

A RAGING SWAN PRESS COLLECTOR'S EDITION
RETRIBUTION

AN ADVENTURE FOR 1ST-LEVEL CHARACTERS



PREPARE QUICKER, PREPARE BETTER



ragingswan.com/gmsresource

RETRIBUTION: COLLECTOR'S EDITION

In the frozen depths of winter, murderous winds mercilessly batter the crumbling Priory of Cymer. Within, trapped by their duty and the heaped snowdrifts that render travel near impossible, the few remaining faithful huddle together and tend the sacred places of their forbears. With the weather worsening, nerves fray and tempers snap as the wind howls its mournful dirge for the forgotten dead of a fallen time. But the worst is yet to come. One of those trapped within holds a murderous grudge that only blood can expunge, and as the storm reaches its savage height, terrible revenge is wrought amid the frigid halls and faded glories of a bygone age.

Design: Creighton Broadhurst

Development: Andy Glenn, Andrew Hodges and Eric Menge

Editing: Andrew Hodges and Eric Menge

Cover Design: Creighton Broadhurst and Simon Butler

Layout: Creighton Broadhurst

Interior Artists: John Batten, Larry Elmore, William McAusland, Brittany Michel, Dave Peterson and V Shane. Some images copyright Erisian Entertainment, used with permission. Some artwork copyright William McAusland, used with permission.

Cartography: Philippa Broadhurst

Playtesters: Creighton Broadhurst, Andy Lewis, Andrew Hodges, Robert Wills and Neil Wright

Dedicated to

Christopher, Alexander, Alaric, Adam and Nathan

Thank you for purchasing *Retribution: Collector's Edition*; we hope you enjoy it and that you check out our other fine print and PDF products.

Published by Raging Swan Press
March 2014

2nd printing
ISBN: 978-0-9575570-8-6

ragingswan.com
gatekeeper@ragingswan.com

Product Identity: All trademarks, registered trademarks, proper names (characters, deities, artefacts, places and so on), dialogue, plots, storylines, language, incidents, locations, characters, artwork and trade dress are product identity as defined in the Open Game License version 1.0a, Section 1(e) and are not Open Content.

Open Content: Except material designated as Product Identity, the contents of *Retribution: Collector's Edition* are Open Game Content as defined in the Open Gaming License version 1.0a Section 1(d). No portion of this work other than the material designated as Open Game Content may be reproduced in any form without written permission. The moral right of Creighton Broadhurst to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted in accordance with the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988. ©Raging Swan Press 2014.

Pathfinder is a registered trademark of Paizo Inc., and the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game and the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Compatibility Logo are trademarks of Paizo Inc., and are used under the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Compatibility License. See <http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/compatibility> for more information on the compatibility license.

Compatibility with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game requires the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game from Paizo Inc.. See <http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG> for more information on the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game. Paizo Inc. does not guarantee compatibility, and does not endorse this product.

To learn more about the Open Game License, visit
wizards.com/d20.



CONTENTS

Contents	2
Stat Blocks by CR.....	3
Reading Stat Blocks.....	4
Using this Adventure	5
Did You Know.....	68

RETRIBUTION

Adventure Background	6
Adventure Synopsis	7
Running Retribution.....	7
The Lonely Coast.....	8
Swallowfeld At A Glance	10
Religion	12

PART 1: SANCTUARY

In which the PCs fight their way through a ferocious snowstorm to reach the Priory of Cymer.

Running Part 1	14
Introduction.....	15
1: Watchers in the Storm (EL 2; XP 600)	16
2: The Rising Storm (EL 1/2; XP 200).....	18
3: Hunters in the Storm (EL 4; XP 1,200).....	19
4: The Bells!	20

PART 2: SIGNS

In which blood is spilt, revenge is wrought and Ythel's scheming reaches its terrible climax.

Running Signs.....	22
Troubleshooting.....	23
Daily Life at Cymer	28
4: Meeting Ruan	29
Interlude: A Cheerless Supper	30
5: Day Two	32
6: Day Three.....	33
7.1: Day Four.....	34
8: Screams in the Dark (EL 2; XP 600)	36
Interlude: Cymer's Fall.....	38

13: Rosenn's Chamber (EL 1; XP 400).....	40
14: The Infirmary (EL 1; XP 400).....	41
15: Upon the Altar (EL 4; XP 1,200).....	42
16: The Restless Dead (EL 3; XP 800)	44
Interlude: Into Darkness	46

PART 3: DARKNESS

In which the PCs explore the Deep Caves beneath the priory and thwart Ythel's evil plan.

The Priory of Cymer	24
Running Darkness	48
Troubleshooting.....	48
Braal's Gifts	49
The Deep Caves.....	50
17: Atop The Ebon Chasm (EL 3; XP 600)	52
18: Descent into Darkness (EL 1/2; XP 200)	53
19: The Black Pool (XP 2; XP 600).....	54
Living Quarters.....	55
20: The Dark Fane (EL 4; XP 1,200)	56
Conclusion & Aftermath.....	58

DRAMATIS PERSONA

Eiravel Soleruil	60
Malvenos Liaiamne	61
Rosenn Ursell	62
Ruan Gloyne.....	63
Tomas Lelean	64
Ythel Frayne	65

THE LONELY COAST

Retribution's default location is a dozen miles north of the village of Swallowfeld deep in the Tangled Wood on the Lonely Coast.

The Lonely Coast is a free mini-campaign setting available from ragingswan.com or from wherever you purchased this module.

- A brief overview of the Lonely Coast appears on pages 8-9.
- Brief details of Swallowfeld appear on pages 10-11.



STAT BLOCKS BY CR

CR		PAGE
1/3	Rosenn Ursell NG female human expert (scribe) 1	63
1/2	Barsala NE female half-goblin ranger 1	17
1/2	Brunk NE male goblin expert (scout) 2	37
1/2	Cymer's Profaned Dead NE male human fast zombie	52
1/2	Goblin Battledancer NE male goblin warrior 1/expert (acrobat) 1	42
1/2	Grelha NE female goblin cleric (Braal) 1	36
1/2	Half-Goblin Sneaks NE male half-goblin rogue 1	17
1/2	Immature Lemure Devil LE young lemure devil	57
1/2	Malvenos NG male half-elf fighter 1	61
1/2	Zombie NE undead	37
1	Eiravel Soleruil CN female tiefling rogue 1/wizard (enchanter) 1	60
1	Gark NE male goblin adept (Braal) 3	43
1	Ghoul CE undead	41
1	Patrax NE male goblin rogue 2	43
1	Terl NE male half-goblin sorcerer (aberrant) 1	40
1	Tomas Lelean LN male human cleric (Daren) 2	64
1	Vartel NE male half-goblin fighter 2	54
1	Wolf N animal	19
2	Ythel NE male human cleric (Braal) 3	57, 65
3	Marel LG male ghost human cleric (Darlen) 2	44
4	Ruan Gloyne LE male human cleric (Darlen) 5	56, 63

GLOSSARY

Chapter-House: A building in which a religious community live and hold meetings.

Cloister: A covered walk with an open arcade or colonnade usually opening onto a courtyard or garth.

Frater: A room used for serving food; often connected to a kitchen.

Garth: An open courtyard enclosed by a cloister.

Sacristy: A room in a church used for storing sacred vessels and vestments.

Vestry: A room in, or a building attached to, a church, in which holy vestments and sometimes other sacred objects used during worship are kept.

ABOUT THE DESIGNER

Creighton lives in Torquay, England where, apparently, the palm trees are plastic and the weather is warm. He shares a ramshackle old mansion with his two children ("Genghis" and "Khan") and his patient wife. Famed for his unending love affair with booze and pizza he is an enduring GREYHAWK fan.

An *Ennie Award* winning designer (*Madness At Gardmore Abbey*) Creighton has worked with *Expeditious Retreat Press*, *Paizo* and *Wizards of the Coast*. He believes in the *Open Gaming License* and is dedicated to making his games as fun and easy to enjoy as possible for all participants. Reducing or removing entry barriers, simplifying pre-game prep and easing the GM's workload are the key underpinning principles of the products he now releases through *Raging Swan Press*.

You can read his thoughts on game design at raging-swan.livejournal.com and contact him at creighton@ragingswan.com.



READING STAT BLOCKS

Retribution includes all necessary stat blocks; these notes explain how to read them. Unless otherwise noted, all listed scores include all the creature's normal modifiers. Stat block appear in four sections: basic, defensive, offensive and supplemental.

BASIC

Name, CR and XP: The monster's name appears first followed by its CR and how many experience points it is worth. If more than one creature is encountered, a bracketed number lists how many appear.

Appearance: The GM can read aloud or paraphrase this section. If a picture depicts the creature, this section may be omitted.

Sex, Race, Class and Level: If the monster has class levels these appear here along with its race and sex. The first noted class is the creature's favoured class.

Alignment and Type: The creature's abbreviated alignment and its type (including applicable subtypes).

Init and Senses: This creature's initiative modifier appears before any special senses (such as scent or darkvision) and the creature's Perception and Sense Motive scores. If the creature has special Perception-based abilities, such as trapfinding or stonecunning, these appear here.

Speed: The creature's modified land speed appears first along with any other relevant speeds (such as climb or fly). If the creature's base land speed is different to its modified speed this is also listed.

ACP and Movement Skills: ACP presents the creature's normal armour check penalty modifier. If the creature's Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist, Fly, Ride, Stealth or Swim modifier differs from the relevant ability modifier minus its armour check penalty, these skills appear here.

DEFENSIVE

AC: The creature's normal, touch and flat-footed AC along with its CMD; additionally this section lists any defensive powers or abilities that affects the creature's AC.

Immune, Resist and Weaknesses: If the creature has immunity, resistance or a vulnerability to an effect or condition it appears here.

Fort, Ref and Will: The creature's saving throw modifiers along with any conditional modifiers and defensive powers (such as evasion) and spell resistance appear here.

HP: The creature's full, normal hit points along with the number of hit dice it possesses. A bracketed hit point total indicates that the creature is injured. If the creature has damage reduction or hardness it appears here.

OFFENSIVE

Space, Base Atk and CMB: The creature's space, base attack bonus and CMB.

Melee: This section lists a creature's melee attacks. If the attack has a reach that is not 5 ft. it is listed here. This line also lists any specific feats a creature can use with the attack (for example Power Attack), but the effects of these feats are not

included in the attack's statistics. Each attack includes attack bonus and damage information. If the attack has the default critical hit characteristics (20/x2) this information is omitted.

Ranged: This section lists the creature's ranged attacks. It always includes the attack's range. Each attack includes attack bonus and damage information. This line also lists any specific feats a creature can use with the attack (for example Point Blank Shot), but the effects of these feats are not included in the attack's statistics. If the attack has the default critical hit characteristics (20/x2) this information is omitted.

Atk Options: This section lists any abilities or feats that can affect more than one of the creature's attacks, unless it has already been presented with the creature's specific attacks. Subsequent listings describe all but the most basic abilities in depth.

Special Actions: This section lists any useful abilities that a creature could use in battle. Subsequent listings describe all but the most basic abilities in more depth.

Spells and Spell-Like Abilities: The creature's caster level, along with its concentration modifier and domains appears in brackets before the main spell listing. If one or more of the creature's spells require a touch attack, the relevant attack bonus is included. Spells available appear in reverse order from highest to lowest level. Spells denoted ^D are domain spells. If applicable, a spell's DC is also provided.

Combat Gear: This section lists any combat-related equipment the creature possesses.

SUPPLEMENTAL

Abilities and Special Qualities: These sections list the creature's ability scores and any special qualities that do not appear anywhere else in its stat block.

Feats: An alphabetical listing of all the creature's feats.

Skills and Languages: These sections list any skills the creature possesses that have not already appeared in the stat block and all languages spoken or understood. Any language-based special abilities also appear here.

Gear: This section lists any gear not already listed in the creature's stat block. This section hardly ever contains weapons or armour as they usually appear in the relevant sections above.

Spellbook: The contents of the creature's spellbook and its opposition schools.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Special abilities appear in the section to which they are best suited. Thus, offensive abilities appear with a creature's attacks while defensive ones appear with its other defences. Full write-ups of irrelevant powers (such as those that could not affect combat) are omitted. The effects of abilities that factor into a creature's normal attacks or defences have already been included in the relevant calculations.

USING THIS ADVENTURE

The notes below describe how to use *Retribution*.

ANATOMY OF AN ENCOUNTER

Each encounter in this adventure has several distinct parts:

Title: This section includes the encounter's number, title, EL and total XP value. The second paragraph provides an at-a-glance overview of the encounter.

Initial Set-Up and Read Aloud: The next few paragraphs provide basic information about the encounter and a read aloud section describing what the PCs most likely see (dependant on PCs' actions, the GM may have to modify this text).

Tactics: Details of how the encountered creatures work together to defeat the PCs.

Area Features: This section describes any noteworthy features in the area. Details of items found in the area (but not those carried by the PCs' opponents) appear here.

Stat Blocks: The encounter includes full stat blocks for all creatures present.

Treasure: This section presents information on any noteworthy items carried by the creatures present in the encounter (as well as detailing the various checks the PCs can make to identify the items).

Scaling the Encounter: This section provides brief details of how to increase or decrease the encounter's EL by 1.

Sidebars: Occasionally, encounters include sidebars. Such inclusions could detail relevant (but little-used rules) like fighting in water or provide tips for running the encounter.

READING TRAP BLOCKS

These notes explain how to use the various traps appearing in the adventure. The following sections make up a trap block:

BASIC

Name, CR and XP: The trap's name, followed by its CR and XP value appear first.

Read Aloud: Text to read when the trap activates.

DETECT, DISARM, BYPASS

Search: The required DC to discover the trap.

Type: The trap's type.

Disarm: The Disable Device check required to disarm the trap. This section also includes how long it takes to make the check and the DC for accidentally activating the trap.

Bypass: If there is a special way to bypass the trap, it is noted here.

ATTACK

Trigger: How and when the trap activates.

Reset: How long it takes for the trap to reset.

Effect: The effect of the trap. If the trap has multiple effects, they are presented separately for clarity.

IDENTIFYING TREASURE

During the course of their adventure, the PCs will find treasure that they'll want to identify. Use the notes below to facilitate their efforts.

IDENTIFYING MAGICAL TREASURE

Magic items can be identified in a variety of ways:

Identify a magic item: When the PCs find a magic item it is presented in the following format: *boots of speed* (moderate [DC 18 Knowledge {arcana} transmutation], DC 25 Spellcraft identifies). The first part of the item's listing indicates the strength and type of magic emanating from the item and the Knowledge (arcana) check made in conjunction with *detect magic* needed to identify the magic type; the second part notes the DC required to identify the magic item using *detect magic* and Spellcraft. Using *detect magic* and Spellcraft to identify a magic item takes three rounds. A character can attempt to identify a magic item once per day. A PC failing to identify a magic item still determines the strength of the item's aura.

Appraising an Item: A DC 25 Appraise check made on a common item (a ring, piece of jewellery etc.) determines its value and whether it is magical or not (but does not identify the item's magical properties.) This check takes one round. Subsequent checks reveal the same result.

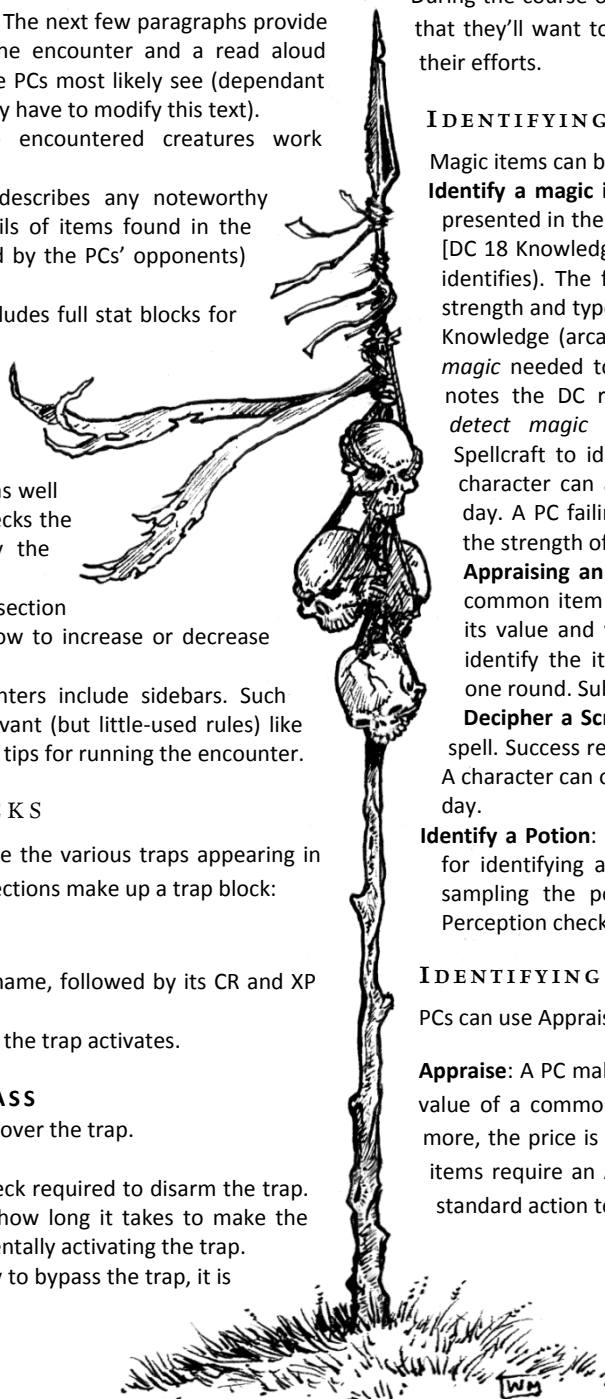
Decipher a Scroll: It takes three rounds to decipher each spell. Success requires a DC 20 + spell level Spellcraft check. A character can only attempt to decipher each spell once per day.

Identify a Potion: Potions can be identified using the method for identifying any normal magic item. Alternatively, a PC sampling the potion and making a DC 15 + spell level Perception check identifies the potion.

IDENTIFYING MUNDANE TREASURE

PCs can use Appraise to identify mundane treasures:

Appraise: A PC making a DC 20 Appraise check determines the value of a common item. If the PC fails the check by five or more, the price is wildly inaccurate. Particularly rare or exotic items require an Appraise check of 25 or more. It takes one standard action to appraise an item.



ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In the twilight of his life, Father Ruan is a gentle man well loved by his acolytes and the few faithful that yet worship before Cymer's high altar. Things were not always thus, however; intolerance and adherence to the extreme teachings of a fanatical sect – the Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way – governed his youth. The sect's extreme teachings (see "The Unalterable Way" [page 12]) made him a harsh and unforgiving man given to savagely punishing his flock's transgressions.

Among those to feel Ruan's blinkered view of justice was Ythel, a lazy student who drifted into the priesthood through indifference, lack of direction and subconscious masochistic tendencies. (Ythel's father deliberately placed his wayward son with Ruan, hoping the intolerant priest would beat a sense of purpose and duty into him). Unsurprisingly, Ythel's lax attitude got short shrift from Ruan, earning him innumerable beatings and humiliating tirades over his three interminable years of instruction.

Ultimately, Ythel joined the priesthood (but not the Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way), giving many years of adequate, if uninspiring, service. Burning hatred for his tyrannical teacher festered deep within his heart, and while fate conspired to keep them apart, his desire for revenge never died.

Meanwhile, an aging Ruan mellowed, eschewing the harsh teaching that had so governed and guided his early years. Welcomed back into the mainstream church, Ruan was gifted the position of the curate of the Priory of Cymer to live out his final years.

Fate took a hand three years ago, reuniting Ruan with his wayward student at the priory when Ythel arrived to bolster the resolve of the remaining faithful.

Although Ythel quickly discovered Ruan had long since renounced the radical teachings of his youth he cared not. Seeing his old teacher awakened the pit of hatred and worthlessness lurking deep in his soul. He thirsted for revenge and began fantasizing about punishing his old teacher. Almost without noticing, Ythel abandoned his belief in Darlen so consumed was he with dreams of bloody revenge. Braal (NE god of Hate, Malice and Revenge [page 12]) sensed the depths of hatred in Ythel's soul and was pleased, slowly seducing him to his ebon worship. Pleased with his new acolyte (and seeing the destruction of the priory as a most welcome bonus) Braal revealed the Deep Caves below the priory to Ythel and their link to the undercroft. Finally, he gifted Ythel with minions and power to attain his dark goal of revenge.

It is deep winter as *Retribution* begins; driving snow and deep drifts soon all but cut off the priory making travel almost impossible. As Ythel's dark scheme unfolds, no help comes from the outside world; it is up to the PCs to save the priory from disaster and destruction.

IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Retribution is designed to be easily inserted into a GM's home campaign. Thus, while the adventure locales themselves are richly detailed, the surrounding area (a range of heavily forested, sparsely populated hills) is only vaguely defined. (The priory itself stands upon a lonely cave-riddled cliff; it's only link to civilisation a single track leading to the nearby villages.)

Similarly, *Retribution's* plot does not rely on world-shattering events either past or present, famous personages or a particular kingdom or group.

Retribution features followers of two faiths – Darlen and Braal (both page 12). These powers oversee relatively generic portfolios allowing a GM to easily substitute suitable deities from his own campaign.

Finally, during the adventure heavy snowfall cuts off the priory. The GM can easily substitute the snow for a sandstorm or thunderstorm as appropriate.

PRIORY OF CYMER

Retribution takes place within the confines of the Priory of Cymer, a small temple complex dedicated to Darlen (LG god of Law, Order, Justice and the Sun). About Cymer hangs an aura of faded glory and neglect. Once a site of pilgrimage and sanctuary, few visitors now come to the priory. (Depending on how the GM sets up this adventure, this is probably because Darlen has fallen out of favour locally.) The temple is dilapidated; some areas are all but abandoned and everywhere the signs of neglect are evident. Where scores of worshippers once answered the call to prayer, only a remnant now linger.

The priory is located in the wilderness on a little-used track leading to several nearby villages. (The specifics of these details are largely irrelevant to the adventure at hand and remain deliberately scant so that the GM can easily place the adventure in his own campaign). *Retribution's* default setting is the Lonely Coast (see page 8 for more details).

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The adventure opens as a winter storm hurtles toward the Priory of Cymer. The worsening weather catches the PCs, as they travel to the priory. As they struggle along the tree-fringed track, a small band of half-goblins (Appendix 1) – vicious, degenerate mongrel creatures – set an ambush. Defeating their assailants the PCs hurry on as the weather worsens.

Snow begins to fall and the wind picks up as the PCs continue their journey. A small pack of wolves finds the PCs' trail and attack forcing the party into a desperate battle as the snow falls around them.

Once they reach the priory, the aged curate, Ruan, meets them and grants them leave to remain until the storm abates. That night at dinner, the PCs meet the rest of the priory's staff and learn that strange events have befallen the church in the last few weeks. Learning of these – strange tracks about the gate and sinister lights in the surrounding woods – the PCs offer to investigate.

Over the next few days, the isolation, howling wind and cold begin to affect the remaining inhabitants; tempers fray and arguments become commonplace. To make matters worse a series of strange events and dark portents puts the inhabitants on edge.

Around midnight on the fourth day, a zombie and its goblin handlers burst into the PCs' chamber. After the PCs defeat their

foe in a hard-won fight they see lights moving about other parts of the priory and hear screaming coming from the clergy's quarters. Investigating, they discover the priory is under attack; goblins and undead roam the halls and unless the PCs act quickly most of their hosts die.

During the course of the night, the PCs discover Ruan has been abducted and evidence identifying Ythel as the culprit.

After cleansing the Justicar's Hall, the PCs discover the door to the undercroft open. Investigating, they discover shrivelled goblin corpses, a vengeful spirit intent on destroying all evildoers and a passageway leading to the caverns below the priory. Quick-witted PCs can placate the ghostly cleric and even gain the *blessed aspergillum* (page 45) – a holy relic – to help scourge the priory free of the evil infesting its halls.

Exploring the passageway, they discover a great cavern dominated by a dark chasm. Undead guard the chamber and attempt to hurl the PCs into the chasm. After defeating the undead and descending the chasm, they discover a further network of passages and chambers. Most of the inhabitants are already dead – slain by the PCs in the priory above – but a few final guards remain. Eventually, the PCs discover Ythel in his Dark Fane, arriving as he tortures his one-time tutor. Using diplomacy or brute force the PCs (hopefully) free the helpless curate and end Ythel's rampage.

RUNNING RETRIBUTION

Retribution uses the Medium advancement track for experience points. Therefore, new 1st-level characters require 2,000 XP to reach 2nd-level. By the end of the adventure, if they defeat Ythel, the PCs should gain the requisite XP to reach 2nd-level.

Retribution is broken down into three parts for ease of use. In these sections, combats and other challenging or significant encounters are listed numerically while area descriptions are listed alphabetically, for the GM's convenience.

DESCENT INTO DARKNESS

Retribution deals with Ythel's unfolding plan for revenge against his old tutor, Ruan. Once a cleric of Darlen, Ythel has secretly converted to Braal's fell worship but has not yet fully fallen into darkness. One thing yet remains: the torture and killing of Ruan.

As a young man, although lazy, Ythel was essentially good. Ruan's treatment of him and his subsequent lingering grudge have pushed him towards evil. As *Retribution* opens Ythel's alignment is true neutral. Because of this *detect evil* (and similar spells) do not identify him as a threat. Once he unleashes his minions into the priory, however, he slips into darkness.

- **Sanctuary (Part 1):** The PCs are travelling to Cymer. In this section of the adventure, their main opponent is the gathering winter storm that will trap them in the priory. At the end of the section, the party should be inside Cymer – and have no intention of venturing back into the storm.
- **Signs (Part 2):** Trapped in the priory, the party meet their hosts and start to realise something bad is happening. Part 2 is heavy on roleplaying and the GM should be conversant with all the priory's occupants before beginning this section of the adventure. Strange events of fell portent set the inhabitants on edge and these culminate in a savage attack by Ythel's minions. By the end of this part, the party should have pieced together – at least in part – what is going on and should know who is responsible.
- **Darkness (Part 3):** In a desperate bid to save Ruan, the party plunges into the caverns below Cymer to confront Ythel and his remaining minions. Here they have a chance to learn of Ruan and Ythel's shared history and can choose to use honeyed words or the sword to save the aged cleric.

THE LONELY COAST

Turbulent waters and forbidding, trackless forests separate the Lonely Coast from the gaudy lights of civilisation. Pirates and slavers ply the storm-tossed waters while goblins and other foul things creep through the gloom of the Tangled Wood that chokes the forgotten holds and sacred places of the Old People. Deep within the forest, a narrow, rock-choked defile piled deep with shadow cuts through a nameless range of rugged, tree-shrouded hills birthing dark, fearsome legends of terrifying monsters and glittering, doom-laden treasures.

Ruler Lord Kenver Locher (LN male human aristocrat 2/fighter 6)
Government Feudal fief
Population 6,200
Alignments LN, N, CN, NG, NE
Languages Common, Goblin
Towns Wolverton (pop. 1,826)
Villages Bossin (pop. 648); Hosford (pop. 678); Oakhurst (pop. 413); Swallowfeld (pop. 526)
Fortifications Caer Syllan
Resources Lumber, tin and slate
Sites of Interest Arius' Watchtower, Deepwater Lake, the Priory of Cymer, the Orestone, Talan's Bluff, the Twisted Gorge.

FEATURES OF THE LONELY COAST

The Lonely Coast has the following major features:

Dense Woodland: The Tangled Wood shrouds most of the coast. Much of it is unexplored.

Trails and Tracks: Meandering tracks link the main settlements with a patchwork of farms and the isolated farmsteads of hunters and charcoal burners.

Cliffs: Lofty cliffs dominate the approaches to the Lonely Coast. In a few places, shingle beaches stand at their base, but most are inaccessible from the cliffs above.

Hills: A nameless range of rugged, tree-cloaked hills rises to the north. Beyond the range lies the deep Tangled Wood.

LOCATIONS OF NOTE

The Lonely Coast has several locations of interest:

Talan's Bluff: The remains of an ancient hill fortress, sprawl across the summit of a high hill giving impressive views over the Tangled Wood.

Arius' Watchtower: A ruined tower hidden deep in the Tangled Wood, the watchtower is famous for the powerful conjurer who once dwelled within (and for the eldritch manner of his disappearance).

The Twisted Gorge: Many caves and passageways honeycomb the steep, overhanging cliffs of this foul place. Ferocious monsters dwell here in profusion.

Deepwater Lake: This lake's cold and deep waters are rumoured to hide much treasure (and a ferocious beast).

Priory of Cymer: An isolated, rundown church dedicated to Darlen and the defeat of a slumbering evil said to lurk beneath the priory.

The Orestone: A wind-swept and wave-lashed shard of rock upon which many ships have come to grief, the Orestone is clearly visible from Wolverton.

