

LURU1-6

DESPERATE TIMES

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING
FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

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Traveling the Nether Mountains has always been risky with bandits and shades looking for loot. Now it seems the undead are involved as more caravans go missing. A *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure set in Luruar for characters levels 4-7.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Andy Collins, Rob Heinsoo, and James Wyatt.

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By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First, it is an official game, tracked under your play history. Second, DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DM REWARDS program. DMing this adventure is worth one (1) point.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31 2012.

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PREPARING FOR PLAY

In order to play this adventure, you'll need copies of the following D&D 4th Edition rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. Any other rules referenced in this adventure will be noted in the **New Rules Items** section at the end of the adventure.

Throughout this adventure, text in bold italics provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your organizer directly after play.

READING MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

Most of the information should be easy to understand, as it mirrors the information presented in the *Monster Manual*. Attacks may have a letter next to them designating the type: M for melee, R for ranged, C for close, and A for area. A lower-case letter (used only in some melee and ranged attacks) denotes that the attack can be used as a basic attack.

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

As the DM of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You take the words on these pages and make them come alive. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- **You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure.** This is especially important and applicable outside of combat encounters, but feel free to use the "scaling the encounter" advice (usually for adjusting to different-sized groups) to adjust combat encounters for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time in an adventure.
- **Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group.** Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a "chance to shine."
- **Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately.** Watch for stalling, as play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish the adventure too early; provide them with a full play experience. *Living Forgotten Realms* adventures are designed to be

played within 3.5 - 4 hours; try to be very aware of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.

- **Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to interact with their environment.** Players should always know when enemies are affected by conditions and are bloodied. They should be given clues about how to interact with their surroundings so they can tackle skill challenges, combats, and puzzles without getting too frustrated over lack of information. This helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out a good choice from a clue.

In short, being the DM for a *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure isn't about following the adventure's text word-for-word; it's about creating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* are filled with good information about being a DM for a D&D game.

APPROPRIATE CHARACTER LEVELS

This adventure is designed for player characters (PCs) levels 4 - 7. Characters that fall outside of the level range may not participate in the adventure. Make certain to check the levels of the PCs before beginning play to ensure that they are the proper level.

Each adventure has a low-level version and a high-level version. The low level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the lower levels of the adventure's level spread. The high level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the higher levels of the adventure's level spread.

A group may decide to play the high level when their levels are more suited to the low level if everyone in the group agrees to do so; however, some of the rewards may not be available to them. Conversely, a group may decide to play the low level when their levels are more suited to the high level if everyone in the group agrees; however, some of the rewards may be less than what they'd ideally want from the adventure.

Reading the Numbers: Each encounter has a level and sometimes other values (such as XP or skill check DCs) listed with two numbers divided by a slash. The number before the slash is always the value for the low-level version of the adventure; the number after the slash is the value for the high-level version of the adventure.

FAILING TO DEFEAT AN ENCOUNTER

If a group fails to defeat an encounter - that is, if they have to flee from a combat because it's too tough or they reach the predetermined number of failures in a skill challenge before reaching success - they are only awarded half experience points (round down) for the encounter. If they manage to tackle the encounter later and defeat it, award them the other half of the experience points for the encounter.

CHARACTER DEATH

If a PC dies during the course of the adventure, the player of that character and the rest of the group have two options, provided that they have access to the Raise Dead ritual (either a PC has it and can use it or the characters return to civilization), they have access to the body, and it is possible to return the dead PC to life.

- **Pay the component cost for the ritual.** If the group chooses this option, the cost should be divided evenly among the group (500 gp for heroic tier, 5,000 gp for paragon tier, and 50,000 gp for epic tier). Using a source outside the group to cast the ritual costs 20% more than the component cost. Total cost when using an outside source is 600 gp for heroic tier, 6,000 gp for paragon tier, and 60,000 gp for epic tier. A PC that dies and chooses this method of return gains full (or half, if the party was defeated) experience points from the encounter in which the character died, but no experience points for any encounters that were missed while the character was dead. If there are encounters remaining, the PC continues to earn experience as normal, and receives a normal cut of the rewards at the end of the adventure.
- **Invoke the Death Charity clause.** If the group cannot afford to pay for the ritual (or doesn't desire to do so), the PC can choose to return to life at the end of the adventure. Doing so forfeits all rewards (including treasure and story rewards) earned for the adventure except experience points gained prior to the character's death (the character receives the experience point award for the encounter in which they died). The PC cannot participate in the same adventure a second time.

MILESTONES

No matter if the characters succeed or fail in an encounter, they reach a milestone if it is the second

encounter they've had since the start of the adventure or their last extended rest. **Encounters that do not give out experience points do not count for purposes of reaching a milestone.** Make certain to mention this information to the players when applicable, as it gives each PC another action point and affects how some magic item powers are used.

LASTING EFFECTS

Sometimes a PC suffers a lasting effect that isn't easily resolved before the end of the adventure. The two most common lasting effects are the death penalty and diseases.

Death Penalty: When a character dies and is brought back to life by the Raise Dead ritual, that character suffers a -1 penalty to all attack rolls, skill checks, saving throws, and ability checks until they have reached three milestones. The player should simply record the adventure where the character died on their adventure log, and then keep a running tally of milestones reached. Once the PC has reached the third milestone since coming back to life, they no longer suffer the penalty.

Diseases: Diseases take hold of a character and last until they are cured or they reach their final state. Normally, a PC makes an Endurance check after each extended rest to see if the disease improves, worsens, or maintains its current condition. At the end of the adventure, any character suffering from a disease must resolve the disease to either its cure or final state, using the necessary number of extended rests to do so. Other characters adventuring with the PC may decide to aid the afflicted character during this time. If a disease reaches its final state and the PC can get a Cure Disease ritual cast (and pay the appropriate costs), they may do so.

Other Lasting Effects: Other effects that last beyond the scope of the adventure should be resolved at the DM's discretion. Any effects that last for a specific period of time (that end after a certain number of days or a certain number of extended rests) should be resolved at the end of the adventure in which the effect was obtained (unless otherwise specified). Effects that use some sort of adventuring benchmark of unknown duration (such as milestones) should be recorded on the character's logsheet and tracked across adventures.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The trade between Everlund and Sundabar has always been difficult since goods can only go through two routes. The first is a pass in the Nether Mountains - not one of the safest roads in Faerun. A second route uses

the river, but several rapids leading into the mountains have to be circumvented, and caravans on this path pose an easy target for raiders. Some merchants choose the river, others prefer the road. However, rumors that undead raiders plague the roads have grown in number. At first these were easily dismissed, but they are increasingly scaring off the regular caravan guards. As a result, few now want to travel the pass, even with mercenaries to guard them.

The recent increase in undead activity can be laid at the feet of Deven Ferrain, a member of the Everlund Merchants Guild, who has fallen upon desperate times. He has contracted followers of Cyric (god of strife and lies), each a part-time associate of the Zhentarim (black-hearted mercenaries), to raid the caravans and return the goods to his warehouse in Everlund. He is hoping to force price increases in Sundabar where he has several failing businesses.

Deven Ferrain tips the Cyric worshippers as to which caravans carry consignments of arcane and alchemical items useful for their depraved rituals. In return, the cultists return the majority of the stolen goods to Deven's warehouse in Everlund. Deven's motivation is simple, deprive the market of fine goods and charge greater prices for them to raise his profits and pay off his debts. In his greed, haste and inexperience, Deven has forgotten one of the basic lessons: never let authorities or adventurers find evidence that links you with the crime.

The cultist bandits that attacked the latest caravan did their job and are now returning the caravan's inventory to Deven's warehouse in Everlund. The Cyric mystic cultist is left behind to tend to the followers until the cultist bandits return the caravan's inventory. None of the cultists know of the purpose for these items except that they were asked to deliver them.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

Due to the location and weather (wet and misty) effects in *LURU1-6 Desperate Times*, there are multiple penalties that affect skill DCs.

With the PCs on their way to or from Sundabar, they stop at a tavern, in the late-morning, to rest their feet and feed their bellies. Whether travelling together for added security, all on their way to Sundabar for one reason or another, or separately is up to the individual players. The exact reason is unimportant, as long as they are in the Last Tavern and have an inclination to help Everlund's Merchant Guild.

During their stay an exhausted and panicked male human caravan guard enters the Last Tavern. Later, after all is calm, a well-dressed male dwarf in fine robes

confronts the PCs to investigate the disappearing caravans.

The PCs find a burnt out caravan and track the bandits to a hideout where they discover the Cyric mystic cultist and some of his followers. The PCs then follow evidence back to Everlund to arrest the prime suspect.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

Regardless the reasons, the PCs are on the road traveling from or to Sundabar. The weather is miserable, rainy and there is a chill wind. Late in the morning they arrive in Jalandhar, a small hamlet en-route, and a popular stop for travelers to eat something warm and to dry from the trip.

As the PCs arrive in Jalandhar, read:

With the late-morning weather turning wet, and miserable, you arrive and decide to dry off inside The Last Tavern. This tavern is on the Everlund Merchants Guild's caravan line, in Jalandhar, a mile south of the Nether Mountains pass.

The following is noticeable.

- The Last Tavern seems to be large for a hamlet, probably due to being the last tavern before the Nether Mountains (or the first after).
- The tavern owner and two maids serve drinks and foods to the guests.
- Approximately two-dozen travelers and six locals fill The Last Tavern eating warm food, playing games or just chatting. Most are human, except for a couple of dwarves and halflings.
- A minstrel strums a harp to entertain the small crowd.
- A dog scours the floor for dropped scraps.

