe hands.

If the PCs decide to follow through with Yindera's plan, then proceed to Encounter Nine. If the PCs decide to wait until daylight to retrieve the *Oakstaff*, then Yindera will insist that they go immediately. There is no difference to Encounter Nine if the PCs decide to wait until morning, and if they require rest then judges should allow it.

Encounter Nine: Kanner Revealed

This encounter sets up the final confrontation between Yindera/PCs and Tocanis. Yindera will lead the PCs to where she has hidden the *Oakstaff*, an abandoned shrine to Fharlanghn just outside Calpius' Craft.

Yindera moves swiftly and silently ahead, leading you through the serpentine roads of Calpius' Craft. You come to unguarded gate in the city wall that has apparently fallen into disuse; large chains with heavy locks encircle the rusted gate. Yindera quickly opens the lock and the gate swings silently open. "Not much further now," she whispers as she leads down what once must have been a well-traveled road, but is now overgrown with vegetation. After about an hour, you come to a decrepit building to the side of the road. Wooden statues of an old bearded man wearing a hood line the steps that lead up to the entrance. The

statues are in various states of decay, with chipped and broken parts strewn about the steps. Above the doorframe, which once may have featured an actual door rather than a rotted plank of wood, is carved the curved line of the horizon within a circle. Yindera turns and whispers, "This road into Calpius' Craft is no longer used, nor is this tiny shrine to Fharlanghn."

The shrine itself is set into a clearing along the road, and is thirty feet square, with ten-foot ceilings.

Yindera approaches one of the statues and removes the broken quarterstaff from the statue's hand. You realize that this is not a broken staff but a small club, gnarled and knotted with arcane symbol written across the length. "The Oakstaff of Kanner the Tall," whispers Yindera. "Quickly we must get out of here."

"There's no rush Yindera!" cries a voice from the road. You recognize the speaker as the half-elf called Tocanis Blot from the Crystal Web, though his features have now softened until he resembles a Suloise human. He wears dark robes, and is flanked by undead servants. "It is time to end this game. Give me the Oakstaff, and I will leave peacefully. I am prepared to offer you this in exchange."

One of the undead (type is determined by APL) will drop a sack in front of Tocanis. The sack will open revealing jewels, gems, and platinum coins. Yindera will eye the bag and then look to the PCs and shrug; she is more than willing to accept the payoff in exchange for the *Oakstaff*, as it was her plan to sell the *Oakstaff* anyways. If the players accept the payoff, then Tocanis will keep his word: he will leave peacefully. In this eventuality proceed to Conclusion: Ending B. More than likely, PCs will refuse at which point Tocanis will attempt to take the *Oakstaff* by force.

APL 2 (EL 4)

☞ **Ghouls (4):** hp 18 each; see *Monster Manual*.

☞ **Tocanis Blot:** male human (Suloise) Nec5/Clr3/PlmStr1; hp 45; see Appendix I (does not fight at this APL).

APL 4 (EL 6)

☞ **Ghouls (8):** hp 18 each; see *Monster Manual*.

☞ **Tocanis Blot:** male human (Suloise) Nec5/Clr3/PlmStr1; hp 45; see Appendix I (does not fight at this APL).

APL 6 (EL 8)

☞ **Ghasts (6):** hp 39 each; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Tocanis Blot:** male human (Suloise) Nec5/Clr3/PLMstr1; hp 45; see Appendix I (does not fight at this APL).

APL 8 (EL 10)

☛ **Ghasts (6):** hp 39 each; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Tocanis Blot:** male human (Suloise) Nec5/Clr3/PLMstr1; hp 45; see Appendix I.

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛ **Spellstitched Ghast Rgr1 (2):** hp 45 each; see Appendix I.

☛ **Mohrg:** hp 126; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Tocanis Blot:** male human (Suloise) Nec7/Clr3/PLMstr1; hp 63; see Appendix I.

Tactics: Even though Tocanis is present, the PCs do not have to fight him except at APL 8 and 10. During the first round (regardless of APL) Tocanis will cast *fly* and move 50 feet into the air. Yindera will attempt to operate the *Oakstaff*. PCs will probably be busy with the undead that Tocanis has brought along.

On the second round of combat, Yindera will have been able to "operate" the *Oakstaff*, though not in a useful way. On her initiative in the second round, read the following:

The is an audible snap, as Yindera twists one section of the Oakstaff into a locking position. The arcane runes begin to glow a suddenly there is burst of colored light. All combatants stare in awe of the image before them. The illusion of a bald man hovers a few feet above the Oakstaff. He is dressed in black robes decorated with blood red arcane symbols. The man's build as well as the style of his blond goatee and his sharp blue eyes determine once and for all Kanner's race: that of a rock gnome. His image is about four-foot high, or normal dwarf-height, giving explanation to his unusual nickname. "Greetings," the image states. "I am Kanner, and you have activated my Staff without speaking the appropriate command phrase. I can only assume that you are a thief, or possibly multiple thieves, and as such, this staff's defense mechanisms have been activated. In approximately one minute, giving you time to make peace with whatever deities you worship, this staff will detonate in a fiery blast, ending the larcenous life or you and whatever companions may be in the vicinity. Letting go of the staff will prematurely precipitate said explosion. I hope this has been a learning experience for you, and wish you the best for the rest of your life, however short it will now be."

Yindera looks to you, obvious fear in her eyes...

Kanner's image will fade after delivering his message, which is a ruse. PCs may attempt a Sense Motive check (DC 17 + the APL) to see that the *Oakstaff* will not actually explode. However, the *Oakstaff* will continue to glow impressively for one minute. Once one minute is up the *Oakstaff* will cease to glow, and fiery death will NOT reign forth.