DISTANCES & JOURNEY TIMES

These tables show the distance and travel times between settlements. To calculate the distance or travel time between two places, find the intersecting table entry. Table entries list distances to the nearest mile and journey times to the nearest hour.

DISTANCES

				Wolverton
				Bossin
				4 miles
				Hosford
				12 miles
				8 miles
				Swallowfeld
				6 miles
				18 miles
				14 miles
Oakhurst	8 miles	14 miles	26 miles	22 miles

TRAVEL TIMES (20 FT. BASE SPEED)

				Wolverton
				Bossin
				2 hours
				Hosford
				6 hours
				4 hours
				Swallowfeld
				3 hours
				9 hours
				7 hours
Oakhurst	4 hours	7 hours	13 hours	11 hours

TRAVEL TIMES (30 FT. BASE SPEED)

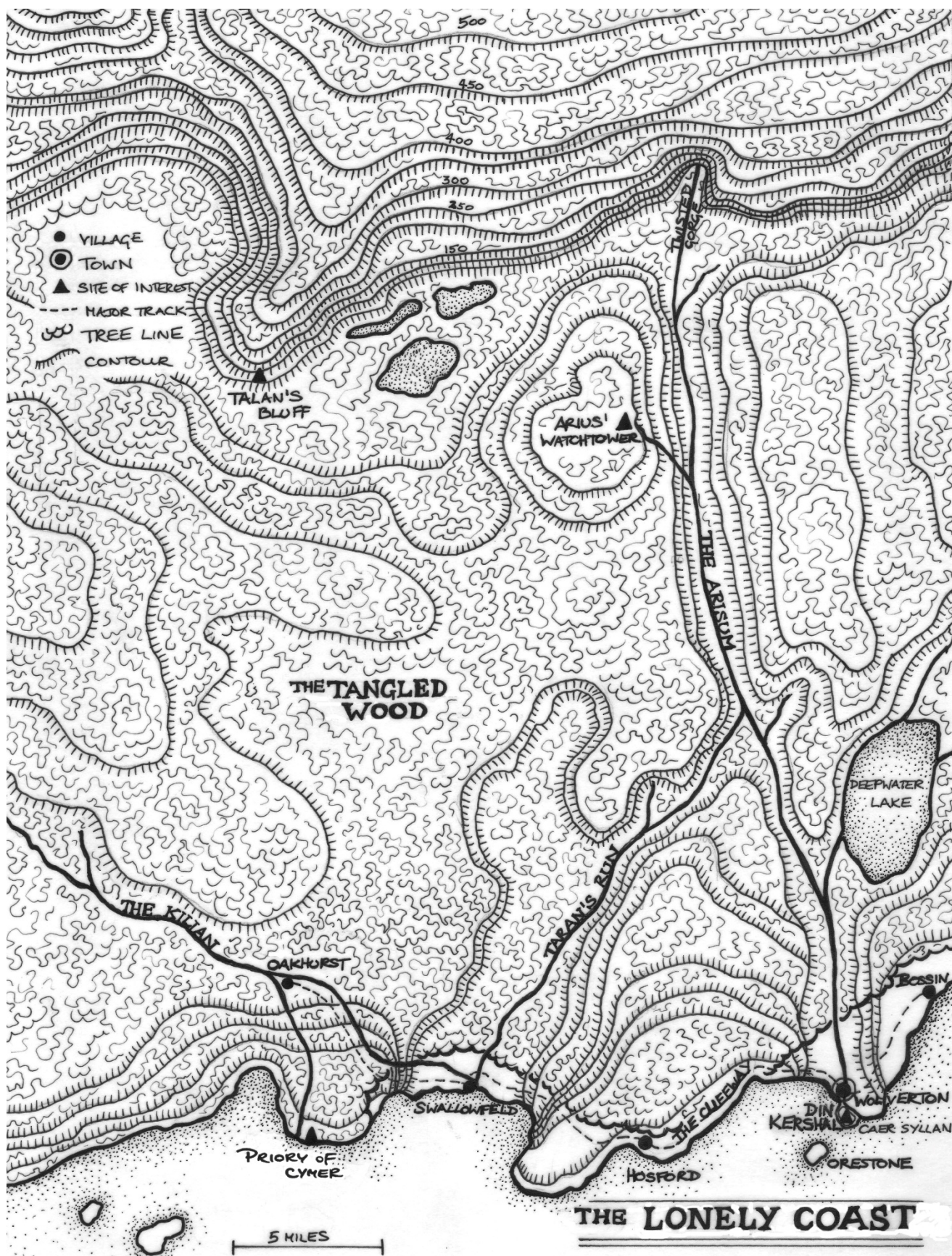
				Wolverton
				Bossin
				1 hour
				Hosford
				4 hours
				3 hours
				Swallowfeld
				2 hours
				6 hours
				5 hours
Oakhurst	3 hours	5 hours	9 hours	7 hours

TRAVEL TIMES (40 FT. BASE SPEED)

				Wolverton
				Bossin
				1 hour
				Hosford
				3 hours
				2 hours
				Swallowfeld
				2 hours
				5 hours
				4 hours
Oakhurst	2 hours	4 hours	7 hours	6 hours

TRAVEL TIMES (50 FT. BASE SPEED)

				Wolverton
				Bossin
				1 hour
				Hosford
				2 hours
				2 hours
				Swallowfeld
				1 hour
				4 hours
				3 hours
Oakhurst	2 hours	3 hours	5 hours	4 hours



SWALLOWFELD AT A GLANCE

Named for the vast flocks of swallows found here by the first settlers, Swallowfeld is an isolated place, perched upon the very edge of civilisation. Pressed closely on three sides by the near-trackless expanse of the Tangled Wood and bounded to the south by the turbulent sea, the village is a hard, frontier place.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Ruler Lord Kenver Locher (LN male human aristocrat 2/fighter 6)

Authority Figures Beryan Teague, bailiff (NG female half-elf fighter 3); Kenan Dobell, village priest (LN male human cleric 3); Melor Keast, reeve (LN male human expert 4); Sir Talek Annear, Lord Warden of the Lonely Coast (LN male human fighter 4)

Government Overlord

Population 526 (490 humans, 12 dwarves, 8 halflings, 8 half-elves, 4 half-orcs, 3 elves, 2 others)

Alignments LN, N, CN, NG, NE

Languages Common, Goblin

Corruption +0; **Crime** +0; **Economy** +1; **Law** +3; **Lore** +1; **Society** +2

Qualities Racially intolerant, strategic location

Danger 0; **Disadvantages** None

Fortifications Kerensa's Hold

Sites of Interest Babbling Monolith, White Fall

MARKETPLACE

Resources & Industry Lumber, foodstuffs, furs, slate and tin

Base Value 550 gp; **Purchase Limit** 2,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 5th;

Minor Items 2d4; **Medium Items** 1d4; **Major Items** –

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

A few of Swallowfeld's buildings are noteworthy.

1. **The Wolf's Head:** The social centre of the village. Maban Tangye and his inquisitive wife know much of what occurs in the village.
2. **Grist Mill:** Run by Kitto and Tecca Joliffe, the mill is the centre of a minor Braalite cult.
3. **Kerensa's Hold:** Built by the ferocious warrior woman, Kerensa Faull, a garrison commanded by Sir Talek Annear now use this small fortress to patrol the locality.
4. **The Crumbled Tower:** The drunkard Jory Mayne dwells within the Crumbled Tower. A moderately skilled mage, Jory is a slave to alcohol and willingly crafts minor magic items in return for gold.
5. **Church of the Father:** This simple building is the village's spiritual heart and home to Kenan Dobell.
6. **Blacksmith:** Wind chimes hang thickly from the gables of Myghal Endean's home.
7. **Tryfena's:** Swallowfeld's trading post and the only place in the village selling finished goods of interest to adventurers. A

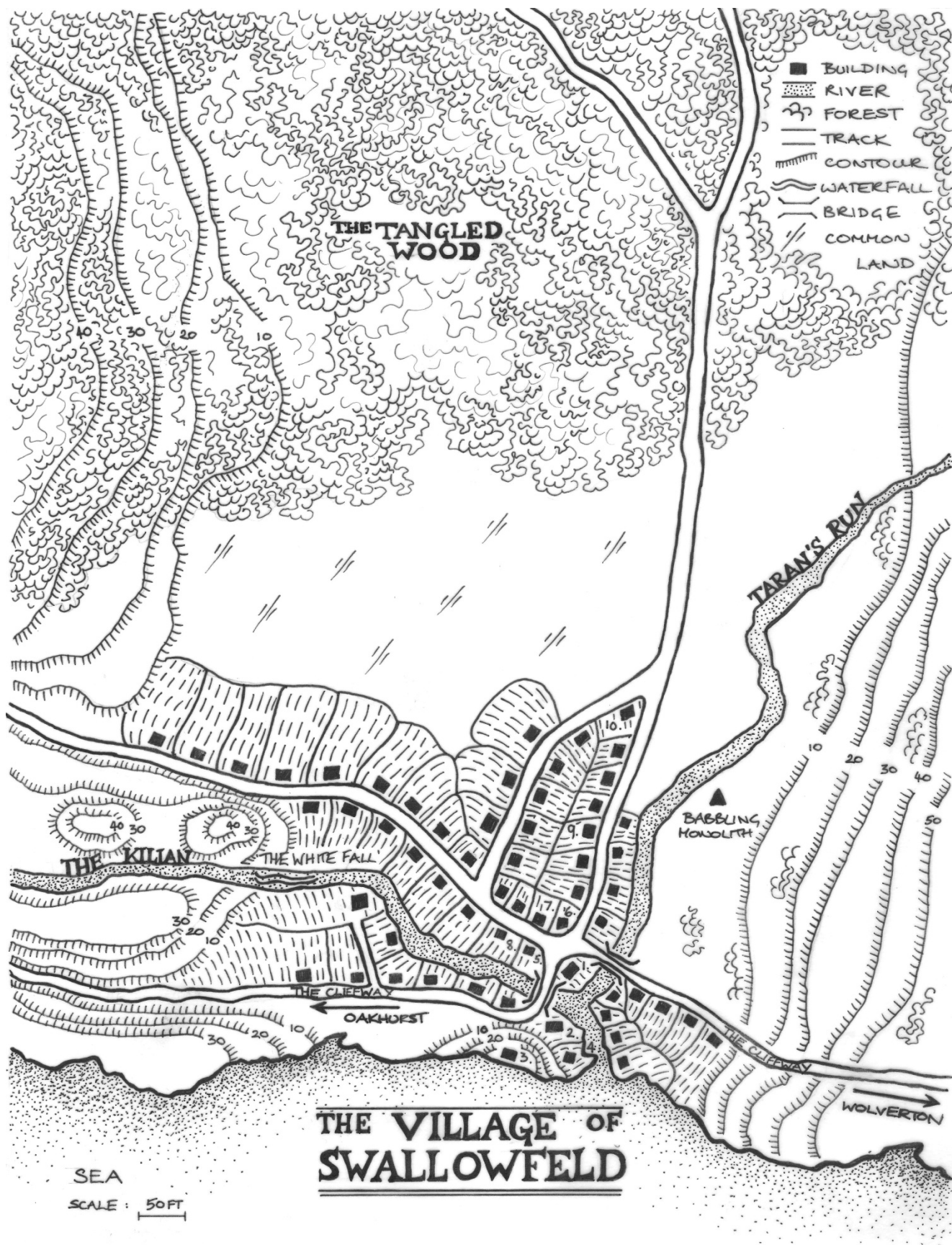
stockade protects the trading post as does a motley band of six guards.

8. **Melor's House:** Here dwells the village reeve; his house is the most impressive in the village.
9. **Mellyn Vosper's House:** A small, impeccably kept house.
10. **Hovel:** The oft-shunned Sowena dwells in a ramshackle house at the edge of the village.

NOTABLE FOLK

A few of the villagers are of interest to adventurers.

- **Beryan Teague** (NG female half-elf fighter 3): Once an adventurer, Beryan takes her role as village protector very seriously. If not loved by the villagers, she has earned their respect many times over.
- **Jory Mayne** (N male human wizard [conjurer] 5): A wizard and a drunkard, Jowen's drink-fuelled exploits are the butt of many village jokes and anecdotes.
- **Kenan Dobell** (LN male human cleric [Conn] 3): A pleasant but superstitious man.
- **Kitto Joliffe** (NE male human expert 3/warrior 2): Kitto is the village miller and a Braal cultist.
- **Maban Tangye** (N male human expert 2): Welcoming to all, the innkeeper is obsessed with cleanliness and rents his rooms to anyone with coin.
- **Mellyn Vosper** (N female human ranger 3): Shy and quiet, Mellyn is the best archer and hunter in the village; she knows the near reaches of the Tangled Wood better than anyone else.
- **Melor Keast** (LN male human expert 4): The village reeve, Melor is too terrified of punishment to cheat his master. Much of the populace dislike him.
- **Myghal Endean** (N male human expert 3/warrior 2): The village flirt and an incorrigible lecher, the blacksmith lives above his workshop. In his early forties, he is unmarried, lonely and craves a woman's company.
- **Sir Talek Annear** (LN male human fighter 4): Commander of Kerensa's Hold and son of a minor nobleman, Sir Talek is obsessed with duty and honour. He resents being stuck in Swallowfeld.
- **Sowena** (NE female human sorcerer [elemental] {fire} 4): The village children fear this terribly scarred, wizened old woman.
- **Tecca Joliffe** (NE female human expert 2/adept 4): Wife of Kitto, she has delved deeper into Braal's mysteries. A sadist she has not yet discovered the full depth of her depravity.
- **Tryfena:** (N female doppelganger rogue 3): This cunning creature infiltrated the village years ago and has quietly been amassing a fortune ever since.



RELIGION

Religion and betrayal are at the heart of *Retribution*. The adventure introduces two new religions. The GM can use these deities – perhaps as local powers – or can replace them with gods from his own campaign. Both deities have relatively generic portfolios and should be easy to replace if desired.

BRAAL

NE god of Hate, Malice and Revenge

Epithets: The Hated, the Wrecker, Dweller in Shadows

Symbol: A cloven skull

Domains: Destruction, Evil, Trickery

Favoured Weapon: Morningstar

Raiment: Braal's faithful wear cowed black cloaks smeared with the blood of their sacrifices. Adherents also shave their heads.

Teachings: Strike from the shadows; punish those who have wronged you and show no mercy. Take what you want and destroy that which you cannot take.

Holy Texts: The worship of Braal is not as prescriptive as other religions. No universally agreed upon text exists, but several dark tomes are preferred by various sects.

DARLEN

LG god of Law, Order, Justice and the Sun

Epithets: The Justicar, the Shining Light, the Noble One

Symbol: The rising sun

Domains: Good, Law, Protection, Sun

Favoured Weapon: Longsword

Raiment: Voluminous, white cowed habits. Unless expecting battle, clerics do not wear armour.

Teachings: The strong must protect the weak, for this is the natural order. Those with great abilities or aptitudes must use their gifts for the betterment of their fellows. The faithful must be ever vigilant for evil's rise, but must show mercy in dealing with its tools.

Holy Texts: Darlen's teachings are set down in the *Scripture of Law* – a vast tome containing teaching, stories and lessons by some of his prominent early followers. *Divine Order* and *On Darkness' Rise* are important early commentaries penned by legendary high priests.

THE UNALTERABLE WAY

An ultra-orthodox sect of Darlenites, the Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way believes the lessons appearing in the *Scriptures of Law* are the literal words of their divine patron. Darlen is a god and thus perfect. Therefore, his lessons are perfect; changing or interpreting them is a mortal sin.

Their most central belief, that to attain salvation believers must physically cleanse themselves of sin, is also their most controversial. Members of the Brotherhood interpret an obscure passage in the *Scriptures of Law* describing true believers as the "scourges of sin" to mean that adherents should whip the sin from their own flesh. Some extremists go further forcibly whipping anyone guilty of committing sin. Such extreme beliefs make the sect very unpopular.



PART I: SANCTUARY

In which the PCs fight their way through a ferocious snowstorm to reach the Priory of Cymer.

RUNNING PART 1

Part 1 portrays the PCs' journey to the Priory of Cymer. However, the encounters herein present more than a simple series of challenges to overcome. An integral part of *Retribution* is the weather and the isolation (both emotional and actual) it imposes upon the PCs. By the time the PCs reach the priory they should be under no illusions that further travel could prove fatal.

THE GATHERING STORM

When the PCs set out, the weather is overcast and gloomy but the priory is little more than a half-day's journey away. However by mid-morning, behind them the sky darkens ominously, the weather deteriorates and a snowstorm hits the area. Conditions worsen and shortly afterwards the PCs encounter a small group of half-goblins (Encounter 1). Despatching them (and with little choice) the PCs continue onwards into the storm.

Encounter 2, which details the storm hitting the area is relatively freeform. (The GM can expand or contract this encounter to suit the gaming group.) During the storm, a small pack of wolves attacks the party (Encounter 2).

Just when the storm reaches new, savage heights and travel becomes virtually impossible, the PCs hear bells ringing over the wind. Following this rhythmic sound, they eventually find sanctuary at the priory (Encounter 3).

TROUBLESHOOTING

Retribution relies on the PCs reaching the Priority of Cymer before the storm renders travel all but impossible. Once it hits, however, some groups may elect to return to Swallowfeld or to sit it out (perhaps at the camp in Encounter 1).

Heading Back to the Village: The storm has come up behind the PCs and if they turn back, the weather rapidly worsens. If the PCs try to head back to Swallowfeld simply determine they get lost – falling snow covers the faint trail and cuts visibility to almost nothing. This combined with their unfamiliarity with the surrounding terrain conspire to turn them around. Eventually, they end up at Cymer.

Take Cover: If the PCs elect to wait out the storm, relate how the temperature drops and the wind strengthens. Then describe how the wind begins to demolish their temporary shelter. At this point, even the most dim-witted adventurer should realise that to remain in the woods is to invite death.



INTRODUCTION

The adventure starts with the PCs travelling along a tree-fringed track on the way to the Priory of Cymer. Before play proper begins, determine why the PCs are visiting the priory. Also at this point, determine how the PCs know each other and call for character introductions. Read:

Dark, ominous clouds hang low in the sky behind you and a strong, chill wind plucks at your cloaks. The muddy streets of Swallowfeld lie hours behind you on the tree-fringed trail. Occasionally, small flurries of sleet and strong winds swirl about you. Ahead hours of miserable travel await.

Allow PCs that think of it to have purchased cold weather gear (8 gp each) at Swallowfeld before they set out.

HOOKS

Use one or more of the hooks below (or design your own) to explain why the PCs are visiting Cymer. Remember, different PCs could have different reasons for visiting the priory. Provide time during Part 2 to resolve each mission.

Injured: One (or more) of the PCs could be infected with a

PCs' KNOWLEDGE OF THE PRIORY

Although none of the PCs has previously visited Cymer, they likely know a bit about it; after all, the priory is their intended destination. Anyone who succeeds on a Knowledge (religion) check knows something about the priory.

DC 10^{1, 2}: The Priory of Cymer is a small, backwater shrine named after a local saint. The priory was founded at the behest of Cymer (a visionary believer) who foresaw a great evil would arise at the site. It never did and over the last few decades, the place has fallen out of favour with the populace of the nearby villages; now few worship there.

DC 15: The curate at Cymer was once a member of an extreme sect – The Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way. Depending on whom you talk to within the clergy, becoming curate of Cymer was either a reward for leaving the sect or a punishment for not doing so sooner!

DC 15: The Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way is an ultra orthodox sect of Darlenites famed for their unbending view of holy scripture and their practise of self-flagellation which they believe literally scourges sin from the body.

DC 25: The priory is rumoured to be built above a network of caves; stonemasons sealed the caverns because they feared what might creep forth.

¹ A PC with Knowledge (local) can also make this check.

² Cleric or paladin PCs of the same faith as those at Cymer automatically know this information.

disease (or perhaps a virulent poison courses through their veins). Lacking the resources to deal with the problem themselves, they travel to the priory to seek aid. (Allow Ruan to cure them before Encounter 8 begins.)

Pilgrim: One of the PC is a devout follower of Darlen. He has come to the priory either to pray before the high altar or to gain Ruan's spiritual guidance on some important matter. Because fell things sometimes creep out of the deep woods to prey on travellers, the rest of the PCs have accompanied their friend.

PC Specific Hooks: One or more of the PCs could have been hired to perform a specific task at Cymer.

- **Eiravel Soleruil:** This clever thief (page 60) has recently stolen a set of earrings from Tryfena a local merchant of Swallowfeld (for which she has offered a 100 gp reward).
- **Malvenos:** The half-elven warrior Malvenos is hiding from Tahlilian Liaiamne (his father). His father is offering a reward of 100 gp if the PCs find Malvenos (page 61).
- **Ruan:** Ruan (page 63) taught a PC's parent long ago. The parent has despatched the PC with a gift for the aged curate.

THE JOURNEY

The PCs have left the small village of Swallowfeld, which is roughly eight miles from the priory. At the start of the adventure, the PCs have been travelling for three hours.

The adventure assumes the PCs have no random encounters during their journey. As it stands, the PCs face several challenging situations during their passage and additional encounters could make the journey a fatal one.

The table below shows total approximate travel times from Swallowfeld to the priory. The weather extends the PCs' initial travel somewhat. If the PCs leave the priory during the storm, double the normal time it takes to reach Swallowfeld.

GROUP'S BASE SPEED	NORMAL JOURNEY	MODIFIED TRAVEL TIME
20 ft.	5 hours	7 1/2 hours
30 ft.	4 hours	6 hours
40 ft.	2 1/2 hours	4 hours

PART 1 ENCOUNTER TIMELINE

The encounters in Part 1 are generally triggered not my location, but by approximate time spent on the trail.

- **Encounter 1:** Three hours into the journey.
- **Encounter 2:** Four hours into the journey.
- **Encounter 2A:** Five hours into the journey.
- **Encounter 3:** This encounter begins when the PCs are only an hour away from the priory.

1: WATCHERS IN THE STORM (EL 2; XP 600)

Timing Three hours into the journey.

This encounter features half-goblins. Appendix 1 presents details on these new creatures.

Barsala and her lackeys guard the trail leading to the priory. Tasked with stopping anyone using the trail, they arrived late yesterday and have set up several crude shelters. The weather's sudden deterioration has surprised them and now, half-frozen and thoroughly miserable, they huddle around a small fire.

The encounter begins when the PCs notice the barricade, which is set just around a corner on the trail. A PC making a DC 10 Perception check spots the barricade when they are 30 ft. away. For every 1 point by which they exceed the check, the PCs start the encounter an extra 10 ft. distant (to a maximum of 70 ft. away). If they fail this check, they see the barricade when they get within 20 ft. Read:

The wind and the intermittent sleet have been slowly increasing in tempo for the last few hours. Although the countless boughs of the forest protect you from the storm's worst effects, it is cold and miserable. Ahead, several fallen trees block the trail.

At this point, have the half-goblins make Perception checks equal to 1/10th the distance between the two groups to notice the PCs (unless the PCs are sneaking). Treat the half-goblins as distracted (-5 to this check) because they are huddling in the barricade.

TACTICS

The half-goblins aid each other when necessary. If reduced to one-quarter hit points, a half-goblin retreats but remains close by using its missile weapon to harass attackers.

Barsala favours ranged skirmishing over melee. She stays at the barricade as long as possible, but then uses her superior movement to move and shoot, trying to stay away from enemies.

Barsala's lackeys similarly try to avoid melee once the PCs reach the barricade. They use Stealth to hide so they can sneak attack as often as possible. If one is engaged in melee, the other targets its mate's attacker in preference to all others.

AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

Illumination: Although the sky is overcast, enough light filters through the tree canopy to brightly illuminate the trail.

Off the trail, dim light (20% miss chance) cloaks the forest floor.

Trail: A muddy, rutted 10 ft. wide trail covered in a light dusting of sleet wends its way through the trees.

Movement on the trail is uninhibited.

Undergrowth: Vines and roots cover any non-trail square. The sleet has not yet penetrated the tree canopy.

It costs two squares of movement to enter such squares. The undergrowth also increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

Trees: A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb) gains partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex).

Massive Trees: Huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex).

Barricade: The half-goblins have felled several trees and dragged them across the path to form a crude 10 ft. wide, 5 ft. high barricade.

It costs four squares of movement to enter a barricade square. Alternatively, characters can leap over the barricade (DC 10 Acrobatics) or clamber over it (DC 10 Climb check). The barricade provides cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex). Characters in the barricade gain concealment (30% miss chance).

The half-goblins have created several roofed niches in the barricade in which to shelter. A variety of battered, but serviceable camping equipment fills these spaces.

Treasure: The half-goblins have enjoyed some success waylaying travellers throughout the surrounding area. Two sacks stuffed into the barricade contain a set of masterwork thieves' tools, 2 vials of holy water, 148 cp, 209 sp and 19 gp. They also contain the following unique items:

- **Four Bronze Goblets:** These battered bronze goblets are very old. Worn with much use, they still boast faded engravings of woodland scenes. They are of Tuath origin and each is worth 25 gp [DC 20 Appraise values].
- **Masterwork Silver Dagger:** Complete with a worn leather sheath, the grip of this slender dagger is covered in dried blood. The dagger is worth 302 gp.
- **Tattered Bloody Map:** A tattered bloody map depicts the Lonely Coast. A crude note and a cross mark the location of the "Road of the Dead." (For more information regarding this location check out *Road of the Dead* an adventure for 3rd-level characters).

DESIGNER'S NOTE

The treasure for this encounter includes several *potions of cure light wounds*. Do not allow the half-goblins to use these items; they appear here so the PCs have greater access to healing magic during Parts 2 and 3 of the adventure because there is little opportunity to rest once Ythel's plot is revealed.

THE WEATHER

The weather has worsened since the PCs began their journey and this encounter coincides with a flurry of sleet borne upon a strong southerly wind.

At the start of each round, use the table below to determine the prevalent weather. Characters on the trail suffer the storm's full force. Those off the trail treat the weather as one-step less as the forest shelters them from the storm's worst effects (except they suffer the full penalty for ranged attacks against a target on the trail).

D20	WEATHER
1-5	Moderate wind: Does not affect combat.
6-15	Strong winds: -2 penalty to ranged attacks.
16-18	Strong winds and flurry of sleet ¹ : -2 penalty to ranged attacks, visibility drops to 1d6 x 10 feet and -4 on Perception checks.
19-20	Severe winds and flurry of sleet ¹ : -4 penalty to ranged attacks and Small creatures on the path are checked ² , visibility drops to 1d6 x 10 feet and -4 on Perception checks.

¹**Spellcasting:** Characters casting spells must make a DC 5 + spell level concentration check or lose the spell.

²**Checked:** Small or smaller creatures must make a DC 10 Strength check to move against the wind.

BARSALA

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

This short, scrawny and bald female has beady, hate-filled eyes. A sneer mars her already ugly countenance. She wears dirty studded leather armour and carries a longbow.

Female half-goblin ranger 1

NE Medium humanoid (goblinoid, human)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5 (+7 vs. humans), Sense Motive +1 (+3 vs. humans)

Speed 35 ft.; **ACP** -1; Climb +5, Ride +5, Stealth +8

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 16

(+3 armour [mwk studded leather], +3 Dex, +1 shield [buckler])

Fort +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

hp 12 (1 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3

Ranged longbow (range 100 ft.) +5 (1d8/x3)

Melee longsword +3 (1d8+2/19-20)

Atk Options favoured enemy (human [+2])

Combat Gear arrows (20), *potion of cure light wounds*, tanglefoot bag

Abilities Str 14, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ track (+1), wild empathy (+0)

Feats Fleet^B, Weapon Focus (longbow)

Skills as above plus Bluff -1 (+1 vs. humans), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (local) +0 (+2 vs. humans), Knowledge (nature) +4, Survival +5 (+6 tracking; +7 vs. humans or +8 tracking humans)

Languages Common, Goblin

Gear as above plus belt pouch, 3 sp

INTERROGATION

Captured half-goblins are hostile, but if rendered indifferent or better they provide some information.

- **Check 1 (DC 24 Diplomacy or DC 10 Intimidate):** The half-goblin acts friendly towards the PCs for 1d6 x 10 minutes and tells how their chief, Belvaig, ordered them to guard this trail and to stop any travellers going to or from the priory. They do not know why. Their tribal lair is far to the north.
- **Check 2 (DC 19 Diplomacy or DC 10 Intimidate):** The half-goblin reveals that someone paid Belvaig for their services. They believe more of their kin are in the area.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Use the notes below to scale the encounter:

EL 1 (XP 400): Remove one half-goblin skulk.

EL 3 (XP 800): Add one half-goblin skulk.

AFTERMATH

After the PCs have dealt with the barricade's defenders and carried out any immediate actions, the weather worsens. Read:

The sleet rapidly turns to snow as the wind intensifies.