Have the PCs introduce themselves.

When the PCs are finished introducing themselves, proceed to Encounter 1.

ENCOUNTER 1: THE LAST TAVERN

SETUP

Important NPCs:

Kerregan, an exhausted and panicked male human caravan guard.

Brewman Hillier, a jovial male human tavern owner.

Delwyn Geldfetter, a well-dressed worried male dwarf merchant.

Selena, a motherly female half-elf cleric of Sune.

After the PCs introduce themselves, read:

After settling down, the minstrel's song is shattered as the door flies open. A beaten and worn caravan guard staggers in, drops to his knees, shouting incoherently "Raiders! Monsters! In the Mountains!"

After the first shout, he falls to the floor and starts to mumble incoherently about monsters, death, his friends and his parents. He looks feverish and suffering from a mental breakdown. A DC 15 Diplomacy or Heal check calms the caravan guard enough to let the PCs question him about the creatures of darkness before the locals take him to the local shrine for further medical attention.

Whether the PCs accompany Kerregan to the shrine, or stick around in the tavern, soon after the event Delwyn Geldfetter from the Everlund Merchants Guild contacts them.

If the PCs came from Sundabar, they remember meeting Kerregan's caravan, likely only an hour or so before the attack. They have not seen no signs of raiders, monstrous or otherwise, suggesting highly skilled attackers, incredibly bad luck for the caravan or precise planning on the raiders' part.

CARAVAN GUARD

Kerregan, the caravan guard, is an exhausted, feverish and panicked male human. He is lightly wounded, and his clothes are soaking wet. A DC 10 Heal check reveals that the fever is natural, and mostly due to the cold and lack of sleep.

- His eyes go wide when questioned about the attack, fearful of the memories.
- He was part of a six-person caravan guard team split between two wagons. There were two teamsters, Havan and Regar, honest, hardworking man, and four guards, Marianna, Jera, and Vern.
- The caravan had gone about two miles into the pass before it was attacked.

- He does not know what the consignment was.
- The assailants were creatures of darkness, taking advantage of the foul weather to attack.
- Humanoid assailants, dressed in dark clothing. Maybe zombies! Or vampires! Or worse!
- Kerregan, soon, starts to babble too much about zombies and vampires; at this time the locals take him to the local shrine attended by Selena.

OWNER

Brewman Hillier, the owner of the Last Tavern, is a portly 5'6" tall jovial male human. He obviously enjoys being the host and does his best to please. He is jolly and happy to spread the local gossip while pulling drinks for the serving maids to deliver to tables.

- He knows all that the tavern locals and tavern travelers know.
- The Everlund Merchants Guild is looking for someone to make the pass safe.
- Other caravans from other guilds have come through here with no problems.

TAVERN LOCALS

The locals are all humans, wearing simple clothing. They are used to deal with caravan guards and mercenaries and they are a tough lot. They are polite towards strangers, but they keep their distance. They can tell the following:

- Caravan attacks are more frequent and the lack of survivors lead to fewer people willing to risk their lives for the sums offered to guard the caravans.
- There are various creatures and monsters attacking the caravans; undead, strange unidentified monsters, werewolves, and demons are just a few.
- The local authorities are not doing anything about it since there is a conflict between them and the arrogant head of the Everlund Merchants Guild.

TAVERN TRAVELERS

Most of the travelers are merchants, teamsters and caravan guards. All wear practical clothes, and weather worn. They are suspicious of strangers, but warm up easily if offered a drink. The four dwarves are a dour lot. They are weapon smiths on their way home in Sundabar. They can tell the following:

- Most have traveled through the Nether Mountain pass and obviously they were never been an attack on us.

- The owner of The Gibbous Moon in Everlund was killed last week. Rumors tell it had to do with slave trading.
- A few came from Citadel Adbar and it sure is getting cold up there, possibly in for a long winter.

EVERLUND MERCHANTS GUILD

Delwyn Geldfetter, the Everlund Merchants Guild's point of contact in Jalandar, is a well-dressed male dwarf in fine robes. He is not happy with the losses, and is under pressure to find out what is happening to the caravans.

- Kerregan is from a caravan that left here early this morning.
- Attacks on caravans started three months ago.
- Delwyn seems to think that only the 'exotic' goods (mostly arcane items, alchemical and ritual components) seem to go missing and that trade goods, such as food and other mundane consignments, get through untouched.
- The consignment of this caravan consisted of arcane and alchemical items.
- 'All rumors about 'creatures and monsters' attacking are unfounded.'
- A DC 12 Insight is needed to see that Delwyn is lying, as he does not want to scare away anyone from helping him to find out what happened.
- Delwyn asks the PCs to help find out what is happening to the caravans and if possible remove the threat. If the PCs accept, Delwyn offers a sum of 25/50 gp each; if the PCs decline, then the adventure is over.
- Delwyn pays the PCs after the job is complete, but he is willing to sign a contract discussing the details (it is a standard mercenary contract).
- After the PCs have found out what has happened to the caravans, returned the stolen items and captured all parties responsible, Delwyn wants them to return here as soon as they can to inform him.

SHRINE

A simple wooden building, serving the small community, is adorned with several symbols representing a variety of gods.

The main hall for services is 20 feet by 40 feet and outfitted with wooden pews. Smaller rooms are off to the side for the clerical office, living quarters and a hospital of sorts with three beds.

Selena, the resident cleric, is a female half-elf dedicated to Sune (goddess of beauty and love). Because her work

has revolved around caring for the sick, she sees herself as more of a healer than a religious or spiritual leader.

- If the PCs did not speak with Kerregan at the tavern, Selena allows access to him, as he is awake and calmer.
- If the PCs have spoken to Kerregan in the tavern already, he is unconscious from hysteria and Selena does not wake him.
- Selena does not know anything more about the attack or the rumors in the past than the locals do.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs decide to help Delwyn, proceed to Encounter 2 as soon as they set out to find out what happened. Haste is required before the rain washes away all tracks.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive no experience points, as this is a roleplaying encounter.

TREASURE

No Treasure.

ENCOUNTER 2: FEEDING TIME

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 6/8 (1350/1850 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

2 deathdogs (D)

2 corruption corpses (C)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

3 deathdogs (D)

2 corruption corpses (C)

Several hours of travel brings the PCs to the place where the attack occurred. The area is mostly grass with some bushes and rocky outcrops. Two wagons from the caravan are broken and burned. Multiple-sized creatures are moving around in the fog.

Map: From off the right side of the map, the PCs approach the scene via the road.

As the PCs enter the area, read:

The weather is grim, and although it is not raining, the fog is thickening and starting to seep through all but the best-quality wet weather clothing.

As you round a bend in the road, a grisly sight emerges through the fog. A burned out caravan sits at the side of the road, and multiple two-headed dark hounds the size of a horse are foraging through the debris of the caravan.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The caravan area has the following features:

Fog: Due to the fog, visibility from 2 to 5 squares is lightly obscured; visibility from 6-10 squares is heavily obscured; visibility beyond 11 squares is blocked.

Bushes: The bushes count as difficult terrain, costing 2 squares of movement.

Rocks: The rocks count as blocking terrain, giving superior cover. A DC 15 Athletics check is needed to climb.

Wagons: The wagons count as difficult terrain, costing 3 squares of movement.

TACTICS

Deathdog: When one of the deathdogs is attacked, it howls to bring the other deathdog charging. Deathdogs charge the nearest foe using *pouncing bite* and attacks until it devours them, turning them into a corruption corpse. They fight to the death.

Corruption Corpse: The corruption corpses hurl globs of necrotic matter at different PCs that are closest to a deathdog. They continue until PCs move within melee range, at which point it shifts away and concentrates on that PC. They fight to the death.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Decrease the level of each creature by 1.

Six PCs: Increase the level of each creature by 1.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

With the creatures are dead, the PCs can examine the area.

- The PCs find the remains of 3 corpses - two drivers and one caravan guard; all badly cut and half eaten. One of the female guards is missing - Marianna.
- This was definitely the caravan that Kerregan was part of.
- Some of the corpses have arrow, sword, claw, and bite wounds on them. A DC 15 Heal and a Religion check identify some of the claw wounds from a ghoul.
- Humanoid boot, skeletal and hobbled barefoot tracks lead from the attack towards the woods in the mountains.
- A left skeletal forearm and hand is found near the wagon. The bones are old and weathered.

If the PCs decide to follow the tracks, proceed to Encounter 3.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters gain 270/370 experience points each for defeating the deathdogs and their creations.

TREASURE

No Treasure.

