

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®]

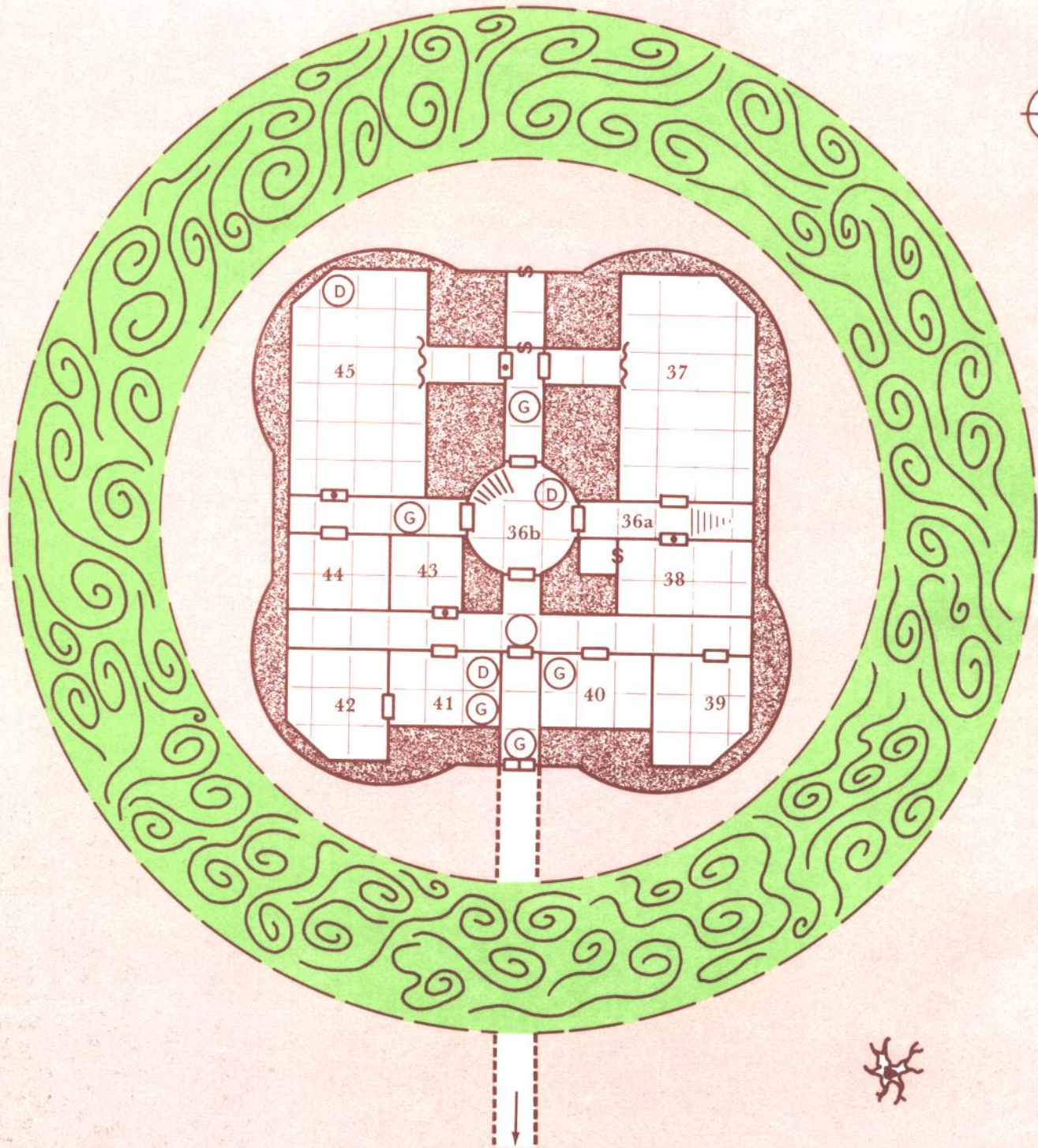
Expert Game Adventure

Saga of the Shadow Lord

by Stephen Bourne



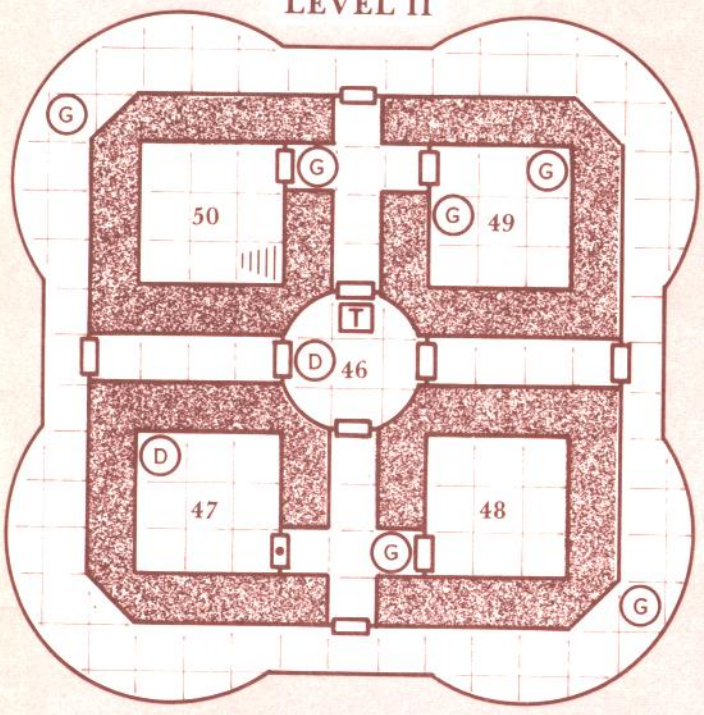
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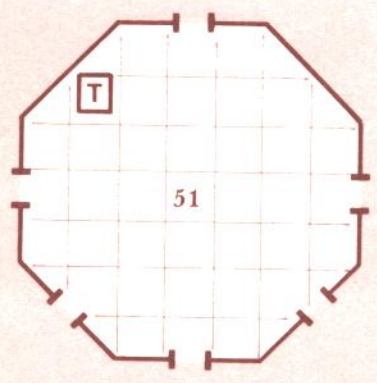
MAP XIV GERETH MINAR

UPPER AND LOWER LEVELS

LEVEL II



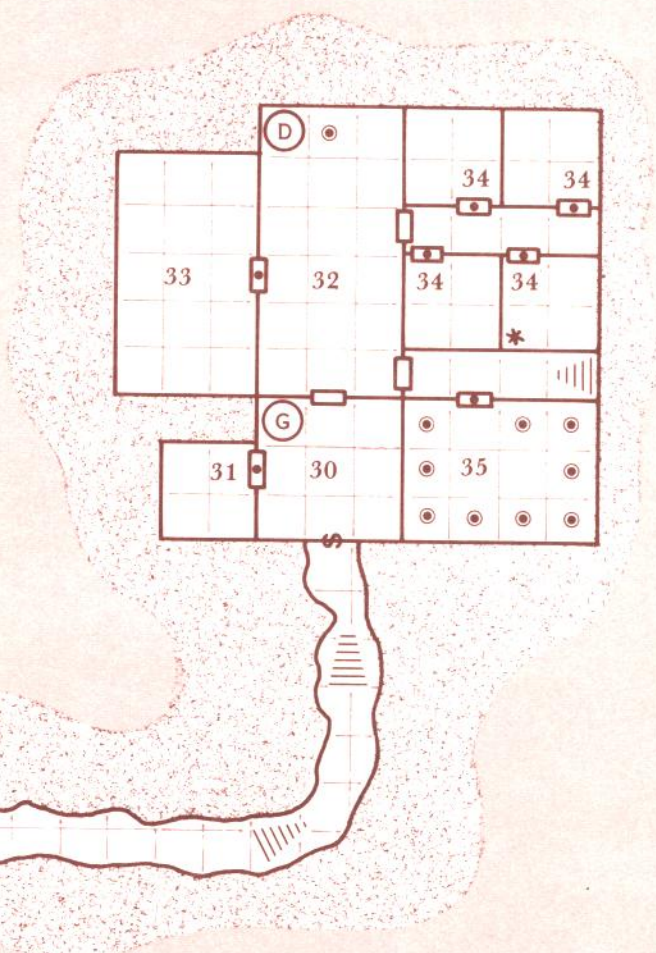
LEVEL III



	Swirling Mist		Window
	Trail		Curtain
	Door		Trap Door
	Locked Door		Observation Device
	Secret Door		Guards
	Stairs		Pillar or Statue
	Nethelar		Tree Stump

Scale: one square equals 10 ft.

DUNGEON LEVEL



To Tree Stump

COMBINED MONSTERS STATISTICS TABLE

NAME	AC	HD	hp	#AT	THACO	D	AL	Sp. Abil.	MV	BOOK
Bat, giant	6	2	9	1	18	1-4	N	5% vampire	180'(60')	Basic
Bear, grizzly	8	5	23	3	15	1-4/1-4/1-8	N	Bear hug	120'(40')	Basic
Boar	7	3	15	1	17	2-8	N		90'(30')	Basic
Brigand (Human)	6	1	5	1	19	1-6	C		120'(40')	Expert
Bugbear	5	3+1	14	1	16	2-8	C	+1 to hit	90'(30')	Basic
Caecillia	6	6*	30	1	14	1-8	N	Swallow prey	60'(20')	Expert
Chimera, undead	4	9**	45	4	11	1-3/1-3/2-8 1-10/3-12/3-18	C	Breath weapon	120'(40')	Appendix
Cobra, spitting	7	1*	5	1	19	1-3/poison	N	Poison spit	90'(30')	Basic
Common man, servant	9	1	4	1	20	1-4	N		90'(30')	
Crab spider, giant	7	4*	18	1	16	1-6/poison	N	Poison bite	120'(40')	
Dark Lancer	5	F5	30	1	17	1-8	N		90'(30')	
Denagoth officer	4	F8	65	1	15	2-9	N		90'(30')	
Dragon, black	2	7**	49	3	13	2-5/2-5/2-20	C	Spells, breath breath: 49	90'(30')	Basic
Dragon, blue	0	9**	63	3	11	2-7/2-7/3-30	N	Spells, breath breath: 63	240'(80')	Basic
Efreeti (lesser)*	3	10*	50	1	10	2-16	C	Illusion, flame invisibility	90'(30')	Expert
Elf	5	1*	6	1	19	1-8	L	Spells (M-U)	120'(40')	Basic
Follower of Idris	6	C2	7	1	19	1-6	C	Spells (C)	90'(30')	
Ghoul	6	2*	6	3	18	1-3/1-3/1-3	C	Paralysis	90'(30')	Basic
Giant, cloud	4	13*	80	1	9	6-36	N	Hurl boulder	120'(40')	Expert
Gnoll	5	2	15	1	18	2-9	C		90'(30')	Basic
Goblin	6	1-1	4	1	20	1-6	C	-1 in daylight	90'(30')	Basic
Golem*, bone	2	6*	30	4	14	1-6x4	N	Immunities	120'(40')	Expert
Guard, warrior	4	F5	40	1	17	1-8	C		90'(30')	
Hawk	6	1/2	2	1	20	1-2	N		240'(80')	
Hell Hound	4	6*	40	1	14	1-6 or 6d6	C	Detect invis.	120'(40')	Expert
Hobgoblin	6	1+1	7	1	18	1-8	C		90'(30')	Basic
Horse, riding	7	2	14	2	18	1-4/1-4	N		240'(80')	Expert
Horse, war	7	3	20	2	17	1-6/1-6	N		120'(40')	Expert
Insect swarm	7	4*	30	1 area	None	Special	N	No hit rolls	60'(20')	Expert
Lion, Mountain	6	3+2	20	3	17	1-3/1-3/1-6	N		150'(50')	Basic
Medusa	8	4**	24	1	16	1-3 + poison	C	Gaze weapon	90'(30')	Basic
Mummy*	3	5+1**	30	1	14	1-12 + disease	C	Fear	60'(20')	Expert
Ogre	5	4+1	25	1	15	3-12	C	+2 to hit	90'(30')	Basic
Orc	6	1	6	1	19	1-6	C	-1 in daylight	90'(30')	Basic
Owl bear	5	5	40	3	15	1-8/1-8/1-8	C	Hug for 2-16	120'(40')	Basic
Rat, giant	7	1/2	2	1	20	1-3 + disease	C	Disease	120'(40')	Basic
Rust monster	2	5*	25	1	15	rust	N	Rusts metal	120'(40')	Basic
Salamander*, flame	2	8*	50	3	12	1-4/1-4/1-8	N	Heat D 1-8/rd.	120'(40')	Expert
Shadow*	7	2+2*	12	1	17	1-4	C	Surprise, touch	90'(30')	Basic
Shadow Lord, NPC	2	MU10	36	1	15	2-12	C	Spells	90'(30')	Chapt. 4
Shrew, giant	4	1*	6	2	19	1-6/1-6	N	Blind, fear	180'(60')	Basic
Skeletal beast	2	Var.	Var.	3	Var.	2-5/2-5/2-20	C	Immunities	90'(30')	Appendix
Spectre*	2	6**	15	1	14	1-8	C	2 Energy Drains immunities	150'(50')	Expert
Stirge	7	1*	4	1	19	1-3 D 1-3/round	N	Blood drain	30'(10')	Basic
Thoul	6	3**	15	2	17	1-3/1-3	C	Paral., regen.	120'(40')	Basic
Troll	4	6+3*	30	3	13	1-6/1-6/1-10	C	Regenerates	120'(30')	Expert
Viper, pit	6	2*	8	1	18	1-4	N	Poison	90'(30')	Basic
Wight*	5	3*	18	1	17	Energy Drain	C	Energy drain	90'(30')	Basic
Wolf, dire	6	4+1	18	1	16	2-8	N	Semi-intelligent	150'(50')	Basic
Wraith*	3	4**	20	1	16	1-6	C	Energy drain immunities	120'(40')	Expert
Wraith Lord*	2	10*****	80	1	10	2-12	C	Spells, undead immunities, etc	120'(40')	Appendix
Wyvern	3	7*	35	2	13	2-16/1-6	C	Poison sting (save or die)	90'(30')	Expert
Zombie	8	2	10	1	18	1-8	C	Slow to attack	120'(40')	poison Basic

Book of Runes

✠ A † I ʀ R

ʃ B ƿ K ʂ S

ƿ C ʌ L ʀ T

Ɔ D ʎ M ʀ U

ʎ E ʃ N ʀ V

ʃ F Ɔ O ʂ W

ʃ G ʃ "J" ʃ P ʂ X

ʃ H ʃ Q ʃ Y

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

Expert Game Adventure

SAGA OF THE SHADOW LORD

by Stephen Bourne



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ADVENTURE ONE

INTRODUCTION

In the east a kingdom falls,
In the west the shadows rise,
From the north the dark lord gazes...
To the south with baleful eyes.

So to the field of honor,
With shield and flashing sword,
For high adventure beckons,
To the halls of the shadow lord.

Saga of the Shadow Lord is played with the D&D® Basic and D&D Expert Set rules. The adventure is intended for four to eight characters of level 5 to 9. For the best results, the party should have a minimum of 30 levels at the beginning of the adventure. If the players do not have player characters (PCs) of sufficient level, they may use some or all of the Pre-rolled Characters provided in the Pull-Out Section, at the center of the booklet, either as PCs or as extra NPC companions.