At APLs 2, 4 and 6, Tocanis, not wishing to meet a fiery end, will now take this opportunity to fly away. At APLs 8 and 10 he will stay and fight. He has already prepared himself with a number of spells (crossed off on his description in Appendix I). He will do his best to separate Yindera from the PCs, opening with the extended *scare* or a *ray of exhaustion* spell he has prepared. He will attempt to hit as many PCs as possible without hitting Yindera with the effect. As the *scare* is extended, PCs who fail the save flee for 12 rounds, not 6. Please note that since Tocanis has greater spell focus (necromancy), the spells *ghoul touch*, *negative energy ray*, *negative energy burst*, *scare*, and *ray of enfeeblement* all have +2 to their normal save DC. Even any *inflict* spells that Tocanis spontaneously casts are subject to the +2 to save DC. He will also use his metamagic rod (at APL 10) to ensure that his spell durations afflict the PCs for as long as possible. Once the PCs have been taken care of, Tocanis will kill Yindera and take the *Oakstaff*. If the PCs are triumphant in defending Yindera and the *Oakstaff* from Tocanis' attack, proceed to Conclusion: Ending A.

Conclusion

Ending A:

With the undead threat dispatched, Yindera thanks you for your help. "Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to sort this mess out. It's been a most beneficial business relationship. Perhaps we will be able to help each other in the future."

The next morning the meeting Caderan proposed occurs between the scholars from Veluna, Rechart from Furyondy and Yindera. It is agreed that the Oakstaff should be auctioned to one of the participants in this episode; at least once Kanner's theft protection spell is removed.

The PCs are welcome to buy the staff as listed on the AR. It is assumed that they won the auction in this situation. At APL 8 and 10, they also have access to *Death's Kiss*. They cannot gain the *Favor of Tocanis Blot* however.

Ending B:

A thin smile crosses the lips of Toccanis Blot as he wraps his hand around the Oakstaff of Kanner the Tall. "A pleasure doing business with you. I am a man of my word, the riches I promised I leave with you. Perhaps we will work together again in the future."

The PCs cannot purchase the staff in this case nor can they gain *Death's Kiss*. However, they do gain the *Favor of Toccanis Blot*.

APL 6 – 180 xp;
APL 8 – 225 xp;
APL 10 – 270 xp.

Total Possible Experience

APL 2 – 450 xp;
APL 4 – 675 xp;
APL 6 – 900 xp;
APL 8 – 1,125 xp;
APL 10 – 1,350 xp.

The End

Experience Point Summary

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

Encounter One

Defeat Melm and Tabok or convince them to leave

APL 2 – 60 xp;
APL 4 – 120 xp;
APL 6 – 180 xp;
APL 8 – 240 xp;
APL 10 – 300 xp.

Encounter Three

Successfully putting the fire out

All APLs – 60 xp.

Encounter Seven

Defeat Toccanis' servants

APL 2 – 120 xp;
APL 4 – 180 xp;
APL 6 – 240 xp;
APL 8 – 300 xp;
APL 10 – 360 xp.

Encounter Seven

Defeat Toccanis' undead and Toccanis (at APL 8 or 10)

APL 2 – 120 xp;
APL 4 – 180 xp;
APL 6 – 240 xp;
APL 8 – 300 xp;
APL 10 – 360 xp.

Discretionary Roleplaying Award

Judge may allocate up to the following for good roleplaying

APL 2 – 90 xp;
APL 4 – 135 xp;

Treasure Summary

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

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

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

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to

practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Encounter One:

APL 2: L: 28 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of shield of faith* +2 (4 gp), *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp), *slippers of spider climbing* (400 gp).

APL 4: L: 28 gp; C: 50 gp; M: *potion of shield of faith* +2 (4 gp), *potion of cure light wounds* (4 gp), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp), *slippers of spider climbing* (400 gp).

APL 6: L: 12 gp; C: 100 gp; M: *potion of shield of faith* +2 (4 gp), *potion of bull's strength* (25 gp), 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 2 +1 *chain shirts* (104 gp each), *slippers of spider climbing* (400 gp).

APL 8: L: 31 gp; C: 150 gp; M: *potion of shield of faith* +2 (4 gp), *potion of bull's strength* (25 gp), 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 2 +1 *chain shirts* (104 gp each), +1 *falchion* (198 gp), *slippers of spider climbing* (400 gp).

APL 10: L: 4 gp; C: 200 gp; M: *potion of shield of faith* +2 (4 gp), *potion of bull's strength* (25 gp), 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), +2 *chain shirt* (354 gp), +2 *breastplate* (363 gp), +2 *falchion* (698 gp), +1 *keen rapier* (694 gp), *ring of protection* +1 (167 gp), *slippers of spider climbing* (400 gp).

Encounter Two:

APL 2: L: 0 gp; C: 50 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 4: L: 0 gp; C: 100 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 150 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 200 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 250 gp; M: 0 gp.

Encounter Nine:

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

APL 4: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *ring of protection* +2 (667 gp), *Tocanis' spellbook* (55 gp), *Death's Kiss* (693 gp).

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *ring of protection* +2 (667 gp), *Tocanis' spellbook* (55 gp), *Death's Kiss* (1,527 gp), *metamagic rod, extend* (917 gp).

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 2: L: 28 gp; C: 50 gp; M: 408 gp - Total: 486 gp (400 gp).

APL 4: L: 28 gp; C: 150 gp; M: 433 gp - Total: 611 gp (600 gp).

APL 6: L: 12 gp; C: 250 gp; M: 687 gp - Total: 949 gp (800 gp).

APL 8: L: 31 gp; C: 350 gp; M: 2,300 gp - Total: 2,681 gp (1,250 gp).

APL 10: L: 4 gp; C: 450 gp; M: 5,921 gp - Total: 6,375 gp (2,100 gp).