ENCOUNTER 2: FEEDING TIME STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL/HIGH LEVEL)

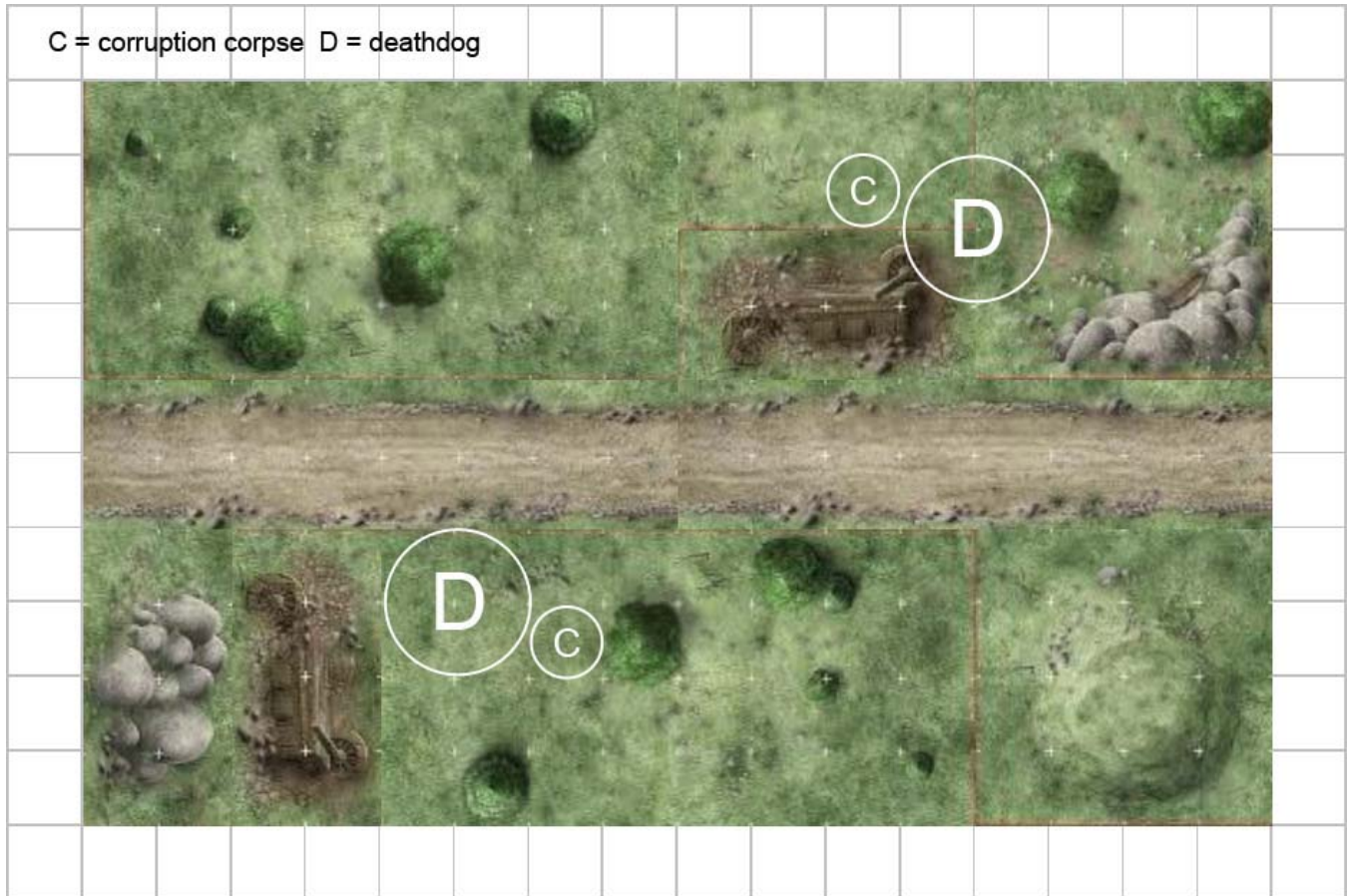
Deathdog		Level 6 Elite Brute	
Large shadow beast		XP 500	
Initiative +6		Senses Perception +6; darkvision	
HP 176; Bloodied 88			
AC 20; Fortitude 19, Reflex 17, Will 16			
Saving Throws +2			
Speed 8			
Action Points 1			
m Pouncing Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic			
		+9 vs. AC; 4d6 + 3 necrotic damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
M Go for the Legs (opportunity, when an adjacent enemy stands up; at-will) ♦ Necrotic			
		The deathdog makes a pouncing bite attack against the triggering creature.	
Unholy Animation			
		A living humanoid killed by a deathdog rises as a free-willed corruption corpse (<i>MM</i> 274) at the end of its creator's next turn.	
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –	
Str 20 (+8)	Dex 17 (+6)	Wis 16 (+6)	
Con 18 (+7)	Int 5 (+0)	Cha 10 (+3)	

Corruption Corpse		Level 4 Artillery	
Medium natural animate (undead)		XP 175	
Initiative +3		Senses Perception +3; darkvision	
Grave Stench aura 1; living enemies in the aura take a –5 penalty to attack rolls.			
HP 46; Bloodied 23; see also <i>death burst</i>			
Regeneration 5 (If the corruption corpse takes radiant damage, regeneration doesn't function on its next turn)			
AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 14, Will 14			
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant			
Speed 4			
m Slam (standard; at-will)			
		+8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.	
R Mote of Corruption (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic			
		The corruption corpse hurls a black glob of necrotic filth. Ranged 10; +7 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 3 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).	
C Death Burst (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Necrotic			
		The corruption corpse explodes. Close burst 1; +7 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 3 necrotic damage.	
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –	
Str 16 (+5)	Dex 13 (+3)	Wis 12 (+3)	
Con 16 (+5)	Int 4 (-1)	Cha 3 (-2)	

ENCOUNTER 2: FEEDING TIME MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Ruins of the Wild X2



ENCOUNTER 3: INTO THE WOODS

**SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 5/7,
COMPLEXITY 1 (200/300 XP)**

SETUP

Important NPCs:

Marianna, an injured female human caravan guard.

The PCs discover a trail in the mud and have the opportunity to track the bandits back to their lair. They encounter an icy cold river in a ravine or a trapped bridge on the way to the bandit's lair. The fog is still creating difficulties.

Penalties: The fog and overall wetness makes tracking through the wilderness more difficult than normal. These penalties are already added into the skill check DC.

If the PCs decide to follow the tracks, read:

After following the tracks for a few dozen yards into the wilderness, the trail of footprints is lost as the woods become denser, the gradient becomes steeper and the fog thickens.

SKILL CHALLENGE: TO THE LAIR

Goal: The PCs keep following the trail with no serious delays. They have to follow the tracks while overcoming several hindrances of the wilderness and of a more social nature.

Complexity: 1 (4 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Arcana, Athletics, Endurance, History, Nature, and Perception.

Victory: PCs arrive at the lair alert and well.

Defeat: PCs arrive at the lair somewhat bedraggled and tired and the mystic cultist knows the PCs are coming.

The tracks take the PCs deeper into the mountains, and due to the weather it is hard to follow the otherwise clearly visible tracks. First the PCs need to find the tracks (Scene 1), and then they need to overcome two hindrances. First they come across the surviving guard, wounded and on death's door, left behind to delay anybody chasing the bandits (Scene 2). Secondly, they need to cross a dangerous river, either over a trapped bridge (Scene 3B) or through some other method (Scene 3A). After each of these scenes the PCs again need to search for the tracks (Scene 1). Repeat Scene 1 after Scene 3 until enough successes or failures are scored.

SCENE 1: THE TRAIL

A slight drizzle starts as you begin to track.

Ask for one check before proceeding to the next scene.

Dungeoneering DC 18/19 (1 successes; 1 maximum overall) (trained only)

Through knowledge on cave systems, the PC knows likely spots for a group of raiders to setup camp safely and hide their stolen loot.

History DC 18/19 (1 successes; 1 maximum overall) (trained PCs only)

The PC has acquired local knowledge of the mountains and memory of an old cave system in the area. PCs from Luruar gain a +5 bonus on this check.

Nature DC 12/13 (0 successes; 1 maximum overall) (trained only)

The PC is aware of the signs of fading tracks and broken foliage through the woods. A successful check grants a +2 bonus; a failed check grants a -2 penalty to the Perception check.

Perception DC 18/19 (1 success)

The PC spots broken twigs and footprints that lead them in the right direction; a failed check leads the PCs down into a dead-end of thick briars that cause a loss of a healing surge.

SCENE 2: THE ABANDONED VICTIM

Having followed the tracks through the woods for an hour or so, the rain lets up as you come to a cliff approximately 20 feet high; from behind some nearby bushes you hear muffled grunts.

The muffled grunts are grunts of pain coming from an injured female human caravan guard, Marianna. Her left leg is missing just below the knee. At the moment she is conscious, albeit barely. Something chewed off her leg. She is soaking wet, freezing cold and fully expected to die out here. She is aware that remaining here, even if her wounds are properly treated, is likely to kill her unless the PCs provide her with proper shelter. She wants to live, and is not above begging for her life.

This is mostly a roleplaying scene to gain information regarding the attack. Her presence though can delay the PCs and cause difficulties later on. Leaving her behind though, is most certainly going to kill her unless the PCs either build a good shelter (DC 18/19 Nature check or protect her with a ritual such as Endure Elements).

Once assured of the PCs good intentions, and willingness to help her, she can relate the following. The information provides 1 success towards the skill challenge:

- Several Cyric cultists aided by skeletal and clawed corporeal undead whose touch caused paralysis and at high-level "ghosts" (Marianna does not know what kind and she has not seen them in action) attacked and took the items in the caravan.
- As far as she knows, everyone else is dead.
- She does not know what the caravan's inventory was.
- Marianna informs the PCs the direction the bandits went and that they mentioned some kind of cavern.
- A DC 15 Heal check informs the PCs the truth about the Marianna's health. She is at 1 HP, exhausted and feverish (no healing surges left). Without proper care and protection she is likely to die soon due to exposure.

Carrying Marianna

Marianna is 5' 10" tall and weights about 150 lbs. She still wears her 40 lbs. heavy chain mail. If a PC carrying her gets into heavy load (see *PHB* 222) they earn 1 failure in the skill challenge. Regardless, the PC carrying her needs to make an Endurance check.

Endurance DC 12/13 (0 success)

The PC carrying Marianna during that particular part of the search needs to make an Endurance check once per Scene 1. A failed check results in 1 failure and the loss of 1 healing surge. A success does not grant one for the challenge. Carrying a wounded person is a hindrance, but does not make things easier. Abandoning Marianna might make things easier, but it is not a good act.