Read each adventure thoroughly before attempting to play it. Adventure One can be played prior to reading Adventure Two, however, reading the whole would be a help for the DM. In any case, elements of the Appendix Section, at the end of the booklet contain vital information for the DM. All the boxed texts are to be read to the players (or interpreted by the DM, according to the situation) at the moment of the corresponding encounter. Any other information is for the DM's eyes only. Check all maps, encounters, and their locations so they become familiar. All the monster statistics appear on the inside of the booklet cover, to provide a permanent display of their abilities at any time during the adventure. The Random Encounters Chart is located on page 62. It indicates all encounters or events that could occur within the various areas of Wendar or Denagoth. Each column of the chart corresponds to a specific area. The proper column to use and the frequency of random encounter checks are explained within the appropriate chapters of the adventure.

When the text calls for a character to make an Ability Check (such as a Strength Check or a Dexterity Check) the player rolls a d20: if the number rolled is equal to or less than the ability number, the check is successful; if the roll is greater than the ability number, the check fails. Sometimes, the text includes modifiers that may will make the ability check easier or more difficult.

Preparing the Adventure

Remove the four maps at the center of the booklet and keep them aside for future use. Pull the last page of the booklet out and show MAP XII to the players. They are to fill the blank hexes as they explore the lands beyond the mountains. The players should use the symbols offered of the map. Avoid showing the runes on the back of the map. The best way to handle this situation is to attach MAP XII with paper clip over the exterior panel of the booklet cover (concealing the runes until the proper moment). The runes are to be used in Adventure Two.

Overland Movement

As is often the case with outdoor adventures, there may be those in the group who would wish to fly at specific times or all the time. In this regard some players might try to make use of winged mounts such as pegasi or others may have access to special magical conveyances such as *brooms of flying*. Discourage excessive use of such procedures as much as possible. A good deal of the drama in this adventure is tied to the fact that Denagoth is an unknown and mysterious land. As such, it is designed to be explored on foot or horseback.

If characters make a habit of flying, tell them that the high altitude of the plateau can affect magical items and exhaust flying mounts; high winds in the mountains can produce treacherous turbulences. As a rule of thumb, have the character make an Dexterity Check for each half-hour of flight. If the character fails two consecutive checks, he must land and rest for 1d4 hours, having become exhausted by flying through turbulence.

The realms of Wendar and Denagoth (described below) are rugged wilderness areas. The wilderness movement rate is two-thirds the normal movement rate unless the party is traveling through mountains or swamp or is traveling along a marked trail. The movement rate through mountains and swamps is one-half the normal rate; movement along marked trails is at the normal rate for the terrain. Movement rates can be found on page 41 of the D&D Expert Set. If the party attempts to forage on the move (see page 21 in the Expert Set) this will reduce their movement rate even further. The chance of finding food while foraging is only 1 in 6, due to the devastation caused by the passage of evil armies.

The Adventure Setting

The adventure is designed to occur north of the

Principalities of Glantri and the Heldann Freeholds (these two realms are described in the D&D® Expert Set. Beyond these realms lie vast barren lands, called the Northern Wildlands, which extend for hundreds of miles to the north and west. This vast expanse of rocks and dry plains is sparsely inhabited and lawless. If the DM has already settled the areas north of the D&D® Expert map, the adventuring area should then be relocated further north, along the Mengul Mountains.

Wendar. For decades the small realm of Wendar has known peace and prosperity under the benevolent rule of its Wizard-King Gylharen, and the protection of the mighty Empire of Thyatis. Wendar is a large valley wedged between the Mengul Mountains, the Principalities of Glantri, and the vast northern wildlands. The large forests and plains covering the rich valley are the common dwellings of elves and human farmers that make up the Wendarian population.

The capital city marks the end of a long caravan route from the open city of Freiburg, in the Heldann Freeholds, and the Ethengar Khanate. The trade route crosses the eastern forest of Wendar and the Kevar Hills before reaching the mountain pass to the Heldann Freeholds. Wendarian soldiers often patrol the trade route between the capital and the frontier, for it is vital to the realm's survival. A small garrison is permanently located at the pass, collecting passage fees and maintaining order. The narrow trail beyond the citadel of Wendar is but a narrow unfrequented path leading to the dark lands of Denagoth. It has been unused for nearly thirty years.

It is said throughout the realm that Wendar thrives due to the magic and good fortune of *Elvenstar*, a gem of rare beauty and great power, older than the elves. *Elvenstar* once lay in a safe and revered place in Gylharen's citadel. Through the power of the gemstone all things evil and malevolent were kept at bay. And so it was that life in the city of Wendar was peaceful and rich until the disaster.

Less than a year ago the star disappeared from Gylharen's citadel. In the wake of the loss things have gone badly. The first disaster to befall the realm was a plague. It spread quickly from the rural outskirts of the state and soon entered the capital, killing thousands before Gylharen could organize the necessary effort to end it. In the end, one-seventh of the population perished.

Then, a serious draught withered crops and depleted the water supply. The people are undernourished and their water shortage

is grave. This sudden poverty has brought on a rash of civil disorder: murder, banditry and desperation are now widespread.

In the midst of this crisis Gylharen sent out a plea for help. Through loyal messengers the Wizard-King requested the aid of Thyatis, but the Emperor was preoccupied by a crisis of his own and was unable to lend aid to his Wendarian allies. Instead, an emperor's advisor has hired the help of a small group of well known mercenaries (the player characters) to investigate the disasters of Wendar. Upon their arrival, these brave adventurers are to meet Lord Gylharen and provide the ruler of Wendar with any services he may request (see Chapter One).

Denagoth, Land of the Shadow Lord. Denagoth is a bleak realm to the north of Wendar beyond an awesome barrier known as the Mengul Mountains. The mountains are feared almost as much as the undefined and dark lands beyond them. The Wendarians were so dependent upon *Elvenstar* that they never fully explored or investigated the foreboding enemy to the north.

Denagoth is located on a high plateau, at an altitude of about 6,000 feet above the valley of Wendar. To the south and east, the towering Mengul Mountains reach 10,000 feet, forming an impassable barrier. Only a narrow path links Wendar to Denagoth, and only heavily armed troops would dare to cross it and brave the monsters lurking there. Although the mountains around the plateau are within Denagoth's boundaries on Map VII, they are mainly unclaimed and uncivilized areas infested with ruthless humanoids and monsters. The Naga River that flows southeast is totally unavigable until it reaches the Heldann plains, due to the numerous cataracts and turbulent waters.

The central portion of the country runs out into a large grassland area known as the Plains of Avien. The barren lands to the north are thought to be beyond the knowing of man alive. Within the Denagothian plateau itself there are grasslands, swamps, forests and marginally arable land. Unevenly distributed throughout a few settlements, sundry farms and other habitats, the population is comprised of humans, orcs, gnolls, goblins, and various other dark folk. The orcish hordes (dominant in the army) have been culled from their camps in the Mengul Mountains.

The Plot of the Shadow Lord

The disappearance of *Elvenstar* is the latest

episode in a long struggle between Gylharen and an old foe from the north, the evil necromancer Landryn Teriak. Thirty years before this time Teriak launched an invasion of Wendar from his dark land of Denagoth. In the face of superior forces and dark magicks, Gylharen appealed to the venerable Sage of Wendar, Bensarian of Kevar. In his wisdom Bensarian made a gift of the wondrous *Elvenstar* to the Wizard-King so that the evil one and his minions would be turned back.

Through the carefully applied power of the star Gylharen was able to defeat the hosts of Denagoth and thwart the invasion of Wendar. With his evil armies scattered, Landryn Teriak withdrew to the dark realm of Denagoth, beyond the Mengul Mountains.

For three decades Wendar has enjoyed a prosperous peace. In his heart Gylharen knows the disappearance of the star is the work of Landryn Teriak. In recent months word has come from the north that once again the dark folk of Denagoth are massing for war under the power of the necromancer who is now called the Shadow Lord by his minions. Gylharen knows that Wendar cannot withstand an all-out invasion from Denagoth.

A former pupil of Gylharen, Camla the magic-user has stolen the gemstone and spirited it away to the north. For many years Camla was a trusted confidant of the Wizard-King while hiding his secret identity as an agent for the Shadow Lord.

Through Camla's treachery, Landryn Teriak now has the gemstone in his possession and is attempting to ascertain its properties, and turn it to evil. Now in possession of the gem, the evil one is mobilizing for war.

Player's Introduction

It is assumed that at least one player character is in a town or city between adventures. Wherever the adventurers may be, they receive a letter written by a local Thyatian agent requesting an interview to discuss a possible adventure.

"Brave Adventurer—

I wish to meet with you and your friends to discuss an expedition that you may find of interest. It involves some risk, but treasure is guaranteed".

The tavern the writer mentions is one familiar to you. The letter is unsigned, but it bears the official seal of the government of Thyatis.

The characters can take some time to make preparations, but they will find out nothing more until they meet the agent, who will be waiting for them in the tavern.

When you enter the tavern, you have barely enough time to make yourselves comfortable before a short wiry man walks to your table and casually sits down. The gold ring he wears bears the eagle emblem of Thyatis.

"Let's get down to business. The imperial government has received a request for help from Wendar, one of our northern allies. They are suffering disasters apparently caused by magic. The imperial government thinks that a team of adventurers is the best aid we can provide, so I offer you this.

If you go to Wendar and help them solve their problem, the Thyatian government will pay each of you 5,000 gold pieces. Of course, that's to be added to any other treasure you may get along the way. When your task is done, you can collect your reward in Wendar or in any Thyatian city, whichever you like.

Unfortunately, I have no details on the problem. Those you'll have to get in Wendar. Interested?"

The Thyatian agent is very brusque and business-like, without the usual Thyatian deviousness. His government does not stand to gain anything from the situation. If the players want to bargain for a better price, the agent will offer up to 7,000 gp per character.

The characters can travel to Wendar without any encounters, if desired; otherwise use the usual Expert rules for overland encounters (see also Map VII).

Chapter One—HIGHPASS TO DENAGOTH

Encounter Setting

The city of Wendar is a place that suffers from disease, drought and famine. Many beggars wander about the streets, and houses are frequently abandoned throughout the city. If the party asks for directions after entering the city, they will be guided to a Wendarian patrol. Gylharen has given the patrols orders to escort the Thyatian adventurers to his citadel, at the center of the city. Read the following to the players when their characters enter the city.

Arriving at the Citadel of Wendar

When you identify yourselves to the officer at the gates, guards wearing tunics of gray and gold escort you to the citadel of Lord Gylharen, the ruler of Wendar.

In the streets of the city, ragged beggar folk and children clutch at your clothing as you make your way through. They cry out for help and deliverance. Everywhere you hear people moaning, "Water. Do you have any water? We need water and food!" The guards are forced to push aside the pressing crowds near the gateway to the Wizard-King's citadel.

Having reached the sanctuary of the main tower you assemble in the throne room. After a time two servants help an old man in a gray and gold robe into the chamber. They ease the gentleman into a large wooden throne before you. With a weary wave of his arm the man dismisses the servants and the guards.

The old man sitting in the throne is Gylharen, the Wizard-King of Wendar. After observing the party silently, Lord Gylharen addresses the PCs in the following way.

"Greetings my friends. You see before you the ruler of this declining kingdom. I am Gylharen, the Wizard-King. I have asked you to come here in the fervent hope that you will undertake a very dangerous quest on behalf of myself and the people of Wendar. But first, let me explain our situation.

"Many years ago we were at war with the dark realm of Denagoth, to the north of the Mengul Mountains. Our forces were reeling before the onslaught of the savage invaders. In the midst of the crisis I appealed to the great Sage of Wendar for assistance. In his wisdom he gave us a

wondrous gemstone known as the Elvenstar. It was a brilliant blue sapphire the size of a man's fist and its power was beyond reckoning. I used this star to effect great magicks that turned the tide of battle. The dark hosts were scattered and the evil designs of the Lord of Denagoth were thwarted.

"After the war the Elvenstar protected us from our enemies—the threat of its power forestalled any attempts at subsequent invasion. For almost thirty years I have ruled this realm certain in the knowledge that our peace and prosperity were assured.

"And then disaster struck. Less than a year ago the Elvenstar disappeared. It was spirited from my tower by a traitor.

"Soon after this a plague ravaged the city, killing hundreds. Of late, a severe drought has withered our crops and denied us precious water. My people go hungry, thirsty and what is worse, civil strife has all but destroyed the goodwill of the Wendarians. Now it is all my guards can do to keep order in the city. But these things we could overcome if it were not for my greatest fear.

"Without the Elvenstar we are most vulnerable to attack from Denagoth. The lord of this dark realm is the evil necromancer Landryn Teriak, the Shadow Lord. I know the heart of this creature and his ambition knows no bounds. Even now his dark legions are massing for war.

"Furthermore, we have ascertained that the Elvenstar itself is in Denagoth, undoubtedly in the hands of my old enemy. I do not greatly fear that Landryn Teriak can use the gemstone properly and this, at least, is some consolation. But without the star we are no match for the hosts of Denagoth.

"It would appear that war is certain and perhaps sooner than we think. Our only chance is to recover the Elvenstar before it is too late. We are certain that it is in Denagoth but we do not know where. This is an uncharted realm, and no Wendarian has ever returned from there. We may assume that if you find the necromancer Teriak, the star will be closeby.

"So what say you, my brave friends? Will you accept this quest? Will you try to recover the Elvenstar and thus save us from a war that will destroy us?"

After this speech Gylharen will answer questions, for instance, about the treachery of

Camla. If the PCs ask for directions across Denagoth, they will be told that the Elvenstar may now lie north of the high plateau, in cold and dry barren lands. Where exactly is unknown, but perhaps a trail may lead to the place from which Teriak rules his hordes. No chart or map of Denagoth is available. Show the players Map XII, but do not reveal material on the back of the map yet. Attaching a blank piece of paper to the back of Map XII would be a good idea until Adventure Two is played.

Gylharen will be quite guarded about the workings of the Elvenstar and also about Bensarian. If pressed about the star, Gylharen will only offer this: "Only I am empowered to make use of the Elvenstar. Such things are ordained by powers beyond our own." The only thing the king will reveal is that it is hazardous to touch the star for more than a few minutes, however, some good may come from a short exposure.

At the end of their discussion, the Wizard-King will also give the party another clue. Gylharen has managed to place a spy within Geron, a small village across the border. The party should seek to contact him. No description of the spy is available for he will probably be wearing a disguise. A password has been provided for positive identification. He will respond to the password "*What's the price of gray breeches?*" with the following "*Not much, unless the trim is gold.*". Once contact is made, he should be able to offer shelter, and perhaps some information.

If the characters ask about other information, the king will tell them that none has been received. Wendar maintains small patrols of border guards, but these return only when there is some important news to report. Since the beginning of the crisis, travel has become far more hazardous, even for armed troops.

Gylharen's servants will provide the party with any non-magical equipment or provisions that they may require. Fresh and swift war horses will also be provided, if needed. The stats for the horses can be found on the inside of the booklet folder.

Random Encounter Checks

The party should not run into wandering monsters until their first night in the Mengul Mountains. From there, until they cross the Naga River (encounters #7 or #8), roll for random encounters, once per day and per night, on the first column of the Random Encounters Chart inside the booklet cover. A score of 80 or more means there are no ran-

dom encounters for that period of the day/night.