Special

☛ *Tocanis' Spellbook*

1st—[*cause fear, chill touch, disguise self, mage armor, negative energy ray (T&B), ray of enfeeblement, shield*]; 2nd—[*blindness/deafness, command undead, disguise undead (T&B), false life, ghoul touch, locate object, scare, spectral hand*]; 3rd—[*fly, halt undead, negative energy burst (T&B), ray of exhaustion, vampiric touch*]; 4th—[*animate dead, bestow curse, contagion, enervation, Evard's black tentacles, fear, stoneskin*].

Market Price: 660 gp; *Weight:* 3 lbs.

☛ *Immortalized in Song*

You have performed a heroic act for the Bardic Circle, and the bards will not soon forget it. Nor are they likely to let anyone else forget it. At the beginning of any adventure set in Bissel, roll a d20 and add your total character level and Cha modifier to this roll. If it beats DC 20, then tales and songs of your deeds have preceded you, and you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Perform checks during that adventure. This benefit expires two years from the date of this AR.

☛ *Kanner's Oakstaff*

This +1 *small quarterstaff* is covered with arcane symbols. It grants the wielder a +2 enhancement bonus (+3 if the wielder is a gnome) to the DC of any illusion spell they cast. This bonus does not stack with the Spell Focus or Greater Spell Focus feats. This staff may have additional powers to be discovered later.

Caster Level: 14th; *Prerequisites:* can't be crafted; *Market Price:* 12,600 gp; *Weight:* 4 lbs.

☛ *Death's Kiss*

This +1 *frost scythe* (+2 *frost scythe* at APL 10) is decorated with skulls and was once wielded by the necromancer Tocanis, a servant of Evard. It carries great significance to the followers of Evard. They will attack the wielder of this scythe (before any others) and stop at nothing to return it to Evard. This scythe may have additional powers to be discovered later.

Caster Level: 8th; *Prerequisites:* can't be crafted; *Market Price:* 8,318 gp (18,318 gp at APL 10); *Weight:* 10 lbs.

☛ *Favor of Toccanis Blot*

You have done a great service for Toccanis Blot, a follower of Evard. The immediate benefit of this favor is that you earn maximum gp for this adventure. In all future scenarios while this favor is still in effect, all followers of Evard you encounter will have their attitude towards you shifted positively two steps and will avoid causing your death if at all possible (stabilizing you if necessary). Unfortunately, if word of your trafficking with a follower of Evard gets out, you will not be the most popular person in Bissel. At the end of any scenario set in Bissel, roll a d20 (and only modify it by the Luck domain or similar ability if you have it). If the result is a 1, your treachery is discovered and you are arrested and convicted of treason. This PC is immediately executed and removed from play permanently. This favor expires one year from the date of this AR.

Items for the Adventure Record

Item Access

APL 2:

- ❖ *Kanner's Oakstaff* (Regional, see above)
- ❖ *Slippers of Spider Climbing* (Adventure, DMG)

APL 4 (APL 2 Items plus):

APL 6 (APL 2, 4 Items plus):

APL 8 (APL 2, 4, 6 Items plus):

- ❖ *Death's Kiss* (Adventure, see above)
- ❖ *Toccanis' Spellbook* (Adventure, see above)
- ❖ *Ring of Protection +2* (Adventure, DMG)

APL 10 (APL 2, 4, 6, 8 Items plus):

- ❖ *+1 Keen Rapier* (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ *+2 Chain Shirt* (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ *+2 Falchion* (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ *+2 Breastplate* (Adventure, DMG)
- ❖ *Metamagic Rod, Extend* (Adventure, DMG)

Appendix I: NPCs

Encounter One:

Brith Brigscunyon, male gnome Exp2/Wiz (Ill) 1; Small Humanoid; HD 1d4+2d6+6; hp 17; Init +1; Spd 20 ft; AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 11) [+1 Dex, +1 size]; Atk +0 melee (1d4-2, 19-20/x2, Dagger); SA Spells; SQ Spell-like abilities, *Dancing Lights*, *Ghost Sound* and *Prestidigitation* all 1/day; AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 6, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 12

Languages: Common, Gnome, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Ancient Baklunish, Velondi

Skills & Feats: Alchemy +6, Appraise +4, Bluff +6, Concentration +4, Craft (Bookbinder) +8, Diplomacy +7, Forgery +11, Knowledge (History) +8, Knowledge (Local – Sheldomar Valley) +8, Profession (Merchant) +6, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +5; Skill Focus (Forgery), Spell Focus (Illusion).

Spells Prepared (4/3; base DC = 13+spell level+ 2 for illusions): 0- [*Ghost Sound*, *Read Magic* (3x)]; 1st- [*Silent Image* (x2), *Unseen Servant* (x2)].

Possessions: dagger, rare books, merchant's garb, bookbinder's tools, spell component pouch, spellbook, donkey.

APL 2

Melm, male human (Oeridian) Rog1; Medium Humanoid; HD 1d6+1; hp 6; Init +7; Spd 30ft; AC 18 (touch 13, flat-footed 14) [+4 armor, +1 shield, +3 Dex]; Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, 18-20/x2, Rapier), +4 ranged (1d4+1, Dart); Sneak attack +1d6; SQ Evasion; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will -1; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills & Feats: Bluff +5, Hide +7, Listen +3, Move Silently +7, Open Lock +7, Pick Pocket +7, Search +6, Sense Motive +3, Spot +6, Tumble +7, Use Rope +7; Dodge, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: rapier, darts (4), chain shirt, buckler, thieves' tools, *potion of shield of faith* +2, *slippers of spider climbing*.

