



## THE COURAGE

## ALTERNATE OPENING



### Disclaimer

Dungeonlands is not reality. The GM sets a scene in a fictional realm and the players play characters in it. Repeat after me, "I am not my character. I cannot do the things that my character can do because he is a fictional character in a fictional universe." Don't try to fly just because your character can fly. Don't kill anyone just because your character is a master of the Scottish claymore. Roleplaying is meant to be fun, but comes with serious responsibilities.

### CHARLY YOU

Every Dungeonlands alternate opening is the unique vision of a different guest writer. Each was given the brief of creating four pre-generated heroes, taking those characters from one realm and deciding how they end up in the Dungeonlands realm. We humbly thank them all for their amazing creativity and hope you enjoy the results of that unique vision.

If you have any feedback, feel free to share that by email (hello@savagemojo.com) or on our forums (www.savagemojo.com). We look forward to hearing from you.

## GREDIC WHERE GREDIC'S DUE

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## THE COURAGE

By special guest writer John Wick.

As part of Lord Taleison's Courage, you have seen and done many things. You've defeated giants terrorizing farming villages, you've thwarted a witch and her undead slaves. You even saved Taleison's son from a cult of Ikhalu worshippers. But this is different. This... this is like nothing you've dealt with before.

Diamond miners unearthed an iron door marked with engravings that no scholar had ever seen before. All who touched the door felt a sense of dread and horror. The Lord asked you, his Courage, to investigate.

And here you are, deep inside the world, the iron door glaring back at you. This is like nothing you've seen before.

The miners look at you with frightened eyes. You've heard that their nights were filled with terrifying visions.

As you look at the door, you feel as if there is something that should not be done here. Close the mine. Seal it up. Forget this thing and leave it alone. Some locks are best left unopened.

But then, you hear something. In the back of your head. On the edge of your dreams. You hear... a song.

A voice calling from the other side of the door. A voice calling for help. A voice of pure helplessness. An honest voice. A true voice.

And you know that the voice is in pain. Barbs and hooks that rend both the flesh and the soul. Eternally torn apart and reborn to be tortured again. You feel the agony of a thousand years and hear the song

## WHAT IS THE COURAGE?

*The Courage* is what you get when trusted heroes investigate an evil doorway and appear on the Island of Paxectel, home of the Lich Queen of infamy.

We offer you the backstory and stats for four potential characters to go adventuring in the Dungeonlands trilogy of old school killer dungeon modules. There's also information on Lord Taleison, the characters' patron on the *Wicked Fantasy* side of the universe, to help set the scene.

*pounding in your ears. A weak, pathetic voice calling out over and over again...* 

Help me.

These things wrap inside your head and your guts and fight with brutal determination. There is something on the other side of the door -- something good and holy -- that needs your help. And yet, the evil that made this door cannot be mistaken. This is a trap. So obviously a trap. Something that was built to call to heroes. A sacred siren's wail to lure heroes to their doom.

You are heroes. What do you do now?

Welcome to the Wicked Fantasy introduction to the Dungeonlands Lich Queen adventures. Here, we'll give you an opportunity to transport Wicked Fantasy characters to one of the meanest, most brutal and deadliest "killer dungeons" ever built.

(JOHN: I should know. I had a hand in building it.)

You can find out everything you need to know about the dungeon in the main text. Here, we're more interested in giving you a way to transport your Wicked Fantasy characters to the Tomb of the Lich Queen for... well, for whatever nefarious reasons you may have.

We've provided you with four characters designed to take on Dungeonlands as well as a backstory for why they wind up there. You can find the characters at the end of this section, but as for why the characters are there... let's just say they've got orders.

The characters are part of Lord Taleison's Courage: a band of adventurers who serve the brave and noble Lord. We've given you a brief write-up of Taleison himself, just below.

They've served in the Courage for many years (as the text above indicates) and have been asked to investigate a strange doorway the Lord's miners found in the mountains.