Encounter Key

Use Map VI (page 31) with the following encounters. Most of the encounters take place in the Mengul Mountains, along the borders of Wendar and Denagoth.

1. Horseman from Denagoth

You have been riding north towards the Mengul Mountains for several days. As the road curls through a wooded area, a group of riders in Wendarian uniforms pull up by the roadway ahead. These six horsemen carry lances and wear tunics of gray and gold.

These horsemen are disguised dark lancers of Denagoth, Landryn Teriak's elite cavalry, wearing stolen Wendarian uniforms. If the players inquire, the DM should inform them that the soldiers are also armed with short swords and daggers. Among them is their sergeant, Shedrak.

Upon encountering the characters, Shedrak will claim that his troops belong to a Wendarian outpost guarding the path to Denagoth. Claiming that he has not seen his folk for many months, he will engage the PCs in a discussion, attempting to learn as much as he can about the defense abilities of Wendar. Shedrak will inquire about the party's mission in the area. He will acknowledge any answer the PCs give and avoid combat if possible, in an attempt to prevent being discovered. Should the party show their suspicion, Shedrak will then order his men to attack the PCs.

If the PCs look closely at Shedrak, they see that in addition to the standard weaponry, he carries a jewelled dagger in his belt (value 30 gp). A small birdcage containing two small carrier pigeons hangs by a chain on Shedrak's saddle. If released, the birds will fly to Benar's headquarters in the village of Geron (See Chapter Two—Beyond the Mengul Mountains). If Shedrak learns about the PCs' mission or that they are headed toward Denagoth, he will release one pigeon with a message warning Benar of the party's arrival.

Use the statistics for a hawk (listed on the inside of the folder) to represent Shedrak's pigeons. If the PCs kill a released pigeon, they will capture Shedrak's message.

Shedrak carries a letter hidden in a pouch within his armor. The letter is a small rolled parchment that reads as follows:

"Shedrak, Sergeant of Denagoth,

The hour of darkness is at hand. Ride south to the accursed land and observe Wendarian current troop strength and preparations. Report as soon as possible in Geron."—(signed) Benar, Captain of Denagoth.

2. Scorched Battlefield

As you ride north into the foothills of the mountains you notice many carrion crows swooping and circling above the ground a few hundred yards to the west of the road. Smoke spirals from the ground at this spot.

Here the characters will discover the aftermath of a terrible battle. Twenty bodies and a number of dead horses lay on the field. Most of the fighters wear the gold and gray tunics of Wendarian soldiers. Some of the bodies, however, have been stripped of their tunics.

These men have been cut down by a much larger force of dark lancers. The Denagothians attacked this Wendarian outrider encampment in the night. The stripped bodies are those of fallen dark lancers—their comrades removed their tunics in order to prevent identification. Several Wendarian soldiers and officers have also been stripped to provide Denagothian spies with a more appropriate attire. If the PCs carefully search the stripped bodies, they will discover on one of them an overlooked black medallion with a red wyvern engraved on it. (The red wyvern is the symbol of the Shadow Lord.)

3. Brigands in the Mountains

As the characters ride north there is a 60% chance that someone in the group will see a flash of light to the north and east of the road. This light is a heliograph signal (a sun flash in a mirror) used by the brigands near the encounter area. If the flash is noticed, mention it to the players and allow their characters to take action before reading the boxed text.

Ahead, the peaks of this ominous range loom above, reaching into the heavens. The air has become decidedly cooler and the gentle lowland trees and shrubs have given way to fir and pine trees. Large and jagged rock formations line the roadway. At one particularly narrow gap in the road the lead horses rear-up nervously.

If the characters, have not taken any precautions against surprise, they will be surprised and ambushed by 20 brigands shooting a volley of arrows. Each character must save vs. Death Ray or be hit by 1-2 arrows.

If the attempted ambush fails to take the party by surprise, the brigands will instead attack on foot with swords drawn. Their leader will hang back so that he can continue to fire arrows at the mounted characters.

Fifty yards to the north of the ambush site the brigands' horses stand tethered. Each saddle bag holds 5-50 sp and 2-20 gp, in addition to food, iron rations and typical personal possessions. The leader's horse has a dark lancer's saddle (with a red wyvern insignia) and a pack with 137 gp, 57 ep and 49 sp. All the horses are riding horses.

The leader and two of the others in this band are deserters from the dark lancers. If captured or questioned under duress, any of the brigands will tell the group of troop movements in the mountains, mostly dark lancer patrols of 5-10 lancers. In exchange for a promise of freedom, the brigand(s) will warn the players to beware of the "mountain dragon" (in reference to encounter #5). The brigand(s) will also reveal a secret cache where they have buried a pile of Denagothian dark lancer uniforms, taken from defeated scouts and patrols.

4. The Mountain Fork

For many hours you have been steadily climbing in this mountainous country. At length you come to a fork in the trail. Towering mountain peaks loom ahead, their snow caps glistening in the sun. At this juncture one road appears to go due north, while the other veers off to the northwest. Both trails lead into the mountains ahead. The air is very cold and thin. Great clouds of steamy breath rise from the nostrils of the horses.

The north pass is the proper gateway to Denagoth. The northwest trail leads to the castle of the cloud giant (see encounter #6). Both roads, however, may ultimately lead to the Denagothian plateau.

5. The Keeper of the Pass

Brulefer, a large blue dragon, guards the main gateway to Denagoth. Teriak has been paying the creature for that duty, over and above what Brulefer may take from trespassers. The dragon is highly motivated and vigilant, and will confront the party on the



main road. Brulefer speaks the common tongue.

Brulefer has the following spells:

Level 1: *darkness**, *detect magic*, *sleep*, *ventriloquism*

Level 2: *ESP**, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *phantasmal force*

If the PCs are disguised as dark lancers, the dragon will turn *invisible* and refrain from attacking. It will then cast an *ESP** on one player from no further than 90'. This should reveal if the characters are impersonating Denagothian soldiers. Thereafter, the beast will question the adventurers as to their motives, using a *ventriloquism* spell to conceal its position, claiming that it is a spirit of the mountain. If the characters have no disguise the creature will cast a *phantasmal force* to modify its appearance to that of a wyvern. It will fly overhead once from behind the PCs. It will take 2d4 rounds for the dragon to turn around and land in front of the PCs (20' ahead on the trail).

The characters can lure the dragon away by telling it a story of a lost treasure hoard. If the supposed hoard is less than 200 miles away and the dragon fails a saving throw vs. Spells, Brulefer believes in the PCs' story and

immediately flies off to the described area to recover the treasure. Once the dragon discovers that it has been tricked, it will return and take revenge on the party if the opportunity arises. Brulefer can fly 48 miles per day (two hexes on Map VII).

If the party attempts to negotiate a retreat, Brulefer will agree only if each character drops one magic item or the equivalent of 1,000 gp in treasure. If not, Brulefer will attack as described below. Brulefer is a master in the arts of appraising the value of treasure (80% chance of appraising correctly; otherwise, Brulefer will estimate the value of treasure at +/- 50% its real price). Some bargaining may be possible between the dragon and the party, up to +/- 10% of an item's value. For magic items, Brulefer will cast a *detect magic* spell.

In battle, Brulefer immediately casts a *mirror image*. It will then breathe once and attack with its claws and bite. However, if disguised as a wyvern, Brulefer will not use a breath weapon until one-fourth of its hit points are gone (to make the illusion more believable). Brulefer will not pursue the party.

Whenever the party decides to withdraw, they should be allowed to return to area #4 and choose the other passage leading north-

west.

At the point marked X on Map VI of Denagoth the beast has a lair in a cave on the south side of a mountain slope, 200 feet above the path's level. The side of the mountain is a sheer vertical cliff. There is a 70% chance that someone in the party will spot the cave if they are actively surveying the area from the south side of the east mountain.

The dragon's treasure trove contains a pile of 5,300 gp, a small chest with 600 pp and a cache of weapons including 3 longswords, 2 gem-studded daggers (value 200 gp total), a *spear +1*, a *mace +1*, and a quiver with 21 *arrows +1*.

6a-d. Castle of the Cloud Giant (See Map I, page 8)

The path has led northwest through the mountains. After some miles the path turns due east. At length you see before you two smaller mountain peaks where the path ends. Between them, nestled in a narrow pass, is a castle consisting of one, tall tower. Off in the distance the cold crisp air is broken by the haunting howl of a wolf.

The howl is that of a dire wolf, one of the cloud giant's pets. The creature has seen the party from the cover of the rocks, north of the roadway. The howl warns the cloud giant of intruders.

As the characters draw within 250' of the castle the cloud giant will walk onto the parapets of the castle and watch the approaching characters. If they approach within 200', he will hurl rocks at them at the rate of one per round. If the party is disguised as dark lancers the giant will continue this barrage until the characters reach the castle gate. If the group is not in lancer guise, the giant will hurl a maximum of four rocks, and then stop and disappear into the tower.

6a. The Entrance

The front gate, a large wooden and iron door, is virtually falling off its hinges (a successful Strength Check will open it). The portcullis beyond is old and rusty but sturdy enough (apply a -1 penalty to any attempted Strength Check for raising the portcullis). The portcullis makes a loud rattling noise when opened, thus warning the giant that the intruders have entered his castle.

An inner secret door is located on the northwest section of the corridor, on this level. It can be opened by manipulating a loose stone in the north wall adjacent to the door. Beyond the secret door, at the end of the 20-foot hallway, is another secret door locked from the inside. This outer door was built as a secret escape route from the castle.

Torches are located at the points marked (*) on the map. Pulling either of these down on their housings will neutralize the trap in the west section of the corridor. After two rounds the levers return to their usual positions, re-activating the trap.

The trap, a 10' by 10' area marked T on the map, is triggered when it is stepped on, releasing a strong sleeping gas into the corridor. The gas emerges through small holes in the wall near the floor on both sides of the hall. Everyone in the group must save vs. Dragon Breath or fall unconscious for 2 to 5 turns. The gas will only affect those in the western section of the corridor.

6b. Prison Cell

The door to this area is locked from the outside by a large iron bolt. A small window with iron bars is set into the door.

In this chamber there are the pathetic figures of four orcs huddled on the floor. All four wear torn, stained uniforms, bearing the symbol of a red wyvern. Straw mats and crude wooden benches comprise the furnishings in this dungeon.

These orcs have been held prisoner by the cloud giant for several weeks and are now too weak to fight. They will beg the party to release them.

If the party does not wear Denagothian uniforms, the orcs will attempt to escape as soon as they have a chance. They come from the northwest, from the Mengul Mountains and know nothing useful about Denagoth, the Shadow Lord, or his plans.

If the party is wearing Denagothian uniforms, the orcs will noisily show their gratitude by generously hugging their "allies" and follow their orders to the best of their limited intelligence and abilities. The orcs freely talk about their orders (rally Mengul orc tribes for a great rampage in the south). However, if the party asks too many questions, the orcs will get suspicious and attempt to flee as soon as they get a chance.

6c. Lower Hall

In this large, octagonal chamber a huge oak table dominates the center of the room. In the middle of the west wall is a fireplace and mantle. In the center of the north wall is a L-shaped staircase leading up at an acute angle. Throughout the chamber are many bones and pieces of putrid meat—the smell is revolting. The carcasses of various mountain animals and some humanoid remains are hanging from higher beams, out of reach from rats and other pests scurrying about. The table at the center of the room rests on large wooden planks more or less covered with rotting pelts, broken bones and various refuse. With broken chairs and ripped tapestries throughout, this chamber is but a dilapidated shadow of its former glory.

Azor the cloud giant uses this area as a pantry. The planks that support the table also conceal a small cave-in connecting with area 6f below. The stairs on the northern sides of the hall lead to areas 6d and 6e above.

The creature that dwells in area 6f will come up during the night, pass through the planks and haunt this hall. If the party spends a night in the Lower Hall, run the event

described in area 6f.

6d. Upper Hall

The stairs lead to an upper landing with two doors, one to the outside parapets and one to the chamber of the giant. Both doors at the top of the stair are metal-reinforced. Apply a -2 penalty if a character attempts to force open either of these doors by using a Strength Check.

When characters manage to open the door into 6d, read the boxed text below.

In this large, vaulted chamber a huge giant slouches in a monstrous, throne-like chair against the south wall. He has pale, almost white skin, with long grey hair falling down over elaborate robes of white silk. He holds a large club in his right hand. On each side of the chair a large wolf stands alertly on guard—the two creatures growl as you enter. The giant stares at you calmly.

In the middle of the west wall a large fire burns brightly within a fireplace. Against the east wall is a giant sized bed with canopy. In the southeast corner a chest sits atop a finely carved, wooden table.

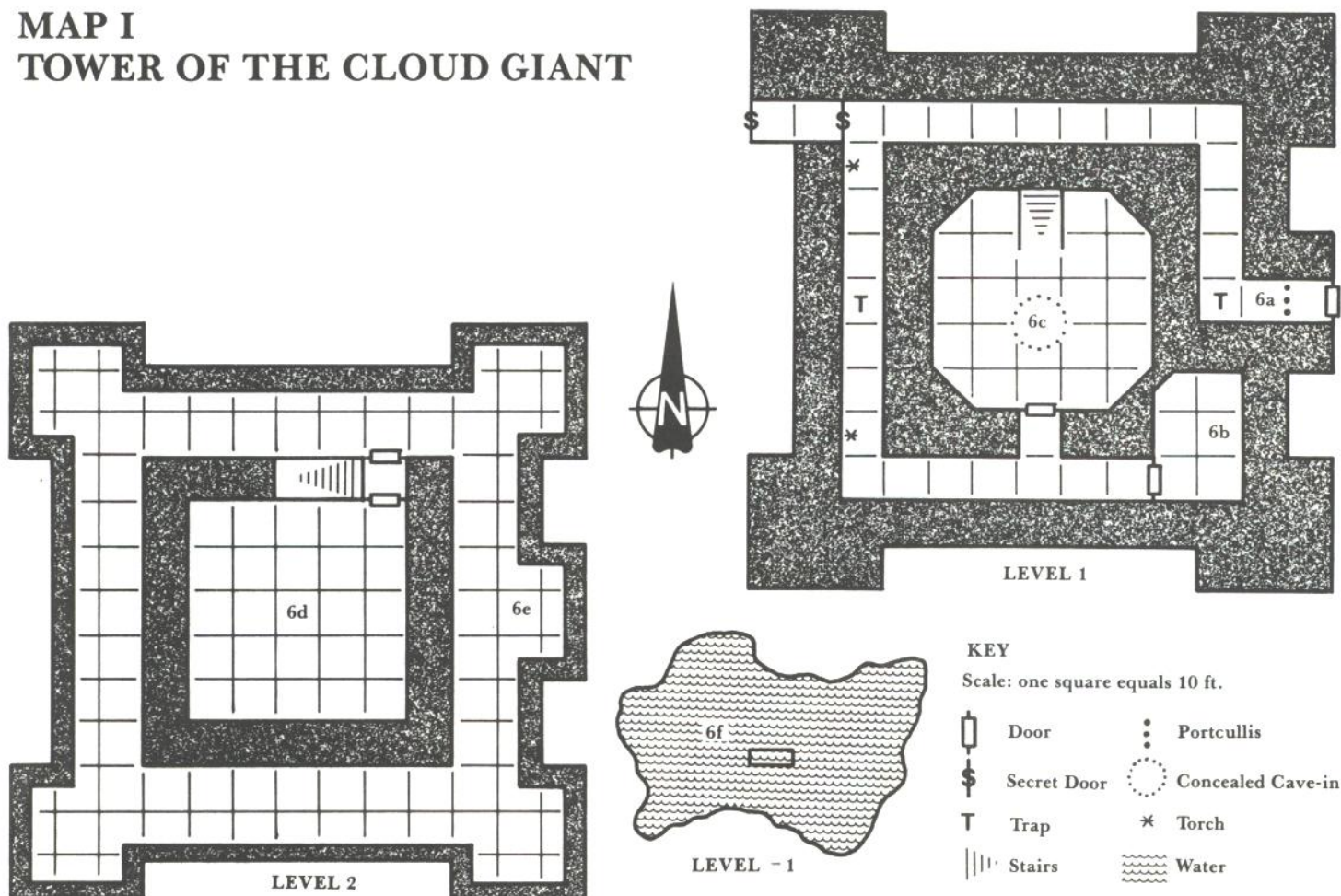
The giant in white is Azor, a cloud giant that has taken over this old keep after its previous owners abandoned it, thirty years ago. His two pets are dire wolves. Apart from his rich, silk vestments, Azor wears a gold chain about his neck (50 gp) and two platinum bracelets (30 pp each).