Proceed to Encounter 2.

HALF-GOBLIN SKULKS (2)

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

Clad in leather armour this skinny, bald humanoid carries a light crossbow. Its head seems oversized for its body and its eyes burn with malevolence.

Male half-goblin rogue 1

NE Medium humanoid (goblinoid, human)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4 (+5 vs. traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +0

Speed 35 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +7, Climb +5, Escape Artist +7, Ride +5, Stealth +9, Swim +5

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 14

(+2 armour [leather], +3 Dex, +1 shield [mwk buckler])

Fort +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +0

hp 11 (1 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +1

Ranged light crossbow (range 60 ft.) +3 (1d8/19-20)

Melee short sword +1 (1d6/19-20)

Atk Options sneak attack (+1d6)

Combat Gear bolts (10), *potion of cure light wounds*, tanglefoot bag

Abilities Str 13, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8

SQ trapfinding (+1)

Feats Fleet^B, Improved Initiative

Skills as above plus Appraise +5, Disable Device +8, Intimidate +3

Languages Abyssal, Common, Goblin

Gear as above plus belt pouch, 12 sp

2: THE RISING STORM (EL 1/2; XP 200)

Timing: Four hours into the journey.

As they PCs continue their journey, the storm grows stronger and more violent. Read:

The wind becomes stronger and switches direction. Now, it hurls snow directly into your faces as you trudge onwards along the snowy trail to the priory.

Describe the storm getting more violent and snow beginning to settle into drifts around trees and bushes. Use 1d4 of the events detailed in "Minor Events" to enliven the storm.

After four hours of travelling, the cold becomes so intense the PCs may suffer hypothermia or frostbite (see below). Be careful not to kill the PCs with this damage – the storm is dangerous (and sets the mood for later parts of *Retribution*) but it shouldn't kill anyone. Death by weather is no fun!

STORM FEATURES

Refer to Encounter 2A for the effects of the storm on Perception checks, visibility and so on.

Hypothermia and Frostbite: The PCs must make a DC 15 (+1 per previous check) Fortitude saving throw every hour or take 1d6 nonlethal damage as the weather worsens. Characters wearing cold weather gear gain a +5 circumstance modifier to this saving throw. Characters making a DC 15 Survival check gain a +2 bonus to the saving throw and can apply the same bonus to one additional character for every one point by which their result exceeds 15. Once a PC's nonlethal damage equals its hit point total, further damage is lethal damage.

GETTING LOST

The swirling snow partially obscures the trail and hides distant landmarks making navigation difficult. If the PCs stray from the trail, they may get lost. Every hour they remain in the forest they must make a DC 20 Survival check or get lost.

MINOR EVENTS

Roll randomly on the table below:

D6	EVENT
1	A DC 20 Perception check reveals the distant sound of howling wolves.
2	The drifting snow covers a rabbit hole. A PC trips, falls and twists his ankle (DC 15 Reflex negates twisted ankle) which reduces his movement by half.
3	The wind blows a sudden flurry into the PCs eyes, blinding them for a few moments.
4	The howling wind's intensity increases for a moment; it sounds like the tortured souls of the damned.
5	A sudden wind flurry snaps a large branch from a tree; it falls dangerously close to a PC.
6	The temperature drops precipitously for a few minutes. This inflicts a -2 penalty to the next Fortitude saving throw made to resist frostbite.

AFTERMATH

Proceed to Encounter 2A



2A: HUNTERS IN THE STORM (EL 4; XP 1,200)

Timing Five hours into the journey.

Wolves stalk the forest and with the onset of winter they hunger for food. In this encounter, three such beasts stalk the PCs as the weather continues to worsen.

WOLF PACK

When the PCs are about one hour from the priory, they encounter the wolves. The wolves are hungry and are leading the rest of their pack (which follows at a distance and takes no part in the fight).

This event begins with the wolves some way distant; in fact due to the terrible weather, the PCs may not even realize a combat encounter has begun. The wolves are tracking the PCs using their scent ability. The PCs can make Perception checks opposed by the wolves' Stealth check to notice them when they get within 1d6 x 10 feet.

When the PCs first see a wolf, read:

Three long, gaunt and black furred forms slip through the falling snow toward you. Their jaws hang open exposing long, sharp fang and their powerful shoulder muscles bunch as they prepare to leap among you.

The wolves attack as soon as the PCs spot them.

TACTICS

The wolves dart in and out of combat attacking vulnerable or isolated foes. They use trip to knock foes over before savaging prone opponents.

If a wolf is reduced to 3 hit points or less, it retreats, but

WOLF (3)

CR 1 (XP 400)

This powerful, gray-furred canine has fearsome jaws and piercing yellow eyes.

N Medium animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +8, Sense Motive +1

Speed 50 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +2 (+10 jump), Stealth +6

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. trip) (+2 Dex, +2 natural)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

hp 13 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2

Melee bite +2 (1d6+1 plus trip)

Trip (Ex [free]) A wolf can trip its opponent without provoking an attack of opportunity if it hits with its bite. If the attempt fails, the wolf is not tripped in return.

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

Feats Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills as above plus Survival +1 (+5 using scent to track)

keeps the party in sight. If the party allows it to do so, it shadows the group occasionally howling to guide its fellows toward their prey.

AREA FEATURES

During the storm, the forest has several features of note:

Illumination: Dim light (20% miss chance).

Strong Winds and Snow: The combination of strong winds and falling snow complicates this encounter.

The foul weather imposes a -6 on Perception checks and reduces visibility to 1d6 x 10 feet. Characters using ranged weapons suffer a -6 penalty on attack rolls.

The foul weather automatically extinguishes unprotected flames such as torches and has a 50% chance of extinguishing protected flames such as lanterns.

Characters casting spells must make a DC 5 + spell level concentration check or lose the spell.

Snowy Ground: A light covering of snow covers the trail. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter any square covered by snow. The snow also increases the DC of Acrobatics checks by 2.

Snow-Laden Trees: A creature in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb) gains partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex).

A character making a successful melee attack against a tree dumps snow into an adjacent square. Any creature in that square is blind (DC 15 Reflex avoids) until the end of its next turn or until it spends a move action to clear the snow from its eyes.

Slick Undergrowth: Vines and roots cover any square not on the trail. It costs two squares of movement to enter such squares. The undergrowth in these squares increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Use the notes below to scale the encounter:

EL 3 (XP 800): Remove the wolf.

EL 5 (XP 1,600): Add one wolf.

AFTERMATH

Once the wolves have been defeated, the PCs can continue their journey. Snow keeps falling, however, and the PCs must make Fortitude saving throws every hour to avoid suffering the storm's effects. To instill a sense of urgency in the PCs describe the distant pack howls slowly drawing closer. Make it clear the pack sounds large. If the PCs tarry, describe the half-seen forms of wolves slipping through the swirling snow and even run another easy EL 1 encounter against a lone wolf scout using the statistics here if the PCs overly tarry.

Proceed to Encounter 3.

3: THE BELLS!

Timing: Run this encounter when the PCs start their last hour of travel.

With the storm's onset, the priory's clergy begin ringing the worship bells to act as a guide to unfortunate travellers caught in the storm. Any PC making a DC 15 Perception check hears the distant sound of bells ringing. (Continue making such checks until the PCs eventually hear them).

If the PCs follow the sound of the bells, they reach the priory after another hour of freezing travel. During this time, describe the weather continuing to worsen; the snow begins to form drifts and the cold seeps into their bones. It should be obvious they must find shelter or risk freezing to death. At an appropriate juncture, read:

Finally, the trail breaks out of the trees. Ahead, the ground rises sharply and you can hear the distant sound of waves crashing on rocks and the clamour of ringing bells. Barely visible through the driving snow you can just make out a large building standing hard against the cliffs.

When the PCs leave the shelter of the trees they experience the storm's full force; the wind tears at them like a living thing, hurling snow into their faces and freezing exposed flesh. When the PCs reach the priory, read:

Ahead, through the driving snow and gloom, looms the shadowy outline of a battlemented high wall and a gatehouse. Already, small snowdrifts are gathering at the wall's base.

As the PCs get closer, they see the gate stands shut and that no guards brave the winds and snow to keep watch. Above the howl of the wind, the bells toll on.

GAINING SANCTUARY WITHIN

Although Malvenos (NG male half-elf fighter 1; page 61) is not maintaining an active watch in this weather, he is in his chambers (Area A) listening for anyone banging on the gate or ringing the entry bell.

Ringling the bell or banging on the door quickly brings Malvenos to investigate. He is cautious, though, and does not just swing the gate open. Instead, he uses a small spy port set in the gate to view and converse with the PCs. He demands to know the PCs' names and business before granting them entry. As long as the party contains no obvious monsters (orcs, goblins and so on), he unbars the gate and grants them sanctuary. Once he has admitted the PCs he swiftly bars the gate and leads them to Ruan's Lodgings (Area C) where they meet the aging curate.

Proceed to Part 2.



PART 2: SIGNS

In which blood is spilt, revenge is wrought and Ythel's scheming reaches its terrible climax.

RUNNING SIGNS

Part 2 takes place in and around the Priory of Cymer and is the most free-form part of *Retribution*. While Parts 1 and 3 deal with overcoming physical challenges, much of Part 2 focuses on role-play and investigation.

The GM should be fully conversant with the priory and its inhabitants before running Part 2, because the PCs can explore the priory as they choose. Remember the early portions of Part 2 are role-play intensive; there are few opportunities for combat during the first three days of the PCs' stay. If the players prefer action over role-play, run Encounters 5, 6 and 7 quickly before starting Encounter 8. However, if the players enjoy role-playing allow them as much time as they want to explore the priory.

When Ythel's minions assault the priory, the tone and pace of the adventure changes; after they deal with their initial assailants push the PCs to make quick decisions – the lives of their hosts depend on the choices they make.

ROLE-PLAYING THE CLERGY

A key part of encounters 5-7 is the clergy's reactions to unfolding events. Remember when portraying these that the NPCs' reactions are uniformly negative and that as time passes the storm makes their perception of events worse. What well-rested folk would view as nothing more than an accident or bizarre coincidence takes on sinister connotations to the tired and scared clergy.

Eiravel: Weakened by poison and virtually bedridden for the first few days of the adventure, Eiravel feels extremely vulnerable. She does not like this and does her best to attach herself to the most confident member of the party. If accused of being a thief, she tearfully confesses and returns the stolen items to the PCs. On day three, she does not leave the infirmary unless in the company of her chosen protector.

Malvenos: Frustrated by his inability to protect the clergy from these strange events, Malvenos begins to suspect the PCs of being involved somehow. He takes a particularly dislike to the PC with the lowest Charisma, following that individual around, asking questions and so on. When not keeping an eye on the PCs, Malvenos patrols the priory's walls. After the "Fallen Icon" event, Malvenos wears his armour at all times.

Rosenn: Since the tortured events of her childhood, Rosenn's grasp on reality has been tenuous at best. The darkening gloom and strange, ominous events cause her to alternate between bouts of sobbing and periods of self-imposed isolation in her chambers.

Ruan: The aged curate is resigned to whatever fate has in store for him. He cares deeply about his acolytes, however, and

constantly beseeches Darlen to punish him for his sins but to spare Rosenn, Tomas and Ythel.

Tomas: Tomas is angered at the turn of events. Already incensed by how the local populace has turned away from Darlen's worship, he believes these events are the work of local villagers bent on driving out the remaining clergy. As events progress, he becomes extremely militant in his views, eventually declaring that he will execute those he deems responsible.

Ythel: Ythel plays the part of the dutiful, loyal acolyte as events unfold. He spends as much time with Ruan as possible, ostensibly to keep him safe and to distract his aged master from the doom gathering about the priory. In reality, he greatly enjoys witnessing the distress his scheme is causing and if possible fuels Ruan's sadness with surreptitious observations.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

The events of *Retribution* take place over several days as Ythel torments those unfortunate enough to be trapped in the priory. Once he unleashes his final assault, however, events proceed quickly; the PCs won't have much time to save Ruan and his acolytes from a terrible fate.

The timeline below presents a brief overview of major events occurring on each day. Ad-lib other events as required.

Day 1: The PCs reach the priory after defeating Ythel's watchers and a pack of wolves. They meet Ruan and he grants them leave to remain in the priory until the weather eases. A winter storm blasts the area. The PCs must prepare their own quarters and afterwards meet their hosts at dinner.

Day 2: Eiravel remains in the infirmary, tended by Tomas. Snow continues to fall. Run the "Dead Birds" and "Sounds in the Night" events.

Day 3: Eiravel appears for breakfast for the first time, but subsequently does not move her possessions into the guest quarters. Run the "Open Shutters" and "Falling Lintel" events. Snow falls throughout the day.

Day 4: With dawn comes a short respite from the storm. Run "Gathering Wood" and "Fallen Icons". Around midnight, Ythel unleashes his final revenge upon Ruan (Encounter 8). This triggers Encounters 9 – 16 and leads to the final confrontation in Part 3.

Spellcasting: Some of the events occur at night, which means they may disrupt the PCs' rest. Spellcasting PCs who have their rest disrupted may not be able to prepare spells the next morning, which could put them at a disadvantage in subsequent encounters. However, remember that only strenuous exercise interferes with a spellcaster's rest.

TROUBLESHOOTING

The PCs may decide the challenge posed by Ythel and his minions is too great for them to overcome. If they discuss their plans with Ruan he begs them to stay, but if they really wish to leave he does not stop them; simply describe their terrible journey to Swallowfeld.

Once the winter storm dies down the PCs can return to the priory, if they wish. Returning PCs discover a massacre – the clergy lie dead in pools of their own gore and more than one of them shows signs of being horribly tortured. In addition, the priory has been comprehensively looted and all items of religious significance have either been stolen or destroyed.

Captured Half-Goblins: The capture of one or more of the half-goblins in Encounter 1, does not necessarily derail the adventure. Malvenos wants to slay the prisoner immediately, but Ruan restrains him arguing that no matter how foul the creature deserves a fair trial. The prisoner is tied up and locked in the stables. Unless guarded all night, the creature is found

“AND I WOULD HAVE GOT AWAY WITH IT...”

As it becomes clear to the PCs that something is terribly amiss at the priory, they will likely take steps to catch the perpetrator of these strange events. When adjudicating events, remember that Ythel is not stupid and that he won't take excessive risks – he has waited too long to exact his revenge to fail now.

The timings of the events in Encounter 5 - 7 are approximate – allow Ythel some leeway in instigating each event. If the PCs are extremely clever and catch Ythel red-handed, the adventure does not necessarily have to end. Ythel tries to talk his way out of the situation. As circumstances allow he could claim to be possessed by a demon, be merely playing a practical joke or that another of the clergy (probably Tomas) forced him to do. (In this last case, he hints of some terrible shame in his past making up details as appropriate to elicit the maximum amount of sympathy and to explain Tomas' alleged blackmail).

In all cases, he speaks eloquently and begs for the chance to redeem himself. This is nothing more than an act, however, and he reverts to his plan as soon as he is able. If imprisoned, he convinces one of the other clerics to release him and promptly disappears into the Deep Caves where he marshals his minions (to attack that very night).

If the PCs slay Ythel, the threat of those creatures lurking in the Deep Caves remains. Thrown into disarray by Ythel's death, they surge forth from the darkness to sack the priory. The attack is uncoordinated; the goblins hate the half-goblins and ghouls try to eat everyone but the threat to the priory is real. The clergy will need the PCs' help to repel the attack.

dead the next morning, its throat cut. Initially, suspicions focus on Malvenos, but he angrily rejects any such accusations. The incident causes no small resentment among the clergy – and some of them wonder if the PCs were responsible in some way.

In any event, the half-goblins know little of value.

Catching Goblins: Interrogating captured goblins is difficult. All are extremely uncooperative and only speak Goblin. Initially hostile to the PCs, their attitude must be changed to at least friendly to get any information from them. If the PCs get them to talk (through Diplomacy, Intimidate or magic) they give a brief summary of Ythel's plan – that he plans to torture and kill Ruan before looting the priory, but they do not know his motivations. They can also provide a brief description of the caves below the priory, but wilfully omit details of any dangers therein.

TRAPPED IN THE PRIORY

The weather plays a pivotal part in *Retribution*. Not only does the storm isolate the priory, but the numbing cold and howling wind play upon the nerves of those trapped within its crumbling walls. During the PCs' time at the priory, make certain to often describe the storm's effects.

PCs venturing outside suffer the storm's full force (use the rules in Encounter 2 and 3 to simulate the storm). Try not to kill the PCs with weather; such a death is no fun. Make it clear to them, however, that such travel is extremely dangerous. (If the PCs decide to flee the priory because events become too dangerous for them, allow them to reach Swallowfeld cold and tired, but alive.)

Nearest Village: The nearby village, Swallowfeld (page 10-11), is approximately eight miles away. A small coastal settlement of 500 folk dominated by agriculture and fishing, little help is to be had at the village. A small garrison of troops keeps marauders slipping from the Tangled Wood at bay, but their commander, Sir Talek Annear (LN male human fighter 4), is not inclined to ride to the priory through such terrible weather.

The village has a single trader, the sly and greedy Tryfena (N female doppelganger rogue 3). She stocks most items of interest to travellers and villager alike, but has few weapons among her inventory. A lone priest, the handsome but superstitious Kenan Dobel (LN male human cleric 3), sees to the villager's spiritual needs.

THE PRIORY OF CYMER

The priory has stood for almost 300 years. Its founder, Cymer, came to this place after following a vision in which Darlen warned him of a terrible darkness that would one day manifest itself in the area. Travelling to this remote area, Cymer discovered a small cavern that plunged deep into the headland's bedrock. Believing this would be the source of the great evil, Cymer founded his priory above it gathering a small group of clerics dedicated to defeating the evil should it appear. Local people aided in the priory's construction and many attended the services to hear the message of eternal vigilance against the gathering darkness.

When the priory was built, the worship of Darlen was at its zenith. Pilgrims, bringing much wealth, came here to worship in the Justicar's Hall. However, over the years, the prophesised evil failed to materialize and the local folk lost faith with the priory's clergy. As the number of visitors dwindled so did the priory's treasury and the buildings slowly slipped into disrepair.

FEATURES OF THE PRIORY

The priory has several generic features:

Illumination: At night, most areas of the priory are unlit. During the day, because of the weather, window shutters remain firmly shuttered. Even then, enough light filters inside to dimly illuminate most areas.

Signs of Neglect: Portray the priory as having an aura of faded grandeur about it and of suffering from neglect and poor maintenance.

D8

1	The door to this chamber is badly hung. It requires a DC 10 Strength check to open. When open, it hangs crazily from one hinge.
2	The mortar in this area's wall is crumbling alarmingly.
3	Dust occasionally sifts down from the ceiling.
4	This shutters on this chamber's window rattle alarmingly and often bang open in strong winds.
5	The shutters on this chamber's window are nailed shut.
6	The floorboards here sag and creak alarmingly.
7	A faded painting – possibly a landscape – adorns the wall.
8	Water drips from the ceiling and runs down one wall.

Empty Areas: Some chambers are effectively abandoned. Such areas normally contain old, disused furniture and dust thickly covers the floor. Signs of neglect and damage are more evident. Ceilings may leak, any paintings have long since faded and flagstones may be cracked. Improvise such details as appropriate.

Ceilings: The ceilings in most areas are 9 ft. high.

Floor: Ground floor rooms have flagstone floors. In most areas these remain in good repair, but in places (normally in

unused areas) the flags have buckled and cracked hindering movement (it costs 2 squares of movement to enter such areas).

Higher floors have wooden floorboards laid over thick, joists. While in general good repair most floorboards creak alarmingly when stood upon (-2 on Stealth checks).

External Walls: The priory's outer walls are very thick, in places up to 10 ft. thick. The snow and ice make them slick and difficult to scale (DC 25 Climb).

Internal Walls: Internal walls are of sturdy brick (hardness 8, hp 90, DC 35 Break); crumbling mortar provides hand and footholds for would-be climbers (DC 20 Climb check). Most walls are unadorned, although in places faded remnant of paintings depicting various events of religious significance can still be made out.

Shuttered Windows: Narrow window slits high up in the walls illuminate ground floor rooms. First floor rooms have normal, shuttered (hardness 5, hp 10) windows that can be barred from the inside (DC 15 Break check).

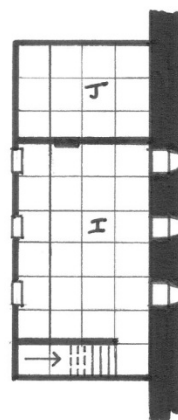
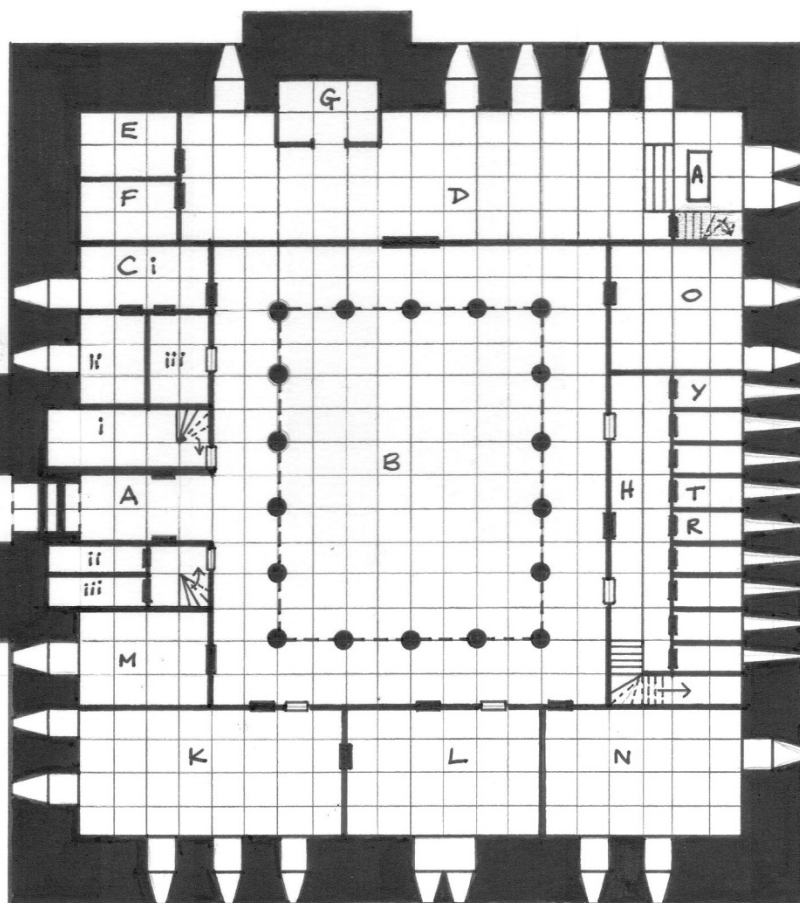
External Doors: External doors are of stout wood reinforced with iron bands (hardness 5, hp 20). They can all be barred (DC 25 Break) from the inside.

Internal Doors: Internal doors are of stout wood (hardness 5, hp 15, DC 16 Break). Most cannot be barred.

KEYED LOCATIONS

Subsequent pages present the following areas:

- A: Saint's Gate
- B: Cloisters and Garth
- C: Ruan's Chambers
- D: Justicar's Hall
- E: Vestry
- F: Sacristy
- G: Bell Tower
- H: Chapter-House
- I: Library
- J: Treasury
- K: Frater
- L: Kitchen
- M: Stables
- N: Guest Lodgings
- O: Infirmary
- Cemetery
- Fields and Gardens
- Undercroft



A: SAINT'S GATE

A single gate (hp 60; DC 25 Break [DC 28 when barred]) set into a stoutly built gatehouse pierces the priory's curtain wall. Intricate scrollwork around the gate tells the story of Cymer, his vision and the building of the priory. A rope pull, leading to a bell in the gatehouse, dangles by the gate.

The gatehouse has two floors. The ground floor comprises an unused barracks (i), storeroom (ii) and armoury (iii). These chambers contain nothing but dust and mouldering furniture that hints at their former roles. Malvenos' quarters (iv) are on the first floor in the sparsely-furnished quarters once reserved for the garrison commander. A winding stair connects the two floors and provides access to the battlemented roof.

B: CLOISTERS AND GARTH

Snow lies deeply heaped in the garth. Covered walkways surround it on all sides. Slender pillars support the cloister's roof. Most of the pillars are plain and unadorned. A few have scurrilous graffiti carved by bored travellers or rebellious students. Ornate scrollwork decorates the pillars in front of the Justicar's Hall. A few benches stand in the cloisters.

In good weather, the clerics gather here to discuss matters of faith in the open air.

C: RUAN'S CHAMBERS

This small building features an office (i), living quarters (ii) and private chapel (iii). All are small and austere. Ruan receives visitors in his office, but does not allow anyone into the other chambers. He keeps no treasure here beyond his personal possessions.

A DC 10 Perception check reveals a scourge set upon the wall behind Ruan's desk. (He keeps the scourge as a reminder of the errors of his youth). A subsequent DC 15 Perception check spots dried blood upon it. A DC 15 Heal check reveals the blood is very old. If asked, Ruan explains the scourge is a reminder of his past stupidity. A PC making a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check remembers members of the Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way use scourges to wipe away their sins

D: JUSTICAR'S HALL

The High Altar, flanked by three statues on either side representing important saints, dominates this chamber. Dusty pews fill much of the remainder of the hall.

Except for periods of worship, the hall is normally empty except when one of the clergy cleans and dusts the chamber.

More Information: Refer to Encounter 8 for more information regarding this area, ignoring references to looting goblins, the attack and such like.

E: VESTRY

Lines of pegs stud the walls of this small chamber. Upon four hang ceremonial robes of white edged with silver trim.

F: SACRISTY

Shelves line the walls of this small chamber. Dusty prayer and hymn books as well as a plethora of small icons (many suffering minor damage) fill the shelves. A small coffer holds six vials of holy water.

G: BELL TOWER

This small three-storey tower contains the priory's four bells. A wooden ladder (DC 0 Climb) propped under a trapdoor provides access to the tower's upper reaches. Four thick ropes hang down through a hole in the middle of the ceiling.

The upper storeys are dusty and have evidently lain all but undisturbed for years. More ladders, stacked against one wall enable access to the bells.

H: CHAPTER-HOUSE

This two-storey building houses the clergy, their library and treasury. Only Ythel, Tomas and Rosenn dwell here; the other chambers are empty. Although each of the occupied chambers has minor personal touches (detailed below) they are essentially identical.

Occupied Chambers: These rooms have a plain single bed, a chest for the occupant's possessions and a small shrine-niche for personal prayer and guidance.

Unoccupied Chambers: These areas – furnished as occupied chambers – are dusty and obviously unused. The furniture within is worn and sagging. Piles of broken furniture fill several of the chambers.

Tomas' Chamber (T): A weapons and armour rack stands against one wall of this immaculately tidy chamber; Tomas' weapons (a masterwork longsword and spear) and armour (masterwork splintmail and large steel shield) are of high quality and in good repair. A well-thumbed book – *Art of Command* by Anudian Restiral – lies atop his bed.

Rosenn's Chamber (R): This chamber is messy and disorganised. The chest is open and contains a disorganized mass of personal possessions and clothes. A DC 20 Perception check spots a bloody knife hidden within a bloodstained shift. (This is the knife she uses to cut herself).

Ythel's Chamber (Y): Ythel's chamber is tidy in the extreme. His shrine-niche contains the usual icons and two prayer books. A DC 20 Perception check reveals the books are dusty – they have obviously not been opened in some time. Ythel keeps nothing damning in his chambers; he keeps all such objects in the Deep Caves.

I: LIBRARY

Sagging bookshelves crammed with scores of large, dusty books line the walls from floor to ceiling. Six reading desks stand in the chamber's centre.

This chamber contains the priory's accumulated holy texts and other esoteric tomes. Most of the books are well-worn and obviously old – no new books have been added to the library for some time. Unless travellers demonstrate their good intentions to the priory and its folk, Ruan does not allow strangers to peruse the library.

Several books lie open on the desks. Most are religious treatises. One, *On Cymer*, is a short account of the priory's founding. It mentions the discovery of the Deep Caves. Anyone spending an hour leafing through the book discovers references to the caves, but no mention of how they may be reached.

J: TREASURY

A sturdy iron-bound door (AC 2, hardness 8, hp 60, DC 28 Break) protected by a large, ornate lock (AC 11, hardness 15, hp 30, DC 30 Disable Device), to which Ruan holds the only key, wards this chamber. The small, windowless room is all but empty. Shelves along one wall hold a number of dusty religious icons, four small sacks and a bunch of keys. Several empty chests cluster in the centre of the chamber.

Treasure: The shelves hold a score of religious icons. Some are of gold and quite bulky while others are little more than painted statues. The PCs could raise 600 gp from selling these but all very obviously belong to the priory.

BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY

The library contains many books. Examples include:

- **Leril's Grimoire:** A thick tome detailing fantastic and terrifying creatures (manticores, dragons, trolls and so on). It is luridly illustrated.
- **The True and Present Light:** This is a thin, pamphlet-style book written to educate the reader on the basic tenants of Darlen's faith.
- **Collected Wisdoms:** A collection of essays and sermons given by high priests. The book is dog-eared and annotated with comments in a number of different hands.
- **The Encroaching Darkness:** This alarmist tract written in a very apocalyptic style warns of the dangers posed by the "malign forces of darkness and corruption." Chief among them is the god Braal.
- **Lexicon of the Dead:** This book describes in graphic detail the lesser undead (zombies, skeletons, ghouls and ghosts) and provides details of their strengths and weaknesses.
- **Other books include:** *Restimon's Commentary*, *Dorian's Lexicon of Dark Tongues*, *Ubiquitous Truths* and *The Justicar's Breviary*.

The sacks contain the priory's coin-hoard: 4,027 cp, 876 sp, and 465 gp.

K: FRATER

Many long tables and benches furnish this large chamber. A shuttered window overlooks the cloisters and garth. This room can seat many more people than currently gather here. The clergy only use the table nearest the fire; dust covers the rest.

Except during meal times, this place is abandoned.

L: KITCHEN

A huge fireplace dominates the kitchen. Sideboards run around much of the rest of the room. Various cooking utensils hang from the walls. The kitchen is the warmest room in the priory and when it gets bitterly cold, many of the clerics gather here for warmth and companionship.

Subterranean Chambers: These chambers – cut into the bedrock of the hill – are accessible via narrow, steep staircases. The stored food is basic, but wholesome. This area does not intersect with the Deep Caves.

A side chamber contains several small barrels of fermenting weak ale. Five finished barrels stand along another wall. Paraphernalia required for brewing covers a workbench.

M: STABLES

A row of unused stalls, their floor covered with old, brittle straw, stand at the rear of this low, one-storey building. This area has been unused for months. A storeroom contains a small supply of mouldering grain as well as all the paraphernalia required for tending horses. A dusty, dilapidated cart stands in one corner.

N: GUEST LODGINGS

This low, single-storey building shows serious signs of neglect. Much of the stonework is crumbling and the roof sags dangerously. Shutters, firmly shut against the incessant wind, keep the foul weather at bay.

Before the PCs' arrival, this building hasn't been used for months. Consequently, the rooms are extremely dusty. One of the clergy can provide the PCs with the relevant equipment to clean their chambers. He also directs the PCs to the stables where they can find hay to refill their mattresses.

Common Chamber: This large chamber features four bays each of which can house three travellers. Four-foot high wooden partitions separate the bays. Each bay features sagging beds complete with mouldering straw mattress. Spiders and mice are commonplace. Small pieces of graffiti – traveller's names and so on – decorate the walls near the beds.

More Information: Refer to Encounter 8 for more information regarding this area's features.

O: INFIRMARY

Rows of beds set against the walls fill this large chamber. When the PCs arrive at the priory, Eiravel is recuperating here. Even when she is well, she does not transfer her belongings to the guest quarters, preferring seclusion.

The clergy keep this area in a state of semi-repair in readiness for the sudden arrival of an injured or sick traveller. A small storeroom contains various equipment of use to healer.

Treasure: The storeroom contains the equivalent of two healer's kits. A PC making a DC 20 Perception check finds a forgotten dusty glass vial containing a slightly sparkling white liquid (a *potion of cure light wounds* [faint; DC 16 Knowledge [arcana] conjuration [healing]; DC 21 Spellcraft identifies]).

CEMETERY

Buried beneath deep drifts, the low walls of the cemetery are no more than indistinct humps in the snow. Carven stones poking above the drifts mark graves. A lonely tree, its boughs laden with snow, stands in one corner.

Two score graves – all obscured by drifting snow – dot the cemetery. If a PC spends one hour scooping away the snow, it

becomes obvious that several of the graves have been dug open and the corpses removed. (This is the source of Ythel's undead minions.) Few clues remain to determine the grave-robber's identity, but a DC 20 Perception check reveals one of the gravemarkers has been defaced with a cloven skull. A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check confirms this is Braal's symbol.

FIELDS AND GARDENS

Extensive fields and gardens – now bounded by tumbled walls – once surrounded the priory, but with its decline, they have reverted to nature; nothing of interest remains. Snow covers this area and no comes here during the storm (except to reach the nearby woodlands for firewood).

THE UNDERCROFT

No one treads the hallowed, dust-shrouded halls of the Undercroft without Ruan's permission, something that he rarely grants. The clergy only enter the undercroft to bury fallen comrades (which has not happened for years).

Refer to Encounter 16 for more details.

DAILY LIFE AT CYMER

The worship of Darlen dominates life at the Priory of Cymer. Services begin and end each day.

Morning: The faithful arise early and file into the Justicar's Hall (Area D) for morning service. Afterwards, they break their fast in the frater (Area K) with a simple meal of bread and cheese before moving to the chapter-house (Area H) to read holy texts and to discuss matters of faith for several hours. Here, Curate Roan presides over the other clerics teaching religious lessons and answering their questions.

Afternoon: The clerics prepare food, struggle outside to cut wood and complete other daily, mundane vital tasks.

Evening: As dusk falls, the clergy share a cooked meal before evening service (again in the Justicar's Hall). The clerics then enjoy a few hours of personal time before retiring.

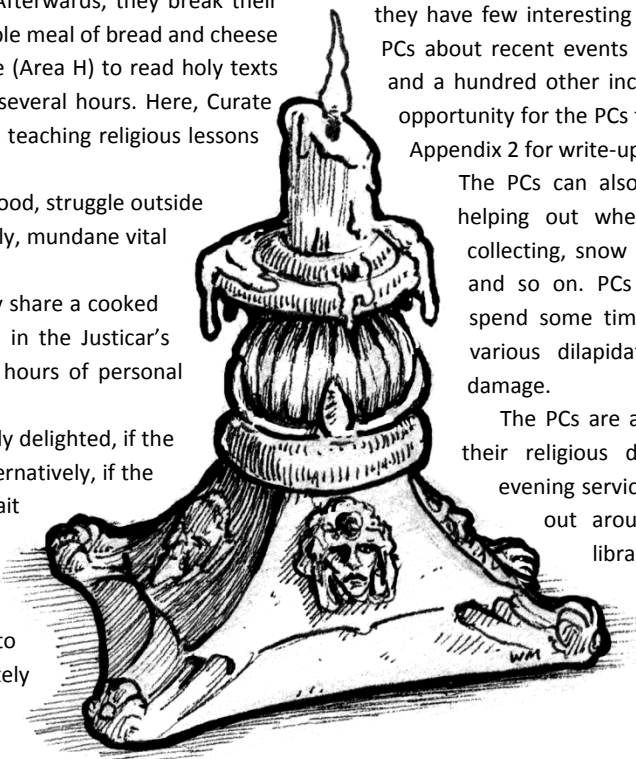
The PCs: The clergy are seemingly delighted, if the PCs join in with their daily tasks. Alternatively, if the PCs wish they can simply try to wait out the storm in their lodgings or could spend some time in library perusing the dusty shelves. PCs with relevant skills could also try to make some (of the desperately needed) repairs to the priory.

THINGS TO DO AT CYMER

Initially, time passes slowly at Cymer. Although the weather traps PCs in the priory, the clergy are glad of the company as they have few interesting visitors. Initially, they question the PCs about recent events in the outside world, their religion and a hundred other inconsequential things. This is a good opportunity for the PCs to get to know their hosts. (Refer to Appendix 2 for write-ups of all the clergy).

The PCs can also curry favour with their hosts by helping out wherever possible. Wood still needs collecting, snow must be cleared from the cloisters and so on. PCs with the appropriate skills could spend some time performing maintenance on the various dilapidated buildings or repairing storm damage.

The PCs are also welcome to join the clerics for their religious discussions and for morning and evening services. Ruan also allows any PC helping out around the priory to investigate the library and to read any books therein (but he does not permit them to remove any books – they are far too precious for that).



4: MEETING RUAN

As Malvenos leads the PCs to meet Ruan, they get their first view of the priory. Read:

Beyond the priory's walls lies a snow shrouded courtyard surrounded on all sides by cloisters. It is still bitterly cold, but here the wind cannot reach you. Your guide leads you to a plain wooden door upon which he knocks. After a few moments, he opens it and ushers you into a comfortable but plain office. Behind a large writing desk sits a frail old man. As you enter, he sets down the book he was reading and rises unsteadily to his feet.

The purpose of the PCs' visit to the priory determines the course of their conversation with Ruan. Ad-lib such details as necessary, remembering Ruan happily welcomes all travellers and provides them sanctuary. Regretfully, however, such a large group has not used the priory's guest quarters in years. Thus, they are dirty and ill prepared; chamber pots are rusty, the beds' thin sheets are mouldy and mildewed, and the mattresses are full of old, stale straw. Ruan can spare none of his folk to help clean them because they are currently preparing the priory to weather the sudden storm. He asks Malvenos to show them to the Guest Lodgings (Area N) and begs their forgiveness that they must prepare their own quarters. Fresh straw can be had in the stables where also can be found brushes and other cleaning implements.

Before they leave, Ruan invites them to join him and his acolytes for dinner. The tolling of the Night Bell announces dinner; when it sounds the PCs should make their way to the frater.

He also asks them to refrain from wandering the priory's halls fully armed and armoured as Cymer is a place of peace and contemplation. To ignore his request would be rude in the extreme.

DESIGNER'S NOTE

In their initial meeting with Ruan, the elderly curate asks the PCs to refrain from wearing full adventuring regalia around the priory as it is a place of peace. If they refuse his request, they earn his disapproval but he does not throw them out into the storm. Ask the PCs to list exactly what they normally carry while in the priory and if they are taking any special precautions at night such as setting a guard. While they are highly unlikely to engage in combat before Encounter 8 this reminds the players they are not in a dungeon. It can also have the subtle effect of hinting that danger – from some currently unknowable source – is lurking nearby; after all this information wouldn't be relevant if fighting wasn't going to take place!

SETTLING IN

Before the Night Bell tolls and dinner begins, the PCs can wander about the priory as they desire. This is a great opportunity to introduce the clergy one at a time. Simply introducing them all at dinner will confuse many players and make it harder for them to differentiate between NPCs during subsequent encounters.

As much of Part 2 comprises roleplay and investigation, it is vital the PCs get a feel for each NPC. Keep this in mind when running each encounter. Introduce the NPCs slowly, giving the players time to note who is who and so on. Play up the NPCs' personalities and mannerisms in this initial meeting so the players get a strong first impression of each individual.

When the PCs arrive, the clergy are engaged in a variety of tasks. They can also move about the priory, however, if the PCs do not visit the relevant locations. Perhaps Rosenn delivers a book to Ruan or Ythel takes Tomas a drink, for example.

Eiravel: She remains in the infirmary recovering from her injury. If anyone speaks with her, she pretends to be in great pain. She doesn't want to speak with any outsiders, fearing they have come to arrest or kill her.

Malvenos: Once he shows the PCs to their lodgings, Malvenos returns to his quarters and his vigil. However, from his vantage point he keeps an eye on the guest lodgings (Area N) and notes the PCs' movement. PCs making a DC 10 Perception check see him at the window watching them.

Rosenn: Working in the library, Rosenn is among her beloved books. The arrival of strangers surprises her; it is obvious to anyone she is scared. If a half-orc is among the group, she flees to her chambers and locks herself in for several hours.

Ruan: The aged curate remains in his chambers pondering the PCs' arrival. By the time dinner begins, he has decided to speak with the PCs about the troubles besetting the priory.

Tomas: Initially unaware of the PCs' arrival Tomas remains in the Justicar's Hall ringing the bell to guide lost travellers to the priory. He greets any strangers and immediately tries to dominate proceedings by making a number of suggestions about how to improve their quarters and so on.

Ythel: Ythel is in the kitchen preparing dinner. The PCs' arrival surprises him for a moment, but he composes himself quickly. A DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals his discomfort. If challenged about his reaction, he blames his nerves and the storm's sudden onset.

INTERLUDE: A CHEERLESS SUPPER

The tolling of the Night Bell announces dinner. When the PCs arrive at the frater, read:

A large, cold room stands before you. Evidently meant to accommodate far more people than currently sit within some of the dining room's tables have obviously stood unused for years. At your arrival, the five people sat at the far table turn to face you. Ruan, a smile on his face, rises and gestures you forward.

This is the first chance the PCs have to interact with all their hosts (although PCs ranging about the priory in search of essentials for their quarters may, at the GM's discretion, meet one or more of the clerics).

Ythel has cooked the evening meal and serves it once everyone is seated. He serves Ruan first and then the PCs followed by his companions. At the end of the meal, everyone but Ruan tidies away.

While filling, dinner – bread, cheese and potage (a thick vegetable soup) – is cheerless; the subdued clergy speak of little beyond the storm's sudden onset. Some small heat comes from the frater's fire, but the room is cold. As the wind rattles the building's roof tiles, conversation gradually moves from the weather to the queer events of recent days. Ruan deliberately steers the conversation in that direction as he hopes the PCs will – perhaps out of a sense of duty or boredom – offer to investigate. During the ensuing conversation, Ruan listens carefully and interjects comments to move the conversation along if necessary. The other clergy are very respectful of Ruan.

Some of the acolytes are nervous about these events – the priory is far from the nearby villages and any aid would take hours if not days to arrive. They fear marauders stalk the woods and that they are too few to safeguard the priory's remaining treasures. Tomas is notable exception to this, believing that Darlen would never allow his holy sanctuary to be defiled.

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

Either during supper or over the coming days, the PCs may wish to find out more about the strange events of recent days. This section provides useful information regarding these subjects and gives the PCs insights into the backdrop to upcoming events.

If the players enjoy role-playing, use the information here in conjunction with the NPC write-ups in Appendix 2. Otherwise, consider

allowing them to make a series of Diplomacy or Bluff checks to gain the relevant information. Read or paraphrase sections in italics as appropriate.

LIGHTS WITHIN THE WOODS

Ruan relates that strange lights have recently been seen moving through the nearby woods at night.

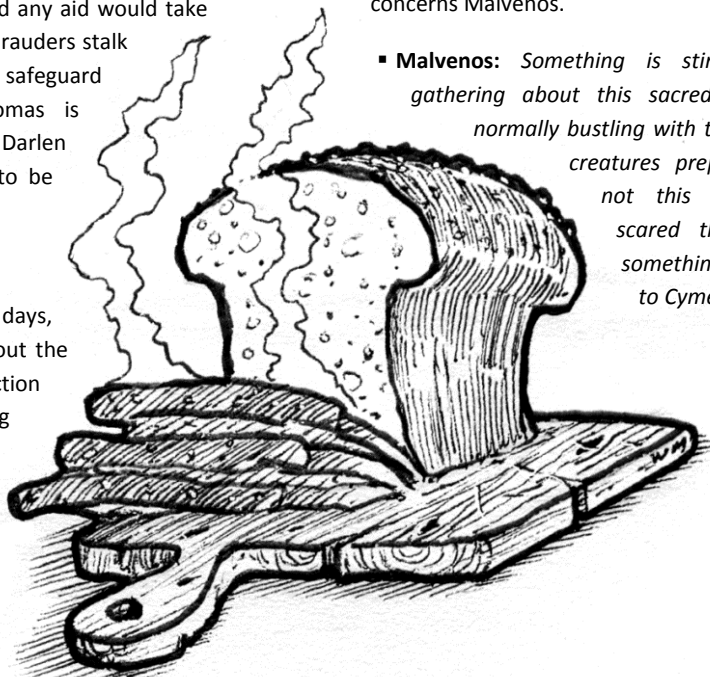
- **Malvenos:** *I saw the lights in the trees about a week ago. Saw them twice, but couldn't tell what they were. The lights seem very dim and never left the trees so I didn't investigate further. Strange things dwell in the deeper parts of the woods – goblins and worse – and I thought it could be a trap.*
- **Tomas:** *The lights are nothing to worry about; perhaps a lost hunter or some strange, but natural beast. Malvenos, you worry too much.*
- **Ythel:** *The lights are nothing but the doomed spirits of the savages who claimed these lands centuries ago. They worshipped false gods and eternal damnation is their fate!*

If asked the clergy confess that no one was brave enough to investigate the lights and although a (cursory) search of the forest was made at daybreak, no sign of what caused the lights has been found. They add that the lights have not been seen for several days.

THE QUIET WOODS

Even though winter has arrived with the sudden storm, the surrounding forests have been quieter than normal. This concerns Malvenos.

- **Malvenos:** *Something is stirring; some doom is gathering about this sacred place. The forest is normally bustling with the sounds of woodland creatures preparing for winter, but not this year. Something has scared the creatures away – something unnatural has come to Cymer.*



CONVERSATION & CONVERSION

Use the brief notes here in conjunction with the information in Appendix 1 to portray the PCs' fellow diners.

Remember although the folk detailed below all ostensibly worship Darlen (with the exception of Eiravel), they do not share identical opinions. They have disagreements like any other group and they are not shy at airing them in front of strangers.

If some of the PCs do not worship Darlen, the clergy politely enquire after their religious beliefs and briefly talk about Darlen. Such PCs are the target of multiple "soft" conversion attempts over the next few days.

Eiravel: The tiefling does not appear at dinner. As the PCs seat themselves, Rosenn scurries to the infirmary carrying a covered tray. She returns a few minutes later. Any of the clergy can relate they have an injured female guest. They do not allow anyone to visit her until the next morning as her injuries yet weaken her.

Malvenos: The half-elf initially assumes the PCs are here at his father's behest. Accordingly, he is very defensive around the PCs and speaks little; only providing the bare minimum of information. If, however, the PCs have a woman among the party with an above average Charisma, Malvenos is somewhat more approachable. He has been starved of female company since coming to the priory and as an incorrigible flirt concentrates his attention on any female guests.

Rosenn: A shy, timid woman, Rosenn says little at the dinner and at no time allows herself to be alone with any of the newcomers. If any half-orcs are among the party a DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals she is very afraid of something. She only speaks when asked a direct question and excuses herself early, claiming she is tired.

Ruan: The aging curate is genuinely happy to have guests as it does his old heart good to aid folk in need. He also sees Darlen's hand in the PCs' arrival and hopes they will uncover the truth behind recent events. He is aware that some of his acolytes can be difficult to deal with and can come across a bit like a parent apologising for a child's idiosyncrasies.

Tomas: Arrogant and overbearing, Tomas nevertheless takes great pains to agree with pretty much everything Ruan says. A decisive man of action he tries to "help" the PCs make plans and offers lots of advice. If the PCs reject his "sage" advice, he takes this as a personal insult and sulks.

Ythel: Ythel is cautious around the PCs and a DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals he is not happy. (Of course, he is not happy because strangers have suddenly arrived mere days before he wreaks his final revenge upon Ruan). If asked about this, he replies he believes the storm was sent by some sinister power bent on the priory's destruction.

Additional questioning reveals the forest has been this way for a couple of weeks. Only Malvenos believes this to be a problem; the other folk are not as in tune with nature as the half-elf and dismiss his worries as paranoia.

MISSING ICONS

Over the last few months a half-dozen gold and silver icons have gone missing from around the priory. The remainder now sit in the priory's locked Treasury (Area J). Except Eiravel, the priory has had no other visitors.

- **Tomas:** *Someone has stolen six of our most precious icons – representations of Darlen himself! This blasphemy must not be allowed to stand.*
- **Malvenos:** *I have searched the priory, but there are so many places such things could be hidden. The thief's identity remains unknown.*

CREATURES AT THE GATE

Two days ago, Malvenos discovered tracks in the mud outside the priory's gate.

- **Malvenos:** *The tracks were plentiful and were made by at least six creatures. I didn't hear anything while they were made, so they must have been stealthy. They seemed to mill about the gate before returning down the trail. They could have been goblins.*
- **Tomas:** *Bah. This is nothing more than peasant children from the nearby village here on a dare, perhaps to steal our treasure or play some pathetic joke. If I catch them, they'll get a sound thrashing!*
- **Rosenn:** *Malvenos thinks we are safe behind the priory's walls; no creatures of the forest can reach us here. What do you think? Are we safe?*

Malvenos is not a skilled tracker and although he managed to follow the tracks toward the forest, he quickly lost them.

AFTERMATH

After dinner, Ruan invites the PCs to join him and his acolytes for the evening service in the Justicar's Hall (Area D) before retiring for the night. Remember this is the first time the PCs likely see the priory's spiritual heart. Apart from the howl of the storm, nothing disturbs the PCs overnight, although it gets very cold in the predawn hours.

The next morning, the dawn is cold and hard; the storm yet rages dumping more snow about the priory's walls. No one has slept particularly well.

Proceed to Encounter 5.

5: DAY TWO

Two strange events occur on the first day the PCs are trapped at Cymer.

Weather: On day two, the day dawns cold and bright. By mid-morning, however, the wind and snow returns. The atrocious weather continues throughout the day.

5.1: DEAD BIRDS

Timing: Day two, early morning.

Location: The Garth (Area B).

Event: Rosenn finds the tiny, frozen crumpled corpses of four birds atop freshly fallen snow in the garth and becomes very upset. PCs in the nearby area become aware of the situation after Rosenn cries for her companions to come and see what she has found. (If the PCs do not investigate, a cleric mentions the dead birds soon afterwards). It appears the birds simply froze to death; however, a DC 14 Heal check reveals discolouration around their beaks suggestive of poisoning. Subsequent questioning of the clerics reveals the priory has a rat and mice problem and the clerics sometimes leave out poisoned food to deal with them. It is possible the birds ate this poisoned food. (The poison is kept in the kitchen store, but it is not possible to determine if any is missing).

5.2: SOUNDS IN THE NIGHT

Timing: Day two, just before midnight.

Location: Justicar's Hall (Area D).

Event: After the PCs retire to bed, their sleep is untroubled until just before midnight when a distant banging sound (the hall's main door banging in the wind) wakes any PC making a DC 10 Perception check. If none of the PCs investigate, the sound stops after a couple of minutes. If the PCs reach the hall within five minutes, they arrive before Tomas enters the hall to investigate. As far as he knows, his fellows are all abed in their quarters.

If one or more of the PCs investigates, read:

Closer to the Justicar's Hall, the banging sound gets louder. Atop the snow-slick steps you easily make out the hall's main door banging in the wind. Beyond, darkness shrouds the interior.

Once the PCs enter the hall, they discover the frozen, mutilated corpse of a fox partially hidden by a small heap of windblown snow. A DC 15 Heal check reveals the fox's heart is missing (PCs searching the area do not find it). Unfortunately, because of the condition of the body it is impossible to tell when the fox was killed. A PC making a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check knows that worshippers of Braal often cut out their sacrifices' heart and that to them a fox signifies the hunt.

A DC 21 Survival or Perception check outside the door reveals a partially obscured Medium-sized footprint leading away from the hall, but falling snow has obscured its fellows.

If the PCs investigate the chapter-house, Rosenn refuses to open her door to the PCs – the banging has brought back terrible memories of bandits breaking into her house – but will speak with them through it. Ythel opens the door, ostensibly very tired. Ruan and Malvenos are asleep in their chambers, while Eiravel slumbers in the infirmary.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If none of the PCs investigates, no one wakes them. However, this event is the only topic of conversation over breakfast the next day. However, there is no physical evidence for the PCs to examine – the corpse has been disposed of and the snow swept from the hall.

TORMENT

Before launching the final phase of his plan – a bloody assault by his goblin and undead minions – Ythel wants to cause as much mental and physical anguish as possible. To that end, he has devised a number of strange events, accidents and portents to sap the will of his fellow priests.

The events occur in the order they appear in the adventure text. Each event includes notes on its timing, location, individuals involved and so on. The GM should modify them as necessary, keeping in mind the objective of building an atmosphere of fear and suspicion among those trapped within the priory.

Use the information here to facilitate play over the next three days. When investigating these events and moving about the priory, allow the PCs plenty of time to chat with the residents. During this portion of play, emphasise the terrible weather, the isolation and the aura of faded glory hanging over the priory.

The PCs' arrival slightly delays Ythel's plans as he seeks to learn as much as possible about the newcomers as possible. Ythel is subtle, however, and does not directly reveal his sinister interest. He acts politely, doing little direct questioning himself, instead preferring to "harmlessly gossip" with his fellows.

During these events, keep in mind the personalities and goals of the priory's staff, referring to their write-ups (Appendix 1) for more information.

Eiravel: It is highly likely Eiravel comes under suspicion at some point. When portraying her, remember she is suffering from being poisoned and that she is a wanted thief in the nearby village of Swallowfeld. Thus, she is quiet and subdued. A DC 20 Sense Motive checks reveals she is hiding something.

6: DAY THREE

Two strange incidents occur on the third day. During this day, it should become increasingly obvious that something or someone is causing these strange incidents to occur. However, because the clergy move around during the day in pursuit of their duties it should be near impossible to work out who is responsible.

Weather: A howling wind and driving snow beset the priory for most of the day. The moan of the wind gets on the clergy's nerves; several describing it as the moans of the restless dead come to haunt the living.

6.1: OPEN SHUTTERS

Timing: Day three, early morning.

Location: Ruan's Lodgings (Area C).

Event: After breakfast, Ythel creeps into Ruan's chambers and opens the shutters. Subsequently, much snow blows into the chamber, soaking Ruan's bed and ruining several rugs.

Once Ruan discovers this, he asks the other clerics to clean up the mess (which they do). PCs that help earn Ruan's thanks.

If asked, he is certain that when he left the room the shutters were shut and barred. After a slow search of the chamber, he concludes nothing is missing. The incident upsets him, however, and he remains quiet and subdued for the rest of the day.

6.2: FALLING LINTEL

Timing: Day three, morning.

Location: Outside Ythel's chamber (Area H).

Event: Ythel orchestrates this event to misdirect suspicion away from himself. Over the last few weeks, he has secretly worked to loosen a large stone from his room's lintel. When no one else is about, he pulls the stone loose and shouts loudly as it crashes to the ground, alerting anyone nearby (at the very least this everyone in the chapter-house).

When others arrive to investigate (and the other clerics eventually do), he breathlessly explains how the stone seemed to leap from the lintel as he passed beneath. Ythel appears shaken, but is unharmed. Stone and plaster dust in his hair and clothes attests to his close call.

- **Foul Play:** A DC 10 Knowledge (engineering) check reveals someone deliberately loosened the stone.
- **Something's Not Right:** A successful Sense Motive check opposed by Ythel's Bluff check (+1) reveals he is holding something back. If pressed, he improvises and reveals he heard a strange whispering sound just before the block fell.
- **Repair The Damage:** Repairing the damage takes three hours and requires a DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check.



7: DAY FOUR

On day four, Ythel is finally ready to unleash his minions onto the priory's occupants. Before he does so, though, Tomas makes a startling discovery outside the priory's walls. Ythel also desecrates the Justicar's Hall in an act of devotion to Braal. He hopes this final act of blasphemy will further unsettle the remaining clergy and, perhaps, give them an inkling of the terrors about to befall the priory.

Weather: On day four, the winds die down and the snow stops falling in the early morning. Glowering storm clouds hang over the priory all day, however, and it is intensely cold. In the afternoon, the wind picks up again, further deepening the great drifts about the priory's walls.

7.1: GATHERING WOOD

Timing: Day four, morning.

Location: Fringes of the wood near the priory.

Event: At breakfast, Tomas indicates he plans to take advantage of the break in the weather to gather firewood and gratefully accepts any assistance.

Reaching the woods, which are a few hundred yards away, is a hard slog through snowdrifts of varying depths. Once there,

Tomas hacks branches from the trees with a small axe. He piles the cut timber into a wheelbarrow. The work takes about two hours as Tomas wants to cut as much wood as possible – he remarks that it is likely to be a long, cold winter.

- **Tracks:** A DC 17 Survival check reveals a few Small-sized footprints not completely obscured by the overnight snow. (A band of goblins lurked here last night). A subsequent DC 17 Survival check reveals the location and direction of the footprints suggest the creatures watched the priory. Wind and driven snow have obscured all other footprints, making it impossible to determine where they came from (or where they went).

Troubleshooting: If no one accompanies Tomas he returns to the priory with news of the footprints. If asked, he can guide the PCs to the wood so they can investigate. If the PCs tarry until the afternoon, they may get caught in wind-blown snow. By mid-afternoon, the footprints have been erased by the driven snow.



7.2: FALLEN ICONS

Timing: Day four, just before dusk.

Location: Justicar's Hall (Area D).

Event: Ythel creeps into Justicar's Hall, casts *silence* and topples three icons. (The statues each represent either Darlan or an important saint). The statues shatter upon the floor; the faithful discovered the destruction when they gather for evening worship. After smashing three, he has a minor crisis of conscience and leaves without smashing the remaining statues.