Tabok, male half-orc, Bbn1; Medium Humanoid; HD 1d12+1; hp 10; Init +3; Spd 40 ft; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 14) [+4 armor, +3 Dex]; Atk +5 melee (2d4+6, 18-20/x2, Falchion); SA Rage 1/day; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills & Feats: Climb +4, Intimidate +2, Jump +4, Survival +4; Power Attack.

Possessions: falchion, chain shirt, *potion of cure light wounds*.

APL 4

Melm, male human (Oeridian) Rog1/Ftr 1; Medium Humanoid; HD 1d6+d10+2; hp 14; Init +7; Spd 30ft; AC 18 (touch 13, flat-footed 14) [+4 armor, +1 shield, +3 Dex]; Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, 18-20/x2, Rapier), +5 ranged (1d4+1, Dart); Sneak attack +1d6; SQ Evasion; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will -1; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills & Feats: Bluff +6, Hide +7, Listen +3, Move Silently +7, Open Lock +7, Pick Pocket +7, Search +6, Sense Motive +3, Spot +6, Tumble +8, Use Rope +7; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: rapier, darts (4), chain shirt, buckler, thieves' tools, *potion of shield of faith* +2, *potion of cure light wounds*, *slippers of spider climbing*.

Tabok, male half-orc, Bbn1/Rog1; Medium Humanoid; HD 1d12+d6+2; hp 15; Init +3; Spd 40 ft; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 14) [+4 armor, +3 Dex]; Atk +5 melee (2d4+6, 18-20/x2, Falchion); SA Rage 1/day, sneak attack +1d6; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills & Feats: Climb +4, Intimidate +3, Jump +4, Tumble +8, Survival¹ +4; Power Attack.

Possessions: falchion, chain shirt, *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

APL 6

Melm, male human (Oeridian) Rog3/Ftr1; Medium Humanoid; HD 3d6+d10+4; hp 24; Init +7; Spd 30ft; AC 19 (touch 13, flat-footed 15) [+5 armor, +1 shield, +3 Dex]; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1, 18-20/x2, Rapier), +7 ranged (1d4+1, Dart); Sneak attack +2d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge (Dex to AC); AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills & Feats: Bluff +8, Hide +9, Listen +5, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +9, Pick Pocket +9, Search +8, Sense Motive +5, Spot +8, Tumble +10, Use Rope +9; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse, Quick Draw.

Possessions: rapier, darts (4), *chain shirt* +1, buckler, thieves' tools, *potion of shield of faith* +2, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *slippers of spider climbing*.

Tabok, male half-orc, Bbn2/Rog2; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d12+2d6+4; hp 30; Init +3; Spd 40 ft; AC 18 (touch 13, flat-footed 15) [+5 armor, +3 Dex]; Atk +7 melee (2d4+6, 18-20/x2, Falchion); SA Rage 1/day, sneak attack +1d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge (Dex to AC); AL NE;

SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +0; Str 19, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills & Feats: Climb +4, Intimidate +5, Jump +5, Tumble +10, Survival¹ +7; Power Attack, Quick Draw.

Possessions: falchion, *chain shirt*+1, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of bull's strength*.

APL 8

Melm, male human (Oeridian) Rog5/Ftr1; Medium Humanoid; HD 5d6+d10+6; hp 35; Init +7; Spd 30ft; AC 19 (touch 13, flat-footed 15) [+5 armor, +1 shield, +3 Dex]; Atk +10 melee (1d6+1, 18-20/x2, Rapier), +8 ranged (1d4+1, Dart); Sneak attack +3d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge (Dex to AC); AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills & Feats: Bluff +10, Hide +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +11, Pick Pocket +11, Search +10, Sense Motive +7, Spot +10, Tumble +12, Use Rope +11; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (rapier).

Possessions: MW rapier, darts (4), *chain shirt* +1, buckler, thieves' tools, *potion of shield of faith* +2, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *slippers of spider climbing*.

Tabok, male half-orc, Bbn2/Rog2/Ftr2; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d12+2d6+2d10+6; hp 47; Init +3; Spd 40 ft; AC 18 (touch 13, flat-footed 15) [+5 armor, +3 Dex]; Atk +11 melee (2d4+7, 18-20/x2, Falchion); SA Rage 1/day, sneak attack +1d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge (Dex to AC); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +0; Str 19, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills & Feats: Climb +4, Intimidate +6, Jump +5, Tumble +10, Survival +7; Power Attack, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (falchion), Dodge.

Possessions: *falchion*+1, *chain shirt*+1, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of bull's strength*.

APL 10

Melm, male human (Oeridian) Rog7/Ftr1; Medium Humanoid; HD 7d6+d10+8; hp 45; Init +7; Spd 30ft; AC 21 (touch 14, flat-footed 16) [+6 armor, +1 shield, +4 Dex]; Atk +12 melee (1d6+1, 16-20/x2, Rapier), +10 ranged (1d4+1, Dart); Sneak attack +4d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge (Dex to AC); AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills & Feats: Bluff +13, Hide +15, Listen +10, Move Silently +15, Open Lock +13, Pick Pocket +13, Search +10, Sense Motive +9, Spot +10, Tumble +15, Use Rope +12; Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (rapier).

Possessions: +1 keen rapier, darts (4), *chain shirt* +2, buckler, thieves' tools, *potion of shield of faith* +2, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *slippers of spider climbing*.

Tabok, male half-orc, Bbn4/Rog2/Ftr 2; Medium Humanoid; HD 4d12+2d6+2d10+8; hp 66; Init +3; Spd 40 ft; AC 21 (touch 14, flat-footed 18) [+7 armor, +3 Dex, +1 ring]; Atk +14/+9 melee (2d4+8, 18-20/x2, Falchion); SA Rage 2/day, sneak attack +1d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge (Dex to AC); AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills & Feats: Climb +4, Intimidate +6, Jump +7, Tumble +10, Survival +7; Power Attack, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (falchion), Dodge.