Azor has been waiting for the party in this upper chamber. His reaction will depend upon whether or not the PCs are disguised as dark lancers or have freed the orc prisoners.

If the characters are outfitted in dark lancer garb (and/or in company of the four orcs from area 6b), he will be quite stern with them, ordering them to leave his castle at once. If the PCs refuse to leave, Azor and his wolves attack as described below.

If the party is not dressed as dark lancers, Azor will be more agreeable in disposition. He will attempt to engage them in conversation at the outset. Azor hates Landryn Teriak and the "devils of Denagoth". If the players openly admit that they've come to make mischief for Teriak, the giant will be pleased. As a neutral and independent fellow, Azor wants nothing to do with the dark folk but he realizes that his presence in the mountains is an affront to the evil one. If the players promise to dispose of Teriak Azor will be delighted.

MAP I TOWER OF THE CLOUD GIANT



In battle, Azor's first move is to send his two wolves to fight against presumed spellcasters. The giant then blows a loud, ringing note on a whistle hanging from his neck-chain (to summon more dire wolves). When he does so, the PCs will hear the howling of many wolves outside. Azor then attacks the largest group of fighter types with his massive club. If he has the opportunity, he will break off melee, seize a piece of furniture (such as the table) and hurl it. All the PCs within the trajectory of the thrown object (a 10' wide path from the giant to the opposite wall) must make a Dexterity check or be knocked off balance for that round and take 1-10 points of damage. Unless the giant has been defeated, 6-36 dire wolves enter the castle 1d6+2 rounds after the fight began. The dire wolves roam about the ground floor areas of the castle, and the PCs will have to defeat the wolves

before they can leave. Whenever Azor is defeated, the wolves' Morale falls to 6.

If the party reaches peaceful terms with Azor, the giant will offer to put the party up for a day or two at the castle. He will provide the lower hall (6c) for their accommodation with the proviso that they accept one of his wolves as an "escort" in the chamber. In a secretive fashion he will offer a potion to one of the characters, explaining that it is a *potion of animal control* and a token of good faith with the party. Actually the bottle contains a very toxic sleeping potion—any character who drinks this receives no saving throw and sleeps for 3-6 hours. Azor employs this rather crude ruse as a test of the party's good faith.

On the mantle above the fireplace are two gold candlesticks worth 200 gp each. The blanket on the huge bed is spun from gold thread worth 400 gp. The chest on the table is

locked and the key is around Azor's neck. Within are 1,000 gp and 4,000 gp. Under Azor's throne is a small wooden box attached by pegs to the frame. This box contains a *real* potion of *animal control*. On Azor's belt hangs the large key that opens the door to area 6e.

6e. Open Air Parapets

At each corner of the battlements are large stacks of rocks. The giant throws these at trespassers to discourage them from coming closer. Unless the party has already defeated Azor, many large wolves can be seen from the top of the walls, prowling the surrounding countryside. They are dire wolves observing the tower, waiting to be summoned by their master.

Large winches and levers on the east side of

the battlements control the portcullis below (see area 6a). The portcullis can be raised or lowered with the winches, or blocked in its current position with the levers.

6f. Crypt of the Spectre

This small room is filled almost to the top with cold, crystal-clear water. Distorted by the ripples on the surface of the water, a vague rectangular shape can be seen at the bottom, 10 feet lower, along with some vague white and grey debris. The beginning of a narrow stairs spiral a few feet down, from the caved-in opening of the vault. The steps abruptly end at the surface of the water.

This area was built as a crypt years ago. In the decades after it was sealed, the water seeped in through cracks in the stone. The giant discovered the crypt by investigating the cave-in in the lower hall. He uses this room as a source of water, and also as a way of getting rid of excess bones, at the end of his meals. The white debris at near the rectangular shape are bones.

The rectangular shape at the bottom of the water is the tomb of the officer who once commanded the keep. Qarnt, the captain and cleric of the keep, was killed during the defense of this outpost against the first hordes of the Shadow Lord, thirty years ago. Since the return of the Shadow Lord's power, his soul has risen from his grave, to haunt and torment any who would profane his final rest.

Qarnt, now a spectre, will rise from his grave during the night and roam through areas 6f and 6c. He will attack anyone found in these two areas. The giant living in area 6d is aware of the spectre's existence and does not come down to that level during the middle hours of the night, as much of apprehension as respect for the soul's torment. The giant will not reveal the spectre's presence to the party, hoping they would perhaps rid the keep from this undesirable host.

Whenever Qarnt runs into the party, he will look as a Wendarian officer. If the party is dressed as dark lancers, the spectre will suddenly change its appearance to a ghastly appearance and cast a *animate dead* spell. Six skeletons will rise from the bones in area 6c or 6f. The spectre has no other spells and will then fight, attempting to touch his opponents. The spectre and the skeletons will not pursue the party to the upper levels or out of the tower.

If the party is not wearing dark lancer uni-

forms, the spectre will observe the PCs, and then fade away, in the direction of its grave.

The spectre can be destroyed in any of the usual ways. In addition, it will dissipate if a *remove curse* spell is cast upon it (it owes its undead existence to Qarnt's extreme hatred for the evil Shadow Lord. The *remove curse* allows it to seek its final rest.

Leaving the Castle

If the group refrains from doing mischief in the castle, Azor will show them a secret goat path that will lead them safely to the village of Geron (see Chapter Two). The path is free of wandering monsters and provides a discreet entrance into the village, from its west side. Without the advice of the giant there is only a base chance of 20% to find the goat path—add 5% for every elf in the party. Azor will also offer them food and iron rations. However, if characters show any ill will to the giant or his pets, he will order them to leave his castle at once or suffer his fury.

7. The Rope Bridge

When following the secret goat trail, the party should reach the other side of the Mengul Mountains, about 20 miles north of the main trail. The swift-flowing Naga River separates the Mengul Mountains from the Denagoth plateau, with only a narrow suspension bridge of ropes and planks to reach the other side. The party may follow the river down to the main bridge in area #8 (see Chapter Two), or use the smaller rope bridge.

The rope bridge is designed so that the party can cross safely if they walk carefully and go one at a time. One person with a horse can cross safely in six rounds. If they try to cross faster, or more than one at a time, the bridge may start swaying, making it more dangerous.

If someone tries to cross in four rounds or less, there is a 25% chance the bridge will start swaying. If two or more try to cross at once, there is a 50% chance that the bridge will start swaying. Characters on a swaying bridge must make a Dexterity Check or stumble, losing their footing. Characters who stumble must make a second Dexterity Check with a -3 penalty; those who fail the second check fall off. If characters on a swaying bridge stand still for two rounds, the bridge stops swaying. If any player rolls a 1 on a 20-sided die when making a Dexterity Check, one of the suspension ropes breaks and all characters fall into the river.

Characters who fall into the river will suffer 2-12 points of damage before hauling

themselves out of the river (on whichever side they choose). Horses suffer 1-8 points of damage from the fall.

Once the party is safely on the other side, read Chapter Two—Beyond the Mengul Mountains.

8. The Bridge

The main trail reaches the northern edge of the Mengul range, dropping off more abruptly than the southern rim. The terrain just north of the Naga River is the southernmost edge of Denagoth, rising gradually to the plateau. Clumps of pine trees grow on the slope. Half way up is Geron, a small village (see Chapter Two). From their position at the top of the mountain pass, the party can see a large bridge that crosses the river, guarded by a few black-clad soldiers.

The Naga River can be crossed only here or at the rope bridge (see encounter #7). Near Geron, the Naga is in full flow; the powerful current prevents any attempts to swim across to the other side.

The main bridge links the narrow mountain trail to a small road winding up toward the village. On the south side of the bridge to Geron there are ten dark lancer guards whose duty is to check the purposes of all travellers. Currently they are mostly concerned with stopping spies and army deserters.

If sergeant Shedrak (see encounter #1) succeeded in sending a message warning Geron about the party, the guards will be suspicious. There is an 80% chance that they will insist that the party accompany them to Captain Benar's building (see area #19. in Geron, Chapter Two).

If the characters are not in lancer guise the guards will insist on searching their equipment. If the party has items belonging to dark lancers, or obvious clues that Gylharen sent them, the guards will attack. If their suspicions are not aroused, the guards will demand a 5 gp fee per character, plus 10 gp for horses and wagons.

If the party is disguised as dark lancers, they will be ordered to report immediately to Captain Benar. If they have not done so within an hour, a search will be started.

If the party fails to comply with any of their demands, the guards attack. While nine of them will attempt to capture the party, the tenth soldier will run to alert Captain Benar. Run Chapter Two from that point.

At night, there are only five soldiers guarding the bridge. If the party wishes to sneak into the village under cover of darkness, allow any reasonable plan to succeed.

Chapter Two—BEYOND THE MENGUL MOUNTAINS

Encounter Setting

The party has several ways of reaching the village of Geron. They may have followed the main trail crossing the Mengul Mountains and the bridge (encounter #8) at the entrance of Geron, or the path leading from the rope bridge (encounter #7) to the northwest side of Geron. Once the party has crossed the Naga River, they may wander off the trails in order to enter the village without being noticed. All along the plateau side grow numerous small forest groves afforded some cover for movement.

The village is populated by craftsmen, peasants, merchants, etc., of varying alignments. If statistics are needed for any of the civilian population, use the "common man, servant" statistics from the Combined Monster Statistics Chart. Unnumbered buildings on Map II are either deserted or belong to various neutral families living in Geron. The inhabitants of unnumbered buildings are simple peasants who do not know any useful information and will not resist if threatened.

The community boasts the Temple of Idris, a facility dedicated to an ancient and evil being, long revered by the human population of Denagoth.

Geron is the field headquarters for the dark lancers and the operations base for what might be termed "special forces". Camla, the Wendarian traitor and Landryn Teriak's chief henchman, have lately settled here to supervise a number of tasks on behalf of the Shadow Lord.

No random encounters occur in this chapter. Chapter One dealt with encounters 1 through 8, leading to the village of Geron. In order to avoid confusion, the numbering of encounters/areas in this chapter starts from #9. This chapter describes areas 9 to 25, in or near the village of Geron. If the party avoids the village entirely and continues north, run Chapter Three instead.

Encounter Key (See Map II)

9. Peasant's Cottage

On a roll of 1-4 on a d6 the old man who lives here will be at home. A roll of 5 or 6 will mean that the cottage is locked up and vacant. The old man is not friendly but if threatened or bribed, he will warn the party about the dark lancers who are billeted in the sheriff's hall at the north end of town (see area #21). This fellow, who goes by the name of Grimm, knows precious little else. When asked about "gray breeches" (see Chapter One, the spy's password), he stares blankly at the party and

shrug his shoulders, ignoring the strange question. A wooden box hidden under his bed contains 178 cp and 13 sp.

10. Arrow-Maker's Cottage

This hut is owned by Damon, an aging human weapons-maker. Currently he is making arrows for Landryn Teriak's elite bowmen. The building is full of tools—vises, knives, files and saws. Many bows in various states of completion hang from the walls of the hut. Wall cabinets and benches hold several dozen arrows, in addition to a number of cloth and leather quivers.

Damon will refuse to provide information about Geron but he will ask the characters about their own purposes. To the spy's password, he will raise a brow and answer "...interested in commerce, hey?" He will keep his distances from he who asked the question, wondering about the PC's strange question. If someone gives him a reasonable explanation for the question, or if anyone buys some of his merchandise, he drops the matter; otherwise, he will alert the sergeant (see area #21) after the party has left his cottage. If threatened, he will attempt to flee through the back door of the hut. Damon will avoid fighting if possible.

Damon (AC 10; F3; hp 12; #AT 1 hammer; D 1d4 + 1; MV 60'(30'); Save F3; ML 4; AL C; St 17, In 10, Wi 11, Dx 13, Co 14, Ch 11)

Damon's bed is in the northeast corner of the cottage. Behind the headboard, set into the wall, is a false panel. In the cubby hole beyond is an unlocked chest with 15 arrows + 1 and a sack of 397 sp.

11. Shoemaker's Cottage

This hut is owned by Ledril, the shoemaker. Currently he is at his bench making boots for the local lancers. He is a soft-spoken, weasel-like man. If threatened or bribed (30 gp minimum), he will inform the party that there is a large army massing north of the town—he knows little else of value. If attacked, he will fight unless he is outnumbered. If asked the code question, he replies, "How should I know? I've too much work to do as it is. But maybe I have time for a little...fun. If you're interested." He then winks conspicuously at the PC.

Lendril (AC 9; F1; hp 8; #AT 1; D 1-4; MV 90'(30'); Save F1; ML 7; AL C; St 6, In 13, Wi 10, Dx 13, Co 10, Ch 18)

The room to the east of the workshop is the fellow's bedroom. The two rooms are separated by a curtain. The shoemaker's treasure is hidden in a locked strongbox beneath the bed. The key is hidden in the hollow grip of Lendril's dagger. The chest is protected by a trap: if the chest is opened without the key, a poisoned dart is fired by a spring-loaded device set within the chest. Any character in front of the chest must save vs. Poison at -4 or take 1-3 hit points of damage; if he is wounded, he must then make another saving throw vs. Poison or die.

Within the chest are 897 sp and one pair of boots of speed. These magical boots will afford a character the movement rate of a horse (240'/turn, 48 miles per day).

12. Potter's Cottage

The door is locked and the windows are shuttered and barred. This cottage is a pottery workshop complete with a kiln, a wheel and various pots on the floor or on the shelves. The kiln lies in the northwest corner, the wheel is in the center and a bed is in the southeast corner.

The potter is not present because he's been drafted into the army. At the base of the kiln there is a loose brick concealing a compartment stuffed with a leather satchel full of gold dust (573 gp value). A leather folder under the bed is filled with common business papers and records. One of the parchments has the look of an official document with a seal at the top bearing the image of a black dragon. In common tongue the work order reads: "By order of the Elder—2 vases of 600 gold pieces value." (This paper is a reference to Naru, the priest at the Temple of Idris, area #22.)