## Arceletas and Erleana A Palaena M Erleana

Saying "Ashcolmb's nobility has a bad reputation" is like saying the ocean is wet or mountains are tall. They are a wretched bunch of villains who have used and abused the lower classes for generations. They drive their people into poverty, then force them to repay their debts with indentured servitude. Kind folks, one and all.

But there are a few members of the nobility who are exceptions to the rule. Lord Taleison is one of them. Having inherited the land from his estranged father, Taleison came back to his home city ten years ago after training in Tamerclimb. He arrived to investigate his father's murder. "He was a villain," Taleison said, "but even villains deserve justice." Since then, he has transformed his father's lands. The people are treated justly and fairly. The spies and saboteurs who tried to burn his crops were caught and sent home with their fingers missing. "Any who seek to harm the people I have sworn to protect will face Tamerclimb justice."

As part of his Courage, you have had a high standard to live up to, but Taleison is not only just and fair, he is also generous. Generous to his people and generous to his Courage. He holds seasonal feasts where all are invited, listens to grievances and allows you to use your judgment to solve them. He is a good man. That has made him an enemy of nearly every other noble in Ashcolmb.

### THE DOOR

The door stands twenty feet tall and fifteen feet wide. It appears to be made of some sort of black iron, but it does not appear to be from this world. (The uvandir can confirm this; he's never seen anything like this substance before.) The door has intricate runes which are also completely alien and apparently undecipherable. But one thing is for certain: the door was made by evil magic.

After spending a night with the door, the heroes will have terrifying dreams. Each of them has visions of being held in a horrible machine that slowly tears them to pieces. You should be as graphic and vivid as you feel your group would be comfortable with. Or, you could just push by the comfort level and get a visceral reaction. Make them feel it.

You can't move. Not your arms, not your legs. Trapped inside a coffin, you can hardly breathe. The air is feted and stale. You see blood and bits of flesh



on the walls of the coffin. And you know those bits of flesh belong to you.

Small holes open in the sides and roof and black iron instruments extend themselves out. You cannot breathe. You cannot move. The instruments reach down toward you and extend tiny razors and metal fingers. The razors cut and the fingers probe. Pulling little bits of you away. Your fingertips. Your stomach. The insides of your thighs. When the razors and fingers reach for your eyes, you awaken, screaming.

The heroes awaken with the knowledge that their experience is happening to someone on the other side of the door. They also awaken with the knowledge that if they go through the door, the same may happen to them.

As they approach the door, the runes glow and seep blood. The door opens and a portal shines on the other side. There is no way to know where the portal leads. No spell or knowledge will inform them. It's a leap of faith.

If the heroes decide to go through, they find themselves at the entrance of the Dungeonlands realm, where the Lich Queen awaits to devour their souls.



#### **Rair Heirdan**

Human Wizard 15 NG Medium humanoid (human) Init +7; Senses Perception +15

#### DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 19, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +5 deflection, +1 dodge) hp 83 (15d6+21)

Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +11

Defensive Abilities evasion; SR 21

#### OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +3 brilliant energy silver dagger +10/+5 (1d4+2/19-20)

**Special Attacks** hand of the apprentice (9/day), metamagic mastery (4/day)

**Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 15th; concentration +23):

8th—temporal stasis (DC 24)