SCENE 3A: THE RAVINE

The tracks disappear into the rough foliage. Minutes later, you emerge at the top of a fog filled ravine that is 30 feet wide with the sound of a fast flowing river below.

- A DC 12/13 Perception check is needed to see the tracks of the bandits out of the foliage and heading upstream; if any PC states they are moving upstream to follow the tracks or to look for a way to cross the river upstream, they automatically find the bridge; see Scene 3B.

- If the PCs check the depth of the ravine, it is 30 feet to the river.
- If the female caravan guard is with the PCs and she goes into the river, the shock of the icy cold river kills her.
- The backing rough foliage to the ravine's edge makes for a 10-foot running start; the other side of the ravine is open area.
- **Mud patches:** Thick mud patches coat the edge of the ravine top causing slickness. These are easy to see. Unless moving very carefully any PC approaching the edge of the ravine needs to make a DC 7/8 Acrobatics check to avoid slipping in the mud. A failed check results in falling down the side of the ravine. The PC takes 3d10 damage and falls into the icy cold river; see Endurance (river) below.
- The goal is to get across the river. If the PCs do so without anybody falling in the water and being carried away downstream they score 1 success towards the skill challenge. Otherwise they gain 1 failure.

Athletics (running jump) DC 30

See Mud patches if the PCs try to jump the ravine.

Each PC must jump the 30-foot wide ravine in order to continue tracking the bandits; a failed check results in a loss of a healing surge as the PC bounces down the jagged rocks on the opposite side of the ravine and into the river; see Endurance (river). Note that the DC might be lower if characters can teleport, jumping the first part and teleporting the remaining distance.

Athletics (throwing a grappling hook) DC 18/19

A success results in the grappling hook lodging firmly behind a rock, making the rope safe to use. If a failure is rolled, the grappling appears to be lodged firmly at first, but it slips as soon as the first character uses it. That PC falls down, taking damage as if falling, but climbing out (assuming the PC succeeds at the Endurance check - see below) is relatively easy (DC 10 Athletics due to the rope).

Athletics (traversing a rope) DC 10

Assuming the PCs get a rope across, traversing it to the other side requires a DC 0 Athletics check. Failing the check by 5 or more, results in the character falling in the river below.

Athletics (ravine climb) DC 17

The PC begins climbing up the jagged rocks to the top of the ravine. A successful check means the PC

climbs out of the ravine; a failed check leads to the PC falling down again.

Endurance (river) DC 12/13

The PC has fallen into the icy cold river, next to the bank, and experiences the shock from the icy cold river. A successful check means the PC climbs out of the river; a failed check means the PC loses a healing surge and floats down the river.

SCENE 3B: THE TRAPPED BRIDGE

This 50-foot length section of the ravine narrows to 10 feet and has a simple raised flat bed of slate bridge, 10 feet wide, running across the ravine. Halfway across the bridge, a poorly disguised trip wire stretches across the full width of the bridge.

- Same bulleted information from Scene 3A.
- The rough rocky terrain along the 50-foot length section makes jumping impossible except for near the bridge. Even at the bridge it is impossible to make a running jump.

Athletics (standing jump) DC 20 (1 success)

Each PC must jump, from the beginning of the bridge, the 10-foot wide bridged ravine in order to continue tracking the bandits; a failed check results in landing short over the bridge and activating the trap; see Trap activation.

Perception DC 12/13 (Thievery trained only) (fog obscuring penalty)

The PC determines that the trip wire is not attached to anything likely to attack the PCs and must be activated to secure the bridge.

Trap activation

If the PC decides to step or jump over the trip wire, this reveals that the bridge is on a pivot and tries to tip the PC into the river (+8/+10 vs. Reflex for stepper; +12/+14 vs. Reflex for jumpers). A successful attack results in the PC falling down the opposite side of the ravine, taking 3d10 falling damage and falling into the icy cold river; see Scene 3A: Endurance (river). The bridge resets with a thud after each tripping.

PCs not on the far side of the trip wire fall prone onto the bridge.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Some time after the ravine (the exact time depending on when the PCs score enough successes or failures) the PCs get near the lair of the raiders. Proceed with

Encounter 4. If the PCs were successful, they catch the raiders unaware. If they failed, the bandits are aware and prepared. See Encounter 4 for more details.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 40/60 experience points each for completing the skill challenge.

TREASURE

No Treasure.

ENCOUNTER 4: THE HIDEOUT

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 6/9 (1200/1950 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 mystic cultist (M)
- 1 corruption corpse (level 5) (C)
- 2 ghouls (G)
- 5 decrepit skeletons (level 5) (D)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 mystic cultist (M)
- 1 corruption corpse (level 6) (C)
- 3 ghouls (G)
- 5 decrepit skeletons (level 5) (D)
- 2 specters (level 6) (S)

Map: From off the right side of the map, the PCs approach the cave opening via the tracks.

The mystic cultist has the decrepit skeletons and the corruption corpse readied if any of the following actions occurred; see The Hideout Map - Readied.

- If the PCs failed the skill challenge in Encounter 3 or took an extended rest.
- The PCs took Marianna back to Jalandhar.

As the PCs near the cave entrance, read:

The sounds of several different creatures and their movements echoes what sounds like a large cave.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The cave area has the following features:

Illumination: Torches arrayed inside the cave cover the area in bright light.

Pool: A long time ago one or more sapient creatures died in the pool and it is now haunted. Any living creature in the area, either right next to or in the pool, senses a sense of deep melancholy and feels like he is drowning. A DC 18/19 Insight check causes a character to sense the haunting. The area is considered difficult terrain even for flying creatures, and any living creature that enters or starts its turn inside the area grants combat advantage to enemies until the end of its next turn.

The cultist is aware of this effect - it is one of the reasons why they picked this cave. Unlike the undead he is affected by it.

Symbols: Symbols of Cyric are daubed on the wall in red. These are non-magical.

Rocks: All rocks count as difficult terrain, costing 2 squares of movement.

TACTICS

Mystic Cultist: The mystic cultist arrives at the start of round 2 (unless readied) and calls for his skeletal minions to stand between him and the PCs. He stays at range and if a PC advances to an adjacent square, he uses *ring of terror* to push them back out of melee. When down to two allies, the mystic cultist tries to escape. He is aware of the haunting and tries to use it to his advantage.

Corruption Corpse: If readied, the corruption corpse hurls globs of necrotic matter at the first PC that enters the cave; otherwise, at PCs that are adjacent to the mystic cultist's allies. It continues until PCs move within melee range, at which point it shifts away and concentrates on that PC.

Ghoul: The ghouls attack nearest PCs with their claws and bite attacks; one of the ghouls is carrying the lower half of the injured female human caravan guard's left leg.

Decrepit Skeleton: If readied, the decrepit skeletons shoot their shortbow at the first PC that enters the cave; otherwise, they drop back to protect the mystic cultist and use their shortbows, except for the one skeleton who is missing its left forearm and hand, until the PCs close the range and then attack with their longswords.

Specter: The specters start invisible and uses *spectral barrage* every chance they get. They flee once bloodied and all other undead and the cultist have been defeated.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove a ghoul (low-tier); remove a specter and two decrepit skeletons (high-tier).

Six PCs: Add a ghoul (low-tier); add a mystic cultist (high-tier).

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

With the creatures dead, the PCs can examine the area.

- If the mystic cultist is captured, he kills himself by breaking a poison tooth cap in his mouth; if

the PCs do something to prevent this, he remains calm and does not talk.

- The PCs find four letters in the mystic cultist's robes; three letters (Player Handout 1) and a coded letter (Player Handout 2).
- PCs with a DC 12/13 Intelligence check can use the code (Player Handout 3) to decipher the coded letter; if the code is not deciphered, the PC can do let it be deciphered by Delwyn, a professional sage in Everlund (costing 20 gp) or in the unlikely case that the cultist is still alive by forcing the cultist to do so. The coded letter translates as:

**THE NEXT RAID
WILL TAKE PLACE
IN 2 DAYS.**

TAKE YOUR SHARE.

**RETURN THE REST
TO THE RED DOOR
WAREHOUSE ON
WHARF STREET
IN EVERLUND.**

- Crates from the previous raid are located at the back of the main cave area. Living quarters can be found in the cavern to the side.
- The left skeletal forearm and hand found at the caravans definitely belongs to one of the skeletons here.

From here, the PCs should stop to see Delwyn (Encounter 5) and then head to the red door warehouse (Encounter 6). The trip to Delwyn takes about 4 hours, and it is another 4 hours to Everlund. The PCs can easily take an extended rest if they want to, but if they take a couple of days before getting to warehouse, Deven learns about the fate of the raiders and flees with all the stolen items.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters gain 240/390 experience points each for defeating the undead.

TREASURE

The PCs find 5/15 gp each in various types of coin, a *symbol of daring* +1 (low-level version only), a *doss lute*, a ritual book with Corpse Light and Last Sight Vision (low-level version only), a ritual scroll with Undead Servitor (high-level version only), and *vision sand*.