13. Lane's Cottage

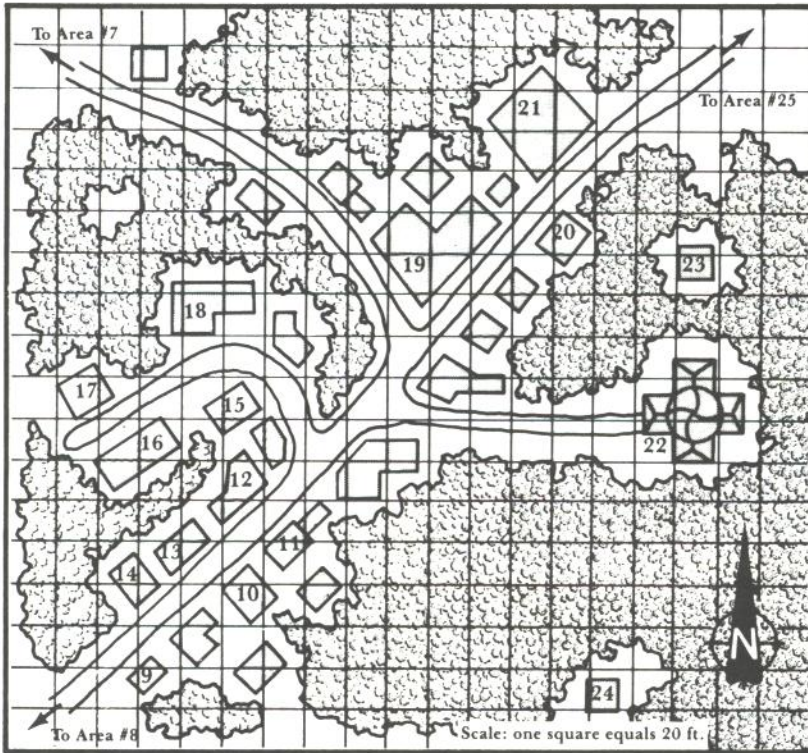
On a roll of 1-5 on a d6 Lane will be at home between the hours of 12 midnight and 6 pm. On a roll of 6 she will be at the Temple of Idris. Between the hours of 6 pm and midnight she is working at the Beggar's Roost Inn (area #19).

This cottage belongs to Lane, a serving woman at the local inn. However, she is also an assistant at the Temple of Idris and an agent for Naru, the high priest. She carries a dagger hidden in her bodice.

Lane (AC 9; F1; hp 7; #AT 1; D 1-4 dagger; MV 120'(40'); Save F1; ML 6; AL C; St 14, In 12, Wi 14, Dx 13, Co 16, Ch 17)

Lane will secretly report anything of interest

MAP II VILLAGE OF GERON



to Naru at the temple. In dealing with the party she will claim to know nothing about important affairs. To the spy's password, she will become sarcastic and answer "Funny you should ask! Tis' none of your business, young lad!" If threatened or bribed, she will admit that an army is located north of Geron (see encounter #25) and that a detachment of black lancers is housed at the sheriff's hall (area #21). She will not disclose her link to the temple.

If left to her own devices after dealing with the characters, Lane will immediately go to the temple—making sure, of course, that she is not seen or followed en route. Anything that Lane reports to Naru will quickly find its way to Camla (area #23).

Beneath her bed in the southwest corner of the hut there are loose floorboards which conceal a chest containing silk (value 40 gp), a silver bracelet (value 15 sp) and necklace with a dark colored clasp. The two halves of the necklace join together to form the tiny effigy of a black dragon—the item is worth 20 gp.

14. Blacksmith's Shop

This forge is operated by a dwarf named Rollo. An evil and self-seeking fellow, the smith is currently making horseshoes and

armor for the dark lancers—it is worth noting that his products are inferior and his service charges are very high.

Rollo knows a good deal about the lancers and their captain, Benar. For instance, he is aware of the recent lancer excursions to Wendar (such as Shedrak's) aimed at eliminating Gylharen's scouts. He also knows about the large army bivouac 15 miles north of Geron (area #25) and what it means: War! In addition, he knows that someone of some importance has recently come to town and is staying at the Temple of Idris. This "someone" is Camla, although Rollo does not know the fellow's name.

Rollo is not a fool. If threatened in any way, he will try to sell information, "I always mind my own business. Business...you understand?" If the characters offer him money he will tell them all he knows in exchange for 40 gold pieces. To the spy's password, Rollo will answer in a gruff voice, "You want to make a deal on uniforms?"

If still at liberty after the encounter, Rollo will report the party to Captain Benar in area #18. In this event the DM will mobilize Benar and six lancers for a town-wide search for the adventurers.

If Rollo is man-handled he will fight his assailants until they are willing to negotiate a

price for information.

Rollo the dwarf (AC 6; F4; hp 38; #AT 1; D 2-6 hammer +1; MV 90'; Save F4; ML 8; AL C; St 13, In 10, Wi 11, Dx 12, Co 17, Ch 9)

Rollo wears a leather jerkin and a *ring of protection +1*. The main workshop area of the hut is dominated by a forge. Various smith's tools line the walls of the shop. Rollo's bedroom lies behind a curtain hanging along the west wall.

In the bedroom is a bed and a large chest in the southwest corner. The locked chest may be opened by a key around Rollo's neck. Within are 297 gp, 99 ep, 354 sp and a set of 10 crossbow bolts +1.

The chest is secured to the floor by bolts. Moving the chest reveals a vertical shaft with a ladder leading down. The shaft is slightly smaller than the bottom of the chest, which completely covers the opening. The shaft is about 12' deep and leads to a tiny cellar. This room contains: a suit of dwarven platemail armor, a silver inlaid handaxe (value 200 sp), two gold vases (value 300 gp each) and a wooden box. The box holds 16 *glowing horseshoes* suitable for riding horses. Shoeing a horse with four of these will improve the animal's movement rate from 240' (80') to 360' (120').

Rollo stole the vases from the potter's cottage prior to their delivery to the Temple of Idris.

15. Cottage of the Cursed

This cottage is occupied by a strange character who can only be described as the village "simpleton". He was once a loyal cleric of Idris. In the past he was driven insane by gazing at a magical cursed book. Formerly the fellow was assigned to Gereth Minar (the Shadow Lord's tower) prior to his infirmity.

This pathetic creature is under the delusion that he's the "King of Denagoth". He will constantly refer to himself in these terms and regard all those in Geron and Denagoth as his subjects. Most of his replies to questions will be nonsensical, however, he will recite the following riddle.

"There once was a castle keeper known as the bearded Leaper, his watchful eye was always wide until age turned him into a sleeper."

This ditty refers to an old acquaintance of the madman. It concerns Leaper, a former stew-

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ard at Gereth Minar. Currently Leaper lives in retirement in an old cottage south of Geron (see area #24). The madman will not expound on this riddle, nor will he provide any other useful information. If asked the spy's password, he will giggle and point at the PC asking the question. He will keep on giggling until the party's departure.

The cottage is in a complete state of confusion—the bed, table, chairs and other furnishings lay strewn about. Beside the fireplace in the south wall there is a chest on one side and a box of firewood on the other. At the bottom of the wood pile (in the box) there is a sack containing 137 gp and 27 sp. The chest holds a pair of boots, a riding cape, two pairs of breeches, a battered mace and a small, leather-bound box. A medallion engraved with the image of a black dragon (40 sp value) is inside the small box.

16. Trapper's Cottage (locked)

The door to this hut has a *wizard lock* on it. All the windows are heavily shuttered and barred from within. This cottage is used by the Wendarian spy, who calls himself Sean the fur trapper. The first time the party comes to this cottage, Sean will be out on a spying mission. Sean will be back 1d20 hours later. He gives the proper reply to the password and welcomes the party in.

Sean has scouted the village and can tell the party the following:

Susa (see area #17) is the village magic-user. The sheriff's hall (see area #21) holds a detachment of 5-10 dark lancers. The innkeeper's wife (see area #19) is a good source of local gossip. A mysterious person of some importance has visited the temple recently.

Sean knows that the army is camped north of Geron (see encounter #25) but does not yet know the army's strength. He has been lately trying to enter the temple (area #22) to investigate the temple's connection with the Shadow Lord. Sean asks the party to search the temple for information, and then follow the trail to the north to locate and search Teriak's base.

Sean did not report to Wendar before now because he feared he was under suspicion; the PCs are his first contact. Sean will stay in his house for several days to protect his cover. He will not join the party.

Sean, the trapper: (AC 6; T6; hp 30; #AT 1; D 1-8; MV 120'; Save T6; ML 11; AL N;

St 11, In 15, Wi 14, Dx 17, Co 13, Ch 12)

The cottage itself is a rustic log cabin. Many animal skins pelts hang on the walls and are spread on the floor. A large bed, table, and chairs comprise the furnishings. In the southeast corner a large locked wooden chest holds the a giant weasel pelt worth 2,500 gp.

The *wizard lock* was cast by Susa the magic-user.

17. Cottage of the Witch

This is home to Susa the magic user, commonly known about town as the "Witch of Geron". Day or night she will admit the characters in the hope of doing business. Although she appears to be an elderly peasant woman of modest means, she is a witch of sorts insofar as she offers her magical services and potions for money.

As a Neutral NPC Susa harbors some ill will for Geron's Sheriff and Benar, Captain of the dark lancers. She has suffered at the hands of both and she resents the way in which the lancers have taken over the village. On the other hand, she does maintain cordial relations with Naru, the high priest of Idris. The subtle balance of her affiliations has, for the moment, secured her tenure in the town.

When the PCs visit the cottage, she will cast an *ESP** spell before letting these strangers enter. If this fails she will ask questions in an attempt to discover the PCs' purposes. She will not be fooled by any dark lancer disguises.

If the encounter is proceeding in an friendly manner Susa will offer to read one of the character's fortunes for a fee of 5 gp. This will involve taking the player character to one side and looking at his/her palm. The DM should conduct this reading in private.

Through the course of the fortune-telling Susa will talk wistfully about the great gift of "second sight" while holding the character's hand palm upward. At length she will offer this:

"I see that a person with a quest you are. Strong your life force and your conviction are. Something you seek. Yes... something of great power...a wondrous gemstone of brilliant blue...Now a great tower I see, wrapped in swirling mists. Far to the north lies the tower and much evil there is...But wait...more there is. A brilliant blue sapphire I see, sitting on a cushion of gold. Around the stone many bodies there are, broken and smashed by much vio-

lence. These creatures I have seen before and so have you. Indeed, one of them you are! More than this I cannot see..."

After the reading Susa will close her eyes and release the person's hand. In a plaintive tone she will offer one more dictum: "*To abandon this quest I would advise, for in your own destruction it might end.*"

If attacked, Susa will try to flee rather than fight. She will cast an *invisibility* spell and attempt to escape any harm.

Susa, the witch (AC 6; MU 6; hp 22; #AT 1; D spells only; MV 90' (30'); Save MU 6; ML 8; AL N; St 9, In 16, Wi 16, Dx 14, Co 10, Ch 6)

Level 1: *magic missile, read magic, sleep*

Level 2: *invisibility, ESP**

Level 3: *clairvoyance, lightning bolt.*

Susa's cottage has the appearance of a gypsy's wagon within. Lush tapestries and exotic icons of various shapes and sizes line the walls. A small woodstove stands in the southwest corner and a bed is in the northeast corner. A wall cabinet stands just to the south of the west door and a chest sits at the foot of the bed.

The cabinet is filled with bottles, jars and various substances in small, porcelain dishes. Substances here include: wolf's bane, mistletoe, frogs' eggs, bone dust, crushed pearl powder, bay leaves and sheeps' eyes. There are two potions: *invisibility* and *gaseous form*, on the bottom shelf.

The chest is locked—if opened without the key around Susa's neck, a cloud of gas rises from the front of the lid. The gas will fill the cottage in 4 rounds. All within the gas must save vs. Breath Weapon or fall unconscious for 2-5 turns.

The chest holds a giant beaver belt (value 300 gp), 210 gp, 341 ep, and 179 sp. At the bottom of the chest lies a *cursed longsword* - 2. The weapon will appear to be a +2 weapon until it is actually used in melee combat. A *remove curse** spell must be used to release the owner of this questionable prize.

Susa's spellbook is hidden inside the stove, within a secret and protected compartment. A heavy iron panel slides back to reveal a package wrapped in scaly material (black dragon hide) resistant to all acids. The book is within this wrapping.



Level 1: *Charm Person, Detect Magic, Magic Missile, Read Languages, Read Magic, Sleep, Ventriloquism*

Level 2: *Detect Invisible, ESP*, Invisibility, Locate Object*

Level 3: *Clairvoyance, Dispel Magic, Lightning Bolt*

18. Burned Cottage

This cottage has burned to the ground. It was the former home of the innkeeper and his wife, who now lives at the Beggar's Roost Inn. There is nothing here of any value or interest to the party.

19. Beggar's Roost Inn

The Beggar's Roost Inn (actually a tavern) is open for business daily between 8 am and 12 midnight. It is a single story building, with a large barroom and smaller living quarters for the innkeeper and his wife. The northern portion of the inn is dominated by a long bar running east/west. A number of tables, benches and chairs are provided for the patrons. All supplies are located behind the bar where the Alfred the innkeeper and his wife Henna are usually working. In the evenings Lane, the woman from cottage #13 will be waiting on tables. At any given time, there will be 6-9 (d4 + 5) customers here.

Alfred the innkeeper is not a talkative fellow. If questioned, he says he minds his own business. Actually, Alfred is quite close to the Sheriff of Geron (building #21) and will report any suspicious questions or behavior to this officer. If asked the password question, he scowls impatiently and shrugs.

Alfred the innkeeper (AC 8; F2; hp 15; #AT

1; D 1-6 crossbow; MV 60' (20'); Save F2; ML 6; AL N; St 12, In 9, Wi 10, Dx 12, Co 13, Ch 12)

Behind the bar the innkeeper has a loaded crossbow ready in the event of trouble. In the till behind the bar are 1-10 gp, 10-60 sp and 100-400 cp. Prices at the Beggar's Roost are as follows: ale 15 cp; beer 10 cp; mead 4 sp; wine 6 sp per bottle; other spirits 5 sp per glass. Bread and cheese are 2 sp.

Henna, Alfred's wife, is very chatty and loves to gossip in exchange for a little silver. She is willing to talk to the characters in exchange for 10 sp for any two pieces of information. She knows the following:

That Lane is an agent of Naru, the high priest of Idris.

That the lancers have sent out 3 patrols to the south in recent days.

That an invasion of Wendar is imminent, perhaps before another moon has passed.

That the Temple of Idris (area #22) is a significant point of interest in Geron and that Naru is the high priest there.

That a "shady-looking character—maybe a wizard" has lately come to Geron and is staying at the temple.

That the tower of the Denagothian ruler is far at the end of the trail to the north. It is called Gereth Minar.

That an ex-servant of the tower (Gereth Minar) lives near the river (area #24).

That the madman from area #15 used to be a cleric of Idris and was once an associate of the Denagothian ruler himself.

If a paying character asks a question that Henna can answer, she will do so. If not, she

will volunteer information if the characters pay for it. Alfred will try to break up the discussion if he sees it taking place. A bribe of 5 gp will serve to appease his anger in this situation.

At any time there will be 6-9 (d4 + 5) patrons at the inn. Half these customers will be merchants and the others will be peasants. Furthermore, there is a 20% chance that there will be two dark lancers quenching their thirst for ale. The inn is off limits to the lancers so these two will mind their own business unless there is a major uproar.