7th—deflection, reverse gravity

**6th**—antimagic field, globe of invulnerability, mass bull's strength, undeath to death (DC 22)

**5th**—2 x hold monster (DC 21), teleport, transmute rock to mud, wall of force

**4th**—black tentacles, mage's faithful hound, 2 x mnemonic enhancer , wall of fire

**3rd**—arcane sight, dispel magic, dispel magic, fireball (DC 19), lightning bolt (DC 19)

**2nd**—cat's grace, continual flame, invisibility, knock, rope trick, spider climb

**1st**—burning hands (DC 17), mage armor, magic missile, magic missile, protection from evil, protection from evil

**0 (at will)**—detect magic, detect magic, message, read magic

#### STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 22, Wis 14, Cha 14 Base Atk +7; CMB +7; CMD 26

Feats Arcane Blast, Arcane Shield, Combat Casting, Destructive Dispel, Dodge, Empower Spell, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Reach Spell, Run, Scribe Scroll, Uncanny Concentration, Widen Spell **Skills** Acrobatics +6 (+10 to jump with a running start), Climb +5, Diplomacy +11, Escape Artist +7, Heal +7, Knowledge (arcana) +24, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +16, Knowledge (planes) +19, Perception +15, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +21, Stealth +13, Survival +7, Swim +5, Use Magic Device +8

**Languages** Aquan, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Elven, Goblin, Ignan

**SQ** arcane bonds (ring of protection), human wizard, specialized schools (universalist)

**Combat Gear** oil of invisibility, potion of barkskin +5, caltrops, tanglefoot bag (5), +3 brilliant energy silver dagger, mantle of spell resistance, ring of evasion, ring of protection +5: **Other Gear** ring of sustenance, backpack, masterwork, belt pouch, belt pouch, belt pouch, chalk, flint and steel, incense, compact spellbook (2), sunrod (3), waterskin, 150 gp

#### Lady Callista Brighton

Human Paladin 15 LG Medium humanoid (human) Init +7; Senses Perception +16

#### DEFENCE

AC 24, touch 14, flat-footed 23 (+10 armor, +1 Dex, +3 deflection)

hp 157 (15d10+55)

Fort +19, Ref +13, Will +17

Immune charm, disease, fear

#### OFFENSE

#### Speed 20 ft.

**Melee** +4 undead-bane adamantine greatsword +22/+17/+12 (2d6+8/17-20 plus 2d6 vs. Undead) or adamantine dagger +19/+14/+9 (1d4+3/19-20)

**Special Attacks** aura of faith, channel positive energy 7/day (DC 22, 8d6), smite evil

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +20)

At will—detect evil

**Paladin Spells Prepared** (CL 12th; concentration +17):

4th—blaze of glory (DC 19), restoration

**3rd**—communal resist energy, cure moderate wounds, fire of judgment (DC 18)

**2nd**—eagle's splendor, resist energy, weapon of awe (DC 17)

**I st**—bless weapon, create water, cure light wounds, protection from evil, read magic

#### STATISTICS

Str 17, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 20 Base Atk +15; CMB +18; CMD 34 **Feats** Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Critical Focus, Extra Lay on Hands, Great Fortitude, Greater Mercy[UM], Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Power Attack

**Skills** Climb +2, Diplomacy +15, Escape Artist +1, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (nobility) +5, Knowledge (religion) +9, Perception +16, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +8, Stealth +3, Survival +11, Swim -1

#### Languages Common

**SQ** aura of courage, aura of good, aura of justice, aura of resolve, divine bonds (greatsword [3/day] 3/ day), lay on hands, mercies (blinded, cursed, fatigued, poisoned, staggered)



**Combat Gear** potion of bear's endurance, folding plate, +4 undead-bane adamantine greatsword, adamantine dagger, ring of protection +3; **Other Gear** backpack, masterwork, bedroll, silver holy symbol (Palatine), holy text, mess kit, tindertwig (5)

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aura Of Courage +4 (10' radius) (Su) Callista is immune to Fear. Allies within her aura gain a morale bonus to saves vs Fear.

Aura Of Faith (10' radius) (Su) Callista's weapons, and attacks against enemies in her aura are considered good-aligned for overcoming DR.

Aura Of Justice (10' radius) (Su) Callista may expend two uses of her Smite Evil ability to allow her allies within aura to Smite evil, using her bonuses.

Aura Of Resolve +4 (10' radius) (Su) Callista is immune to charm. Allies within her aura gain a morale bonus to saves vs charm.