ENCOUNTER 4: THE HIDEOUT (LOW LEVEL)

Mystic Cultist	Level 8 Controller
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 350
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +7	
HP 88; Bloodied 44	
AC 22; Fortitude 19, Reflex 20, Will 21	
Speed 6	
m Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+13 vs. AC; 1d8+4 damage.	
r Dagon's Fang (standard; at-will)	
Ranged 10; +12 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 psychic damage.	
A Storm of the Ocean Lord (standard; recharge 4-6) ♦ Cold	
Area burst 2 within 10; +12 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 cold damage and target is immobilized until the end of the cultist's next turn.	
C Ring of Terror (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves to an adjacent square; encounter) ♦ Fear	
Close burst 1, triggering enemy only; +12 vs. Will; push 4.	
Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Abyssal, Common	
Skills Religion +9	
Str 10 (+4) Dex 13 (+5) Wis 17 (+7)	
Con 16 (+7) Int 10 (+4) Cha 21 (+9)	

Corruption Corpse (Level 5)	Level 5 Artillery
Medium natural animate (undead)	XP 200
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +3; darkvision	
Grave Stench aura 1; living enemies in the aura take a –5 penalty to attack rolls.	
HP 52; Bloodied 26; see also <i>death burst</i>	
Regeneration 5 (If the corruption corpse takes radiant damage, regeneration doesn't function on its next turn)	
AC 18; Fortitude 17, Reflex 15, Will 15	
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant	
Speed 4	
m Slam (standard; at-will)	
+9 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.	
R Mote of Corruption (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic	
The corruption corpse hurls a black glob of necrotic filth. Ranged 10; +8 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 3 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).	
C Death Burst (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Necrotic	
The corruption corpse explodes. Close burst 1; +8 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 3 necrotic damage.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages -	
Str 16 (+5) Dex 13 (+3) Wis 12 (+3)	
Con 16 (+5) Int 4 (-1) Cha 3 (-2)	

Ghoul	Level 5 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid (undead)	XP 200
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +2; darkvision	
HP 63; Bloodied 31	
AC 21; Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 17	
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant	
Speed 8, climb 4	
m Claws (standard; at-will)	
+12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).	
M Ghoulish Bite (standard; at-will)	
Target must be immobilized, stunned, or unconscious; +10 vs. AC; 3d6 + 4 damage, and the target is stunned (save ends).	
Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common	
Skills Stealth +11	
Str 14 (+4) Dex 19 (+6) Wis 11 (+2)	
Con 15 (+4) Int 10 (+2) Cha 12 (+3)	

Decrepit Skeleton (Level 5)	Level 5 Minion
Medium natural animate (undead)	XP 50
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +4; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 20; Fortitude 17, Reflex 18, Will 17	
Immune disease, poison	
Speed 6	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+10 vs. AC; 6 damage.	
r Shortbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 15/30; +10 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages -	
Str 15 (+4) Dex 17 (+5) Wis 14 (+4)	
Con 13 (+3) Int 3 (-2) Cha 3 (-2)	
Equipment heavy shield, longsword, shortbow, quiver of 10 arrows	

ENCOUNTER 4: THE HIDEOUT (HIGH LEVEL)

Mystic Cultist	Level 8 Controller
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 350
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +7	
HP 88; Bloodied 44	
AC 22; Fortitude 19, Reflex 20, Will 21	
Speed 6	
m Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+13 vs. AC; 1d8+4 damage.	
r Dagon's Fang (standard; at-will)	
Ranged 10; +12 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 psychic damage.	
A Storm of the Ocean Lord (standard; recharge 4-6) ♦ Cold	
Area burst 2 within 10; +12 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 cold damage and target is immobilized until the end of the cultist's next turn.	
C Ring of Terror (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves to an adjacent square; encounter) ♦ Fear	
Close burst 1, triggering enemy only; +12 vs. Will; push 4.	
Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Abyssal, Common	
Skills Religion +9	
Str 10 (+4) Dex 13 (+5) Wis 17 (+7)	
Con 16 (+7) Int 10 (+4) Cha 21 (+9)	

Corruption Corpse (Level 6)	Level 6 Artillery
Medium natural animate (undead)	XP 250
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +4; darkvision	
Grave Stench aura 1; living enemies in the aura take a –5 penalty to attack rolls.	
HP 58; Bloodied 29; see also <i>death burst</i>	
Regeneration 5 (If the corruption corpse takes radiant damage, regeneration doesn't function on its next turn)	
AC 19; Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 16	
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant	
Speed 4	
m Slam (standard; at-will)	
+10 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.	
R Mote of Corruption (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic	
The corruption corpse hurls a black glob of necrotic filth. Ranged 10; +9 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 4 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).	
C Death Burst (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Necrotic	
The corruption corpse explodes. Close burst 1; +9 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 4 necrotic damage.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages -	
Str 16 (+6) Dex 13 (+4) Wis 12 (+4)	
Con 16 (+6) Int 4 (+0) Cha 3 (-1)	

Ghoul	Level 5 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid (undead)	XP 200
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +2; darkvision	
HP 63; Bloodied 31	
AC 21; Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 17	
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant	
Speed 8, climb 4	
m Claws (standard; at-will)	
+12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).	
M Ghoulish Bite (standard; at-will)	
Target must be immobilized, stunned, or unconscious; +10 vs. AC; 3d6 + 4 damage, and the target is stunned (save ends).	
Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common	
Skills Stealth +11	
Str 14 (+4) Dex 19 (+6) Wis 11 (+2)	
Con 15 (+4) Int 10 (+2) Cha 12 (+3)	

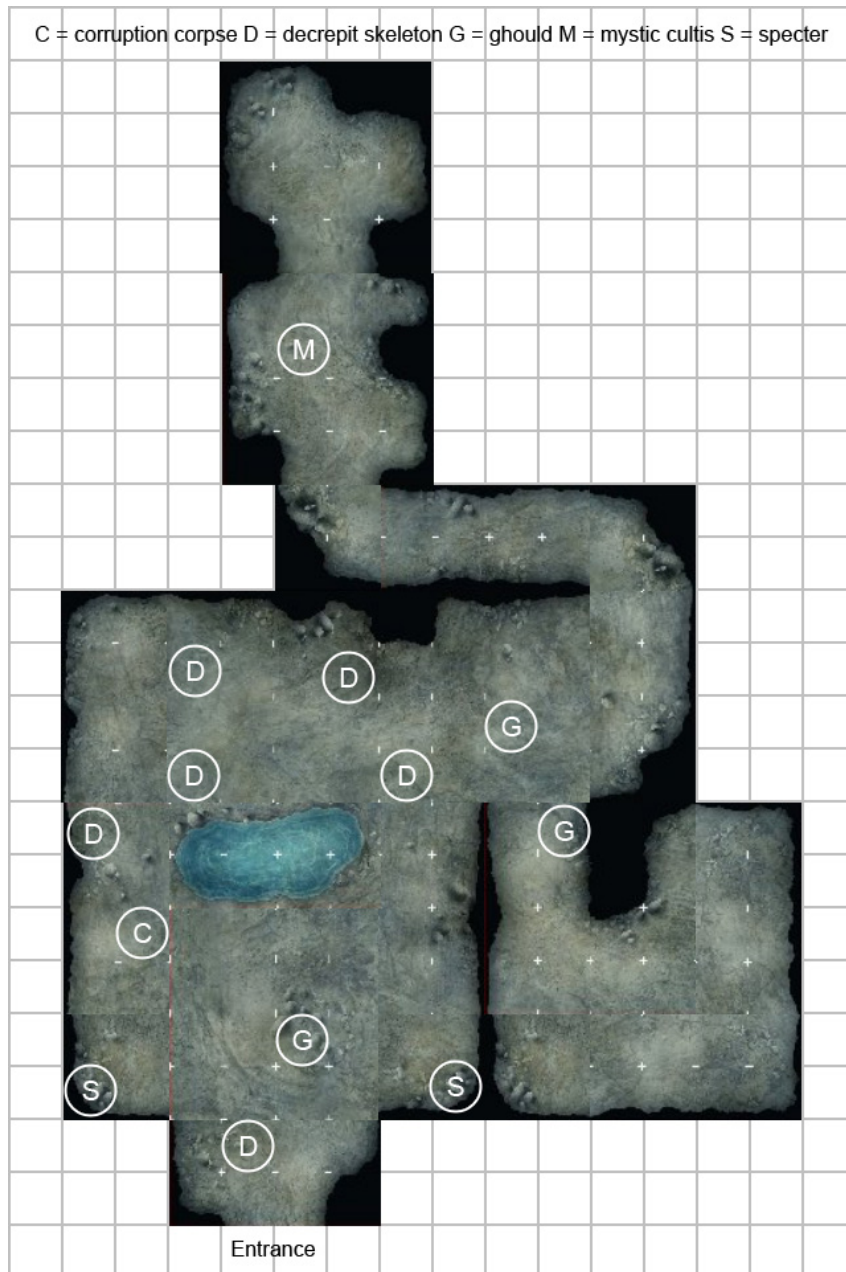
Decrepit Skeleton (Level 5)	Level 5 Minion
Medium natural animate (undead)	XP 50
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +4; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 20; Fortitude 17, Reflex 18, Will 17	
Immune disease, poison	
Speed 6	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+10 vs. AC; 6 damage.	
r Shortbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 15/30; +10 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages -	
Str 15 (+4) Dex 17 (+5) Wis 14 (+4)	
Con 13 (+3) Int 3 (-2) Cha 3 (-2)	
Equipment heavy shield, longsword, shortbow, quiver of 10 arrows	