Possessions: *falchion* +2, *breastplate* +2, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of bull's strength*, *Ring of protection* +1.

Encounter Three:

Typical Bardic Circle Initiate, female or male human Brd 3; Medium Humanoid; HD 3d6-3; hp 12; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 10) [+2 Dex]; SA Bardic Music; SQ Bardic Knowledge; AL CN; SV Fort +0, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 8, Dex 15, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 16.

Skills & Feats: Bluff +9, Knowledge (any two) +8, Perform +11, Sense Motive +7, Tumble +8; Dodge, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perform).

Spells Per Day (3/2; base DC 13+spell level): 0- [*Dancing Lights*, *Detect Magic*, *Ghost sound*, *Mage hand*, *Mending*, *Prestidigitation*]; 1st- [*Charm Person*, *Cure Light Wounds*, *Mage Armor*].

Possessions: MW Musical Instrument, Spell Component pouch, study materials, bottle of wine.

Encounter Seven:

Bince Rupel, male human (Oeridian) Brd2/Rog1; Medium Humanoid; HD 3d6+3; hp 16; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 10) [+2 Dex]; Atk +1 melee (1d6, 18-20/x2, Rapier); SA Bardic Music; SQ Bardic Knowledge; AL CN; SV Fort +1, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 15.

Skills & Feats: Bluff +8, Hide +6, Knowledge (history) +3, Knowledge (Local – Sheldomar Valley) +5, Move Silently +6, Open Lock +6, Perform +8, Pick Pocket +10, Search +5, Spot +3, Tumble +8, Use Rope +6; Combat Casting, Dodge, Skill Focus: Knowledge (Local – Sheldomar Valley).

Spells per Day (3/1; base DC 12+ spell level): 0- [*Daze*, *Detect Magic*, *Mage Hand*, *Open/Close*, *Prestidigitation*]; 1st- [*Cure Light Wounds*, *Mage Armor*].

Possessions: rapier.

APL 4/APL 6

Spellstitched Ghast Rgr1; Medium Undead; HD 4d12+1d8+3; hp 45; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; AC 21 (touch 13, flat-footed 18) [+3 Dex, +4 natural, +4 *Mage Armor*]; Atk

+6 melee (bite 1d8+3 plus paralysis), +4 (2 claws 1d4+1 plus paralysis); SA Favored Enemy +2 (Humans), Paralysis, Stench, Spell-like abilities; SQ Create Spawn, DR 5/magic, SR 18, darkvision 60 ft., Turn resistance +4, Undead Traits, wild empathy; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 17, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats. Balance +7, Climb +9, Escape Artist +9, Hide +8, Jump +9, Move Silently +8, Spot +8, Survival +9; Multiattack, Toughness, Track.

Spell-like abilities (caster level 5; base DC 13 + spell level): 1/day *Mage Armor*, *Stinking Cloud*, *Vampiric Touch*; 2/day *Scare*, *Summon Swarm*; 3/day *Cause Fear*.

APL 8

Spellstitched Ghast Rgr1/Ftr1; Medium Undead; HD 4d12+1d8+1d10+3; hp 52; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; AC 21 (touch 13, flat-footed 18) [+3 Dex, +4 natural, +4 *Mage Armor*]; Atk +8 melee (bite 1d8+3 plus paralysis), +6 (2 claws 1d4+1 plus paralysis); SA Favored Enemy +2 (Humans), Paralysis, Stench, Spell-like abilities; SQ Create Spawn, DR 5/magic, SR 18, darkvision 60 ft., Turn resistance +4, Undead Traits, wild empathy; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 17, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats. Balance +7, Climb +9, Escape Artist +9, Hide +8, Jump +9, Move Silently +8, Spot +8, Survival +9, Swim +6; Multiattack, Toughness, Track, Weapon Focus (claw, bite).

Spell-like abilities (caster level 6; base DC 13 + spell level): 1/day *Mage Armor*, *Stinking Cloud*, *Vampiric Touch*; 2/day *Scare*, *Summon Swarm*; 3/day *Cause Fear*.

Spellstitched Ghast Rog1/Ftr1; Medium Undead; HD 4d12+1d6+1d10+3; hp 51; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; AC 21 (touch 13, flat-footed 18) [+3 Dex, +4 natural, +4 *Mage Armor*]; Atk +7 melee (bite 1d8+3 plus paralysis), +5 (2 claws 1d4+1 plus paralysis); SA Sneak Attack +1d6, Paralysis, Stench, Spell-like abilities; SQ Create Spawn, DR 5/magic, SR 18, darkvision 60 ft., Turn resistance +4, Undead Traits, Trapfinding; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 17, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats. Balance +7, Climb +9, Escape Artist +9, Hide +8, Jump +9, Move Silently +8, Spot +8, Swim +6, Tumble +12; Multiattack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (claw, bite).

Spell-like abilities (caster level 6; base DC 13 + spell level): 1/day *Mage Armor*, *Stinking Cloud*, *Vampiric Touch*; 2/day *Scare*, *Summon Swarm*; 3/day *Cause Fear*.

APL 10

Spellstitched Ghast Rgr1/Ftr3; Medium Undead; HD 4d12+1d8+3d10+3; hp 67; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; AC 21 (touch 13, flat-footed 18) [+3 Dex, +4 natural, +4 *Mage Armor*]; Atk +11 melee (bite 1d8+4 plus paralysis), +9 (2 claws 1d4+2 plus paralysis); SA Favored Enemy +2 (Humans),

Paralysis, Stench, Spell-like abilities; SQ Create Spawn, DR 5/magic silver, SR 18, darkvision 60 ft., Turn resistance +4, Undead Traits, wild empathy; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +9; Str 18, Dex 17, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats. Balance +7, Climb +12, Escape Artist +9, Hide +8, Jump +12, Move Silently +8, Spot +8, Survival +9, Swim +9; Combat Reflexes, Multiattack, Toughness, Track, Weapon Focus (claw, bite).