Divine Bond (greatsword +4, 15 mins, 3/ day) (Sp) Weapon shines with light and gains enhancement bonuses.

**Folding Plate** This item normally looks like a heavy steel brooch or cloak clasp, often depicting a heavy helm or sturdy shield. On command, the brooch transforms in a clatter of metallic plates and panels to instantly cover the wearer in a complete suit of +1 full plate, with the design of the brooch displayed on the armor's breastplate. The same command word causes the armor to transform into the brooch. The brooch only transforms if the wearer's armor slot is unoccupied, thus it won't work if the wearer is already armored.

*Note*: This armor will have negligible weight while it is not equipped - presumably it is in brooch form while not in use.

#### Construction

**Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, instant summons; **Cost** 7,650 gp

#### Arianna Luetea

Human Oracle 15 CG Medium humanoid (human) Init +3; Senses Perception +19

#### DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+7 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 94 (15d8+9)

Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +12

Immune exhaustion, fatigue

Weakness oracle's curses (lame)

#### OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +3 dancing quarterstaff +14/+9/+4 (1d6+3) Oracle Spells Known (CL 15th; concentration +20):

7th (4/day)—disintegrate (DC 22), holy word (DC 22), mass cure serious wounds, resurrection

**6th (6/day)**—contingency, heal, hellfire ray, heroes' feast, mass cure moderate wounds

**5th (7/day)**—breath of life (DC 20), dispel evil, flame strike (DC 20), insect plague, mass cure light wounds, permanency

**4th (7/day)**—cure critical wounds, cure critical wounds, freedom of movement, greater magic weapon, restoration, threefold aspect

**3rd (7/day)**—create food and water, cure serious wounds, daylight, dispel magic, elemental speech, sands of time

**2nd (7/day)**—blinding ray (DC 17), cure moderate wounds, gentle repose (DC 17), hold person (DC 17), instant armor, lesser restoration, silence (DC 17), status

**1st (8/day)**—bane (DC 16), cause fear (DC 16), cure light wounds, divine favor, endure elements, memory lapse (DC 16), protection from evil

**0 (at will)**—create water, detect magic, detect poison, guidance, light, purify food and drink (DC 15), read magic, resistance, stabilize

#### STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 21 Base Atk +11; CMB +14; CMD 25

Feats Abundant Revelations, Abundant Revelations, Agile Maneuvers, Divine Interference, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Extra Revelation, Great Fortitude, Iron Will

**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Appraise +5, Bluff +16, Climb -1, Diplomacy +15, Escape Artist +2, Heal +15, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (planes) +9, Knowledge (religion) +15, Perception +19, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +9, Stealth +3, Survival +7, Swim -2, Use Magic Device +15

#### Languages Aquan, Auran, Common

**SQ** mystery (time), revelations (aging touch, erase from time, knowledge of the ages, rewind time, temporal celerity, time hop), slow and steady

**Combat Gear** +3 dancing quarterstaff **Other Gear** mwk backpack , bedroll, belt pouch (2), everburning torch, flint and steel, platinum holy symbol, marbles, mirror, parchment (10), 98 gp, 9 sp

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aging Touch (7 STR to creatures or 15d6 HP to objects, 5/day) (Su) Arianna's touch ages living creatures and objects. As a melee touch attack, she can deal 7 points of Strength damage (1/ 2 oracle levels) to living creatures. Against objects or constructs, she can deal 15d6 points of damage (1d6/oracle level).

**Divine Interference** Arianna can sacrifice a spell to force an enemy to reroll a successful attack against one of her allies.

**Erase From Time (7 rds, 3/day, DC 22) (Su)** As a melee touch attack, Arianna can temporarily remove a creature from time altogether. The target creature must make a Fortitude save or vanish completely for 7 rounds. No magic or divinations can find or contact the target during this time.