When the clergy arrive here for evening service, they discover the desecration. The vandalism affects Ruan deeply, while Tomas is outraged. Malvenos is worried this means some evil intruder is inside the priory and goes off alone to search; he accepts any offer help from the PCs.

As Ythel and Rosenn tidy away the shattered statues (placing them in the stables [Area M] for eventual repair), Ruan explains he believes this is a sign of Darlen's displeasure. He is uncomfortable saying more, but a DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals he is holding something back.

- **Tell Us More, Ruan:** A DC 16 Diplomacy check gets Ruan to explain that in his youth he belonged to the Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way (page 12), He eventually saw the error of his ways and cast off its radical teachings. However, he was a

member for many years and beat and harangued many students. He believes that either Darlen is punishing him for his error or that some demon is testing his devotion.

- **Plinths:** A DC 10 Knowledge (engineering) check reveals the statue's plinths are secure; the statues must have been dislodged by some agency or another; they did not fall by themselves.

DEVELOPMENT

After a subdued evening service, the clergy retire to their beds.

- Rosenn is particularly unnerved by this event and rushes off as soon as it is proper to do so.
- Malvenos sets off to do one final check of the priory and to make certain the outer gates are shut. He returns here ten minutes later and if he catches PCs lurking in the Justicar's Hall – perhaps they are lying in wait in case someone returns to smash the other statues – he is suspicious of their intentions and demands they leave. If they refuse, he leaves, but returns an hour later to check the hall.
- Tomas and Ythel escort Ruan to his chamber before themselves retiring.

Proceed to Encounter 8, when the PCs retire.



8: SCREAMS IN THE DARK (EL 2; XP 600)

Location Guest Lodgings (Area N); **Timing** Day four, around midnight.

This event heralds the final phase of Ythel's dark scheme. In the dead of night, as a gale howls outside, he unleashes his minions into the priory with orders to slay everyone. Concerned the PCs may disrupt his plan, he dispatches a small group of minions to dispose of the outsiders. By the time Grelha shepherds her small band to the guest lodgings, Ythel's attack is well underway.

SET UP

If the PCs are maintaining a watch over the garth, they may see the zombie shambling towards the building. (Brunk and Grelha approach more cautiously; PCs must succeed on a Perception check opposed by the goblins' Stealth checks to notice them). If the PC has low-light vision or darkvision it is immediately apparent something is terribly wrong; other PCs may just assume a cleric is coming to speak with them. Otherwise, this encounter starts when Brunk tries to open the door.

When the zombie reaches the door, Brunk darts forward and tries to open it. If the door is unbarred, he automatically succeeds. Read:

A sudden blast of cold air and the wind's howl jolt you awake. The outside door bangs open and beyond you see several sinister shapes lurking in the storm's gloom.

If Brunk fails (the bar is too heavy for him) any PC making a DC 5 Perception check hears his attempt (sleeping PCs suffer a -10 penalty to this check). If any PC hears Brunk fail to open the door, read:

Above the storm's howl, you hear something scratching at the door.

This provides the PCs with a round of actions before the zombie begins to break the door down. If Brunk fails to open the door, Grelha commands the zombie to smash it down. Because of the door's hardness, this likely takes a minute or so giving the PCs time to prepare (likely by barricading the door or hastily donning armour).

TACTICS

Ythel has ordered Grelha to slay the PCs; Grelha is terrified of Ythel and fully intends to carry out his command.

Zombie: The zombie shambles inside and beats the nearest target to death, moving to the nearest opponent if its target falls. It follows Grelha's commands.

Brunk: Brunk snipes at obvious spellcasters while staying near the door. If the zombie is destroyed, he flees into the

cloisters. There he takes cover and shoots at PCs emerging from the guest quarters.

Grelha: Grelha casts *protection from good* just before the zombie destroys the door and *bleed* once it moves inside. She uses channel energy to heal the zombie and saves *cause fear* for any enemy engaging her in melee. She fights to the death.

AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

Illumination: Darkness cloaks the garth. Inside, the level of illumination is dependent on PC action.

Door: A single door provides access to the guest quarters (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 20, DC 25 Break check if barred). A bar stands propped against the wall nearby.

GRELHA

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

This small, bald humanoid has a flat, soot-stained face, squashed nose and a wide mouth full of fangs. She is clad in studded leather armour.

Female goblin cleric (Baal) 1

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2, Sense Motive +2

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -1; **Escape Artist** +4, **Ride** +6, **Stealth** +12

AC 18, **touch** 14, **flat-footed** 15; **CMD** 13

(+3 armour [mwk studded leather], +3 Dex, +1 shield [buckler], +1 size)

Fort +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

hp 10 (1 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** -1

Melee morningstar +0 (1d6-1) or

Melee Touch touch of evil (3/day) +0 (sickened [1 round])

Ranged light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +4 (1d6/19-20)

Special Actions channel negative energy (3/day; 1d6; DC 10 Will), copycat

Copycat (Sp [3/day; standard]) Grelha creates an illusionary double of herself (as a single *mirror image*); duration 1 round (or until destroyed).

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +3; spontaneous casting [*inflict* spells]; Evil, Trickery)

1st—*bleed*, *cause fear* (DC 13), *protection from good*^P

0—*bleed* (DC 12), *detect magic*, *resistance*

Combat Gear bolts (10), *potion of cure light wounds*, smokestick, tanglefoot bag

Abilities Str 8, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 15, Cha 11

SQ evil aura (faint)

Feats Stealthy

Skills as above plus Knowledge (religion) +3

Languages Goblin

Gear as above plus wooden holy symbol, spell component pouch, belt pouch, 2 gp, 15 sp

The Storm: The storm has several effects on the battle, if it moves out of the guest quarters:

- Characters attempting listen-based Perception checks in the garth suffer a -4 penalty because of the howling wind.
- The swirling snow provides concealment (20% miss chance).
- Ranged attacks made into or out of the garth suffer a -2 penalty because of the wind.
- A character casting spells in the garth must make a DC 5 + spell level concentration check or lose the spell.

Furniture: Six beds stand here. They can be tipped over to provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex) with a DC 10 Strength check. Small creatures under a bed have improved cover (+8 AC, +4 Reflex). Characters leaping atop a bed (DC 8 Acrobatics or by spending 2 squares of movement) gain the benefit of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks).

Wooden Partitions: These 4 ft. high walls (hardness 5, hp 10) provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex). It costs three squares of movement to cross a partition.

INTERROGATING GRELHA OR BRUNK

A PC who can speak Goblin can use Diplomacy, Intimidate or Bluff (against the goblin's Sense Motive) to gain useful information from a captured goblin.

Captured goblins are unfriendly toward the PCs.

HUMAN ZOMBIE

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

A partly decomposed corpse shambles toward you. Grave dirt clings to its body and tattered burial shift. Its cold, dead eyes regard you with merciless indifference.

NE Medium undead

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** 0

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 14

(+2 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

Fort +0, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3

hp 12 (2 HD); **DR** slashing/5

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +4

Melee slam +4 (1d6+4)

Atk Options staggered

Staggered (Ex) Slow and ungainly, a zombie can only take a single move or standard action each round. A zombie can move its speed and attack as a charge action.

Abilities Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10

Feats Toughness^B

Gear rotting burial garments, a gold and silver chain below its burial garments (worth 300 gp)

- **Brunk (DC 23 Diplomacy or DC 11 Intimidate):** Brunk knows of the general plan to capture Ruan and kill everyone else. He can also provide brief details of the Deep Caves.
- **Grelha (DC 25 Diplomacy or DC 13 Intimidate):** Grelha knows more than Brunk. She can relate the information above, but also knows Ythel's name. She has also worshipped Braal with him and knows he has spellcasting powers.

TROUBLESHOOTING

The PCs may not be in the Guest Lodgings. If Ythel knows where they are, run this encounter but adjust the attackers' tactics (remembering Grelha's low intelligence). If one of the PCs is elsewhere, he may witness Ythel's minions creep forth. Ad-lib events as appropriate.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Use the notes below to scale the encounter:

EL 1 (XP400): Remove Brunk.

EL 3 (XP 800): Add one zombies.

AFTERMATH

Once the PCs are victorious, proceed to Interlude: Cymer's Fall. The events are relatively freeform in nature; allow the PCs to explore the priory as they desire, but track how long it takes them to do so: Rosenn's (location H), Eiravel (location O) and Tomas' (location D) survival depends on the PCs' progress.

BRUNK

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

Clad in dirty, but serviceable, studded leather armour this small, squashed-nosed humanoid carries a loaded heavy crossbow.

Male goblin expert (scout) 2

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4, Sense Motive -1

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -1; Acrobatics +7, Climb +4, Ride +6, Stealth +15

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 15

(+3 armour [mwk studded leather], +3 Dex, +1 shield [buckler], +1 size)

Fort +0, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2

hp 9 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +0

Ranged heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.; Point Blank Shot) +5 (1d8/19-20)

Melee dagger +2 (1d3/19-20)

Combat Gear bolts (10), caltrops (2), thunderstone

Abilities Str 10, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6

Feats Point Blank Shot

Skills as above plus Disable Device +8, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (nature) +4

Languages Goblin

Gear as above plus backpack, belt pouch, thieves' tools, sack, 17 sp, 34 cp, 2 gold rings (each worth 100 gp)

INTERLUDE: CYMER'S FALL

Once the PCs have defeated the initial attack upon their persons, they have time to heal, don armour and so on. However, while they do so Ythel's remaining troops are far from idle, looting the priory and torturing and killing its clergy.

THE ATTACK

At the start of this interlude, doom stalks the folk within the priory's walls. As Grelha and her troops attacked the PCs other groups were also abroad in the priory:

- **Ruan (Location C):** One group, led by Ythel, broke into Ruan's lodgings and abducted the aging curate. Captured by Ythel, Ruan is already in the Deep Caves where Ythel is preparing to begin his teacher's last torment.
- **Tomas and Roseen (Location H):** Another group snuck into the chapter-house to deal with Tomas and Rosenn. Trapped in her room and driven mad by terror, a foul half-goblin sorcerer is abusing Rosenn. Ten minutes after this interlude begins, he kills her. Meanwhile, captured by goblins, Tomas lies atop the altar in the Justicar's Hall enduring terrible torture. Thirty minutes after the attack begins, after revealing nothing to his tormentors, he dies of blood loss and shock moments before Gark cuts out his heart.
- **Malvenos (Location A):** A small group of goblins attacked Malvenos in his chambers. He has killed the goblins sent to slay him, but is gravely injured.
- **Eiravel (Location O):** A ghoul snuck into the infirmary to slay Eiravel. Having defeated her, the ghoul lurks in the infirmary. Twenty minutes after this interlude begins, it finishes ransacking the infirmary and begins to consume her corpse.

MOVING OUT

Outside, the storm howls and snow falls, quickly erasing the attacker's tracks. However, PCs making Perception checks to hear or spot activity in the other parts of the priory may gain valuable clues as to what is going on. When the PCs look into the garth, read:

In the garth, the winter storm howls and snow swirls in the air dramatically reducing visibility so that you can barely make out the priory's other buildings. Above the howling of the wind, you can hear the faint, undulating screams of someone in terrible pain.

PCs making a DC 15 Perception check believe the screaming comes from the chapter-house. PCs making a DC 20 check identify the screamer as Rosenn.

STAYING PUT

If the PCs elect to stay put, Ythel eventually remembers Grelha and her mission and dispatches the goblins detailed in Encounter 15. This second group is extremely cautious approaching the guest lodgings. As soon as they face opposition, they retreat to warn Ythel not all resistance has been crushed. Design additional combats using Ythel's remaining minions, but do not immediately overwhelm the PCs; give them time to decide to carry the fight to their enemy.

EXPLORING THE PRIORY

When ready, the PCs can explore the rest of the priory. Ensuing encounters appear here and overleaf. Subsequent pages present the remaining combat encounters of Part 2. With the exception of Encounter 15, the remaining encounters in Part 2 are designed so that even a single PC can resolve (or avoid) them (in case the group splits up).

- If the PCs investigate Rosenn's chamber, run Encounter 13.
- When the PCs reach the infirmary, run Encounter 14.
- If the PCs investigate Justicar's Hall, proceed to Encounter 15.
- In all likelihood, the PCs eventually proceed to Encounter 16 in the undercroft.

OTHER AREAS

Ythel's minions have ranged throughout the priory in search of victims and loot; use the notes here to describe their rampage.

Cloisters and Garth: Ythel's minions used the cloisters to move about the priory; footprints of many humanoids are evident in the snow. A DC 17 Survival check reveals two distinct set of tracks – those of small humanoids (goblins) and the shuffling gait of larger creatures (zombies).

Library and Treasury: The treasury's door easily resisted the goblin's puny strength. A small pile of scorched books in front of the door shows how they tried to burn it down.

Kitchen: Ythel's minions have comprehensively ransacked this area. Sacks of food are slashed open, cooking equipment lies scattered about and the so on.

H: TOMAS' CHAMBER

Tomas' chamber is in disarray. Read:

A battle has clearly been fought here. Tomas' unsheathed longsword lies unbloodied on the floor amid the shattered remnants of the chamber's door. Other mundane possessions lie scattered about. A bloody smear near the door suggests someone was dragged from the room.

All of Tomas' wealth has been stolen, but his masterwork splint mail and large steel shield (too large for goblins to use) remain on their rack.

H: YTHEL'S CHAMBER

The recent violence and looting have left this chamber almost untouched. The door is shut. Read:

This room seems completely untouched by the recent violence.

A DC 10 Perception check reveals Ythel's books and religious icons here have been defaced. Ythel has taken everything of value to his lair (Area F) in the Deep Caves.

C: RUAN'S CHAMBERS

Ythel himself led his minions here to capture Ruan. Although Ruan tried to defend himself, the feeble cleric was no match for his attackers and was quickly subdued. The front door to Ruan's chambers stands open and snow has started to blow inside. Read:

Snow has blown into Ruan's office. Within, doors to his private chambers and chapel similarly stand open. All the rooms have been comprehensively looted.

If the PCs search Ruan's dwelling, they may find some small clues as to his fate.

Bed Chamber: A DC 15 Perception check reveals a small amount of splattered blood on his bed. A DC 15 Heal check indicates the wound was probably not fatal.

Private Chapel: The altar has been defaced and the icons upon it smashed on the floor. Scratches in the stone show where someone has slashed at it.

A: MALVENOS

Of all the priory's occupants, Malvenos is the only one to defeat his attackers – saved by his armour and skill-at-arms. When the PCs reach this area he is badly wounded, but all his attackers lie dead. The ground floor of the gatehouse is essentially untouched by the battle, but the outer door has been forced open.

The bodies of two goblins lie sprawled on the stair; both slain by powerful sword blows from above. Two more lie at the top of the stairs in a bloody pile. Moaning and the sound of movement emanate from the partially open door ahead.

If Malvenos hears movement on the stairs (oppose his Perception check against the PCs' worst Stealth check) he assumes the PCs are more attackers and prepares for battle.

Tactics: Malvenos hides behind the chamber door and prepares to slam it into the first person to reach the doorway. Treat this as a bull rush attack with a +4 modifier that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. He then moves around the door, but stops attacking when he sees the PCs.

SPEAKING WITH MALVENOS

Malvenos was badly wounded in his fight against the goblins (he is on 2 hit points) and gratefully accepts any offered healing. He relates he heard the goblins breaking in downstairs and defeated them. Malvenos is very keen to go to the clergy's aid (particularly Rosenn's) and explains he was just preparing to do so when the PCs arrived.

While searching the priory Malvenos is brave, but not foolhardy. He offers any assistance he can to those rescued and when the PCs descend into the undercroft stays behind to guard any survivors. If there are no other survivors, however, he joins the PCs if they dare the undercroft.

13: ROSENN'S CHAMBER (EL 1; XP 400)

Location Rosenn's chamber in the chapter-house (location H).

If the PCs trigger this encounter within ten minutes of Grelha's attack (Encounter 8), Rosenn is still alive. If they arrive after this deadline, she is dead.

Terl (a burly and vicious half-goblin) has been sent here by Ythel to deal with Rosenn. Terl is a foul, odious individual who hates humans; he has decided to have a little fun with his victim before killing her. Whether Rosenn is dead or alive, Terl is distracted when the PCs arrive (-5 on Perception checks); thus he might not notice their approach.

ROSENN DEAD

The PCs are too late; Rosenn is dead and Terl is searching the chamber. Read:

Rosenn's corpse lies on the bed, her throat cut. Her blood soaks the bed and nearby floor. Bloody handprints decorate the wall by the head of her bed.

A scrawny but muscular man wearing bloodstained robes has his back to you – he is searching the room and has not yet noticed you.

ROSENN ALIVE

Terl is brutalizing Rosenn as the PCs approach the chamber. They hear her screams when they enter the chapter-house. When they reach her chamber, read:

Rosenn's door stands open; its frame smashed inwards. Within the room, a scrawny but muscular humanoid writhes on the bed pinning Rosenn below him. The room is in disarray and bloody handprints decorate the wall at the head of the bed.

Rosenn has 2 hp remaining when the PCs arrive and does nothing to aid them in battle. While the battle rages about her, she rolls into a ball and screams.

TACTICS

Terl does not want to be trapped in the room and even if faced with only one visible foe tries to escape. He uses *colour spray* to subdue opponents before making a run for it. (If his *colour spray* subdues all his enemies he stops briefly to loot, but he does not take the time to administer coup de graces).

If he escapes, he hides in the priory and watches developments; he is not particularly loyal to Ythel and takes no risks to warn his master the PCs yet live.

If trapped in the room he sells his life dearly, slaying as many enemies as possible. He targets humans in this instance.

AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

Illumination: Two candles provide shadowy illumination.

Door: The wooden door has been kicked in; pieces lie on the floor and the frame is broken in several places.

Walls: Parts of the whitewashed wall by the head of the bed are smeared with blood.

Furniture: The room has a single bed, a small chest containing Rosenn's clothes and a small shrine-niche.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Use the notes below to scale the encounter:

EL 2 (XP 600): Apply the advanced creature template to Terl (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; spell DCs +2; AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 18; CMD 19; hp 18; he also possesses a *potion of invisibility*).

AFTERMATH

Terl's brutal attack has severely traumatised Rosenn and she can barely speak. Although not severely physically injured, his attack has crushed her fragile sanity and if rescued she does little but hug herself and rock back and forth on her bed.

TERL

CR 1 (XP 400)

This scrawny creature stands about 5 ft. tall. Slightly pointed ears frame the man's freakishly oversized, bald head. His scarred face is twisted into a cruel grimace.

Male half-goblin sorcerer (aberrant) 2

NE Medium humanoid (goblinoid, human)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception -1, Sense Motive -1

Speed 35 ft.; **ACP** 0; Ride +4, Stealth +4

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 15

(+4 armour [*mage armour*], +2 Dex)

Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2

hp 14 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3

Melee mwk morningstar +4 (1d8+2)

Ranged Touch acidic ray (range 30 ft.; 5/day) +3 (1d6+1 acid)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 2nd; concentration +4)

1st (5/day [4 remaining])—*colour spray* (DC 13), *mage armour* 0—acid splash, *dancing lights*, *daze* (DC 12), *detect magic*, *mage hand*

Combat Gear scroll of expeditious retreat, scroll of identify, scroll of sleep

Abilities Str 15, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 15

SQ bloodline arcana (aberrant)

Feats Eschew Materials^B, Fleet^B, Toughness

Skills as above plus Knowledge (arcana) +4, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Spellcraft +5

Languages Common, Goblin

Gear as above plus 9 pp, 42 gp, belt pouch

14: THE INFIRMARY (EL 1; XP 400)

Location Infirmary (location O).

If the PCs reach this area within 20 minutes of Grelha's attack (Encounter 8) Eiravel yet lives. If the PCs arrive later, she is dead. Refer to the relevant section below.

EIRAVEL ALIVE

When the PCs enter the infirmary, Eiravel is unconscious, but stable (hp -2). Read:

The infirmary is in disarray; several beds lie on their sides and scattered equipment covers the floor. A hairless man-shaped creature clad in ancient robes crouches in one corner, riffling a backpack. Eiravel's unmoving body lies beneath an overturned bed.

If the ghoul is defeated, the PCs can heal Eiravel. If they do so, she is extremely grateful for their help. A small-time thief used to fleecing merchants and other easy marks recent events have terrified her. She has no interest in helping the PCs clear the

priory of other intruders and barricades herself into the infirmary.

EIRAVEL DEAD

When the PCs enter the infirmary, they interrupt the ghoul feasting on Eiravel's corpse. Read:

The infirmary is in disarray; several beds lie on their sides and scattered equipment covers the floor. A hairless man-sized creature clad in ancient robes crouches over Eiravel's body. Red gore covers the surrounding flagstones.

TACTICS

The ghoul fights savagely until destroyed. If it paralyzes a foe, it makes a full-attack against its helpless target (+4 to attack and the target has a Dexterity of 0 [-5 to AC]) before attacking another opponent.

AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

Light: several candles provide shadowy illumination.

Beds: Rows of beds stand here. Squares containing beds are difficult terrain but characters can leap atop one with a DC 8 Acrobatics check or by spending two squares of movement. Characters atop a bed gain the benefit of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks).

Storerooms: Unless they've already been found, PCs making a DC 20 Perception check find two healers' kits and a glass vial containing a slightly sparkling white liquid. It is a *potion of cure light wounds* (faint [DC 16 Knowledge {arcana}] conjuration; DC 16 Spellcraft or Perception identifies]).

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Use the notes below to scale the encounter:

EL 2 (XP 600): Apply the advanced creature template to the ghoul (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; ghoul fever DC 15, paralysis DC 15; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 16; CMD 18; hp 17).

DESIGNER'S NOTE

If the PCs know who has (or has not) resisted ghoul fever's onset much of the flavour of this encounter is lost. Consider making the relevant saving throws yourself and keeping the result secret until afflicted characters begin to feel unwell. Such developments can breed uncertainty in the group and add to the general level of anxiety and paranoia the PCs should be feeling by now.

GHOUL

CR 1 (XP 400)

This humanoid's hairless skin is pallid and drawn tightly over its almost skeletal frame. It has long, sharp teeth, an unnaturally long tongue and red-hued eyes.

CE Medium undead

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7, Sense Motive +2
Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +4, Climb +6, Stealth +7, Swim +3

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 14
(+2 Dex, +2 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5 (+7 vs. channelling)
hp 13 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2

Melee bite +3 (1d6+1 plus ghoul fever (DC 13 Fort) and paralysis [DC 13; duration 1d4+1 rds.; elves immune]) and
2 claws +3 (1d6+1 plus paralysis [DC 13; duration 1d4+1 rds.; elves immune])

Ghoul Fever (Su) Fort DC 13 [2 cures]; *onset* 1 day; *freq.* 1 day; *effect* 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage. A humanoid who dies of ghoul fever rises as a ghoul at the next midnight. A humanoid who becomes a ghoul retains none of the abilities it possessed in life. A slain humanoid of 4 or more Hit Dice rises as a ghast.

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con —, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 14

SQ undead traits

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills as above

Languages Common

15: UPON THE ALTAR (EL 4; XP 1,200)

Location Justicar's Hall (Area D).

Rapacious, but dim witted, these goblins believe the clergy's most valuable items are hidden somewhere in this chamber. Originally tasked with killing Tomas, Gark (their leader) instead decided to sacrifice him to Braal here as an insult to Darlen. While preparing to do so, Partrax convinced him to first force the hapless priest (through torture) to reveal the priory's hidden treasures. Thus far, Tomas, stubborn to the end, has refused to do so.

A scrawny goblin stands before the hall's high altar, blood dripping from the dagger in its hand. Atop the altar lies Tomas wearing his bloodstained robes. Nearer to you, two more goblins clad in studded leather armour are investigating the pews.

Once Tomas spots the PCs, he calls weakly for aid.

SET UP

Gark is behind the altar while the goblin battledancers are poking about in the main chamber. Partrax is investigating the bells atop the tower and is not immediately visible.

The goblins are intent on their various tasks and are thus distracted (-5 to Perception checks).

TACTICS

The goblins act quickly in the face of a new threat.

Goblin Battledancers: These warriors tumble toward the PCs keeping pews between themselves and archers or spellcasters. They flank foes whenever possible, using Two-Weapon Fighting unless their foes are proving difficult to hit.

Gark: Gark attacks Tomas trying to plunge a dagger into his chest (resolve this attack normally; see "Tomas' Fate") as soon as battle begins. (Surprised by the PCs' presence, he does not take the time to administer a coup de grace).

He stays behind the altar using it (and Tomas) as cover and hurls darts at approaching enemies. Gark uses *burning hands* when a target enters range (which may also catch Tomas) and *obscuring mist* to flee if hard pressed.

Partrax: As soon as he hears the sounds of battle (DC -3 Perception check [already modified for distance and distraction]) he positions himself at the top of the ladder leading down to the hall and hides (gaining cover from the open trapdoor). He then fights from range, hiding so he can sneak attack with his shortbow.

If injured, he retreats up the ladder and snipes at any pursuers. If trapped in the tower, he fights to the death.

TOMAS' FATE

If the PCs are slow to reach this place – arriving more than 30 minutes after finishing Encounter 8 – Tomas dies from shock and blood loss moments before Gark cuts out his heart as a sacrifice to Braal. A DC 15 Heal check reveals he has been tortured. If he is still alive, use Tomas' unprepared statistics (Appendix 2) with these modifications during the battle:

AC 5, touch 5, flat-footed 5

hp 1

- **How He Helps:** Tomas has his normal complement of spells available. If he survives the battle, he is immensely grateful, using them to heal himself and the PCs.
- **What He Knows:** He relates he saw Ythel dragging Ruan into the undercroft. When last he saw him, Ruan was alive but battered. Ythel had a maniacal look on his face and was ranting on about Ruan paying for his sins with his blood and his soul.
- **What He Does:** Tomas refuses to accompany the PCs below into the undercroft, however, saying he must see to Rosenn (or to her corpse if she has not survived). He won't admit it, even to himself, but Ruan's death would bring him one-step closer to becoming the curate of Cymer.

GOBLIN BATTLEDANCER (2)

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

This small humanoid has a flat face, squashed nose and a wide mouth full of fangs. Clad in stained studded leather armour it wears two rusted and pitted spiked gauntlets.

Male goblin warrior 1/expert (acrobat) 1

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +3, Sense Motive -1

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** 0, Acrobatics +8, Climb +5, Ride +7, Stealth +15, Swim +1

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 15

(+3 armour [mwk studded leather], +3 Dex, +1 size)

Fort +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1

hp 13 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2

Melee spiked gauntlet +3 (1d3) or

Melee spiked gauntlet +1 (1d3) and
spiked gauntlet +1 (1d3)

Atk Options Two-Weapon Fighting

Combat Gear vial of small centipede poison (DC 11; 1 rd. for 4 rds.; 1 dx)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6

Feats Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills as above plus Perform (dance) +7

Languages Goblin

Gear as above plus belt pouch, sack, 15 sp

AREA FEATURES

The area has the following features of note:

Illumination: Two *everburning torches* provide normal light around the altar and dim light for a further 20 ft. beyond.

Ceiling: The ceiling is 25 ft. high.

Walls: The walls are of whitewashed dressed stone. In places, the whitewash is faded and peeling.

Floor: Coloured tiles (red, brown, white and gold) cover the floor. Many of these are faded and worn; several are cracked.

High Altar: A white sheet soaked in Tomas' blood covers the altar.

Statuary and Icons: A half-dozen life-sized statues normally flank the high altar, three to a side. Now, three niches are empty. Each of the statues represents Darlen or an important saint. Characters standing behind a statue gain cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex).

Pews: Rows of dusty pews fill much of the chamber. Count squares containing a pew as difficult terrain; characters moving between pews are squeezing (-4 on attack rolls, -4 to AC and it costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square between pews).

Characters leaping atop a pew (DC 8 Acrobatics) gain the benefit of higher ground (+1 to melee attacks). Characters can jump from pew to pew with a DC 5 Acrobatics check.

GARK

CR 1 (XP 400)

This bald and skinny, seemingly malnourished humanoid wears crudely hacked off, dirt-streak white robes.

Male goblin adept (Braal) 3

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Ride +6, Stealth +10

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 12; Mobility (+1 armour [*bracers of armour* +1], +2 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +1 size)

Fort +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

hp 16 (3 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** -2

Melee cold iron dagger +0 (1d3-2/19-20)

Ranged dart (range 20 ft.) +4 (1d3-2)

Adept Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +4)

1st—*burning hands* (DC 12), *cure light wounds*, *protection from good*

0—*detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *touch of fatigue* (DC11)

Combat Gear darts (5), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of invisibility*, *scroll of obscuring mist*

Abilities Str 6, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 7

SQ summon familiar

Feats Dodge, Mobility

Skills as above plus Heal +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +6

Languages Goblin

Gear as above plus wooden holy symbol, spell component pouch, black gem (onyx [50 gp]), 4 gp, 12 sp

Characters moving at full speed along a pew must make a DC 10 Acrobatic check; those moving at half speed need make no check.