Spell-like abilities (caster level 6; base DC 13 + spell level): 1/day *Mage Armor*, *Stinking Cloud*, *Vampiric Touch*; 2/day *Scare*, *Summon Swarm*; 3/day *Cause Fear*.

Spellstitched Ghast Rog3/Ftr1; Medium Undead; HD 4d12+3d6+1d10+3; hp 60; Init +4; Spd 30 ft; AC 22 (touch 14, flat-footed 18) [+4 Dex, +4 natural, +4 *Mage Armor*]; Atk +9 melee (bite 1d8+3 plus paralysis), +7 (2 claws 1d4+1 plus paralysis); SA Sneak Attack +2d6, Paralysis, Stench, Spell-like abilities; SQ Create Spawn, DR 5/magic silver, SR 18, darkvision 60 ft., Turn resistance +4, Undead Traits, Trapfinding, trap sense +1, evasion; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +9; Str 17, Dex 18, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats. Balance +8, Bluff +12, Climb +9, Escape Artist +10, Hide +9, Jump +9, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +11, Spot +8, Swim +6, Tumble +13; Multiattack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (claw, bite).

Spell-like abilities (caster level 6; base DC 13 + spell level): 1/day *Mage Armor*, *Stinking Cloud*, *Vampiric Touch*; 2/day *Scare*, *Summon Swarm*; 3/day *Cause Fear*.

Encounter Eight:

Yindera Raschid, female human (Baklunish) Brd4/Rog3; Medium Humanoid; HD 7d6; hp 32; Init +7; Spd 30 ft; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 14) [+3 Dex, +3 armor, +1 shield]; Atk +9 melee (1d6-1/18-20/x2, Masterwork rapier), +9 ranged (1d8/x3, Masterwork composite longbow); SA Bardic Music, Sneak Attack +2d6; SQ Bardic Knowledge, Evasion, Uncanny Dodge (Dex to AC); AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +10, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 9, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats. Balance +7, Bluff +12, Decipher Script +7, Disable Device +6, Disguise +12, Forgery +6, Hide +10, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (Local – Sheldomar Valley) +7, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +7, Perform +14, Search +4, Tumble +13, Use Magic Device +12; Improved Initiative, Spell Focus(Enchantment), Weapon Finesse(Rapier), Greater Spell Focus(Enchantment)

Possessions. MW Rapier, MW Studded Leather, MW Buckler, MW flute, MW Composite Longbow, *Amulet of Proof Against Detection and Location*.

Spells per Day: (3/3/1; base DC 14+spell level/16+spell level for enchantments): 0- [*Daze, Detect Magic, Light, Mage Hand, Prestidigitation, Read Magic*]; 1st- [*Charm Person, Cure Light Wounds, Unseen Servant*]; 2nd- [*Cure Moderate Wounds, Suggestion*].

Encounter Nine:

APL 8

Tocanis Blot, male human (Suloise) Wiz(Nec)5/Clr3 of Nerull/Pale Master1; Medium Humanoid; HD 5d4+1d6+3d8+9; hp 45; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 26 (touch 16, flat footed 24) [+2 bone mail, +2 Dex, +2 ring of protection, +4 mage armor, +2 shield of faith, +4 shield]; Atk +6 melee (2d4+2+1d6 cold, crit x4, +1 frost scythe, "Death's Kiss"); SA spells; SQ spells, spontaneous casting; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +11; AL LE; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills & Feats: Bluff +6, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +6, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (religion) +16, Spellcraft +13; Combat Casting, Martial Weapon Proficiency(Scythe), Skill Focus(Knowledge (religion)), Spell Focus(Necromancy), Extend Spell, Greater Spell Focus(Necromancy)

Possessions: *Death's Kiss* (+1 Frost Scythe), Spell Components, Spell Book, +2 ring of protection.

Cleric Spells Prepared (4/4/3; base DC 12+spell level): 0- [*Detect Magic* (2x), *Guidance* (2x)]; 1st- [*Cause Fear* (domain), *Cure Light Wounds* (2x), ~~*Shield of Faith*~~]; 2nd- [*Cure Moderate Wounds, Invisibility* (domain), ~~*Undetectable Alignment*~~].

Wizard Spells Prepared (5/5/5/4; base DC 13 + spell level, DC 15 + spell level necromancy): 0- [*Acid Splash, Disrupt Undead* (x2), *Mage Hand, Prestidigitation*]; 1st- [~~*Disguise Self, Mage Armor, Negative Energy Ray*~~*, *Ray of Enfeeblement, Shield*]; 2nd- [*Blindness/Deafness, Ghoul Touch, Disguise Undead**, ~~*False Life, Locate Object*~~]; 3rd- [*Scare* (extended), *Fly, Negative Energy Burst**, *Ray of Exhaustion*]. Prohibited schools: Enchantment, Evocation.

*Described in *Tome and Blood* (see Appendix II).