Knowledge Of The Ages +5 (5/day) (Su) Arianna can search through time to recall some bit of forgotten lore or information. She can retry any Knowledge skill check she has made within the past minute, gaining a +5 insight bonus.

Lame One of Arianna's legs is permanently wounded, reducing her base land speed by 10 feet. Her speed is never reduced due to encumbrance or armor.

#### **Tom Bing**

Halfling Rogue 15 N Small humanoid (halfling, haffun) Init +8; Senses Perception +22

#### DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 16, flat-footed 17 (+6 armor, +4 Dex, +1 size, +1 dodge)

hp 140 (15d8+48)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +14 (+5 bonus vs. traps), **Will** +8 (+2 vs. fear)

**Defensive Abilities** evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +5

#### OFFENCE

Speed 20 ft.

**Melee** +3 silver shortsword +17/+12/+7 (1d4+1/19-20) and

adamantine dagger +13/+8/+3 (1d3/19-20)

**Ranged** +3 distance seeking darkwood shortbow +19/+14/+9 (1d4+3/×3)

Special Attacks sneak attack +8d6

#### STATISTICS

#### Str 10, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 12 Base Atk +11; CMB +14; CMD 25

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Go Unnoticed, Improved Initiative, Mobility

**Skills** Acrobatics +24, Climb +14, Diplomacy +19, Disable Device +29, Escape Artist +22, Heal +6, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +14, Knowledge (engineering) +16, Knowledge (nobility) +6, Linguistics +10, Perception +22, Profession (Butler) +8, Sense Motive +10, Sleight of Hand +22, Stealth +26, Swim +11, Use Magic Device +19; Racial Modifiers +2 Acrobatics, +2 Climb, +2 Perception

**Languages** Common, Elven, Gnoll, Gnome, Halfling, and add another five languages that fit your campaign specifics or the backstory you want for Tom.

**SQ** rogue talents (another day, befuddling strike, crippling strike, esoteric scholar, hard to fool, offensive defense, snap shot), trapfinding +7

**Combat Gear** +3 studded leather, +2 silver shortsword, +3 distance seeking darkwood shortbow, slaying arrow (3), adamantine dagger, arrows (20), smoke arrows (3), mwk thieves tools +1; **Other Gear** backpack, bedroll, flint and steel, rope, silk (50'), sunrod (10), magnifying glass, marbles, mess kit, mirror (small, steel), waterskin, (2), whistle (signal); 150 gp

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

Another Day (I/day) (Ex) If attack reduces below I hp, move 5 ft. If out of reach take 0 dam, but staggered next rd.

**Befuddling Strike (Ex)** Foe Tom sneak attacks takes -2 on attacks against him for 1d4 rds.

Crippling Strike (Ex) Tom's sneak attacks do 2 points of Strength damage.

**Esoteric Scholar (I/day) (Ex)** Once a day, Tom may attempt a Knowledge check, even when he is not trained in that Knowledge skill.

Fearless +2 racial bonus vs Fear saves.

**Go Unnoticed** During the first round of combat, flat-footed opponents are considered not to have noticed Tom yet for the purposes of Stealth skill checks, allowing him to make a Stealth check that round to hide from them.

Hard To Fool (4/day) (Ex) Tom can roll 2d20 for Sense Motive check and take the better result.

**Offensive Defense (Ex)** Sneak attack grants a +1 dodge bonus to AC for each die rolled vs. that foe.

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A door buried under a mountain, reeking of evil. A voice pleading for help, sacred and pure. A simple instruction: investigate and report back.

Guest writer John Wick presents an alternate opening for the Dungeonlands trilogy from his Wicked Fantasy version of standard fantasy tropes.

# You're Lord Taleison's Courage, the bravest of heroes. It's time to show it!

These 15th level characters are designed to be a party of dungeon delvers in the Dungeonlands trilogy, but they can be player (or non-player) characters in any Suzerain setting you like. You'll want a copy of Wicked Fantasy to make the most of this book.