Pews grant cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex) to characters standing behind them while characters prone behind a pew gain improved cover (+8 AC, +4 Reflex and improved evasion).

Frescos: The painting behind the altar depicts Darlen sitting in judgment on a great multitude of souls. The picture to the left shows souls found wanting being cast into hell while that to the right depicts a fanciful view of the afterlife.

Undercroft: Ythel has unlocked the door leading to the undercroft and left it slightly open.

Treasure: Two *everburning torches* set in scones light the hall. If Tomas yet lives, he does not object to the party borrowing these to facilitate their exploration of the undercroft.

Apart from the various ceremonial objects, the goblins carry the only other treasure found here.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Use the notes below to scale the encounter:

EL 3 (XP 800): Remove Partrax.

EL 5 (XP 1,600): Add two goblin battledancers.

PARTRAX

CR 1 (XP 400)

Lean and lithe, this small humanoid moves with speed and skill. He wears a fine chain shirt and wields a shortbow.

Male goblin rogue 2

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5 (+6 vs. traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +0

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -1, Acrobatics +8, Climb +4, Escape Artist +8, Ride +7, Stealth +16, Swim +1

AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 17; Dodge (+4 armour [*mwk chain shirt*], +4 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +1 size)

Fort +2, **Ref** +7 (evasion), **Will** +0

hp 18 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +0

Ranged mwk shortbow (range 60 ft.) +7 (1d4/x3)

Melee short sword +6 (1d4/19-20)

Atk Options sneak attack (+1d6)

Combat Gear arrows (12), *potion of blur*

Abilities Str 11, Dex 19, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ rogue talent (finesse rogue)

Feats Dodge, Weapon Finesse^B

Skills as above plus Disable Device +10 (+11 vs. traps), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Sleight of Hand +8

Languages Common, Goblin

Gear as above plus masterwork thieves' tools, belt pouch, 3 gp, 14 sp, 37 cp

16: THE RESTLESS DEAD (EL 3; XP 800)

Location The undercroft.

Below the Justicar's Hall lies the undercroft. When the PCs descend the stair, read:

The steep spiral stair leads to a crypt. The floor is flagged and the walls are of brick (each bearing the symbol of a rising sun). An altar decorated with a rising sun motif stands ahead while many sealed burial niches pierce the walls. Three shrivelled goblin corpses lie on the floor.

Ythel is cautious and has not yet dared to plunder Cymer's tomb, fearing guardian spirits and protective wards. Some of his minions, however, did not share his caution and came here for plunder after Ythel carried Ruan below. Their desecration awoke Marel (a priest slain by goblin raiders decades ago).

When the PCs reach the undercroft, Marel is hovering nearby. Alerted either by footsteps or lights upon the stairs, he sinks into the wall adjacent to the stairs. While within, he cannot hear or see the PCs, but can sense creatures passing his position. He waits for several rounds after he senses the last person passing by before emerging. Read:

The spectral image of an old man clad in burial vestments bursts from the wall near the stairway. He flies toward you screeching, "Death to Braal's servants!"



If the PCs fight, refer to "Tactics." If they negotiate, proceed to "Parley." In combat if the PCs parley a DC 24 Diplomacy check stops Marel fighting. For each PC openly wearing Darlen's holy symbol give a +2 bonus to this check.

TACTICS

Marel is a merciless opponent of evil but cannot leave the undercroft. He uses corrupting touch to slay his enemies.

MAREL

CR 3 (XP 800)

The transparent image of an old man clad in burial vestments hovers before you. His face is contorted as if in great pain and his hands clutch a gaping wound in his stomach from which his transparent entrails tumble.

Male human ghost cleric (Darlen) 2

LG Medium undead (augmented humanoid, incorporeal)

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13, Sense Motive +10

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect); **ACP** 0; Fly +7, Stealth +7 (incorporeal)

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 9; **CMD** 14

(-1 Dex, +4 deflection)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); critical hits and precision-based damage (except from *ghost touch* weapons); nonmagical attacks

Fort +7, **Ref** -1, **Will** +6 (+10 vs. channelling)

hp 20 (2 HD); half damage from corporeal spells or weapons

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +1

Melee (incorporeal touch) corrupting touch +1 (3d6 [DC 15 Fortitude halves])

Special Actions channel positive energy (9/day; 1d6 [1d6+2 vs. undead and attack bypasses channel resistance]; DC 15), *touch of good*

Touch of Good (Sp [6/day]) When Marel touches a good creature he grants it a +1 sacred bonus on attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and saving throws for 1 round.

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 2nd; concentration +5; spontaneous casting [*cure* spells]; Good, Sun)

1st—*cause fear* (DC 14), *detect evil*, *protection from evil*^P

0—*detect magic*, *light*, *resistance*, *stabilise*

Abilities Str —, Dex 8, Con —, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 18

SQ good aura (moderate), incorporeal, rejuvenation

Feats Alertness^B, Extra Channel

Skills as above plus Heal +8, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (religion) +6, Knowledge (planes) +5, Spellcraft +5

Languages Celestial, Common

Rejuvenation (Su) If slain, Marel's spirit reforms in 2d4 days.

Gear burial vestments

UNDERCROFT FEATURES

The undercroft has several features of note:

Illumination: Darkness.

Staircase: This steep spiral staircase descends 30 ft. It is difficult terrain, characters cannot run or charge and the DC of Acrobatics checks increases by 4. Characters on the stairs gain the benefit of higher ground (+1 to melee attacks).

Walls: The walls are of brick (hardness 8, hp 90, DC 20 Climb) faced onto stone. A rising sun motif decorates each brick.

Shattered Wall: Guided by Braal, Ythel broke through this wall to reveal a passageway leading to the Deep Caves. A pile of bricks (difficult terrain) lies to one side.

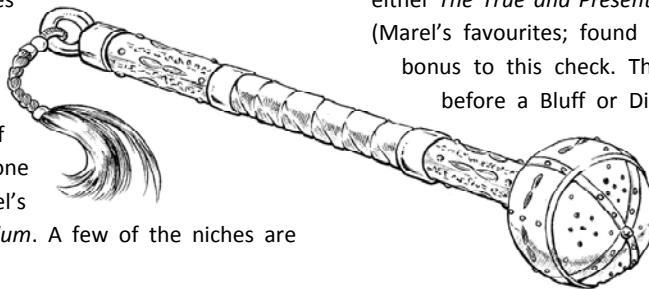
Ceiling: The arched and vaulted ceiling is 20 ft. high and in good repair. Faded murals of rising suns adorn it.

Floor: The flagged floor is in good condition. A dusty mosaic of a rising sun covers the floor.

Stone Altar: A rising sun motif decorates the altar.

Burial Niches: Cover stones (hardness 8, hp 60, DC 28 Strength to lift) graven with the incumbent's name covers each dusty niche. Bones and scraps of cloth cover the floor, but none contains treasure except Marel's which holds the *blessed aspergillum*. A few of the niches are empty, awaiting occupants.

Goblin Corpses: Three goblin corpses lie before Marel's burial niche. Slain by his corrupting touch, each is horribly shrivelled. They have a total of 12 gp, 37 sp and 132 cp.



BLESSED ASPERGILLUM

This silver object resembles a light mace, but many tiny holes perforate its head. A cap at the end of the handle unscrews revealing the item is hollow. Runes decorate its shaft.

Lore (DC 10 Knowledge ([religion])) Priests use aspergillums to sprinkle holy water over penitents or items of religious significance. A character able to read Celestial can translate the runes upon it, which read "Light smites the darkness."

Abilities Sprinkling a weapon with holy water from a *blessed aspergillum* has the same effect as *bless weapon*. The aspergillum can hold a vial of holy water and such an amount of liquid can cover three weapons. Doused weapons glow with radiance equal to a candle while blessed. The *holy aspergillum* can affect up to three weapons a day in this fashion.

The *blessed aspergillum* doubles as a silvered light mace. If filled with holy water, the first hit coats the target in holy water.

Activation Use activated (standard action); refilling the *blessed aspergillum* is a move action.

Aura Faint transmutation (DC 16 Spellcraft); **CL** 3rd

Requirements: Craft Wondrous Item, *bless weapon*; **Cost** 2,250 gp

PARLEY

The PCs must convince Marel they are not evil's agents. Modify their skill checks by +2 or -2 for good or bad role-playing respectively.

Success or Failure: The PCs must make four successful checks before three failures to befriend Marel.

Bluff: If the PCs lie, Marel opposes the Bluff check with a Sense Motive check.

Diplomacy (DC 19): PCs making Diplomacy checks either quote holy scripture or tell Marel of Ruan's kidnap and the doom falling upon the priory.

Intimidate: Using Intimidate against Marel automatically fails. Marel is dead and cannot be forced into abandoning his self-appointed task. A DC 20 Sense Motive check made immediately beforehand reveals Intimidate will fail.

Knowledge (religion; DC 15 or 20): The PCs can quote passages from religious tracts to aid their case. Quoting from either *The True and Present Light* or *The Encroaching Darkness* (Marel's favourites; found in the library [Area I]) earns a +2 bonus to this check. The PCs may make one such check before a Bluff or Diplomacy check. A successful check bestows a +2 circumstance bonus to the PCs' next Bluff or Diplomacy check. A DC 20 check bestows a +4 bonus. A PC failing a DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check earns a -2 penalty.

Success: If the PCs achieve four successful checks they convince Marel of their good intentions. He explains his remains bind him to the crypt but the priory must be cleansed of the evil lurking in the caves. He begs the PCs to do so.

If the PCs gained one failure or less, he give them the *blessed aspergillum* and uses channel energy to heal their wounds.

Failure: If they fail two checks, Marel becomes agitated; if they fail a subsequent check, he attacks.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Use the notes below to scale the encounter:

EL 2 (XP 600): Apply the young creature template to Marel (+2 on all Dex-based rolls; -2 on all other rolls; hp 16).

EL 4 (XP 1,200): Apply the advanced creature template to Marel (+2 on all rolls), corrupting touch DC 17, channel positive energy DC 17, spell DC +2; AC 17, touch 15, flat-footed 13; CMD 18; hp 24).

AFTERMATH

If the PCs convince Marel to let them pass, award them XP as if they had defeated him. Additionally, if he gifts them the *blessed aspergillum*, award another 200 XP. When the PCs enter the passageway to the Deep Caves, proceed to Part 3.

INTERLUDE: INTO DARKNESS

At the end of Part 2, the PCs should be under no illusions as to what is going on, who is responsible and what they need to do next. If they do not act swiftly, Ruan will no doubt suffer a grizzly fate. Pacing is important here; the Deep Caves are a relatively small network of caves designed specifically so the party can tackle them in one delve. Thus, the GM should subtly encourage the party to continue, if at all possible. Resting or hit and run tactics are not an option here, as Ythel will shortly torture Ruan to death.

Surviving members of the clergy beg the party to descend into the caves as quickly as possible to rescue their curate.

HELP

If any of the other clergy have survived Ythel's attack they urge the party to take immediate action. To this end, the survivors provide any help they can reasonably offer. Tomas, for example, uses his spells and channel energy to heal the party's injuries.

If the party are still low on resources, one of the clergy could gather the two healer's kits and the *potion of cure light wounds* kept in the infirmary (location O). Similarly both Tomas and Malvenos possess potions they could donate to the party in extremis:

- **Malvenos:** *potion of cure light wounds* (2), *potion of protection from evil*.
- **Tomas:** *potion of cure light wounds* (2), *oil of magic weapon*, vial of holy water (2).

Only provide these to the party, if they seem truly reluctant to continue. Both NPCs ask for the return of any unused equipment – they will likely need it to defend the priory through the long winter.

YTHEL FALLS INTO DARKNESS

If the party still decide to rest, Ythel kills Ruan and completes his descent into the evil. When the PCs finally confront him in his lair, he gloats about his deed and taunts them that if they hadn't been so cowardly, they could have saved Ruan from a horrible fate. In this instance, while the PCs might still kill Ythel, they have failed. Not only did they not save Ruan but they also failed to prevent Ythel's fall into darkness.



PART 3: DARKNESS

In which the PCs explore the Deep Caves beneath the priory and thwart Ythel's evil plan.

RUNNING DARKNESS

The final part of *Retribution* takes place in the Deep Caves below the priory. Here the PCs (hopefully) thwart Ythel's evil plan and rescue Ruan from his clutches.

The tone of this final part is different to the preceding parts. In Parts 1 and 2, the PCs either struggled against the winter storm or were at the mercy of an unseen and unknown assailant. Now, with Ythel's identity and scheme revealed, the PCs can take positive action to defeat his nascent evil. Depending on the party's proclivities they can defeat Ythel through force of arms or forestall his fall into evil and darkness through diplomacy. Ythel's surviving minions, however, are all irredeemably evil and should be slain.

PACING

To a certain extent, the PCs control the course of events because they are now the aggressors. Part 3 has been specifically designed to enable the party to explore the dungeon in one foray. Before starting this final part of the adventure, the GM (through surviving NPCs in the priory) should provide the PCs

with the impression that speed is of the essence. After all, who knows what unspeakable tortures Ythel is inflicting on his captive.

Ythel, initially assuming his minions have expunged all resistance in the priory, believes he has as much time as he needs to revenge himself against Ruan. Once the PCs make their first foray into the caves, Ythel quickly realises this is not the case. In this instance, he slays Ruan, but the forced change in his plans angers him greatly. After killing his mentor, Ythel gathers any surviving minions and attacks the PCs – gambling all in one hate-filled final battle.

Alternatively, if the GM wishes to introduce Ythel as a reoccurring villain (a particularly effective tactic if one of the PCs worships Darlen) he manages to escape either into the storm or through yet deeper caves (see “Expanding the Deep Caves” [page 58]). For prepared stat blocks of Ythel at 3rd, 7th, 12th and 18th level check out ragingswan.com for a free web enhancement.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Part 3 is the most dangerous segment of the adventure and as such PC fatalities are most likely in this section.

Captured PC: If Ythel's minions capture a PC, not all is lost. Ythel does not immediately slay the interloper as he is far too busy to trouble himself with such a diversion. The PC is slung into Area D (a small, noisome cave used as a dump) and left there until Ythel finds the time to deal with him. This gives his companions one day to rescue him.

If one of the PCs is careless enough to get captured this complicates the final fight (Encounter 20) because if Ythel is warned of intruders he drags his hapless captive into the area to use as a living shield.

Slain PC: Winter storms cut off the priory making the introduction of a replacement PC tricky. The unfortunate player could play any of the NPCs surviving Ythel's initial attack. Alternatively, a new PC could be a prisoner of Ythel – a lone traveller taken by the half-goblin sentinels in Encounter 1 and held in Area D.

Finally, a hardy or foolish traveller with urgent business at the priory (perhaps using one of the plot hooks in “Hooks”) could arrive at an opportune moment.

Running Away: If the PCs decide the dangers of the Deep Caves are too much for them, they have two options: they can either barricade themselves into one of the priory's buildings or brave the storm.

Barricade: If they stay and barricade themselves into a building (the gatehouse offers the best chance of success), Ythel takes his time winking them out. Ad-lib encounters using Ythel's remaining minions. Have the action play out over several nights – Ythel is in no hurry, and he has only a limited number of troops at his disposal. He is clever and prefers to wear his enemies than risk his few minions in an all-out assault. He also, as an attempt to draw the PCs out of their position, taunts the PCs about their failure to save Ruan and describes lovingly the torments the old man endured before finally dying.

Flee: If the PCs instead elect to flee, allow them to eventually reach safely, but engineer an encounter or two with wolves or some of Ythel's other minions. Additionally, use the information on pages 18-19 to portray their desperate struggle through the storm and snow to safety. (With the much reduced visibility and lack of easily identifiable landmarks, getting lost is also a real possibility.

In this instance, Ythel survives the adventure and could return to menace the PCs again in future adventures. Out of spite, he could also spread rumours of the PCs' cowardice throughout the local communities.

BRAAL'S GIFTS

To ensure Ythel's descent into darkness, Braal has gifted him a variety of minions. His profane influence upon the priory is responsible for the creation of the zombies and ghoul and his commands have forced a variety of goblins and half-goblins to serve Ythel.

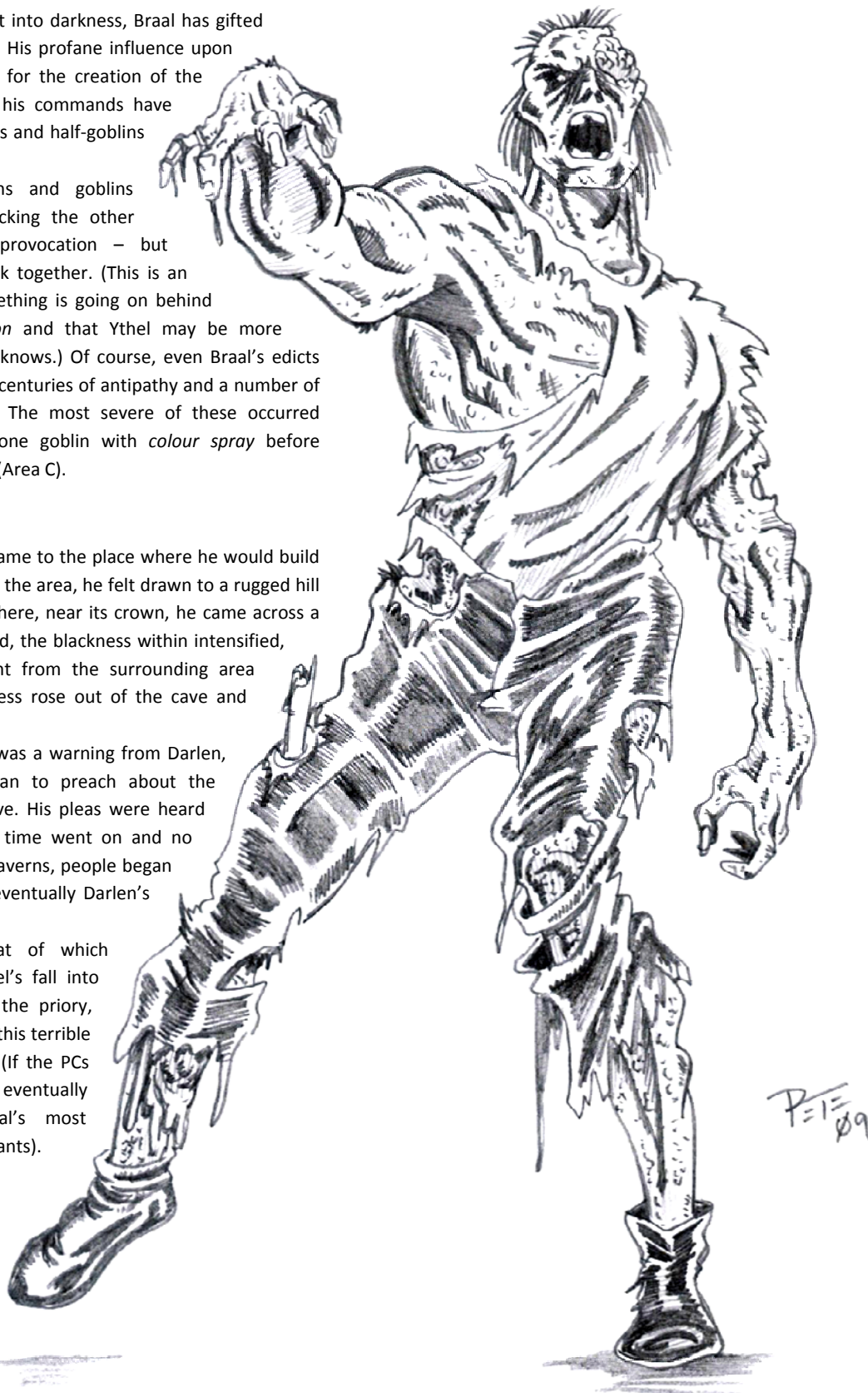
Normally, half-goblins and goblins hate each other – attacking the other without the slightest provocation – but strangely, here they work together. (This is an important hint that something is going on behind the scenes in *Retribution* and that Ythel may be more important than even he knows.) Of course, even Braal's edicts cannot completely erase centuries of antipathy and a number of incidents have resulted. The most severe of these occurred when Terl subdued a lone goblin with *colour spray* before feeding him to the ghou (Area C).

THE PROPHECY

During a dream, Cymer came to the place where he would build his priory. As he explored the area, he felt drawn to a rugged hill overlooking the ocean. There, near its crown, he came across a small cave. As he watched, the blackness within intensified, seeming to draw in light from the surrounding area before a cloud of darkness rose out of the cave and began to cover the land.

Realising the dream was a warning from Darlen, Cymer immediately began to preach about the danger lurking in the cave. His pleas were heard and the priory built. As time went on and no darkness rose from the caverns, people began to discredit Cymer and eventually Darlen's faith fell into decline.

Ironically, the threat of which Darlen warned was Ythel's fall into evil. Thus, by founding the priory, Darlen's faithful brought this terrible doom upon themselves. (If the PCs do not defeat Ythel he eventually becomes one of Braal's most powerful and feared servants).



THE DEEP CAVES

This deep network of natural caves descends hundreds of feet below the priory to the base of the cliffs. Several submerged caves provide access to lonely, rock-covered beaches. The only entrance to the Deep Caves known to the clergy is through the priory's undercroft. Other entrances exist, but are located miles away; the extent of the caves depends on the GM; a passageway leading away from Area D represents this on the map.

Stonemasons building the priory sealed up the original cave leading to the deeper caverns long ago. Only the curate knew of the tunnel's exact location and he only passed this secret onto his successor. The Deep Caves have remained sealed off from the outside world until Braal gifted Ythel with the location of the sealed up tunnel. Having rediscovered the caves, Ythel used them as barracks for the many creatures Braal sent to help him wreak his vengeance.

FEATURES OF THE DEEP CAVES

The Deep Caves have several features of note:

Illumination: Darkness.

Walls: Of natural origin, the Deep Cave's walls (hardness 8, hp 900, Break DC 65, DC 15 Climb) are rough and feature many cracks, crevices and ledges. In places, they are slick with moisture (DC 20 Climb).

Ceiling: In many places, stalactites hang down from the ceiling (DC 25 Climb). In corridors, the ceiling varies between 5 ft. and 15 ft. in height.

Floor: In most areas, the floor is smooth and unimpeded. The denizens of the cave have cleared away much rubble and broken off stalagmites to facilitate movement through the caves.

In chambers, squares adjacent to walls contain a mixture of broken stalagmites, piles of loose stones and so on. Such squares increase by 2 the DC of Acrobatics checks made within them and cost 2 squares of movement to enter.

Stalagmites: Squares containing stalagmites (AC 4, hardness 8, hp 250, DC 28 Break) provide partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex) but cost 2 squares of movement to enter. Destroyed stalagmites create difficult terrain in the square in which they stood.

DUNGEON DRESSING

Use this table below to describe minor features of interest in the Deep Caves.

D12

1	A crude cloven skull symbol is carved into the cave wall.
2	The PCs discover 2d10 silver coins scattered on the floor. Looted from above, they dropped from a ripped sack.
3	A bloody, smeared handprint on the cavern wall. (Here, Ruan tried to break away from his captors). The handprint points in the direction Ruan was taken.

4	A rock fall blocks some of the passageway ahead. (Depending on the location of the rock fall, the GM could use this area as a link to deeper caverns; see "Expanding the Caves" (page 58) for more information).
5	A lingering, fetid smell fills the area.
6	Water drips from the ceiling forming several small puddles on the floor.
7	Rubble stands in a pile against one wall. The pile is unstable and anyone standing on it causes it to collapse (loudly, but harmlessly).
8	Soot marks cover the ceiling as if someone holding a torch lingered here for some time.
9	A patch of thick mud covers part of the cave floor. Footprints (created by Ythel's minions are evident within and may provide a clue about what lies beyond).
10	Pages ripped from a book lie scattered about the area. A brief perusal of the text reveals it to be a holy tract from the priory's library.
11	The odd acoustics of the caves allows the sound of the sea in Encounter 19 to travel some distance. A DC 5 Perception check enables the PCs to hear the faint sounds of the waves crashing against the cavern walls.
12	The passageway passes under a natural stone archway. At first glance, the arch looks unsafe, but a DC 10 Knowledge (engineering) check reveals that it is safe.

ENCOUNTER AREA SUMMARY

The Deep Caves comprise the following areas:

17 and 18: The Ebon Chasm

19: The Black Pool

20: The Dark Fane

A: Goblin Lair

B: Lair of the Mongrels

C: Lair of the Dead

D: Dump

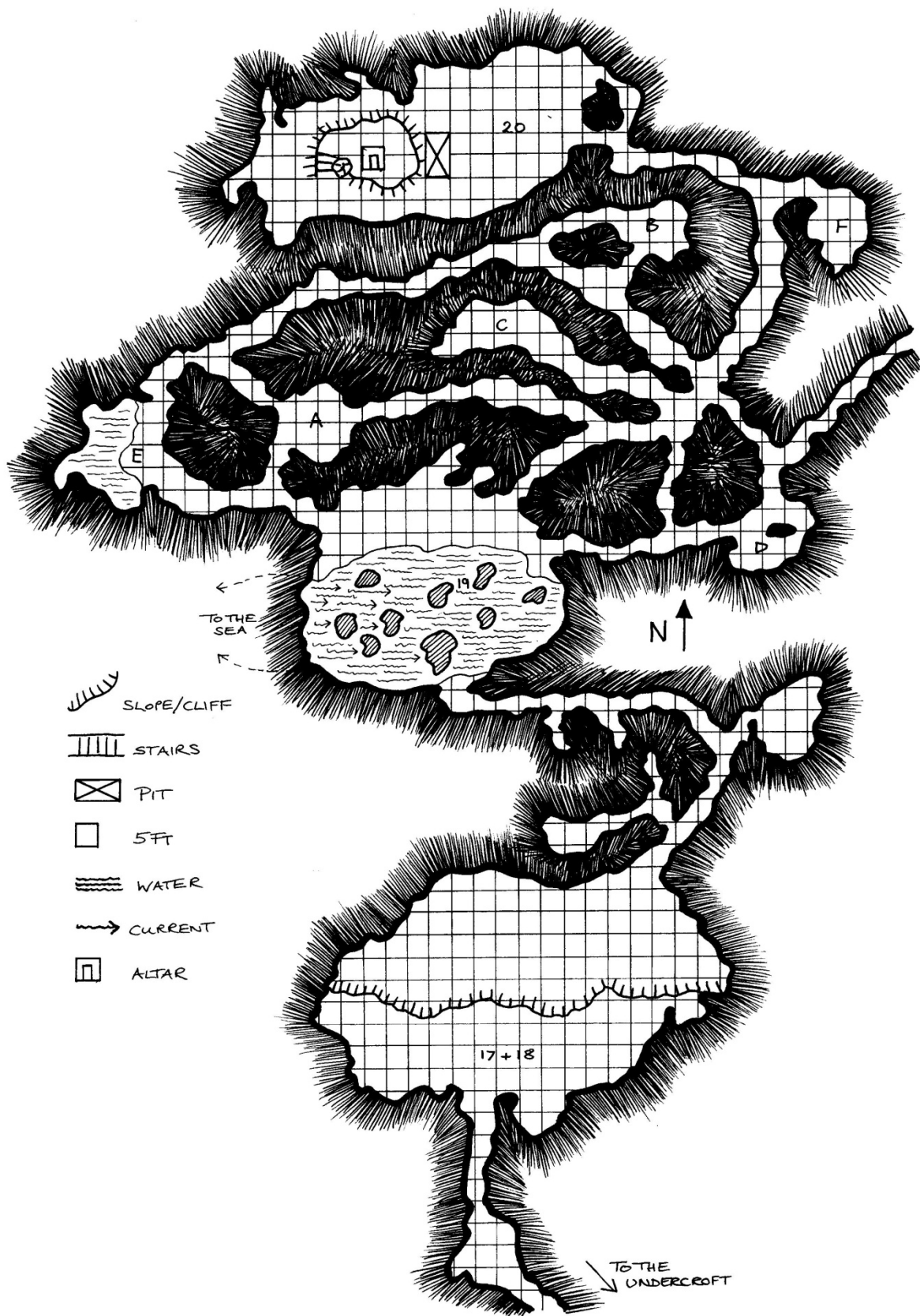
E: Pool Chamber

F: Ythel's Chamber

IMPROVISING ENCOUNTERS

When the PCs reach these caves, they are probably mostly unoccupied. However, if the PCs have had an easy time up to this point, or if they have rested before entering the caves (and did not deal with all the intruders in the priory), they may encounter Ythel's remaining minions here.