APL 10

Tocanis Blot, male human (Suloise) Wiz(Nec)7/Clr3 of Nerull/Pale Master1; Medium Humanoid; HD 7d4+1d6+3d8+26; hp 63; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 26 (touch 16, flat footed 24) [+2 bone mail, +2 Dex, +2 ring of protection, +4 mage armor, +2 shield of faith, +4 shield]; Atk +8 melee (2d4+3+1d6 cold, crit x4, +2 frost scythe, "Death's Kiss"); SA spells; SQ spells, spontaneous casting;

SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +12; AL LE; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills & Feats: Bluff +9, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +8, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (religion) +20, Spellcraft +17; Combat Casting, Martial Weapon Proficiency(Scythe), Skill Focus (Knowledge: Religion), Spell Focus(Necromancy), Extend Spell, Greater Spell Focus(Necromancy)

Possessions: *Death's Kiss* (+2 Frost Scythe), Spell Components, Spell Book, +2 ring of protection, *Metamagic Rod: Extend* (used twice today).

Cleric Spells Prepared (4/4/3; base DC 12+spell level): 0- [*Detect Magic* (2x), *Guidance* (2x)]; 1st- [*Cause Fear* (domain), *Cure Light Wounds* (2x), ~~*Shield of Faith*~~]; 2nd- [*Cure Moderate Wounds, Invisibility* (domain), ~~*Undetectable Alignment*~~].

Wizard Spells Prepared (5/6/5/5/3; base DC 13 + spell level, 15+ spell level necromancy): 0- [*Acid Splash, Disrupt Undead* (x2), *Mage Hand, Prestidigitation*]; 1st- [~~*Disguise Self, Mage Armor, Negative Energy Ray*~~*, *Ray of Enfeeblement, Shield*]; 2nd- [*Blindness/Deafness, Ghoul Touch, Disguise Undead**, ~~*False Life, Locate Object*~~]; 3rd- [*Scare* (extended), *Fly, Negative Energy Burst**, *Ray of Exhaustion* (x2)]; 4th- [*Evard's Black Tentacles, Stoneskin, Enervation*]. Prohibited schools: Enchantment, Evocation.

*Described in *Tome and Blood* (see Appendix II).

Spellstitched Ghast Rgr1; Medium Undead; HD 4d12+1d8+3; hp 45; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; AC 21 (touch 13, flat-footed 18) [+3 Dex, +4 natural, +4 Mage Armor]; Atk +6 melee (bite 1d8+3 plus paralysis), +4 (2 claws 1d4+1 plus paralysis); SA Favored Enemy +2 (Humans), Paralysis, Stench, Spell-like abilities; SQ Create Spawn, DR 5/magic, SR 18, darkvision 60 ft., Turn resistance +4, Undead Traits, wild empathy; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 17, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Balance +7, Climb +9, Escape Artist +9, Hide +8, Jump +9, Move Silently +8, Spot +8, Survival +9; Multiattack, Toughness, Track.

Spell-like abilities (caster level 5; base DC 13 + spell level): 1/day *Mage Armor, Stinking Cloud, Vampiric Touch*; 2/day *Scare, Summon Swarm*; 3/day *Cause Fear*.

Appendix II: New Spells

Negative Energy Ray (from Tome & Blood)

Necromancy

Level: Sor/Wiz 1

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

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

Effect: Ray

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will half (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

A ray of negative energy projects from your pointing finger. You must succeed at a ranged touch attack with the ray to deal damage to a target. The ray deals 1d6 points of damage to a living creature.

For every two extra levels of experience past 1st, you deal an extra 1d6 points of damage. You deal 2d6 at 3rd level, 3d6 at 5th level, 4d6 at 7th level, and a maximum of 5d6 points of damage at 9th level or higher.

Since undead are powered by negative energy, this spell cures them of a like amount of damage, rather than harming them.

Material Component: A mirror, which you break.

Negative Energy Burst (from Tome and Blood)

Necromancy

Level: Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

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

Effect: 20 ft. radius burst

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will half (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

You release a silent burst of negative energy from a point you indicate.

The burst deals 1d8 points of damage to living creatures in the area + 1 point per caster level (maximum 1d8+10). A successful Will save reduces damage by half.

Since undead are powered by negative energy, this spell cures them of a like amount of damage, rather than harming them.

Disguise Undead (from Tome and Blood)

As per the disguise self spell in the Player's Handbook, but Level is "Sor/Wiz 2", Components includes a Focus (a cocoon of a death's head moth), Range is Touch, Target is "One corporeal undead", and Saving Throw is "None (harmless)".

Player Handout #1

This is the perceived conversation gained through a Spot check to read lips:

Gnome: "'m sorry gen-men c- I help you?"

Human: "Y-, we w- just going to help ourselves to -ese seats here."

Half-orc: "Yuh, h- ourselves."

Gnome: "Now see h-, I th- it's highly improper to j- sit d- without my invitation."

Human: "Listen *m'lord*, we're -ust interested in wh- you're transporting thr- here."

Gnome: "'m sorry -ut th- is priviledged..."

Human: "Hey, we -ust w- to help guard your -ares. N- ill intentions."

Gnome: "Well I h- no interest in -ealing with the likes of y-. I'll -ust be taking my -eave..."

Half-orc: "Sit down!"

Human: "Listen h- *friend*, you're going to tell us all about your -argo if you w- to leave Doutham the -ame w- you entered."

Player Handout #2

This is the perceived conversation gained through a Spot check to read lips:

Gnome: "'m Rary gen-men, I w- hurt you!"

Human: "Y-, we w- just going to help ourselves to -ese seats here."

Half-orc: "Yuh, h- ourselves."

Gnome: "Now see h-, I th- I'll use my mighty power to cast you out w- a high invocation!"

Human: "Listen m'lord we're -ust interested in wh- you're transporting thr- here."

Gnome: "'m Rary! -nd I -ill pillage!"

Human: "Hey, we -ust w- to help guard your -ares. N- ill intentions."

Gnome: "Well I'll h- to cast some spell to hit spikes upon you! I'll -ust be r-ing up my sleeve..."

Half-orc: Sit down!