The merchants are here to do business with Captain Benar. As horse traders, they have found the lancers quite willing to buy their stock. Behind the inn the merchants' horse stock are tethered to a long hitching post. In total there are 14 war horses tended by two boy servants. The merchants' own horses are tethered to the post just to the north of the inn.

The merchants will be quite talkative if the PCs buy them some ale. The merchants praise themselves on their profitable business dealings with the lancers. If questioned, they will freely admit that their trade is brisk with war imminent. They will mention the large army bivouac (area #25) north of Geron. If the conversation with the characters is going well, one of these traders will ask the characters if they know the dwarven blacksmith, Rollo (area #14). The merchants have some business to attend to with the smith but they will decline to disclose its nature. (Actually Rollo had planned to sell them the two gold vases in his cellar).

Each merchant carries 100-400 sp (d4) and 10-100 gp in leather pouches on their persons. At this point they are still awaiting pay-

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ment of 3,800 gp from Captain Benar for the war horses. Beneath their fine silk clothes, they wear leather jerkins.

The small room behind the bar serves as a bedroom for Alfred and Henna. Beneath the bed is a strong box holding 151 gp and 473 sp.

20. Benar's Cottage

This cottage belongs to Captain Benar, commander of the local dark lancer detachment. When or not he will be found here depends on what the PCs have done so far.

If the characters have been discovered as enemies or the alarm sounded on the bridge (area #8), Benar and six lancers will be conducting a town-wide search for the party. The cottage will be deserted and locked.

If the PCs true mission has not been discovered and no alarm sounded, there is a 60% chance that Benar will be at home, off-duty. If at home, Benar will be relaxing or sleeping without his armor but with his sword closeby. There is a 40% chance he will be at headquarters (building #21), attending to routine duties.

Captain Benar (AC 3 or 9; F6; hp 40; #AT 1; D 1-8 sword; MV 90' (30'); Save F6; ML 10; AL C; St 17, In 15, Wi 13, Dx 12, Co 14, Ch 16)

When in uniform, he wears shining black, plate mail armor with the red wyvern insignia etched onto the breastplate. He normally carries 2-40 gp and a medallion with the red wyvern motif around his neck (15 gp value). Also on the neck chain is the key to the lock on his cottage door.

If the PC ask him the password question, he stares silently at the party and apparently ignores the question. From there on, he will suspect the PCs of being spies looking for a contact in Geron. If possible, he will let them go and have them followed.

In the southeast corner of this well-furnished cottage there is a large bed. On the east wall is a weapons rack with 4 spears and 3 swords. Against the north wall stands a tall wooden cabinet. A small wood-burning stove sits in the southwest corner of the hut.

The unlocked wall cabinet holds the captain's plate mail armor (when he's not wearing it).

Behind the woodstove, concealed by a wooden panel in the wall, is Benar's personal treasure, in a chest holding 400 pp, 320 gp and gems to a value of 97 gp.

At the foot of the bed a footlocker holds rid-

ing breeches, spare shirts, a pair of boots, socks, undergarments, a sack of coins (34 sp and 61 cp) and a small leather satchel about 6 inches long. The satchel holds 3 very small parchments and 3 tiny metal clasps. The parchments are creased in many places. (These are carrier pidgeon messages.) The notes are written in common speech and read as follows:

1. After two days of riding we fell upon Wendarian scouts and destroyed them near the foothills. Shedrak and his men are riding further south. All's well. — *Ivren*

2. There are many brigands in the foothills. We'll have to deal with them before the supply lines are established. We are riding south to within sight of the city. — *Shedrak*

3. My agent C. is riding to Geron. He is taking care of security matters. I want you to give him your full co-operation. I expect a good report. Carry on. — *L. T.*

The first note is from the officer who destroyed the Wendarians in area #2. The second note is self-explanatory. The third note is from Landryn Teriak and refers to Camla's appointment as security chief for the army and special operations. The DM will recall that Camla was the magic user who betrayed Wendar by spiriting away the Elvenstar. Any other message sent via Shedrak's carrier bird will also be among Benar's collection.

A small lean-to stable is behind the cottage. If Benar is at home, his war horse is stabled here. On the roof of the stable is a small pigeon coop with 2 birds within.

21. Army Headquarters/ Sheriff's Hall

As explained in the description of building #20, there is a 40% chance that Captain Benar will be present here, unless the village has been alerted that the PCs are enemies. There is much activity in this building and at any time there will be 4-7 (d4 + 3) dark lancers present.

This stone building is well-built, with narrow slit-like windows, heavy doors and shutters and thick walls, as if for defense. The door is open.

As you enter, you see that a number of black-clad soldiers are present; some

reclining on bedrolls scattered on the floor, others cleaning weapons. A large man in plate armor is working behind a desk with his back to the west wall.

Two large cabinets stand on opposite sides of the desk, weapon racks line the walls, and a large banner, depicting a red wyvern, hangs from the ceiling on the south wall.

Most of the soldiers look surprised to see you; anyone without a weapon reaches for one. No one looks glad to see you.

The Sheriff of Geron is working behind the desk; the soldiers are dark lancers.

If the characters enter the building in a civil manner, the Sheriff will calm the startled lancers with a wave of his arm. He will then motion for the party to approach his desk. The Sheriff is an overweight fellow with a big round stomach protected by absurdly large plate mail armor. He will ask questions, e.g., "Who are you people? What is your business here?", trying to find out why the PCs have come.

If the PCs have done *anything* to arouse suspicion in Geron, or if their answers to the Sheriff's questions are unsatisfactory, the Sheriff will attempt to surprise them with a trap located 5 feet in front of his desk. He moves a lever under his desk that opens a secret trap door over an old dry well rebuilt as a pit trap. Once the trap is sprung, anyone standing on the trapdoor must make a Dexterity check or fall into the well, dropping into a pit 15' deep and 10' by 10' square. Characters suffer 1-4 points of damage in the fall.

The soldiers, the Sheriff, and Captain Benar (if present) will attack any characters who avoided the trap. If all characters were caught, crossbowmen surround the pit to prevent the characters from climbing out. They then raise the trapdoor to a closed position and lock it. Characters who manage to reach the trapdoor can destroy it with a successful Strength Check.

Sheriff (AC 3; F7; hp 48; #AT 1; D 2-9 sword + 1; MV 60' (20'); Save F7; ML 7; AL C; St 15, In 13, Wi 12, Dx 11, Co 14, Ch 8)

The desk has two cabinets either side and a single drawer in the center. The lever for the floor trap is fixed into the floor under the desk. The desk drawer holds 37 gp, 11 sp and a flask of mead.

The weapon rack on the west wall (behind the desk) holds swords, maces, flails and

crossbows. On the north wall another large rack holds many spears. A total of 14 bedrolls are spread on the floor.

The cabinet on the north side (of the desk) contains 14 sacks, each with 100 gp. The south cabinet holds two small chests. One of these contains 300 sp, a scroll and a necklace. The scroll is an anonymous letter addressed to the Sheriff. It explains that the necklace is a gift from a secret admirer. This nasty item is in fact a *necklace of strangulation* given to the officer by Susa the witch. Whoever dons the necklace will be slowly strangled at a rate of 6 hit points per round. This item can only be removed by a successful *remove curse* or *dispel magic* spell.

The other chest contains 5 gold bracelets (value 50 gp each), a gold chain (value 20 gp), and a ruby brooch (value 180 gp).

In the floor in the northwest corner of the building is a normal trapdoor leading to a single flight of stone steps and a single cell below the headquarters. The door to this cell is heavily barred from outside—a single peephole is covered by a sliding iron cover.

This only prisoner is Merak, a cashiered dark lancer, dismissed from the service and imprisoned for stealing. He will offer to help the party in any way he can if characters release him.

Merak explains that he is a deserter from the army. In fact, Merak will quickly see this situation as an opportunity to serve the Shadow Lord again. He will accompany the party until he discovers their purpose and then, at the earliest opportunity, he will try to slip off to make a report to Benar, Naru, or Camla (in that order). In this way Merak hopes to win back his commission.

Merak knows everyone in Geron and the purpose of most facilities. He will offer any information in order to convince the party of his good intentions.

22. a-j The Temple of Idris

(See Map III for areas #22a to #22j)

The temple is topped by a bronze dome. The statue of a black dragon stands atop the dome. There is one main entrance to the west, and two side entrances to the north and south. Two temple guards are on watch at each entrance. The doors of the main entrance are open; the side doors are closed.

The side entrances are locked. If the party approaches the temple from the north side, they will see a small trap door in the roof of the north

wing (leading down into area #22e).

22a. Entrances

Two guards in flowing dark tunics are slowly pacing in front of the entrance of the building. Some heavy armor seems to bulge under their tunics. Both hold large maces on their shoulders.

If the party does not take special precautions to approach the temple (disguise, *invisibility*, etc.), the two guards will immediately shout in order to alert the other guards, and block the way into the temple as best they can. Two rounds later, the four other temple guards will join the fight.

If the party is attacking the main door, Parx, the cleric from #22b will arrive within 1-4 rounds and cast a *hold person** on up to 4 attackers before entering the melee.

Parx: (AC 7; C4; hp 24; #AT 1 or spell; D 2-7 mace; MV 90' (30'); Save C4; ML 8; AL C; St 14, In 11, Wi 16, Dx 13, Co 17, Ch 15).

Level 1: *cause fear**, *cure light wounds**

Level 2: *hold person**

Parx wears maroon robes with the black dragon emblem on the front. At his waist the cleric carries a set of keys to rooms #22c, #22g, and all cabinets and chests within. Around his neck he wears a black dragon medallion (value 10 gp).

22b. Temple Office

If the party managed to enter the temple unseen, Parx (see area #22a) will be sitting at the desk.

A desk sits against the east wall of this chamber. A bookcase is built into the north wall, stocked with boxes, books and piles of parchment. A tapestry bearing the image of the black dragon covers the west wall. A large bronze gong stands in front of the tapestry. Glowing braziers are located at both side of the door.

If Parx is here, he attempts to parley with the PCs, trying to discover what they are after. Parx hopes to find a way to reach the gong and strike it. If he succeeds, Naru (currently in room #22j) will send his students to investigate the noise; they arrive at #22b 1-4 rounds after the gong was struck. If the students do

not return within 10 rounds after they leave, Naru will prepare an ambush in area #22j. The two guards in area #22e will arrive at #22b two rounds after Naru's students.

The desk is littered with papers concerning food and other routine supplies for the temple. The desk drawer holds more of the same.

The bookcase holds a good deal of blank parchment and writing materials, as well as books on temple management and other mundane topics.

22c. Storeroom (locked)

Six large barrels stand on end in the middle of the room. The walls are lined by shelves holding several dozen sacks and ten casks.

The barrels contain water or wine. The sacks hold barley, flour, oats and bran. Three casks hold mead, brandy, or beer.

22d. Temple Hall

The hall is protected by an illusion trap. The engravings on the doors leading into the hall serve as a warning to the followers of Idris.

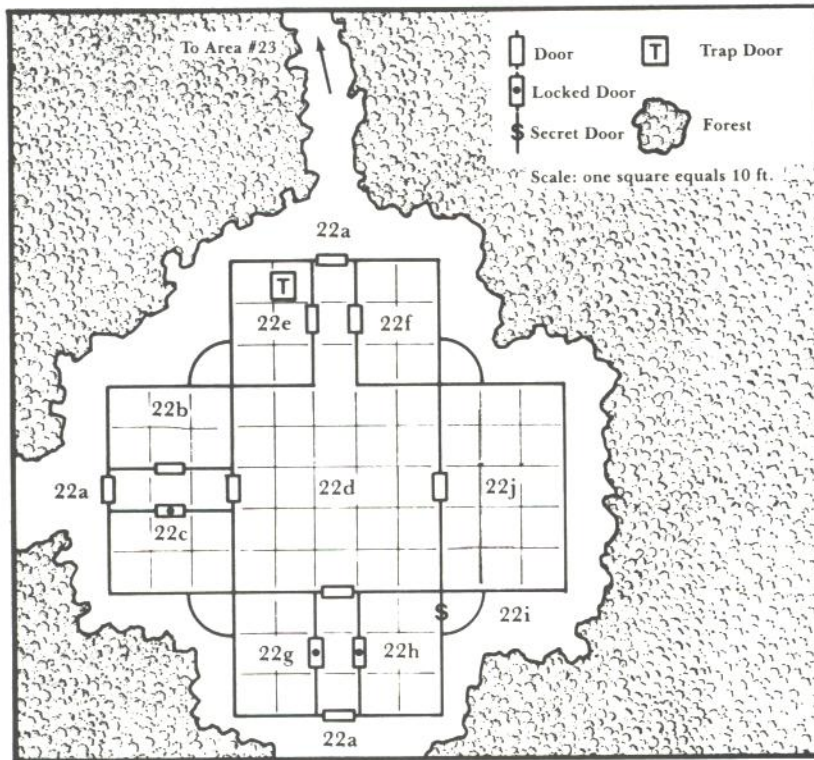
You come to a closed pair of bronze doors, ornately engraved with black dragons and the following inscription in the common tongue, "Hail, Idris! In submission to thee, gain we wisdom and might."

The characters can easily open the doors, which open silently.

The doors open, revealing a vast hall. A huge oak table with benches and chairs occupies the center of the hall. A fireplace and cooking area occupies the northwest corner. The walls bear the painted images of black dragons in various postures and fierce combat sequences.

A powerful illusion affects the painted images of black dragons, which will take effect unless one or more characters perform a gesture of "submission" when entering the hall (any such gesture, such as kneeling, bowing, a salute, or saying, "Hail, Idris!" is sufficient). If no one does so, three *phantasmal force* dragons will emerge from the painting and breathe at the trespassers. Make a secret saving throw vs. Spell for each character in the room. Those who succeed are not affected. The illusory dragons disappear after the first round.

MAP III TEMPLE OF IDRIS



If some characters are affected by the illusion, Naru and his students in room #22j will be aware of the presence of intruders and prepare an ambush.

The victims of the illusion are also affected by a special *curse*. When in the presence of a black dragon, magical fear causes them to fight and save at -2 versus any attack or magic coming from these creatures. The curse lasts until the victim receives a *remove curse* from a cleric of at least 14th level.

22e. Barracks

Two fighters are lying on their bunks here. They are not happy to see you.

These fighters are unarmored (AC 9). Unless surprised, they rise from their bunks and grab their swords in 1 round.

There are a total of six beds here, with a footlocker for each bed. Each footlocker contains 1-20 sp, 5-100 cp and 1-6 gp. The locker adjacent to the bed in the far south of the chamber has a *dagger +1*.

A ladder in the room leads up to a trapdoor in the ceiling.

22f. Acolytes' Quarters

Six narrow beds lie against the east wall. A seventh bed has been squeezed against the south wall of the room

The six beds belong to the six novice clerics. The seventh bed has been provided for Parx (room #22b) who normally resides in the forest cottage (#23). The cottage has been made available to Camla.

Beneath each bed is a chest containing robes, hoods, gloves, leggings, 1-6 gp, 2-40 sp and 5-100 cp. Under Parx's bed, however, is a chest which contains a very carefully concealed false bottom. In a small space below the false bottom is a 60' coiled rope. This is a *rope of coiling* and will, upon command, move in any desired direction and fasten itself where possible. The magical rope, however, must be manipulated by its user and knot-tying will shorten it by 10'.