Use the statistics and tactical notes presented in the omitted encounters in Part 2 to design such encounters. Take particular care to keep the EL of any encounters below 3 otherwise when the PCs reach The Dark Fane (Encounter 20) they may have expended too many resources to prevail.



17: ATOP THE EBON CHASM (EL 2; XP 600)

To reach the bulk of the caverns, the PCs must traverse the Ebon Chasm. Read:

The natural corridor opens out into a large chamber. The stalactite-festooned ceiling towers thirty feet above. Ahead, the floor drops away into a black chasm.

From their position, the PCs cannot see the small cave and the lurking zombies within. Likewise, the zombies cannot see the PCs until they get closer to the chasm.

TACTICS

The zombies' tactics are simple. Ythel has ordered them to push anyone not accompanied by a Braalite into the chasm. Thus, unless at least one of the intruders is bald or displaying Braal's holy symbol the zombies attack. They target characters closest to the chasm. If two bull rush attacks fail against a target, they revert to normal attacks.

CAVERN FEATURES

The cavern has several features of note:

Illumination: Darkness.

Ceiling: The stalactite-festooned ceiling stands 30 ft. above the floor. Water drips from the stalactites onto the floor, making

it slightly slippery. Characters making a DC 10 Perception check hear the soft patter of water falling onto rock and into pools emanating from the chasm.

Large Stalagmites: Large stalagmites (AC 4, hardness 8, hp 400, DC 35 Break) provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex). Additionally, characters cannot be bull rushed through a square containing a stalagmite.

Cavern Walls: The bare, slippery rock of the cavern's walls is difficult to scale (DC 20 Climb).

Chasm: The chasm is 70 ft. deep and 30 ft. wide. Refer to "Falling into the Chasm" if a character tumbles into it. A natural niche hides a flight of crude, carved steps leading downwards. Refer to "The Stair" for more information.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Use the notes below to scale the encounter:

EL 1 (XP 400): Remove one zombie.

EL 3 (XP 800): Add one zombie.

AFTERMATH

The PCs must climb down the chasm to investigate the rest of the caves. Proceed to Encounter 18.

CYMER'S PROFANED DEAD (3) CR 1/2 (XP 200)
Clad in a ragged burial shift, that barely covers its rotting body, this corpse charges toward you with preternatural speed.

Male human fast zombie

NE Medium undead

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0
Speed 40 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +2 (+6 jumping)

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 16
(+2 Dex, +2 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

Fort +0, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

hp 12 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +6

Melee slam +4 (1d6+4)

Atk Options quick strike

Quick Strike (Ex) When making a full-attack, the fast human zombie makes an additional slam attack at its normal bonus.

Abilities Str 17, Dex 14, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ undead traits

Feats Toughness^B

Gear ragged and stained burial shifts

FALLING INTO THE CHASM

Normally, a 1st-level character falling all way to the bottom of the chasm is going to die. A character falling into the chasm either during the battle with the zombies or as they attempt to scale its walls, can make a Reflex save to try and arrest his fall. Instead, use the chart below to determine their fate.

Reflex Save	Result
1 ¹	The character falls 20 ft. onto a ledge (taking 2d6 damage) and lands prone.
2-5	The character falls 10 ft. onto a ledge (taking 1d6 damage) and lands prone.
6-13	The character falls 10 ft. onto a ledge (taking 1d6 damage).
14-19	The character falls into the chasm, but catches himself after tumbling only 5 ft. He takes no damage and begins his next turn clinging to the rock face. He can climb up or down with a DC 20 Climb check.
20 ² +	The character falls prone in the last square it occupied in the cavern and does not fall into the chasm.

¹A character rolling a natural 1 always uses this result.

²A character rolling a natural 20 always uses this result.



Getting safely to the chasm floor is difficult and dangerous. Read:

Before you, the ebon darkness drops away into the bowels of the earth.

If the PCs simply climb down the chasm, refer to “Area Features” to adjudicate their efforts. If they look for another way down, refer to “The Stair.”

THE STAIR

The 90 ft. long, crudely cut stairs take a rambling route down the chasm wall. Using the stairs is much easier (DC 5 Climb) than scaling the chasm walls.

Find the Stairs: Ythel’s followers have concealed the stairs; thus to use it the PCs must first find it. To do so, they can make a variety of skill checks:

- **Climb (DC 5):** Scaling the chasm’s walls will be extremely difficult.
- **Knowledge (dungeoneering) (DC 15):** The PC gains a +2 bonus to Perception checks made to find the stair.
- **Knowledge (religion) (DC 11):** The PC realises zombies couldn’t climb the sheer, slippery cavern walls.
- **Perception (DC 10):** The PC uncovers a crude carving of a cloven skull in the rock. A DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the symbol as Braal’s. Finding this symbol bestows a +2 bonus to Perception checks made to find the stair.
- **Perception (DC 15):** The PCs find the stair. A character failing the check by 5 or more believes he has found a safe route down. This error is revealed when the first PC makes his second Climb check (against DC 20 instead of DC 5).

AREA FEATURES

The chasm has several features of note:

Illumination: Darkness.

Depth: The chasm is 70 ft. deep.

Width: The chasm is 30 ft. wide.

Walls: The bare, slippery rock of the chasm is difficult to scale (DC 20 Climb). If the PC fails his check by five or more, refer to “Falling into the Chasm.”

AFTERMATH

When the PCs reach the chasm floor, read:

Many small pools dot the floor at the base of the chasm. A single tunnel continues off into the darkness.

Proceed to Encounter 19.

19: THE BLACK POOL (XP 2; XP 600)

A large rock-strewn pool dominates this chamber. Linked by a flooded tunnel to the Lonely Coast's stormy waters, tidal surges regularly inundate the cavern. One of Ythel's most trusted soldiers, Vartel, guards the cavern.

Characters within 60 ft. of the chamber who make a DC 5 Perception check hear the sound of water rushing and crashing on rocks. Characters within 30 ft. automatically hear this sound and smell the tang of salt on the air.

A large pool dominates this chamber. Suddenly, water surges from a hidden passageway deluging the many slick rocks piercing the pool's surface. Seaweed and other flotsam cover the chamber's floor.

Vartel is alert, although he initially assumes creatures approaching the cavern are Ythel's allies.

TACTICS

Vartel takes cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex) in a rock niche from where he can shoot at opponents trying to cross the pool. He always shoots at the target closest to him (unless he himself is under sustained and accurate missile fire).

AREA FEATURES

The cavern has several features of note:

Illumination: Darkness.

Ceiling: The ceiling is 20 ft. high.

Walls: Characters must make a DC 20 Climb check to scale

the cavern's slick rock walls.

Seaweed: Seaweed covers any floor square adjacent to the pool. It costs two squares of movement to enter such areas.

Tidal Pool: A 15 ft. deep pool of frigid seawater dominates the chamber. The Swim DC to move in the pool depends on the tidal surge's strength (see "The Tidal Surge" below).

Characters in the pool have improved cover (+8 AC, +4 Reflex) from opponents on land. Completely submerged characters have total cover from such attacks.

Slick Rocks: Many slick, barnacle-encrusted rocks thrust from the pool. It costs two squares of movement to enter such squares (unless a character is jumping).

Characters can leap between rocks with a successful Acrobatics check. (The distance between rocks determines the DC). Characters failing this check by 4 or less can make a DC 20 Reflex save to grab hold of the rock they were trying to reach. Success indicates the character can use a move action to make a DC 10 Strength check to climb out of the water and stand up. Failure indicates the character falls into the pool.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Use the notes below to scale the encounter:

EL 1 (XP 400): Apply the young creature template to Vartel (+2 on all Dex-based rolls; -2 on all other rolls; hp 15).

EL 3 (XP 800): Apply the advanced creature template to Vartel (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 22, touch 16, flat-footed 18; CMD 20; hp 23).

VARTEL	CR 1 (XP 400)
<i>This bald, scrawny humanoid wears studded leather armour and carries a shortbow.</i>	
Male half-goblin fighter 2	
NE Medium humanoid (goblinoid, human)	
Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1	
Speed 35 ft.; ACP 0; Acrobatics +4, Climb +6, Ride +6, Stealth +5	
AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14; CMD 18; Mobility	
(+3 armour [mwk studded leather], +3 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +1 shield [mwk buckler])	
Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1; +1 vs. fear	
hp 19 (2 HD)	
Space 5 ft.; Base Atk +2; CMB +4	
Ranged mwk shortbow (range 60 ft.; Point Blank Shot) +6 (1d6/x3)	
Melee hand axe +4 (1d6+2/x3)	
Combat Gear arrows (20), <i>potion of cure light wounds</i>	
Abilities Str 15, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8	
Feats Dodge, Fleet ^B , Mobility, Point Blank Shot	
Skills as above plus Handle Animal +3	
Languages Common, Goblin	
Gear as above plus belt pouch, 19 sp	

THE TIDAL SURGE CR 1/2 (XP 200)

Init: +1

Odd-Numbered Rounds: On every odd-numbered round, use the table below to determine the power of the water surging into the cavern. On its initiative, a strong or powerful tidal surge makes a bull rush attack against any character on the slick rocks or in the water.

Even-Numbered Rounds: Every even-numbered round, the strength of the tidal flow diminishes by one step. It may still make bull rush attacks, if it has sufficient power remaining.

D20	TIDAL SURGE
1-5	Negligible tidal surge (DC 10 Swim check).
6-13	Moderate tidal surge (DC 15 Swim check; failure sweeps the characters 1d4 squares eastwards).
14-18	Strong tidal surge (DC 15 Swim check; failure sweeps the characters 1d6 squares eastwards). The tidal surge makes a bull rush attack (+4 modifier) against characters on the slick rocks or in the water.
19-20	Powerful tidal surge (DC 20 Swim check; failure sweeps the characters 1d6+2 squares eastwards). The tidal surge makes a bull rush attack (+9 modifier) against characters on the slick rocks or in the water.

LIVING QUARTERS

Ythel uses the small network of caverns beyond The Ebon Chasm as living quarters for his minions and undead servitors. Currently, these chambers are unoccupied – their occupants having been unleashed into the priory earlier.

A: GOBLIN LAIR

Ythel's goblin minions laired here.

This small chamber shows obvious signs of habitation. A half-dozen crude sleeping pallets cover the floor. The room reeks of sweat and stale food.

The goblins ate, slept and socialised here. They are likely now dead by the PCs' hands.

Bored goblins have daubed pictures on the wall. Most show primitive representations of goblins killing and eating humans. A very crude map of the priory covers one wall.

There is nothing of value here.

B: MONGRELS' LAIR

Terl (Encounter 13) and Vartel (Encounter 19) dwelled here. Both are likely now dead at the PCs' hands. If they have not already been slain they are encountered here. Read:

This small chamber rises steeply to your left. Perched atop the ledge two neat sleeping pallets lie next to a small jumble of camping equipment.

The items here are mundane; nothing of real value remains. Investigation reveals the creatures have probably been here for a month or so.

C: LAIR OF THE DEAD

Ythel's most powerful undead servitor – the ghoul (Encounter 14) – laired here. Read:

This chamber seems unoccupied. A large pool of dried blood on the floor shows where something almost certainly died. Blood splatter leads toward the far wall.

PCs making a DC 5 Perception check find a partially eaten goblin corpse shoved under a natural rock shelf. (The ghoul ate one of its goblin "allies" after Terl gifted it to the ghoul; its kin noted the warrior's absence but were too terrified of the ghoul to investigate).

If the PCs did not slay the ghoul in Encounter 14, it is here. The PCs discover it feasting on Eiravel's bloody, broken corpse.

D: DUMP

Used as an informal dump and toilet, this chamber stinks. PCs approaching the area who make a DC 10 Perception check smell the stench from 30 ft. away. Read:

Rubbish and the detritus of life cover the uneven floor of this cavern. The room reeks of decay.

PCs searching through the trash get very dirty and very smelly, but find nothing beyond bodily wastes, gnawed animal carcasses, broken equipment and so on.

E: POOL CHAMBER

PCs approaching this chamber that make a DC 10 Perception check, hear the sounds of dripping water ahead. Read:

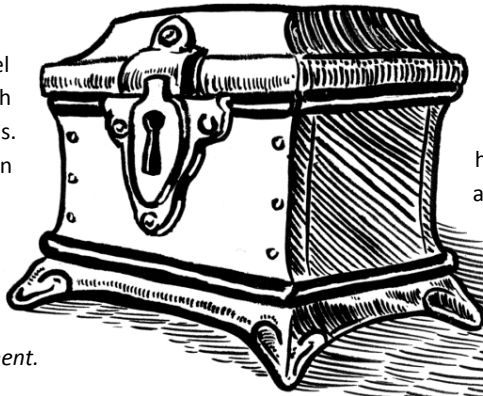
Water drips through the ceiling of this cavern into a clear pool.

Ythels' minions got their fresh water here. The pool is cold and 5 ft. deep.

F: YTHEL'S CHAMBER

Ythel dwells in this small, unassuming chamber. As he has not yet spent much time here, furnishings are sparse; he plans to take the choicest items from the priory once he has dealt with Ruan. Read:

A curiously almost empty cavern opens before you. Strangely, all the stalagmites that once stood here have been hacked down and their pieces removed. A small chest stands against one wall.



Small Chest: The unlocked chest contains a small locked iron coffer and the defaced icons filched by Ythel from the priory over the last few months. Each is now little more than a hunk of gold and silver. (Ythel plans to melt them down to make new icons dedicated to Braal). In total, they are worth 130 gp as scrap metal.

- **Small Locked Iron Coffers:** This coffer (1 in. thick, hardness 10, hp 10, DC 20 Disable Device; Ythel has the key) contains Ythel's choicest treasures: 12 pp, 257 gp, four small green gems speckled with red spots (bloodstones worth 50 gp each [DC 20 Appraise identified and values]) and one violet stone (a garnet worth 500 gp [DC 20 Appraise identified and values]).

20: THE DARK FANE (EL 4; XP 1,200)

In this encounter, the PCs enter Ythel's Dark Fane as the revenge-obsessed cleric tortures Ruan; if they act promptly, they can rescue the aging curate. The PCs can resolve this encounter using diplomacy or violence. Read:

Flickering torchlight fills this large natural chamber. Roughly in the centre of the cave a rocky plateau rises about 15 ft. Atop the rock stands a crude altar upon which Ruan lies bound. Ythel, a cloven skull symbol covered in burnt flesh in hand, stands behind the altar haranguing the helpless curate. A pit, filled with corpses, pierces the floor in front of the plateau. Fell symbols daubed in blood cover the walls.

A DC 15 Perception check reveals the corpses in the pit seem to be shifting slightly. When the PCs get within 20 ft. of the pit, three immature lemures (that were feeding on the corpses) emerge. Read:

The corpse-pit begins to undulate and shift as three creatures composed of pulsating waves of melted flesh ooze haltingly from it and shudder across the floor toward you. Within the creatures' form wriggle half-formed clawed arms and a dripping face twisted into a bestial scowl.

The lemures attack all intruders. Only a symbol of Braal, strongly presented, keeps them at bay.

Ythel is initially dismayed to see the PCs – he had hoped to despatch Ruan at his leisure – but quickly recovers his poise. If given a chance to speak, he rants at the PCs about Ruan's sins.

TACTICS

The lemure devils ooze toward intruders, intent on battering them to death. They attack the nearest active target and fight until destroyed. Their tactics are primitive and entirely lacking in cunning.

During battle, Ythel continues to rant about Ruan's sins and his right for revenge. He uses his lackeys as a screen, casting *bleed*, *protection from good* and *bull's strength*. He uses his remaining channel negative energy (with Selective Turning) when his foes reach the plateau (which also injures Ruan). He stays close to Ruan and if it looks as if the battle is lost, attacks the helpless curate.

- **Stop Fighting!** PCs feigning interest with a full-round action and a successful Bluff check opposed by Ythel's Sense Motive get him to waste an entire round ranting.

Unless persuaded to surrender (see "Speaking with Ythel") he fights to the death.

SPEAKING WITH YTHEL

The PCs can speak with Ythel before or during battle.

- **Stop Fighting!** A DC 16 Diplomacy check (rendering him temporarily indifferent) convinces Ythel to talk.

If circumstances allow, he cannot resist justifying his actions. He tells the PCs of the beatings and humiliations he received at Ruan's hands, even ripping his robe off to reveal his scars. Read:

Ythel screams, "He did this! He whipped and scourged me, all in the name of his god. Now he will reap that which he has sown!"

Although his scheme is far advanced, Ythel is not yet irredeemably evil. While the PCs cannot bully him into surrendering, persuasive religious arguments can make him realize his terrible mistake. To convince Ythel of the error of his ways; the PCs can attempt a variety of skill checks. Award a +2 bonus for good role-playing or a -2 penalty for bad role-playing to these checks.

Success or Failure: The PCs must make six successful checks before three failures to succeed.

Bluff (opposed by Ythel's Sense Motive): Threatening Ythel with dire consequences to his actions earns the PC a -2 circumstance penalty.

Diplomacy (DC var): Using honeyed words, the PC attempts to persuade Ythel to surrender. Ythel begins the encounter hostile to the PCs; each successful check moves him one step closer to helpful. PCs empathising with him gain a +2 bonus to the check; those asking him to spare Ruan suffer a -2 penalty.

Intimidate (DC n/a): Ythel is angry and cannot be bullied into backing down; attempts to do so fail and count as one failure. PCs attempting an Intimidate check can make a DC 20 Sense Motive check to realise this tactic will fail.

Knowledge (history) (DC 15): The PC remembers an example of Braal's treachery. For example, Ferdera, a priest of Darlen who converted to Braal's worship long ago, was betrayed by Braal and consigning to eternal torment. The stories illustrate

RUAN

Covered in burns and innumerable small cuts, this old man is clearly in a bad way. His robes are bloodied and ripped.

AC 5, touch 5, flat-footed 5; CMD 5
(-5 Dex)

hp 4 (normally 19)

Helpless Ruan is bound to the altar with rough hemp rope (hp 2; DC 23 Strength; DC 23 CMD to untie). Until untied, he cannot cast spells or use his various divine powers.

DC 15 (+1/10 ft. distant) Perception The aged curate's lips are moving – as if whispering a prayer.

Braal's treacherous nature and base traits.

Knowledge (religion) (DC 15): Drawing on his knowledge of the tenets of Darlen's and Braal's religions the PC tries to turn Ythel from his dark path. Alternatively, a DC 10 check, gains a +2 circumstance bonus to the next Bluff or Diplomacy check as he weaves religious arguments into his speech.

Stealth or Sleight of Hand (opposed by Ythel's Sense Motive): A PC winning a Stealth check can perform a single move action without drawing Ythel's attention. While this does not count as a success, such actions can provide tactical advantages in any ensuing battle. Adjudicate such actions carefully; some automatically fail (for example, removing Ruan's bonds).

AREA FEATURES

The chamber has several features of note:

Illumination: Many guttering torches shoved into cracks in the rock provide bright light.

Ceiling: The ceiling is 30 ft. high.

YTHEL FRAYNECR 2 (XP 600)

Male human cleric (Baal) 3
NE Medium humanoid (human)
Init -1; **Senses** Perception +3, Sense Motive +9
Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -3; Acrobatics -4 (-8 jumping)

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 13
(+7 armour [+1 *breastplate*], -1 Dex, +1 shield [mwk light steel])
Fort +3, **Ref** +0, **Will** +6
hp 23 (3 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +3
Melee mwk longsword +4 (1d8+1/19-20)
Atk Options destructive smite (+1)
Destructive Smite (Su [6/day]) Ythel deals 1 additional point of damage with his next successful melee attack.
Special Actions channel negative energy (4/day; 1 remaining; DC 12; 2d6; Selective Turning [1]), copycat
Copycat (Sp [3/day]) Ythel creates an illusionary double of himself (as a single *mirror image*); duration 1 round.
Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +6; spontaneous casting [*inflict spells*]; destruction, trickery)
2nd—*bull's strength*, *cure moderate wounds*, *invisibility*^D
1st—*bless*, *cure light wounds*, *true strike*^D, *protection from good*
0—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*
Combat Gear *scroll of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of silence*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 13
SQ evil aura (moderate)
Feats Martial Weapon Proficiency (longsword), Selective Turning, Toughness^B,
Skills as above plus Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (planes) +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Spellcraft +8
Languages Celestial, Common, Infernal

Gear as above plus silver holy symbol (Baal), wooden holy symbol (Darlen), spell component pouch, key, 36 gp, 57 sp, key (unlocks chest in Area F)

Walls: Symbols of evil, religious significance daubed in blood cover the walls. A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) checks reveals the symbols are sacred to Braal.

Plateau (Walls): Characters can scale the plateau's 15 ft. high walls with a DC 10 Climb check.

- **Stairs:** Rough-hewn steps are cut into the plateau's flank. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter such squares.

Characters on the plateau gain the benefit (+1 on melee attacks) of higher ground against those below them.

Altar: Ythel uses the rough, bloodstained altar as a place of worship and torture. The altar provides cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex). Ruan lies limply upon the altar.

Corpse-Pit: This shallow pit holds the decomposing bodies of Ythel's previous victims. All are naked and show signs of torture. There are five corpses in the pit; three goblins (who displeased Ythel) and two humans (travellers waylaid in the surrounding forest). The pit is difficult terrain (it costs 2 squares of movement to enter such squares).

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Use the notes below to scale the encounter:

EL 3 (XP 800): Remove two immature lemure devils.

EL 5 (XP 1,600): Add two immature lemure devils; Ythel has two channel negative energies remaining.

AFTERMATH

At the end of this encounter, the PCs have likely defeated Ythel, but Ruan may have died during the final battle. If the PCs defeat Ythel without resorting to violence, award them the full XP total for this battle. Proceed to "Conclusion."

IMMATURE LEMURE DEVIL (3)CR 1/2 (XP 200)

A pulsating wave of melting flesh oozes forward. Within the creature's fetid form, wriggle half-formed limbs and a dripping timorous face.

Young lemure devil
LE Small outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0
Speed 20 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +2 (-2 jumping)

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 11
(+2 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)
Immune fire, mind-affecting effects, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10
Fort +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +0
hp 9 (2 HD); **DR** good or silver/5

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** -1
Melee 2 claws +1 (1d3-2)

Abilities Str 7, Dex 14, Con 8, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 5

CONCLUSION & AFTERMATH

Refer to the relevant section below.

VICTORY

If the PCs defeat Ythel, they may be the only people alive in the priory. After they have buried the dead, there is little else to do. The remainder of the winter is hard; the snows continue, making travel difficult and dangerous. Staying at the priory is boring, but could afford the PCs the chance to discover additional portions of the Deep Caves.

Until the snows melt, no one visits the priory. Once travel becomes easier, the PCs can either guard the priory until the church sends a new curate or leave in search of new adventures.

If Ruan did not survive, the church could appoint a suitable PC as the priory's new curate in recognition of his exploits. This allows the party to use the priory as a base from which to explore the surrounding area (and provides a good source of non-combat challenges).

If Ruan survives Ythel's revenge, he uses his spells to heal his rescuers; he also attempts to heal Ythel – wracked by guilt and a desire to save his old pupil's soul he believes he can turn his tormentor from his dark path. Any other clergy surviving the attack remain at the priory, vowing to return it to its former glory. Such folk are extremely grateful toward the PCs.

DEFEAT

If the PCs flee the priory, allow them to reach civilisation cold and dishevelled but alive. If they raise the alarm, eventually they secure a small contingent of men-at-arms to aid in retaking the

ROAD OF THE DEAD

Centuries ago, the Tuath were a mighty folk who strove against the goblins of the Tangled Wood for dominion over that ancient place. Defeated by treachery and their feral, warlike enemies the Tuath's civilisation was thrown down, their settlements were sacked, their places of strength broken open and their holy places despoiled. The few survivors melted away into the trackless gloom of the deep forest leaving behind nothing but remnants of their once-great culture. The Road of the Dead, a ceremonial pathway representing a soul's journey to the underworld, is one such fragment that yet lingers in the Tangled Wood awaiting the brave or the foolhardy. A cunningly designed death-trap, it hides the forgotten treasures and legends of a fallen people.

Now available in Collector's Edition format.

An adventure for 3rd-level characters by Creighton Broadhurst
set on the Lonely Coast.

priory. By the time they reach the priory, Ythel and his remaining followers have disappeared leaving several grisly displays behind. In this scenario, Ythel could become the PCs' nemesis (particularly if they seem keen to avenge Ruan's death.)

FURTHER ADVENTURES

The PCs' adventures do not end with Ythel's defeat – rather their careers are just beginning. The GM has several options. The PCs could explore further portions of the Deep Caves (see "Expanding The Deep Caves").

Alternatively, they could seek to learn more about the map they recovered from the half-goblins in Encounter 1. The map notes the location of the Road of the Dead, a hitherto undiscovered place of the ancient Tuath.

STORY AWARDS

Each PC can also earn the additional story awards:

- **Defeating Ythel and Saving Ruan:** 200 XP.
- **Saving Rosenn:** 100 XP.
- **Saving Tomas:** 100 XP.
- **Individual missions** (see "Hooks"): 50 XP each.

EXPANDING THE DEEP CAVES

Retribution presents a relatively small network of caves below Cymer. If the GM desires, it is a simple matter to expand the caves. The long, rambling passageway in the north eastern portion of the caves could lead to other networks of inhabited caves. Alternatively, a particularly low tide could expose a hitherto unknown passageway or a rock fall could open up new areas for exploration. Miners from below could also link the caves to other deeper networks or the PCs could simply spot a concealed passageway Ythel and his minions had not noticed.

If the winter is particularly harsh, the PCs could be effectively trapped in the priory for months. They may return to the caves in an attempt to dispel their boredom. This is an excellent time to introduce the new areas of the caves.

The deeper passages and caverns can be as extensive as the GM desires. Remember when preparing these areas they have been cut off from all surface contact for many years; thus the kind of creatures encountered therein will be markedly different to those faced in the upper caverns.

Degenerate troglodytes hold much of the immediate surrounding caverns and savagely defend them from incursions from above. No doubt, the PCs could spend months exploring the tangled network of caverns and passages below the priory.

APPENDIX 1: DRAMATIS PERSONA

EIRAVEL SOLERUIL

Masquerading as a wizard, this woman has a dark secret.

Eiravel is Cymer's only other guest. Recently (and correctly) accused of several thefts from the nearby village, Eiravel arrived at the priory a day ago. Suffering from a poisoned wound (a dart laced with Medium spider venom) received during her last theft, she is convalescing in the infirmary. She told Ruan goblins attacked her, and although he knows she is lying, he allows her to remain. Similarly, Tomas does not trust her, but the other clergy have yet to form an opinion. Malvenos is biding his time, until she is well enough to seduce.

Background: Although always marked as different, Eiravel had no idea of her true heritage until she was 13-years-old. The slum in which she was dwelling caught fire when a wizard accidentally summoned a fire elemental that subsequently ran amok. Surviving the resultant fire (thanks to her heritage), she found the wizard's smouldering corpse and looted his spellbook, which she then parleyed for formal training.

Personality: Eiravel's childhood was tough and loveless. She constantly acts assured but really just wants someone to protect her. If someone is not strong enough to do so, she uses them mercilessly. She loves to carve wooden figurines of animal and can craft beautiful sculptures. She rarely shows her creations to anyone.

Mannerisms: When upset or stressed, Eiravel compulsively taps her right foot on the floor.

Distinguishing Features: Outwardly Eiravel is human, but a few subtle clues point to her true heritage. A faint smell of brimstone hangs in the



air around her (which she disguises with heavy perfume) and when she is in darkness her eyes give off a faint red glow (she always keeps a candle burning nearby to mitigate this effect).

Hook: Eiravel recently stole a pair of silver earrings set with three red stones (jade [DC 13 Appraise values at 130 gp] from Tryfena (a merchant dwelling in Swallowfeld). Tryfena wants the earrings back, but does not care what happens to Eiravel. She offers 100 gp for their return.