Player Handout #3

A letter written on fine paper in a delicate, careful script

3 Flocktime, Grayington

To the most serene and scholarly Yindera Raschid,

First I must thank you for the honor you have bestowed upon my brothers and I by writing to us of your most learned findings. I find it daunting that word my own researches into the "Small War" have reached the eminent Bardic Circle of Bissel. What was even more surprising was to learn that your researches have confirmed what I have suspected for almost a decade now; that the famed mage-hero of that conflict, Kanner the Tall, was a devout worshipper of Rao and a native of Veluna. We're most excited about this news; the subject has dominated our evening conversations since your letter arrived.

Indeed, this uncovered lore only serves to amplify the glory of Rao's name, and as such my brothers and I are only too happy to send what wealth we can spare to fund your continued researches on this matter. Your promise to donate Kanner's famous Oakstaff, if it has indeed survived these years intact, is most generous. It will make a fine relic to display in the worship area of our modest temple.

With Rao's blessing, I look forward to meeting you on the second Earthday of Wealoun, at the place you mentioned. It will be most exciting to meet and speak with you at last.

Yours in Rao,

Brother Caderan Lorgrave,

Assistant Vice-Cleric of Scholarly Reason

Player Handout #4

A letter written on course parchment in a tight, deliberate script.

The letter also bears the seal of the Royal Explorer's Society.

To the esteemed Yíndera Raschid,

I offer many thanks for the letter regarding your remarkable investigations into the "Small War" of 436-438 CY. However, I'm afraid you have been misled as to the goals of the Royal Explorers Society. Our primary interest is the discovery of new and foreign cultures and lands, not historical inquiries into the former vassal-states of our mighty Empire. As such, it is with great regret that I must inform you that the Royal Explorers Society has denied your appeal for funding. I would like to personally offer my condolences, as well as a new proposal for mutual gain.

The claim that you put forth in your letter to the Society, that the famed wizard Kanner the Tall was a patriot of Keoland, runs contrary to most current theories. Yet I would be very interested in taking a first-hand look at the evidence you cited in your letter. As such, I am sending with this note a small amount of money meant to aid in your studies on this subject. In return, I hope that Kanner's Oakstaff, which you promised the Society, might instead become the property of one who did not turn a deaf ear to your pleadings for assistance.

Thus, instead of an official envoy from the Society, I will personally meet with you, as an individual, at the Crystal Web Tavern in Calpius' Craft on the day and time that you mentioned.

Good luck and I hope to see you and the Oakstaff next month,

Tocanis Blot,

Two Flocktime, Níole Dra

(The seal of the Royal Explorers Society is stamped here)

Player Handout #5

A letter written on thin, brittle parchment in a hasty, unmeasured script. The back of this parchment has many letters and numbers scratched out, leading you to believe that this particular parchment has been used at least once before.

Dearest Yindera,

It seems as if an entire age has passed since I last heard from you; I suppose you have little time to spare your elders these days. Yet, I will not allow such a radiant creature as you turn me into a bitter old man. Our time in Hardby brings back many bittersweet memories...

But you wrote me on business, and business is what I shall discuss. Your findings in regards to the "Small War" are most interesting, and certainly worthy of the attention of the College of Concescent Lore. The premise of the wizard named Kanner the Tall being from my homeland in Furyondy is a well known hypothesis to me, but the new evidence you've uncovered must be quite a find for you to contact me after all these years. That fact alone has been enough to convince me to use what small weight I have here to appropriate these funds, enclosed with this message. May it bring a swift completion to your work on this matter, and I will personally see what progress you've made next month in Calpius' Craft. I confess, an evening rendezvous with you will be an unmixed pleasure, if we can dispense with out business quickly enough. Perhaps, I won't be returning with just Kanner's Oakstaff, but the greater prize of Yindera as well.

Your most ardent supporter,

Rechart Molender, 5 Flocktime, Chendl

Player Handout #6

This is pertinent information gained from studying the books which Brith Brigscunyon is transporting.

From page 538 of *Reman's Guide to the Sheldomar*, a relatively recent work, written in 588 CY

...in this conflict it was a mage named Kanner the Tall who would prove to be one of the deciding factors. The mage was apparently tall beyond belief and wielded impressive magics that demanded respect from his allies and inspired fear in his enemies. He was not a member of either of the invading armies, but instead remained a "come-as-you-please" ally, appearing and disappearing at will.

This Kanner individual seems to me as having possessed many of the attributes of your typical Bisselite: strongly independent in a very superficial way. For as the nation throws off one oppressor they always seem to welcome another, and that leads me to discussion of more recent events, for even as...

From page 672 of volume one of Ralora Dain's *March Palatine*, written circa 530 CY

To date, the following rhyme is the only reference I have found concerning the fate of Kanner the Tall after his escapades in the "Small War:"

Kanner from the East
Driving toward the West
His foes from the South
In the North is where he rests

I have investigated the possible resting place of Kanner, with no luck. No scroll mentioning him exists, and no local of the north knows of his name. This leads me to believe that Kanner may be fictitious, much like the well-known tale that begins...

From page 310 of Ezlen the Old's *Bissel in My Own Eyes*, written between the years 559-561 CY

When I was barely a century old I had the great fortune to meet Fallon the Honest, a Paladin of Rao and veteran of the "Small War." The elderly human had a little problem with his memory, but when asked about Kanner the Tall, Fallon told me that he had never met a more deceptively trustworthy individual. I found this a very odd thing to say, but as Fallon is reputed to have never told a lie during his long life, I do not doubt the statement. "On the day I last saw Kanner," the aged knight said, "the wizard told me that we would never meet again. I had heard him say that many times, only to find the rascal two days later, feasting on my rations and joking with the men. I asked him where he was going and he just said 'North.' It was true that time, I've never seen or heard from him since."