22g. Naru's Workroom (locked)

The center of the room is taken up by a long workbench covered with bottles and jars.

The bottles hold chemicals such as acid, sulphur solutions, and various distillations from plants and herbs (which are in the jars).

22h. Naru's Bedroom (locked)

In the southwest corner of this lavishly furnished bedroom is a large four-poster bed with a fine embroidered maroon canopy. A large wooden cabinet stands against the north wall, just to the left of a small desk and chair in the northeast corner. A comfortable armchair and a table rest near the west wall, just to the south of the door. A crystal decanter and two glasses sit atop the table.

If Lane (see building #13) is in the Temple, she will be in this room, sitting on the bed and combing her hair. If attacked, attempts to flee and sound the alarm; if cornered, she fights to the death. Lane is Naru's spy in Geron. Anything she learns is passed along to Naru, who in turn sends the information to Camla (see building #23).

The locked wooden cabinet contains a number of weapons: 4 swords, 2 throwing daggers in a boxed set, and two unusual shields. The shields have small crossbows mounted at right angles by brackets on the inside. Each shield has a discreet hole in the middle, to accommodate the firing of the crossbow quarrel. One shield bears the red wyvern token and the other features the gold and gray star configuration of Wendar. These shields have been designed by Naru for assassination purposes. In the guise of a guard, a Denagothian could get close enough to attempt an assassination without rousing any suspicion.

Shelves in the cabinet also hold weapon-making tools, a cache of crossbow quarrels and enough poisons to taint six quarrels (or arrows) or one sword. Victims of this poison must save vs. Poison at +1 or suffer 2d20 points of damage.

A single locked drawer in the desk holds a black notebook and a set of keys which unlock all doors in the temple. The notebook contains the following entries:

Notes on training procedures and ceremonies for novices.

Notes on inculcating novices with "ideals of Idris". Bribery, torture, blackmail, and self-gratification are major tools of this philosophy.

Notes on Gylharen, the Wizard-King of Wendar, complete with detailed entries on

his appearance and habits. These entries suggest that Gylharen has been targeted for assassination.

The last entry shows a date only a day or two before this time. Below the date is the name, "Camla".

Behind the desk is a secret door (4' high and 4' wide) in the west wall. The secret door opens outward into the secret room beyond (area #22i). The desk must be moved away to gain access to the room.

The decanter on the small table holds very fine brandy.

22i. Secret Room

This tiny room contains only a large iron chest sitting atop a table. The key to this locked chest is around Naru's neck (see room #22j.). The chest holds 500 gp, 700 sp and 900 ep. In addition, there is a small case and a larger one within the chest. The small case holds a *potions of invisibility* and *potion of levitation*. The larger case holds two cloaks, one gray and one black cloak. The gray cloak has no special properties but in the lining of the garment are 25 small rubies sewn into the hem (3,000 gp value). The black cape is a *displacer cloak*.

At eye level on the north wall near the east corner is a discreet spy hole providing a view of the shrine room, room #22j.

22j. Shrine Room of Idris

Naru, leader of the Followers of Idris, was formally inducting his students into the order at the moment the party entered the temple. Read the following to the players if the alarm has not been sounded in area #22b (otherwise, only give the room description to the players, and read the second boxed paragraph that follows).

This large chamber is dominated by a large statue of a large woman warrior standing on an elaborate dais cleverly carved in the effigy of a black dragon curled around the feet of the woman. On the lower step of the dais a maroon-robed figure stands in front of the statue between two incense-burning pedestals. The figure holds a silver dagger aloft, as if saluting the statue. Behind this person six maroon-and-white robed figures kneel, facing the statue. All these people are chanting in deep, resonating tones. On the north and south walls are the images of the black dragon insignia.

The six characters in maroon-and-white are Naru's students. Although the students' spell-casting abilities have been used up during the ceremony, they can fight intruders with the maces they all carry under their robes. The character with the silver dagger is Naru.

Naru (AC 5; C9; hp 42; #AT 1 or spell; D 3-8 mace +1; MV 120' (40'); Save C9; ML 10; AL C; St 13, In 14, Wi 17, Dx 9, Co 6, Ch 16).

Level 1: *cause light wounds**, *darkness**, *cause fear**

Level 2: *blight**, *hold person**, *resist fire*

Level 3: *cause disease**, *bestow curse**, *striking*

Level 4: *dispel magic*, *neutralize poison**

If the alarm was not sounded, the followers of Idris will be unaware of the party's presence in the temple. If so, they will be surprised by the PCs actions on the first round.

If characters were affected by the dragon's illusion in area #22d, then the students and Naru are only pretending to conduct a ceremony. In reality, they are expecting the party to come in. Naru's chanting is really the incantation to bring a powerful creature to their help (see below). Before the party enters, Naru will be protected by a *resist fire* spell and have a *striking* spell cast on his mace.

If the alarm has been sounded earlier in room #22b, only Naru will be here. At the time the party finds him, Naru will have finished his incantation. In this case, read the boxed text below:

While a maroon-robed figure stands, pale, panting, and sweating heavily, a dark shape forms in the center of the room, wrapped in swirling black fumes and small sparks of flame. Then, out of the dark mists appears a creature of flame brandishing a trident.

The creature coming out of the smoke is a flame salamander. It will attempt to prevent the party from attacking Naru. If the party is not in the room (peeking through the peephole from room #22i, or spying from behind the door), the cleric will point at the party's location, and the salamander move to intercept the party, wherever they may be.

Naru will need 1-4 rounds to recover from the incantation, after which he will be able to cast other spells or fight in a melee. Naru will

not use the incantation if the party has surprised him and his students. The Elder of Idris, Naru, wears chain mail beneath his robes and a black dragon medallion of Idris around his neck (the key to the chest in room #22i is also on this neck chain). Naru has a magical talisman which he uses for conjuring a flame salamander, however, the item will only function once.

In melee within the shrine room all the clerics of Idris will get +1 to hit, on their saving throws and to their Morale Levels. Any major disturbance here will attract all remaining guards in the temple (including the two at each of the three entrances to the temple, and the two off-duty in area 22e).

At the base of the north brazier there is a lever device set into the leg of the stand. Pulling this trigger up will open a 2' by 3' secret wall panel behind the statue of Idris (east wall). Here, in a recess, is a chest with 600 gp, 850 sp and 1,750 ep. At the bottom of the chest is a small box with a silver clasp containing a clerical scroll of *raise dead**. The painted dragons in room #22j are normal paintings.

Naru carries on his person a pouch containing 15 gp, 12 pp and 7 sp. His students carry no treasure.

23. Camla's Hut

Outside the hut, on the east side, are two war horses tethered to trees. If the party approaches the hut openly, there is a 25% chance that the horses will neigh loudly, alerting the occupants of an intrusion. Whenever the party looks into the room read the following boxed text to the players.

Two beds, a table and two chairs comprise the furnishings in this rustic cabin. A glowing fire burns in a fireplace in the southeast corner. Two people, one in dark robes and one in leather armor, seem quite startled by the intrusion as they look up from their beds.

The dark-robed one is Camla the sorcerer. He wears an *elven cloak* and a *ring of clairvoyance* that functions like the spell of the same name. The ring enables Camla to scan the area around the house for trespassers. Unless the party takes extra precautions, Camla may see them coming from inside the house (25% chance per round). The other one is Derik. He wears *leather armor* +3. Derik has two daggers, one in each boot; a black dragon brooch necklace (10 gp); and 37 gp in his purse.

Chapter Two—BEYOND THE MENGUL MOUNTAINS

If Camla noticed the party's approach, he will *levitate* ten feet up to the beams under the roof and blend with the shadows using his *elven cloak*. If he has enough time, he will cast a *shield*, and a *phantasmal force* representing Camla and Derik chatting in the room (giving false information to anyone listening). Whenever a character enters, Camla will cast a *magic missile* or a *hold person*. Meanwhile, Derik will be hiding behind a curtain, on the right hand side of the door, hoping to surprise incoming intruders.

If indeed the party managed to surprise the two characters, the scene described in the boxed text will be real instead of an illusion.

Camla (AC 6; MU 7; hp 20; #AT 1 or spell; D 1-6 staff; MV 120' (40'); Save MU 7; ML 9; AL C; St 7, In 16, Wi 11, Dx 16, Co 13, Ch 17)

Level 1: *detect magic, magic missile, shield*

Level 2: *levitate, phantasmal force*

Level 3: *dispel magic, hold person**

Level 4: *dimension door*

Derik: (AC 3; T6; hp 32; #AT 1; D 1-8 sword; MV 120' (40'); Save T6; ML 8; AL C, St 13, In 13, Wi 10, Dx 14, Co 14, Ch 11).

If Camla feels he is in danger, he will try to escape toward the sheriff's hall (building #21), casting a *dimension door* spell. If he or Derik are captured, they will refuse to talk openly about Landryn Teriak or Denagoth. However, an *ESP** spell can reveal the following if the appropriate questions are asked:

Denagoth will invade Wendar on the occasion of the next moon.

The Elvenstar lies at Gereth Minar, 100 miles north of Geron.

Landryn Teriak has not been able to make the star function.

Derik the thief (Camla's servant) is about to be sent to Wendar to assassinate the Wizard-King, Gylharen. (Derik is a lay adherent to the temple of Idris.)

Naru, the priest of Idris, is helping Camla with the assassination mission.

If Camla is questioned in a normal fashion he will take a very scornful tone with the party. He will admit to stealing the Elvenstar and that he has been Landryn Teriak's agent in Wendar for years. Derik, on the other hand, knows little and will say less (if captured and questioned).

Beneath Camla's bed there is a locked

chest with 1,000 gp, 1,300 sp and various personal items such as breeches, boots, spare robes etc. At the bottom of the chest there is a wooden box with a Wendarian scout's tunic, helm, spear and pennant with the gold star. There is also a floorplan of Gylharen's tower (needed for the assassination plot). On the underside of the chest lid there is a secret compartment containing a magic user's spell scroll: *ESP**. Camla's spellbook is resting quite openly on the mantle. The spell book includes only the spells Camla currently has memorized.

Beneath the thief's bed are two sets of saddle bags. One set is empty while the other holds 123 gp, 193 sp and 33 cp, in addition to a set of thieves' tools and personal items.

24. Leaper's Cottage

In this small cottage there is a roaring blaze in a west wall fireplace. An old man reclines in an armchair before the hearth, smoking his pipe. In the northeast corner is a large bed—a table and a single chair rest against the wall to the left of the door. An old chest lies at the foot of the bed in front of the door. Thick clouds of pipe smoke fill the air in the hut.

The old man dozing in front of the fire is Leaper, the former steward of Gereth Minar (mentioned in the riddle by the madman from building #15). Old Leaper is unable to offer any resistance in this encounter. Indeed, he will sit passively by the fire even if the characters ransack his abode. The poor old fellow is quite senile at this stage in life. If questioned by the party, he will have only one question and one statement: "Ahh, have you come with my tobacco? I was hoping you would. These days there's many a slip betwixt pipe and lip". Any further utterances will be quite whimsical and meaningless.

Leaper's chest contains clothes, tools and a normal sword. His money is stashed in the padding of the easy chair in which he reclines (57 gp and 127 sp).

In the brick mantle of the fireplace there is a loose brick about midway up the south side of the fireplace. Behind the brick is a small leather satchel containing a crude map of the area around Gereth Minar and the location of the secret tunnel entrance. If this is found, draw a very simple outline of the walls on a piece of paper (based on Maps XIII and XIV), with an "X" indicating the secret entrance, and show it to the players.

25. Army of Denagoth Bivouac (See Map IV)

You have been riding north from the village of Geron over a distance of about 24 miles. To the northwest of the roadway, about 700 yards away, you can see many tents and the smoke of numerous fires. As you proceed you can make out many banners and flags flapping in the wind.

The tents are crude and sloppily made. The banners are recognizable as typical orcish type, probably indicating the presence of several tribes. The banner in the middle of the camp bears the token of the red wyvern. Once per hour, roll a d6 and check the result below.

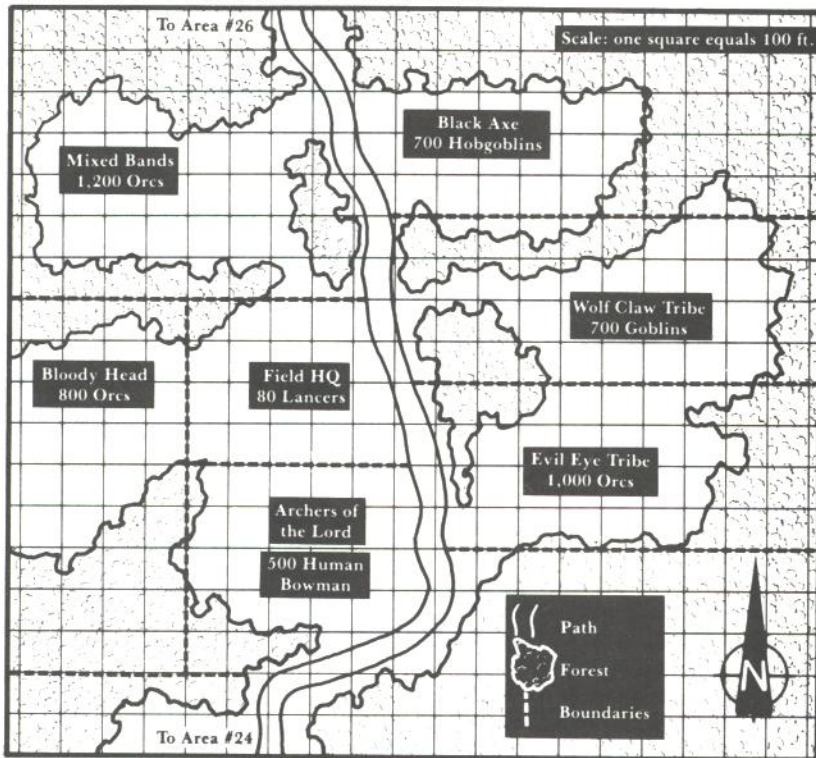
- 1-3 A patrol of 60 orcs passes on—the orc officer ignores the party on the assumption that they have reasonable business being there. If the party is in lancer guise the orcs will steer clear of them.
- 4-6 A patrol of 40 orcs marches directly toward the party's location. Allow the players an opportunity to take evasive action. Quickly leaving the open road and hiding in the trees is possible. The orcs will not bother searching the bushes.

If the party runs into the orcs, the orcs' first move will be to encircle the PCs and attempt to capture them alive. If more than half of the orcs are defeated, the patrol will retreat and avoid mentioning the event to their superiors in order to avoid certain punishment.

If the PCs are captured, they are disarmed and carelessly tied up. One of the orcs will come out of the ranks, claiming to be the leader. Krumz, as he calls himself, is drunk and will start questioning the prisoners. Krumz will debate with his lieutenant, Foopch, whether or not to kill the alleged "spies" right away and save the trouble of reporting the deed. Finally, Foopch will manage to convince Krumz to tie up the party, hide them in thick bushes and sell them later to a band of slavers due in the area in a few days.

If captured, the PCs can escape rather easily due to the carelessness of the orcs. A PC can escape his ropes by making either a Strength Check or a Dexterity Check. With a little steth they can escape unobserved (50% chance). If they make a break for it, they will elude pursuit.