EIRAVEL SOLERUIL

CR 1 (XP 400)

Female tiefling rogue 1/wizard (enchanter) 1

CN Medium outsider (native)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4 (+5 vs. traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +4

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +7, Climb +3, Escape Artist +7, Stealth +9, Swim +0

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10; **CMD** 12 (+3 Dex)

Resist cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

Fort +1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

hp 13 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** -1

Melee mwk dagger +0 (1d4-1/19-20) or

Melee Touch *dazing touch* (6/day)-1 (dazed [1 HD, 1 round])

Ranged dagger (range 10 ft.) +2 (1d4-1/19-20)

Atk Options sneak attack (+1d6)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +4; arcane bond (amulet); barred schools evocation, necromancy)

1st—*charm person* (DC 14), *mage armour*, *sleep* (DC 14)

0—*daze* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *mage hand*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd)

1/day—*darkness*

Combat Gear *elixir of hiding*, *elixir of tumbling*

Abilities Str 8, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 11

SQ fiendish sorcery, trapfinding (+1)

Feats Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll^B

Skills as above plus Appraise +7, Bluff +8, Diplomacy +6, Disable Device +9, Disguise +4 (+6 with disguise kit), Intimidate +2, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (planes) +7, Sleight of Hand +7, Spellcraft +7

Languages Abyssal, Common, Goblin, Infernal, Undercommon

Gear as above plus masterwork thieves' tools, disguise kit, spell component pouch, 11 gp, 15 sp, set of earrings with three red stones (worth 130 gp; see "Hook")

Spellbook 0—all; 1st—*charm person*, *detect secret doors*, *expeditious retreat*, *mage armour*, *obscuring mist*, *sleep*

While poisoned, Eiravel has the following statistics:

Climb +1, Swim -2

Melee mwk dagger -2 (1d4-3/19-20) or

Melee Touch *dazing touch* -3 (dazed [1 HD, 1 round])

Abilities Str 4

MALVENOS LIAIAMNE

Arrogant and vain, Malvenos hides at Cymer from his domineering father.

Malvenos is a refugee from a far off land. Not for him were the terrors of racist persecutions by dim-witted farmers or the haughty indifference of the elves the catalyst of his flight. Rather, a manipulating father and the terror of a loveless arranged marriage precipitated his self-imposed exile.

At the priory, he acts as gatekeeper and guardian. Occasionally he hunts in the surrounding woodland, returning with venison and rabbit for the clergy.

Background: The product of a brief tryst between a human woman and a skilled, elven mercenary warrior, Malvenos spent his formative years with his mother. When she died, he went to live with his father who had become rich and powerful over the intervening years. His father cared little for Malvenos, but saw him as a useful tool for strengthening certain political relationships.

He fled here to escape his father's machinations and now bides his time; hoping his father will forget him.

MALVENOS LIAIAMNE

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

Male half-elf fighter 1

NG Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +6, Sense Motive +1
Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -5; Acrobatics -2 (-6 jumping), Climb +1

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 16

(+5 armour [scale mail], +3 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +1 shield [buckler])

Immune *sleep*

Fort +3, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1 (+3 vs. enchantments)

hp 12 (1 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3

Melee cold iron longsword +4 (1d8+2/19-20)

Melee spear +2 (1d8+2/x3)

Ranged shortbow (range 60 ft.) +4 (1d6/x3)

Combat Gear arrows (12), *potion of cure light wounds* (2), *potion of protection from evil*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ multitalented (fighter, ranger)

Feats Dodge, Skill Focus (Perception)^B, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills as above plus Profession (soldier) +5

Languages Common, Elven

Gear belt pouch, 6 gp, 13 sp, 74 cp

When not prepared, Malvenos has the following statistics:

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +3, Climb +6

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 10

Atks only carries longsword

Personality: Malvenos is a fiercely private man but also an extrovert who loves the company of women. He believes himself to be suave and is genuinely surprised if a woman rebuffs him. He is fiercely suspicious of any elves (or anyone asking too many questions) – believing they may be his father's agents.

He is very inquisitive – both because he wants to hear of far-off lands and because he fears his father's agents.

Mannerisms: Although an intensely private person, Malvenos is an insatiable flirt. Sadly, for Malvenos, life at the priory affords him few opportunities to meet women. (Indeed the only woman in permanent residence is Rosenn who has made it very clear that she is not interested in a romantic relationship). If any of the PCs are women, Malvenos relentlessly seeks them out in an attempt to quench his desires.

Distinguishing Features: Malvenos wears tight-fitting clothing, to accentuate his physique.

Hooks: An elven or half-elven character could travel to Cymer, at the behest of Tahlilian Liaiamne (Malvenos' father). Tahlilian, recently hearing stories of a half-elven warrior watching over the priests at Cymer, has despatched the PC to investigate. The PC's mission is simple; to determine whether the half-elf is indeed Malvenos but not to alert him to his father's interest in the priory. Successful completion of the mission earns the PC 100 gp.



Barely sane, Rosenn desperately tries to forget her past.

Rosenn came to the priory over a decade ago after surviving the destruction of her village. The curate at the time, Relf, took pity on her and allowed her to join his clergy even though she was not a fully trained cleric. As she lacked the ability, discipline and inclination to become a cleric, Relf trained her as a scribe and she is now responsible for maintaining the priory's library. She takes great pride in her job, loving the quiet and solitude it brings her.

Background: Rosenn's childhood in a small hamlet outside Bossin was idyllic until bandits burnt down much of her village and killed most of the populace (including her entire family).

Rosenn spent several terrible days in the hands of the bandits until they grew tired of their new plaything and discarded her. Physically she survived the experience, but was brutalised by the brutish half-orc leading the raid who took a fancy to her. The experience shattered her sanity and she retreated to the sanctuary of the priory.

Now in her mid-thirties, the wounds of her youth have finally begun to heal thanks to Darlen's wisdom and the calm patience of first Relf and then Ruan. Her recovery is fragile, however; Ythel's brutal attack on the priory will likely once again shatter her sanity (if she survives the night).



Personality: The brutal end to Rosenn's youth gravely damaged her sanity. While still a caring person, she is extremely nervous around people she does not know. She cannot bear to be around half-orcs, particularly large warrior types. Such folk terrify her and if she cannot leave the area immediately, she puts as much distance between herself and the individual as possible.

Rosenn has a dark secret. In the dead of night, when she is scared or depressed she often cuts her arms and legs. (She hides these self-mutilations beneath her robes so they are not immediately evident). She does this because of the trauma she suffered when her village was destroyed.

She also suffers nightmares about that terrible day and is tormented by survivor's guilt – she feels she could have done something more to save her family or that she should have died with them.

Ythel has spent considerable time getting to know Rosenn and is the only one in the priory except Ruan that knows the full horror of her past.

Mannerisms: Rosenn is not an emotionally demonstrable person. She rarely expresses her own feelings and speaks in a low monotone. Consequently, many people find her remote and standoffish.

Hooks: Even now, Rosenn has trouble sleeping. Often dark dreams beset her from which she wakes screaming. Such episodes unsettle Tomas (who half suspects she is possessed). Ythel (knowing her history) ignores them. If the GM wants to foreshadow 8: Screams in the Dark, he could have Rosenn wake up screaming one night.

Rosenn can normally be found in the library tending to her beloved books.

ROSENN URSELL

CR 1/3 (XP 135)

Female human expert (scribe) 1

NG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +6, Sense Motive +6

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Escape Artist** +5, **Swim** +1

AC 11, **touch** 11, **flat-footed** 10; **CMD** 11

(+1 Dex)

Fort +0, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2

hp 4 (1 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +0

Melee dagger +0 (1d4/19-20)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 9

Feats Alertness^B, Skill Focus (Profession [scribe])

Skills as above plus **Appraise** +5, **Craft** (books) +5, **Knowledge** (religion) +5, **Linguistics** +4, **Profession** (scribe) +7

Languages Common, Elven, Goblin

Gear as above plus belt pouch, scroll case containing doodles and pictures, 9 sp, 34 cp

RUAN GLOYNE

Tired and ready to meet his god, Ruan still works to atone for his youthful sins.

Ruan does not carry his eighty years easily. Failing eyesight and a weak heart have precluded him leaving the priory's confines for several years. He philosophically bears these burdens, though, seeing them as penance for past transgressions.

Background: Ruan came from humble beginnings to rise to the lofty rank of curate. This combined with his links to the Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way (page 12) have made him an object of veiled contempt among his fellow curates. He was gifted the post of curate at the backwater priory to live out his days after the previous incumbent, the aged and infirm Relf, died in his sleep.

RUAN GLOYNE

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

Male venerable human cleric (Darlen) 5

LG Medium humanoid (human)

Init -4; **Senses** Perception +8, Sense Motive +16

Speed 30 ft.; **ACP** 0

AC 7, touch 6, flat-footed 7; **CMD** 6

(-4 Dex, +1 natural [amulet of natural armour +1])

Fort +4, **Ref** -1, **Will** +12

hp 19 (5 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +0

Melee unarmed strike +0 (1d3-3 subdual)

Special Actions, channel positive energy (9/day; 3d6, DC 18 Will; Selective Channelling, Turn Undead), resistant touch touch of good

Resistant Touch (Sp [standard; 9/day]) By touching a creature, Ruan grants it a +2 resistance bonus for 1 minute. Using this power reduces his saving throw bonuses by 2 for 1 minute.

Touch of Good (Sp [standard; 9/day]) By touching a creature, Ruan grants it a +2 sacred bonus on attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and saving throws for 1 round.

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +11; spontaneous casting [cure spells]; Good, Protection)

3rd—*magic circle against evil*^P, *remove curse*, *remove disease*

2nd—*align weapon*^D, *delay poison*, *lesser restoration*, *silence*, *status*

1st—*death watch*, *command* (DC 17), *endure elements*, *entropic shield*, *protection from evil*^P, *sanctuary* (DC 17)

0—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *purify food and drink*, *stabilize*

Combat Gear feather token (whip), scroll of cure moderate wounds (2)

Abilities Str 4, Dex 2, Con 6, Int 19, Wis 22, Cha 22

SQ good aura (strong)

Feats Alertness^B, Selective Channelling, Skill Focus (Knowledge [religion]), Turn Undead

Skills as above plus Diplomacy +14, Heal +12, Knowledge (planes) +9, Knowledge (religion) +15, Spellcraft +9

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Elven, Infernal

Gear as above plus silver holy symbol, spell component pouch

His one-time membership of the Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way now embarrasses him, and he does not voluntarily speak of it. Persistent questioning gets him to reveal basic information about the cult. He also reveals Ythel was one of his students many years ago. The Adventure Background (page 6) presents other relevant portions of Ruan's background.

Personality: A firebrand in his youth with no tolerance for dissenting opinions, Ruan has mellowed as he has aged. Now a peaceful, gentle man he is friendly and open with all he meets.

He is interested in history and spends much of his time in the library or in his chambers writing a commentary dissecting *On the Nature of Law* – an examination of how different high priests interpreted Darlen's teachings.

Mannerisms: Softly spoken he barely raises his voice above a whisper.

Hooks: Ruan is an old man and no longer instructs new acolytes. In the past, though, he trained hundreds of clerics. Some remained within the Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way, while others embraced the mainstream church. A PC could be the child of one of his old students. His parent yet holds Ruan in high esteem and has despatched the PC with a gift for the aging cleric – a finely illustrated copy of *Book of Exalted Prayers*.

He rarely leaves his quarters and then only for meals and prayer.



Tomas is single-mindedly bent on his self-imposed destiny.

Tomas serves Cymer through a strong sense of familial duty and a belief his destiny is to be the curate that resurrects Cymer's glory.

Background: Tomas comes from a long line of servants of Cymer dwelling in Swallowfeld. His grandfather and his father served at Cymer with honour and distinction. Throughout his childhood, Tomas' parents unwittingly indoctrinated him; he genuinely believes a position at Cymer will elevate him above the peasants with whom he grew up.

Personality: Tomas is extremely ambitious and seeks advancement through Ruan's favour. This is not because of any sinister lust for power; rather he greatly desires to best his father who never reached the lofty position of curate and who often denied him the validation he so desperately craved.

He prefers action to debate and can come across as arrogant and overbearing because of his need to "win" any given debate or situation. He believes himself an expert on almost everything and that the folk of the nearby villages are idiots for eschewing the worship of Darlen. It is evident to him that once they return to the faith, their fortunes will improve dramatically.

Mannerisms: Tomas believes himself to be wise and knowledgeable. He loves to interrupt other people when they are speaking to offer unwanted advice and anecdotes. He does this even at inappropriate times and does not notice when this irritates people.



Hooks: Stemming from his need to "win" every conversation, Tomas places great value on converting unbelievers to the faith. To this end, he bombards unbelievers with religious teachings, particularly if they express even the slightest interest in his views.

Most of the time he remains close to Ruan to further ingratiate himself with the aging curate.

TOMAS LELEAN

CR 1 (XP 400)

Male human cleric (Darlen) 2

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init -1; **Senses** Perception +2, Sense Motive +6

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -4; Acrobatics -5 (-9 jumping)

AC 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 12

(+5 armour [mwk scale mail], -1 Dex, +1 shield [light steel])

Fort +4, **Ref** -1, **Will** +5

hp 16 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3

Melee mwk longsword +4 (1d8+2/19-20)

Special Actions channel positive energy (5/day; 1d6; DC 13 Will; Turn Undead), touch of good, touch of law

Touch of Good (Sp [standard; 5/day]) By touching a creature, Tomas grants it a +1 sacred bonus on attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and saving throws for 1 round.

Touch of Law (Sp [standard; 5/day]) By touching a creature, Tomas enables it to treat all attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and saving throws as if rolled a natural 11 on a d20 for 1 round.

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 2nd; concentration +4; spontaneous casting [*cure* spells]; Good, Law)

1st—*bless*, *protection from evil*^P (2), *sanctuary* (DC 13)

0—*detect magic*, *light*, *resistance*, *stabilize*

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, *oil of magic weapon*, *holy water* (2)

Abilities Str 14, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 15

SQ good aura (moderate)

Feats Skill Focus (Diplomacy)^B, Turn Undead

Skills as above plus Diplomacy +10, Heal +6, Knowledge (religion) +4

Languages Common

Gear as above plus silver holy symbol, spell component pouch, 8 gp, 15 sp

When not prepared, Tomas has the following statistics:

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics -1

AC 9, touch 9, flat-footed 9

Atks only carries longsword

YTHEL FRAYNE

Bent on a terrible revenge, Ythel has almost irredeemably fallen into darkness.

Ostensibly a devout member of the faith, in reality Ythel has allowed his hate of Ruan to consume him utterly. He has willingly fallen under the thrall of Braal, although darkness has not yet fully claimed him.

YTHEL FRAYNE

CR 2 (XP 600)

Male human cleric (Baal) 3

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init -1; **Senses** Perception +3, Sense Motive +9

Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -3; Acrobatics -4 (-8 jumping)

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 12

(+7 armour [+1 breastplate], -1 Dex, +1 shield [mwk light steel])

Fort +3, **Ref** +0, **Will** +6

hp 23 (3 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +3

Melee mwk longsword +4 (1d8+1/19-20)

Atk Options destructive smite (+1)

Special Actions channel negative energy (4/day; 2d6; DC 12 Will; Selective Turning [1]), copycat,

Copycat (Sp [6/day; standard]) Ythel can create an illusionary double of himself (as a single *mirror image*); duration 1 round (or until destroyed).

Destructive Smite (Su [6/day; standard]) Ythel deals 1 additional point of damage with his next successful melee attack.

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +6; spontaneous casting [*cure spells*]; destruction, trickery)

2nd—*bull's strength*, *cure moderate wounds*, *invisibility*^D

1st—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*

Combat Gear scroll of *cure moderate wounds*, scroll of *silence*, silversheen

Abilities Str 12, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 13

Feats Martial Weapon Proficiency (longsword), Selective Turning, Toughness^B

Skills as above plus Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (planes) +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Spellcraft +8

Languages Celestial, Common, Infernal

Gear as above plus silver holy symbol (Baal), wooden holy symbol (Darlen), spell component pouch, 36 gp, 57 sp, key (unlocks chest in Area F [Deep Caves])

When not prepared, Ythel has the following statistics:

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Acrobatics -1

AC 9, touch 9, flat-footed 9; **CMD** 12

Melee unarmed strike +3 (1d3+1 nonlethal)

Background: Ythel is the fourth son of a minor noble much given to rank and privilege. When his father forced him to join the clergy, he was completely unprepared for the experience. His stubborn arrogance and mannerisms collided violently with Ruan's harsh outlook on life. Ruan's subsequent beatings and humiliations twisted his soul and bred a deep hatred for the aging curate. The Adventure Background (page 6) presents more detail on Ruan's and Ythel's shared history.

Personality: Outwardly Ythel is a devout member of the faithful; he always attends services and is a vocal participant in any religious conversation, but otherwise is quite taciturn. Inside, however, a twisted anger consumes him for the many humiliations and beatings heaped upon him by Ruan. He believes, Ruan must pay for his sins even if he now regrets them.

Ythel is cautious and does nothing without fully thinking through the consequences.

Mannerisms: Ythel's eyesight is not perfect, and as such he has developed a terrible squint. He always wears voluminous clothes to conceal his heavily scarred back and arms – a legacy of Ruan's beatings.

Hooks: Ythel is friendly toward the PCs, although he does not seek them out – playing the part of a shy, naive priest. He pretends to know little of the outside world, listening in seeming wonder to stories of previous adventures. If challenged regarding his shared history with Ruan, he professes to hold no grudge against his one-time teacher instead affirming he is glad Ruan beat some sense into him.



NEW MONSTER: HALF-GOBLINS

Men whisper that ghosts of an elder age stalk the deepest, unknowable reaches of the Lonely Coast's ancient woodlands. Along with the forsaken holy places and forts of a long-fallen elder civilisation, a debased and twisted race of half-goblins haunts the forest's deepest thickets. The mongrel descendants of a tribe of humans subjugated by goblins centuries ago, half-goblins are a bitter, evil folk. Never numerous, and dedicated to dark powers, they skulk about civilisation's fringe weaving terrible plots to destroy their neighbours.

ECOLOGY & SOCIETY

Although thoroughly evil and despicable, half-goblins have nevertheless developed a tight-knit, hierarchical society. Assailed by innumerable external threats, half-goblins have learnt that personal survival and advancement depends on that of the clan.

Half-goblins dwell in small clans – little more than extended family groups – of no more than forty individuals. Although the clans compete among themselves for glory and wealth, contact and trade between groups is brisk and relatively peaceful. An elder, assisted by the learned folk of the clan, rules each clan. Groups of clans, in turn make up a tribe. No one individual rules the tribe except in times of great crisis or war. Normally, clan elders form a council which loosely directs the tribe's activities.

Relations: Half-goblins hate all other races, viewing them as potential aggressors. In particular, they hate goblins (who hunt them) and humans (who treat them as normal goblins to be killed on sight).

Alignment and Religion: Half-goblins are sadistic, hate-filled creatures concerned only with the survival and advancement of their clan at the expense of others. In the main, they worship Braal (NE god of hate, malice and revenge) a few worship fell demonic powers or the ancient, atavistic spirits of the woodland in which they dwell. Others stray toward lawful evil. Most such individuals dream of uniting the disparate clans under a strong leader (normally themselves) and scourging the Tangled Wood clear of both the human and goblin infestations.

Adventurers: Most half-goblins do not stray far from their clan home. A few venture farther abroad on specific missions while others, fleeing some terrible punishment, are forced to endure civilisation's perils.

NPC half-goblins usually have levels in warrior, adept or expert (scout). Some have levels in cleric, fighter, ranger or rogue. A rare few embrace sorcery or worship the atavistic spirits of their ancient woodland home. Unsurprisingly, paladins, monks and wizards are unknown among them.

Male Names: Anarl, Bartrel, Carlai, Cerlal, Destrel, Earlal, Estrel, Ferel, Krel, Marl, Steril, Terlal, Terl, Vartel, Werlal, Xerl.

Female Names: Arala, Barsala, Carlix, Eratla, Harastra, Jerix, Larsala, Narlix, Oparlix, Severa, Varla.

Clan Names: Black Arrow, Blood Knife, Broken Spear, Cloven Shield, Crimson Blade, Dark Shadows, Dripping Blade, Ebon Axe, Gouged Eyes, Sneaking Death, Splintered Knees, Twisted Neck.

HALF-GOBLIN TRAITS

Taller than their goblin antecedents but shorter than humans, half-goblins are scrawny creatures. Like their goblin kin, their heads seem oversized for their bodies. Their eyes are black or dark brown and hair is similarly of a dark hue while their ears are slightly pointed. Roughly one in ten can pass for a human (albeit a freakishly short and ugly one).

Half-goblin advance by class level and have the following racial traits:

- **+2 to One Ability Score:** Half-goblins get a +2 bonus to one ability score to represent their varied nature.
- **Medium:** Half-goblins are Medium creatures and have no bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- **Normal Speed:** Half-goblins have a base speed of 30 ft.
- **Darkvision:** Half-goblins can see in darkness for 60 ft.
- **Goblin Blood:** Half-goblins count as both human and goblin for any effect related to race.
- **Swift:** At 1st-level, half-goblins receive Fleet as a bonus feat.
- **Rider:** Half-goblins receive a +2 racial bonus on Ride checks.
- **Stealthy:** Half-goblins receive a +2 racial bonus on Stealth checks.
- **Languages:** Half-goblins begin play speaking Common and Goblin. Those with high Intelligence scores can also choose from Abyssal, Dwarven, Gnoll, Gnome, Infernal and Orc.

HALF-GOBLIN RANDOM HEIGHT AND WEIGHT

TITLE	BASE HEIGHT	BASE WEIGHT	MODIFIER	WEIGHT MODIFIER
Male	4 ft. 10 in.	90 lbs.	2d4	x3 lbs.
Female	4 ft. 4 in.	75 lbs.	2d4	x3 lbs.

HALF-GOBLIN STARTING AGE

ADULTHOOD	MARTIAL	ARCANE	DIVINE
13	13	17	15

HALF-GOBLIN AGING EFFECTS

MIDDLE AGE	OLD	VENERABLE	MAX. AGE
26	38	50	50 + 2d10

LAIRS

Half-goblin clans dwell deep in the Tangled Wood, in places well hidden from the prying eyes of their enemies. They often choose defensible caverns, but the elder places of the world – places where ancient peoples raised mighty temples or high fortresses – also attract them.

COMBAT & TACTICS

Keenly aware of their low numbers, half-goblins avoid stand-up fights wherever possible. Rather, they prefer striking from ambush unleashing missile weapons and spells upon their hapless foe.

Alternatively, they love to manipulate their foes into fighting each other. For example, half-goblin scouts could lead a goblin raiding party to a human settlement or (disguised as goblins) attack wandering adventurers.

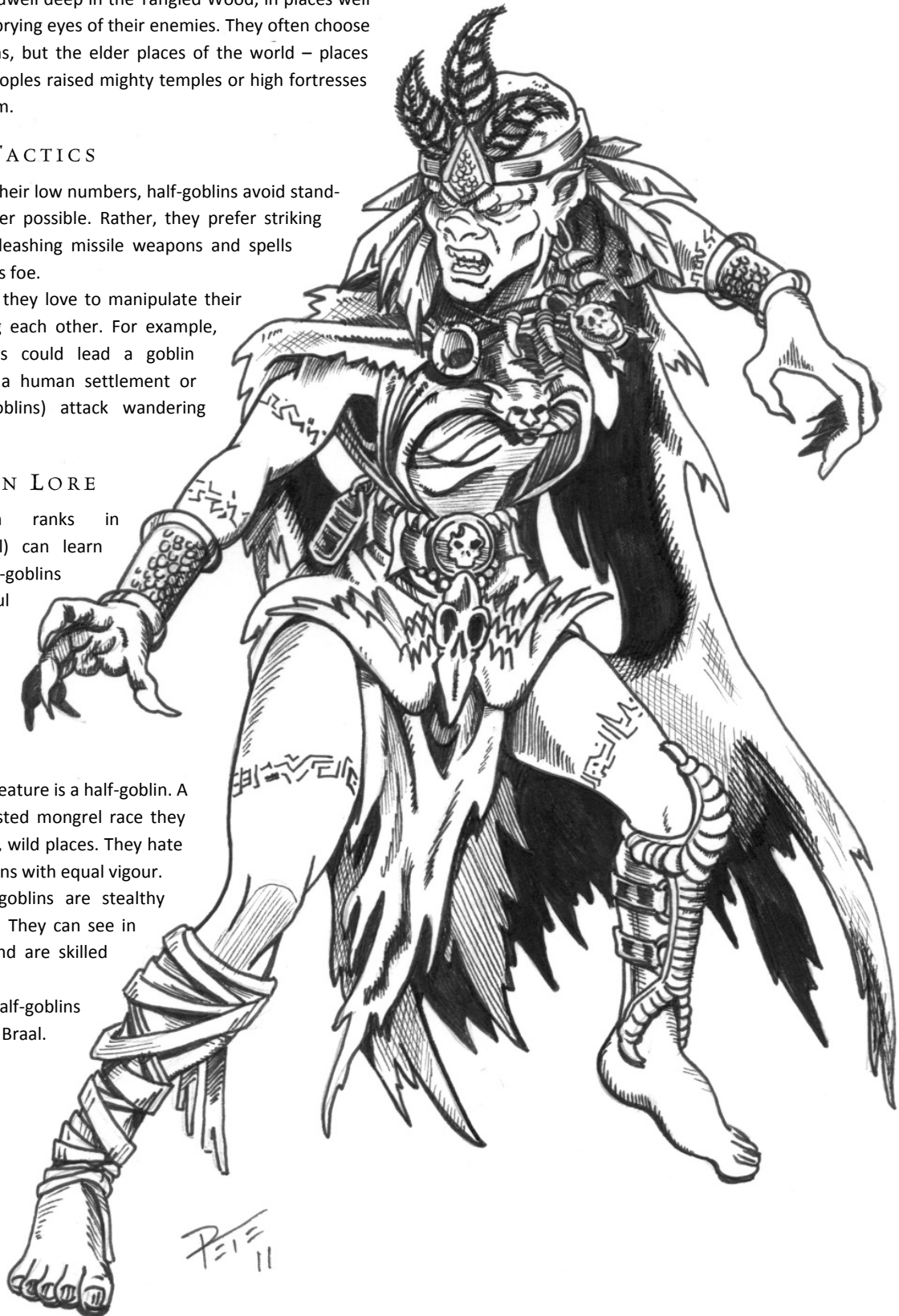
HALF-GOBLIN LORE

Character with ranks in Knowledge (local) can learn more about half-goblins with a successful skill check. A successful check reveals all information revealed by a lesser check.

DC 11: This creature is a half-goblin. A debased and twisted mongrel race they dwell in secluded, wild places. They hate humans and goblins with equal vigour.

DC 16: Half-goblins are stealthy and fleet of foot. They can see in pitch darkness and are skilled riders.

DC 21: Half-goblins normally worship Braal.



DID YOU KNOW?

If you enjoyed this product, please consider leaving a review.

If you didn't enjoy this product, did you know Raging Swan Press offers a money back guarantee?

OPEN GAME LICENSE VERSION 1.0A

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product Identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product

Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10 Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12 Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13 Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14 Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15 COPYRIGHT NOTICE: Open Game License v 1.0 ©2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Open Game License v1.0a. Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast Inc.

System Reference Document: ©2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Authors: Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, based on material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Pathfinder Roleplaying Game. ©2008, 2009, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Jason Bulmahn.

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary. ©2009 Paizo Publishing LC; Author Jason Bulmahn, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook and Sip Williams.

The Book of Experimental Might. ©2008, Malhavoc Press; Author: Monte Cook.

Tomb of Horrors. ©2002, Necromancer Games, Inc.; Authors: Scott Greene, with Clark Peterson, Erica Balsley, Kevin Baase, Casey Christofferson, Lance Hawvermale, Travis Hawvermale, Patrick Lawinger, and Bill Webb; Based on original content by TSR.

Retribution. ©Raging Swan Press 2010; Author: Creighton Broadhurst.

The Lonely Coast. ©Raging Swan Press 2010; Author: Creighton Broadhurst.

Swallowfeld. ©Raging Swan Press 2010; Author: Creighton Broadhurst.

Troglodytes of the Tentacled One. ©Raging Swan Press 2011; Author: Creighton Broadhurst.

Half-Goblins of the Tangled Wood. ©Raging Swan Press 2011; Author: Creighton Broadhurst.

So What's The Demi-Human Called, Anyway? ©Raging Swan Press 2012; Author: Creighton Broadhurst.

Advanced Player's Guide. ©2010, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Jason Bulmahn.

Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Combat. © 2011, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Authors: Dennis Baker, Jesse Benner, Benjamin Bruck, Jason Bulmahn, Brian J. Cortijo, Jim Groves, Tim Hitchcock, Richard A. Hunt, Colin McComb, Jason Nelson, Tom Phillips, Patrick Renie, Sean K Reynolds, and Russ Taylor.

Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Magic. © 2011, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Authors: Jason Bulmahn, Tim Hitchcock, Colin McComb, Rob McCreary, Jason Nelson, Stephen Radney-MacFarland, Sean K Reynolds, Owen K.C. Stephens, and Russ Taylor.

Ultimate Combat. ©2011, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Jason Bulmahn.

The Village of Swallowfeld. ©Raging Swan Press 2013; Author: Creighton Broadhurst.

The Lonely Coast. ©Raging Swan Press 2013; Author: Creighton Broadhurst.

Retribution Collector's Edition. ©Raging Swan Press 2014; Author: Creighton Broadhurst.

Visit us at ragingswan.com