Specter (Level 6)	Level 6 Lurker
Medium shadow humanoid (undead)	XP 250
Initiative +9 Senses Perception +7; darkvision	
Spectral Chill (Cold) aura 1; enemies in the aura take a –2 penalty to all defenses.	
HP 55; Bloodied 27	
AC 18; Fortitude 18, Reflex 18, Will 19	
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic, insubstantial;	
Vulnerable 5 radiant	
Speed fly 6 (hover); phasing	
m Spectral Touch (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic	
+9 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 3 necrotic damage.	
C Spectral Barrage (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Illusion, Psychic	
Close burst 2; targets enemies; +9 vs. Will; 2d6 + 3 psychic damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
Invisibility (standard; at-will) ♦ Illusion	
The specter becomes invisible until it attacks or until it is hit by an attack.	
Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common	
Skills Stealth +10	
Str 10 (+3) Dex 15 (+5) Wis 8 (+2)	
Con 13 (+4) Int 6 (+1) Cha 15 (+5)	

ENCOUNTER 4: THE HIDEOUT MAP (SURPRISED)

TILE SETS NEEDED

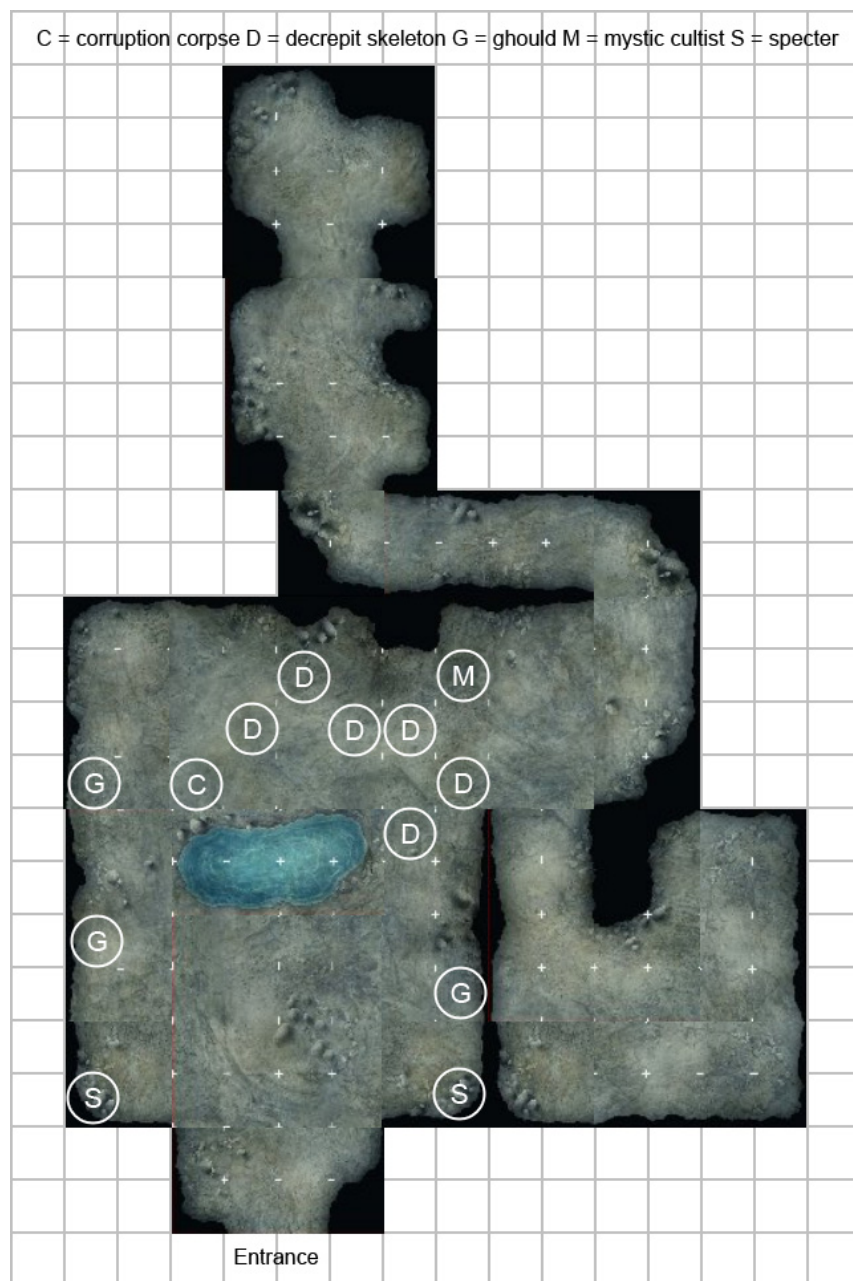
Lost Caverns of the Underdark X3



ENCOUNTER 4: THE HIDEOUT MAP (READIED)

TILE SETS NEEDED

Lost Caverns of the Underdark X3



ENCOUNTER 5: THE STOP BEFORE PROSECUTION

Important NPCs:

Delwyn Geldfetter: A well-dressed anxious male dwarf merchant.

The PCs return to Jalandhar and talk to Delwyn for more information.

When the PCs return to Jalandhar, read:

With the fog left behind you, you return to Jalandhar and find Delwyn awaiting your news quite anxiously.

- Delwyn determines that more is needed to fulfill the quest. He gives the PCs a 'note for full compensation' from the Everlund Merchants Guild once the quest is complete.
- If the coded letter was not deciphered, Delwyn can decipher it for them.
- Delwyn knows of, but does not know who owns the red door warehouse in Everlund.
- If the items from the caravan attack are returned to Delwyn or Delwyn is informed of which items were found, he informs the PCs that a *bowl of purity* and a *cradle of rapid rest* (aka *bed of rapid rest*) are still missing. (These were taken away). Delwyn lets the PCs use the items found to continue tracking down the owner of the red door warehouse.
- Delwyn suggests to the PCs that before talking with the Everlund Merchants Guild into prosecuting the owner of the red door warehouse, they should go to the red door warehouse to find evidence.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The information from Delwyn brings the PCs closer to the end of their search. The PCs should investigate the red door warehouse before contacting the Everlund Merchants Guild. It takes about 3 hours to get in Everlund.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive no experience points, as this is a roleplaying encounter.

TREASURE

No Treasure.

ENCOUNTER 6: PROSECUTION

SKILL CHALLENGE: LEVEL 5/7

COMPLEXITY 2 (400/600XP)

SET UP

Important NPCs:

Markum Teller, Everlund Merchants

Guildmaster: A busy arrogant short and portly male human with little time for the PCs. He bustles around and while polite, he is quite terse.

Deven Ferrain: A stringy looking darting eyed male human.

Goal: PCs try to obtain evidence, accuse and then arrest Deven Ferrain.

Complexity: 2 (6 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Athletics, Bluff, Diplomacy, Endurance, Intimidate, Perception, Stealth, Streetwise, and Thievery.

Victory: The PCs gather evidence regarding Deven's involvement in the raids, contact the Everlund Merchants Guild and arrest Deven.

Defeat: Something has gone wrong and Deven has found out about the PCs looking into his involvement. He flees town before the PCs can arrest him.

The PCs have learned about the red door warehouse on Wharf Street in Everlund in the previous encounters. At the moment they do not have enough information to detain Deven, and need to investigate the warehouse in the hopes of finding more proof of Deven's involvement.

At the warehouse the PCs have the option to fight the guards, talk with the guards or sneak into the warehouse to gather information. After the evidence is acquired from the warehouse, the PCs travel to the Everlund Merchants Guild to learn the whereabouts of Deven Ferrain and if necessary acquire a warrant to arrest him.

If the PCs decide to detain Deven first, start with Scene 3. Remember that without any hard evidence, the PCs have no right to imprison Deven.

SCENE 1 – THE WAREHOUSE

As the PCs get within sight of the warehouse, read:

An empty side street in the warehouse district of Everlund, Wharf Street, contains similar looking warehouses, one of which has red paint peeling from its dirty double red doors, large enough for a wagon to

enter. Windows are boarded up on the outside and no sign of life can be seen except for the four guards patrolling the warehouse.

The PCs have the option between fighting the guards, talking with the guards or infiltrating the warehouse. Once inside they can search the place for evidence. The PCs need 2 successes to get inside the warehouse, where they can earn 1 more searching for evidence.

FIGHTING THE GUARDS

The guards of the warehouse do not get paid enough to fight against seasoned adventurers.

If the guards are attacked, on their initiative, the first two of them (assuming they are still able to) turn and run and the PCs must give chase to prevent them from warning Deven.

Human Lackey (Level 1)		Level 1 Minion
Medium natural humanoid		XP 25
Initiative +0	Senses Perception +1	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		
AC 13; Fortitude 11, Reflex 8, Will 9; see also <i>mob rule</i>		
Speed 6		
m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+6 vs. AC; 3 damage.		
Mob Rule		
The human lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human lackeys are within 5 squares of it.		
Alignment Any	Languages Common	
Str 16 (+3)	Dex 11 (+0)	Wis 12 (+1)
Con 14 (+2)	Int 10 (+0)	Cha 13 (+1)
Equipment leather armor, club		

Once two successes are complete, proceed to Scene 3 – After warehouse conclusion.

Athletics, Endurance or Steetwise DC 12/13 (1 success; 2 maximum (one for each guard))

The PCs give chase to stop the guards from possibly contacting Deven Ferrain. A successful check means that the PCs caught one of the guards. A failed check means that a guard has escaped and informed Deven that adventurers have assaulted the warehouse.

Each escaped guard gives the PCs an accumulative -1 penalty to all skill checks during Scene 3 – Deven Ferrain.

TALKING WITH THE GUARDS

The guards of the warehouse are not paid very well, and they can easily be convinced to turn over information on Deven.

Showing the deciphered coded letter results in a +2 bonus to all checks in this scene.

Bribe (1 success; 1 maximum)

If the PCs offer 5 gp per guard or more as a bribe they gain an automatic success, plus a +2 bonus to the Diplomacy/Intimidate check.

Diplomacy/Intimidate DC 12/13 (1 success; 2 maximum)

PCs try to talk or threaten some sense into the guards to turn in Deven. A successful check means that the PCs have convinced the guards it is in their best interest to comply with the PCs' wishes. A failed check means that a guard leaves to inform Deven that adventurers are inquiring about his business. Assuming the PCs do not stop the guard give the PCs an accumulative -1 penalty to all skill checks during Scene 5 - Deven Ferrain.

INFILTRATING THE WAREHOUSE

Three guards stay at the front of the warehouse while a fourth guard patrols the perimeter of the warehouse every 6-8 rounds.

The warehouses nearby are all the same size. The street system is thirty feet wide. The alleys are twenty feet wide.

To get inside the PCs need to get past the locked door or skylight.

Bluff DC 12/13 (0 success; 1 maximum per check)

Any PC can cause a distraction near the warehouse to aid the other PCs that are trying to sneak into the warehouse. A successful check grants a +2 bonus to all checks made to sneak into the building.

Stealth DC 12/13 (1 success; 2 maximum)

PCs wishing to infiltrate the warehouse must make a Stealth check before they enter and after they exit. After the first failed check the guards to briefly check the inside of the warehouse, but they do not spot the PCs yet. After a 2nd failure, they confront the thief, while one of the guards leaves to warn Deven.

Each escaped guard gives the PCs an accumulative -1 penalty to all skill checks during Scene 3 - Deven Ferrain.

Thievery DC (17/18 for the skylight) (12/13 for the back door) (Trained only) (0 success; 1 maximum)

Any PC can gain entrance into the warehouse via the skylight or the backdoor.

EVIDENCE

While in the warehouse, the PC must search for the evidence.

Perception DC 12/13 (17/18 if searching while infiltrating) (1 success)

PCs must search the warehouse to uncover the following evidence.

If the PCs take their time searching (unless they are sneaking around), then an acquaintance of Deven's passes by and contacts Deven in regards to what is going on. In that case the PCs get a -2 penalty on checks to arrest Deven in Scene 3. This penalty stacks with penalties gained for fleeing guards.

- Shipping manifest for the crates with markings for Sundabar.
- Letters from the Cyric Hierarchy and the Zhentarim (a large mercenary organization with a deserved bad reputation to do anything if the price is right).
- Contract from the Cyric Hierarchy with Deven Ferrain's name on it.
- Other invoices not related to the crimes.
- A strongbox with 70/85 gp per PC.
- +2 *staff of missile mastery*
- +2 *orb of reversed polarity* (high-level only)
- *Summoned armor* +2.

Once the PCs have acquired evidence and go to the authorities (who direct them to the Merchant Guild) or the Merchant Guild, proceed to Scene 2.

SCENE 2 – EVERLUND MERCHANTS GUILD

As the PCs get within sight of the Everlund Merchants Guild, read:

A large building, the guildhall, takes up most of the street and merchants constantly move in and out of it.

If the PCs show the deciphered coded letter and the evidence they gain a +2 bonus to all checks in this scene.

Diplomacy DC 17/18 (1 success; 1 maximum)

The PCs talk to the guildmaster and request information about the warehouse ownership. A successful check reveals Deven Ferrain as the owner and the guildmaster provides you with two guards to arrest Deven Ferrain. A failed check means that the PCs have to cut through various red tape, giving some of Deven's spies to inform the man and to allow him the time to prepare to flee.

Regardless of the results of the check the PCs eventually convince the Guild of Deven's guilt, and

they gain their compliance to arrest the merchant. Proceed to Scene 3 if the PCs go arrest Deven.

SCENE 3 – DEVEN FERRAIN

The PCs find Deven Ferrain at his house in Everlund. Several bags are stacked neatly on the front walk as if he is ready to leave.

Deven answers the door and resists giving the PCs anything, as he quickly realizes the game is up and does his best to escape through the back door.

Bluff DC 17/18 (0 success; 1 maximum)

The PCs try to calm Deven to discuss warehouse arrangements or some other pretense. In addition to a regular success, they also gain a +2 bonus on any checks to catch Deven while he flees. A failed check grants a -2 penalty to these check and Deven makes a run for it.

Diplomacy/Intimidate DC 12/13 (1 success; 1 maximum)

The PCs convince Deven it is in his best interest to surrender - fleeing is futile. A failed check results in Deven making a run for it.

Athletics or Endurance DC 17/18 (1 success; no maximums)

Deven makes a run for it and the PCs have to chase him down to bring him back to justice.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

With the revelation of Deven Ferrain's activities, the Everlund Merchants Guild has confiscated the stolen items.

EXPERIENCE

The characters receive 80/120 experience points each for dealing with the guards.

TREASURE

A successful Perception check from Scene 1 reveals the treasure items: a strongbox with 70/85 gp per PC, a +2 staff of missile mastery, a +2 orb of reversed polarity (high-level only), and a summoned armor +2.

The PCs turn in the 'note for full compensation' that Delwyn gave them and receive 25/50 gp each for helping him out in stopping the attacks, returning the stolen items and finding out who was responsible for the attacks.

The PCs receive the minor quest, "Exotic Goods", for finding out what is happening to the caravans.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The Everlund Merchants Guild is grateful that the PCs have found and defeated the gang behind the raids, this way the pass can be safe for trade again. Read:

My Noble friends, thank you on behalf of the Everlund Merchants Guild. Now we can trade in relative safety with Sundabar once more.

The PCs receive the story awards **LURU11 Gratitude of the Everlund Merchants Guild**.

IF DEVEN IS CAUGHT, READ:

Deven is locked up and can no longer undermine our success. His assets are seized in order to compensate our clients for their losses.

IF DEVEN ESCAPED, READ:

Unfortunately, that scoundrel Deven remains at large for the time being. Maybe he has fled to his partners in crime - maybe to the hills, in which case, may he meet his end at the grace of the elements this coming winter.

The PCs receive the story award **LURU12 Wrath of Deven Ferrain**.

REWARDS SUMMARY

At the conclusion of the adventure, the PCs earn experience points, treasure, and possibly story awards. All totals listed here are per PC. A number before the slash is the low-level value; after the slash is the high-level value.

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

It is critical that you enter the PC rewards accurately on the tracking form, and ensure that the information is reported and entered online in a timely manner. While players can and should track their character's information on paper, the online information serves as an important backup and verification of play. Ask the players for their RPGA numbers and character numbers (usually a single digit) when you begin to fill out the tracking form.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Give PCs a full award for each encounter they successfully completed, and a half award if they were unsuccessful. Give no award if the characters did not play the encounter at all.

Encounter 2: Feeding Time

270/370 XP

Encounter 3: Into the Woods

40/60 XP

Encounter 4: The Hideout

240/390 XP

Encounter 6: Prosecution

80/120 XP

Minor Quest: Exotic Goods

10/20 XP

Total Possible Experience

640/960 XP

Gold per PC

100/150 gp

(Encounter 4: 5/15 gp, Encounter 6: 70/85 gp, Encounter 6: 25/50 gp)

TREASURE

Each PC receives treasure in the form of gold pieces as well as one share from a treasure bundle. The treasure bundle may give the PC more gold, a magic item, or something else of value. Each player makes one and only one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure bundle. Mark the one-

letter bundle ID on the tracking form next to any character that selects a bundle; note that it is possible (and likely) that some characters will not select a bundle for each session of play.

If characters buy or sell magic items or other gear during the adventure (or pay for services) add or subtract that amount from the total gold the PC receives at the end of the adventure. If a player selects an option that gives their character more gold, add that amount to that character's base gold award, and ensure you enter the total amount of gold gained (minus any expenditures) online. It is possible and permissible for a character who spends more gold than he or she earns to have a negative total for the adventure. PCs receive 20% of the item's market price when they sell any magic item or consumable. They receive 50% of the market price for ritual books and alchemical formulas.

If a player selects a magic weapon or suit of armor for their PC that is not specific on the type of item listed, they must select the exact item at the time they choose that bundle. For example, if a *duelist's weapon* +1 is listed as a choice in a bundle, a player selects the form of the weapon amongst the choices possible for that magic item (light blades). If the player selects the item as a +1 *duelist's dagger*, the player writes that information down on the PC's adventure log and the item is forever after that specific weapon.

An asterisk next to a magic item means that it is an item that appears in the **New Rules** section.

EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BUNDLES:

Bundle A: *symbol of daring* +1* (low-level version only) (level 5; *Adventurer's Vault* 2)

Found in Encounter 4

Bundle B: *doss lute** (level 7; *Player's Handbook* 2)

Found in Encounter 4

Bundle C: +2 *staff of missile mastery** (level 7; *Adventurer's Vault*)

Found in Encounter 6

Bundle D: *summoned armor* +2* (low-level version only) (level 6; *Adventurer's Vault*)

Found in Encounter 6

Bundle E: +2 *orb of reversed polarity* (high-level version only) (level 9)

Found in Encounter 6

Bundle F: ritual book with Corpse Light* and Last Sight Vision* (low-level version only)

Found in Encounter 4

Bundle G: ritual scroll with Undead Servitor* and a ritual book with Last Sight Vision* or Corpse Light* (high-level version only)

Found in Encounter 4

Consumable plus Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add a pouch of *vision sand** plus 50/175 gp to their rewards from this adventure. The player should write the consumable gained on their adventure log. That character (and only that character) then receives the consumable plus the listed amount of gold (if any) instead of any other treasure bundle. Consumable items obtained in this fashion do not take up found magic item slots.

More Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add 125/250 gp to their rewards from this adventure. That character (and only that character) receives more gold instead of any other treasure bundle.

STORY AWARDS

Award these if the PC completes the condition for the award in the adventure. Pass out certificates to the players for their story awards. Normally, if a PC earns three awards, they may only have 2 of them and must pick which two they want before ending the session (exceptions to this will be noted in the story award text). Make sure to mark the story award codes next to each character that earned them on the tracking form.

LURU11 Gratitude of the Everlund Merchants Guild

The Everlund Merchants Guild is extremely happy that the pass is open for trade again.

LURU12 Wrath of Deven Ferrain

Your attempts to capture Deven Ferrain have failed and he has escaped; his assets are seized, his business is in ruins and he owes the Cyric mercenaries for their losses.

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

Mark the answers to the following adventure questions on the tracking form.

1. What did the PCs do with the Cyric mystic cultist?

- a. They killed him.
- b. Captured and turned him in.
- c. The mystic cultist escaped.

2. What did the PCs do with Marianna?

- a. Cared for her and she lived.
- b. Left her behind to die.
- c. Took her with them and she survived.
- d. They never found her.

3. What did the PCs do with Deven Ferrain?

- a. Captured and turned him in.
- b. Deven escaped.
- c. They never found any evidence linking Deven to the attacks,

NEW RULES

Symbol of Daring

Level 5+

When you wield this symbol, your allies are inspired to strike boldly.

Lvl 5 +1 1,000 gp Lvl 20 +4 125,000 gp

Lvl 10 +2 5,000 gp Lvl 25 +5 625,000 gp

Lvl 15 +3 25,000 gp Lvl 30 +6 3,125,000 gp

Implement (Holy Symbol)

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus, or +1d12 radiant damage per plus with attacks made when you spend an action point.

Property: When any ally within 5 squares of you spends an action point to make an attack, he or she gains a bonus to damage rolls on that attack equal to the symbol's enhancement bonus.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault* 2, page 29.

Doss Lute

Level 7

This dulcet music of this lute imbues its listeners with resilience and quiet resolve.

Wondrous Item 2,600 gp

Property: Bards can use this item as an implement for bard powers and bard paragon path powers. As an implement, it grants a +2 enhancement bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls, and it deals 2d6 extra damage on a critical hit.

Power (Daily): Standard Action. Use this power during a short rest. At the end of the short rest, choose yourself or an ally who remained within 20 squares of you during the rest. Until the end of that character's next short rest or extended rest, he or she gains a +1 power bonus to saving throws.

Song of Rest: The power bonus equals +2.

Reference: *Player's Handbook* 2, page 210.

Staff of Missile Mastery

Level 2+

This dark wooden staff empowers a wizard's most basic attack.

Lvl 2 +1 520 gp Lvl 17 +4 65,000 gp

Lvl 7 +2 2,600 gp Lvl 22 +5 325,000 gp

Lvl 12 +3 13,000 gp Lvl 27 +6 1,625,000 gp

Implement (Staff)

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus, or +1d8 damage per plus when using *magic missile*.

Property: When you cast *magic missile* with this implement, you gain a +1 item bonus to attack rolls and an item bonus to damage rolls equal to the staff's enhancement bonus.

Power (Daily): Free Action. Use this power when you cast *magic missile*. Target one or two creatures with the

attack. No target can be more than 5 squares from any other target.

Level 17, 22, or 27: Target one, two, or three creatures with the attack.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 106.

Summoned Armor

Level 6+

One need never worry about being caught unarmored while possessing this extraordinary armor.

Lvl 6 +2 1,800 gp Lvl 21 +5 225,000 gp

Lvl 11 +3 9,000 gp Lvl 26 +6 1,125,000 gp

Lvl 16 +4 45,000 gp

Armor: Any

Enhancement: AC

Power (At-Will): Minor Action. You banish this armor to a secure extradimensional location. At any point in the future, unless you are wearing armor, you can use another minor action to recall the armor. The armor appears on you as though you had donned it normally.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 53.

Corpse Light

A sickly green flame springs forth, washing the area in nauseating light. In its illumination, those that walk in undeath are revealed beyond a doubt.

Level: 2

Component Cost: 25 gp

Category: Divination

Market Price: 100 gp

Time: 10 minutes

Key Skill: Arcana or

Duration: 1 hour

Religion

You create a pale green flame that illuminates as a lantern. The light emanates from an object you designate during the ritual. The green fire produces no heat.

Any undead creature that enters the illuminated area or is within it, and that is of a level equal to or lower than your Arcana or Religion check - 10, is wreathed in a green, flaming aura that harmlessly flickers around the creature. This aura appears even if the undead is disguised by a polymorph or illusion effect. Invisible undead are surrounded by visible green radiance. The glow reveals the squares in which the undead is located, but it does not affect the total concealment granted by invisibility.

Reference: *Open Grave*, page 49.

Last Sight Vision

As you finish the ritual, you see the final moments of the corpse's life.

Level: 2

Component Cost: 25 gp

Category: Divination **Market Price:** 100 gp

Time: 10 minutes **Key Skill:** Arcana or

Duration: 2 or more rounds Religion

When you perform this ritual in the presence of a corpse or a skull, you witness an auditory and visual reply of the moments before the death of that creature, as seen from the creature's perspective. You cannot perform this ritual on headless corpses. Once you have performed this ritual, you must wait until you have gained a level before using it again on the same remains.

Your Arcana or Religion check determines the length of time prior to the target's death that you experience.

Check Result Time Period

19 or lower 2 rounds

20-29 4 rounds

30-39 6 rounds

40 or higher 10 rounds

Reference: *Open Grave*, page 50.

Undead Servitor

The corpse shudders, then clambers to its feet. At your direction, it shoulders your gear and lumbers after you.

Level: 6 **Component Cost:** 150 gp

Category: Creation **Market Price:** 360 gp

Time: 1 hour **Key Skill:** Arcana (no

Duration: Permanent check)

You imbue a humanoid corpse of natural origin and Medium or smaller size with the ability to move under its own power and an understanding of one language of your choice. It has a speed 6 and Strength 16, never tires, and obeys you at all times.

The undead servitor is a noncombatant. When forced onto an active battlefield, treat the servitor as an allied minion (1 hit point, never damaged on a missed attack) with all defenses of 11. It acts just after you do and never makes attacks.

You cannot have more than one undead servitor at a time from different performances of this ritual. If you attempt to create a second servitor, that ritual fails without component expenditure.

Reference: *Open Grave*, page 50.

Vision Sand Level 6

Blessed by Ioun's clergy, this sparkling crystalline sand enhances divinations.

Other Consumable 75 gp

Property: When added to the normal components for casting a divination ritual, vision sand grants a +2 power bonus to any one skill check required by the ritual.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 192.

PLAYER HANDOUT 1

These are the three letters that are located in the mystic cultist's pocket.

During the reading of the letters, the following information sticks out.

...mine is my own; 'Scepter of Life' has been received...

...the sacrifices from Selune's Tor... ...the Glimmerwood...

~Sadbatu

...the slave trade in Everlund shall come to a halt.

...that annoying tiefling has been found and taken care of, just like the Gibbous Moon's innkeeper; do not fail me in the future rise of my young...

...stop the Netherese problem or I will make you the Netherese's solution...

~Sadbatu

...the alliance with Mithral Hall can not happen...

...Uktar's coming marks Great Malgarath's alliance to our front lines...

~Sadbatu

Player Handout 2

The diagram illustrates the decomposition of the tensor product of two 2x2 matrices into a direct sum of two 2x2 matrices. On the left, two 2x2 matrices are shown side-by-side, representing the tensor product. Each matrix has a top row of two dots and a bottom row of two dots. A vertical line separates the two matrices. To the right of this line, an equals sign is followed by a plus sign and two 2x2 matrices in brackets, representing the direct sum. The first matrix in the sum has a top row of two dots and a bottom row of two dots. The second matrix in the sum has a top row of one dot and a bottom row of one dot.

$$\left| \begin{array}{c} \bullet \\ \bullet \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{cc} \bullet & \bullet \end{array} \right| \quad \left| \begin{array}{cc} \bullet & \bullet \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \bullet \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{cc} \bullet & \bullet \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \bullet \\ \bullet \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \bullet \\ \bullet \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \bullet \\ \bullet \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{cc} \bullet & \bullet \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \bullet \end{array} \right|$$

Player Handout 3

ABC | DEF | GHI

JKL | MNO | PQR

STU | VWX | YZ

To decipher the verbal part of the coded letter...

- 1- Compare the shape in the coded letter to the chart in the code.
 - a. I.e. The “U” shape is the letters DEF.
 - b. I.e. The “L” shape is the letters GHI.
- 2- Count the number of dots in the shape in the coded letter.
 - a. The number of dots will be the letter in its section of the code from left to right.
 - i. I.e. The “U” shape with 3 dots is the letter “F”
 - ii. I.e. The “L” shape with 2 dots is the letter “H”

123

\ /

456 \ / 789

/ \

/ \

0

To decipher the numerical part of the coded letter...

- 3- Compare the shape in the coded letter to the chart in the code.
 - a. I.e. The “V” shape is the numbers 123.
 - b. I.e. The “<” shape is the numbers 789.
- 4- Count the number of dots in the shape in the coded letter.
 - a. The number of dots will be the number in its section of the code from left to right.
 - i. I.e. The “V” shape with 2 dots is the number 2.
 - ii. I.e. The “<” shape with 1 dot is the number 7.