MAP IV DENAGOTH CAMP



Infiltrating the Army Camp

If the PCs are disguised as dark lancers, they can easily investigate the camp—the other evil soldiers fear and avoid the dark lancers. As lancers, the characters may freely move throughout the bivouac area excluding the field headquarters—provided, of course, that they do so with a degree of restraint. Investigations of non-human camp areas will produce surly looks and nasty grumblings from the assorted orcs and goblins. There is no love lost between the human lancers and the dark demi-humans in the army ranks. However, a complete tour of these areas will provide the characters with fairly accurate notion of the enemy forces.

Infiltrating the lancer field headquarters is another matter. Currently the commanding officer of the lancers (and the army) is not present. His name is Gevren and he is at Gereth Minar conferring with the Shadow Lord. At this stage the lancer camp is just a collection of tents and corrals (strength 80 lancers).

If the disguised characters attempt a friendly exchange with any of the soldiers they will learn of the following rumors, some true and some false (indicated by the adjoining explanation):

- That the Shadow Lord has mobilized a battery of wyverns to spearhead the attack on Wendar (*false*)
- That the orcs and goblins will be used to terrorize the countryside around the city-state in order to demoralize the rural population (*true*)
- That the Shadow Lord himself will lead the attack mounted on a black steed that breathes fire (*false*)
- That Wendar is sure to fall because Gylharen, the Wizard-King, is already dead (*false*)
- That regardless of the wyverns, lancers will conduct the actual takeover of the city after the 500 bowmen shower 20,000 arrows on the populace (*true*)
- That the Shadow Lord is holding 500 lancers in reserve. (Actually the number is closer to 150.) (*true*)
- That Gevren is at Gereth Minar working out the final details of the attack with the Shadow Lord (*true*)
- That Landryn Teriak plans to make Lord Camla master in Wendar to hold the realm on the Shadow Lord's behalf (*true*)

If the characters act in a foolish manner the DM should mobilize the 80 lancers. On the

other hand, if the party makes mischief in an intelligent fashion, the DM should be lenient as the characters attempt to withdraw from this encounter.

Give the PCs a scare by taking on the roll of a inquisitive lancer officer. This fellow may insist on an explanation for these new faces in the camp. He might want to know who their commanding officer is, and so on. Generally, the DM is encouraged to have some creative fun with this risky, but open-ended encounter.



Chapter Three—ON TO GERETH MINAR

Encounter Setting

Lothenar is a very dense forest with monstrous overarching trees shrouding the roadway. It was once populated by elves at a time when Landryn Teriak was not dominant in Denagoth. The forest was a peaceful home to treants, sprites and elves alike. In those days Denolas, Lord of wood elves, ruled Lothenar and all was well in the sanctuary of the wood.

With the advent of the evil one Lothenar was invaded by orcs and other evil creatures. The forest folk fought bravely to defend themselves. After months of warfare Denolas and his kinsmen still resisted the encroachments of evil. At last Landryn Teriak lost patience with the situation and called upon the clerics of Idris to send forth a special champion of darkness.

So it was that a black dragon came and cleared the elven folk from their strongholds in the wood. Denolas and his vassals perished before the acid attacks of the beast.

As reward for service the black dragon was given dominion in Lothenar by Teriak, whose grip on Denagoth was now consolidated. The beast now resides on an island in the middle of a swampy lake (area #27).

Once in the Forest of Lothenar, the party will find several smaller paths leaving from the main trail (see Map VI). These paths lead to the encounters described below. At the end of the main trail, north of the Lothenar Forest, the party will reach Gereth Minar (see Map V). Gereth Minar is described after the encounters occurring in Lothenar. If the party goes around the forest, and reaches Gereth Minar, run Chapter Four instead of this adventure.

Random Encounters

As the characters pass through the forest, make at least three checks for wandering monsters, one during the day, and two during the night. Roll for random encounters on the second column of the Random Encounters Chart inside the module cover. A score of 80 or more means there are no random encounters for that period of the day/night. The various creatures found on this column of the Lothenar Forest are the troubled undead spirits of Lothenar's slain.

Encounter Key (See map V)

26a-c. The Hall of Denolas

This path has led you to a clearing in the wood. Here stands the dilapidated ruins

of a building—burned in many places and marred by peculiar black stains. The building has been in ruins for years—it is almost shrouded by a thick cover of vines and overgrowth.

This building used to be Denolas's mansion in Lothenar. A black dragon devastated the building many years ago, ripping through the walls, or spitting acid. The inside is very dim, almost dark. Thick foliage has overgrown the cracks in the walls and Lothenar's dim light can hardly filter through the trees and overgrowth of the area.

If the party searches the area for clues, they find and recognize foot prints belonging to some giant reptilian creature.

26a. Main Hall

Remind the players that the area beyond the entrance is dark and needs a source of light to be explored. Once the PCs can see the inside of the building, read the boxed text below:

The entrance arch to the building is heavily charred and pitted with burn marks and gouges. The remains of a great oak door lay rotting on the floor just within the entry, its fine iron hinges corroded and ripped asunder. Throughout the chamber within are the decaying remnants of fine furnishings that bear the unmistakable mark of elven craftsmanship. In the center of the west wall a large fireplace and mantle has partially caved-in. Two doors are slightly ajar, opening in the wall to the east. Many building stones, chunks of mortar and portions of ceiling beam lie scattered about. A faintly nauseating smell of death and decay hangs in the air.

One round after the party entered the area, sinister whispers will be heard. Suddenly, a gust of wind blows out all torches and unprotected sources of light. The two doors to the east slam shut. The area will then become gradually colder and darker.

Among the debris in front of the fireplace are 70 sp, in addition to an elven dagger. Throughout the chamber are many shards of elven pottery.

26b. Denolas' Bedroom

The door to this chamber is scorched and pitted, but still strongly-built. Within the room are the devastated furnishings of a

once-fine bedroom. In the southeast corner lie the splintered remains of a large oak bed. In the southwest corner a smashed wooden cabinet lies in pieces. As you move about the room you feel a strange, unnerving, unseen presence lingering here.

This room is haunted by the spirits of Denolas and his wife. The two elves, despairing over the lost beauty of the forest, became spectres, although they were not evil. Their haunted spirits cannot forsake the site of their once-great hall amongst the trees. However, these things are not entirely evil. Anyone who commands the spectres to "Leave us in peace!"—or some such phrase in elvish—will have his or her wish granted and the spectres will vanish. The creatures can also be turned or fought like other spectres.

Until the party finds a way of dismissing the two spectres, the creatures have a 25% chance of appearing during each round, behind one character chosen at random. Both spectres have a distinct elvish appearance. They will stare at the character for 1-4 rounds. If no one notices the undead, one of the two will whisper to the PC to leave the area. Once the message is given, or whenever the party notices the creatures, both spectres exit the area through the walls, to reappear later. Should anyone attack them (or once each character in the group has had the message), the creatures will fight back, concentrating their efforts on one character.

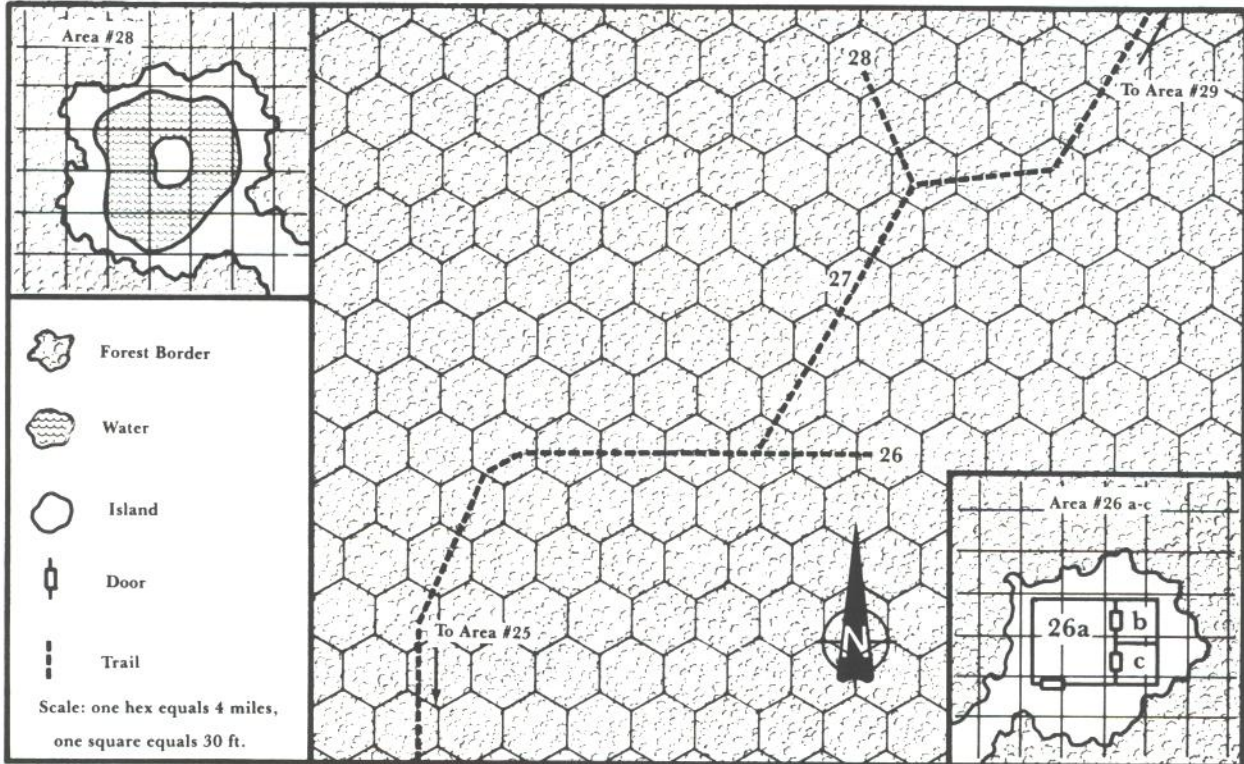
A careful inspection of the rubble in the southwest portion of the chamber will reveal a chain with a glowing ring on it. This item is a *ring of spell storing* with two clerical spells: *speak with the dead* and *restore**, an extremely powerful Seventh Level spell. The *restore* spell will restore 1 experience level lost because of Energy Drain by a device or undead monster. The spell has no effect on characters that have not suffered Energy Drain. If a character puts on the ring, it will magically tell him what spells are in the ring and how to use them. The spells inside the ring are the only ones that can be placed inside it.

If the *speak with the dead* spell is used to talk to the spectres, tell the characters the tragic tale of Denolas.

26c. Denolas' Study Chamber

This room is littered with rotting pieces of parchment and a number of old and torn

MAP V LOTHENAR FOREST



books. A battered bookcase lies in pieces against the east wall. A marble statue of an elven lord lies in four pieces in the northwest corner.

The books are written in elvish script and consist of songs, poems and general elvish lore. Near the base of the statue's pedestal (NW corner) there is a concealed trap door in the floor. Below this is a small hole containing a chest with 637 gp and 976 sp. At the bottom of the chest is a leather-bound book entitled *The Journal of Denolas*. Only the first few pages of the book have elvish writing and the rest is blank. The written pages are heavily stained in several places and are only partially legible. The available text reads as follows:

For hundreds of years my elvish kinsmen flourished in this wood, an island of peace in a harsh land. But in the darkest of years came the evil one the human folk called the Shadow Lord...

Soon after the dark one, came the orcs and the goblin folk from the mountains. We slew them by the hundreds with the sharp points of our elvish arrows. Still they came, driven in madness by the will

of the evil lord. But we forgot them and held fast until the flying horror...

Now we are no match for this beast and I fear that we shall all perish before another moon. It would take the Elvish Stone itself to save us now from the doom of this black monster. And yet, there may be hope in the great blade...

...I fear now that all is lost. My kinsmen have perished before the terrible breath that burns and the orcs range freely in the wood. I will return to the forest hall with my Lady of the Wood, there to make a final stand against the darkness...

I pray that ye who find this book shall deliver it unto the hands of Bensarian of Kevar, the sage, so the songs may yet be sung of the fallen elves of Lothentar...

Denolas' entries refer to a "great blade". This weapon is a dragon-slaying sword that the elf wielded before the dragon burned him down. Both the sword and the dragon are present in area #28.

27. The Messenger

Before meeting the dragon in area #28, the party encounters a Denagothian messenger

on the trail. The exact spot where this encounter happens is unimportant.

You hear the hoofbeats of a trotting horse ahead of you in the forest. The horse is approaching, but is not yet visible through the trees.

The messenger is a dark lancer riding a war horse. The PCs will have time to lay an ambush for him, if desired. If they approach him without dark lancer disguise, he will immediately flee toward the north. He holds a message from Landryn Teriak to Vitriol, the dragon of area #28. It says:

"Lord Vitriol of Lothentar,

Despite your repeated demands for control of the Menguls, we feel your presence in Lothentar is vital to the protection of the path to Gereth Minar. However, for your good and loyal services, we offer you control of the Kevar Hills, soon to be ours. As soon as victory is ours, you will join our troops there.— L. T'

The messenger comes from Gereth Minar. He is victim of a irreversible curse that will kill him if he ever reveals anything about the tower or his master. He is aware of the curse



and will panic if the party captures him and attempts to get information.

28. Isle of the Black Dragon

As the party approaches the lake the DM should inform the player characters that they smell water. There is a 50% chance that the dragon is asleep on his island. Soon the party should reach a vantage point on a large rock, that will enable them to see area #28 through the branches and leaves of the trees.

The path comes to a clearing that forms a sandy beach area to the east of a small lake. In the center of the lake is a small island, approximately 40' x 30'. From your vantage point you can see the unmistakable form of a very large black dragon sitting among large chests, on a worthy pile of coins. Apart from this sandy clearing, the forest presses close to the water's edge all around the lake.

Vitriol's breath weapon is a stream of acid 5' wide and up to 60' in range. The monster has two breath attacks available when the party first meets him.

Vitriol's Spells: *Darkness**, *Detect Magic*,

Protection vs. Evil, Ventriloquism

Vitriol is a bitter rival of Brulefer (see area #5 in the Mengul Mountains). He strongly resents what he feels is an arbitrary favoritism that allows Brulefer the control of the Mengul Pass, obviously a more exciting and important post. Instead, Vitriol, the destroyer of the elves of Lothenar, has been given this remote area to keep, with no decent cave to occupy—a boring prospect.

The party can safely approach the creature if they wear the dark lancer garb. Vitriol will open a eyelid half way, and ask, "Now what? Are you finally bringing the new orders?" Vitriol is expecting the message found during encounter #27.

If the party tries to hoodwink the dragon with false orders, they will have to explain why none are written (if the orders are verbal). If their explanations are logical, the characters have a 70% chance of convincing the dragon (the beast is bored and is looking for action). The party could pretend that the Shadow Lord ordered Vitriol to replace Brulefer in the pass. The creature will then pack 80% of the treasure in large chests (and his scroll—see below) and take off to Brulefer's cave. If the two dragons meet, they will fight to death over their "assignments". The sur-

viving one will stalk the party and attempt to destroy them as soon as possible.

If the party does not wear dark lancer uniforms, the dragon will immediately attack the party, using his breath weapon from the isle. Thereafter, the creature will use another breath weapon to its best effect. If the creature loses 40 hit points or more, it will take to the air and swoop down upon its targets.

The monster jealously guards 3,005 gp, 9,008 sp and 700 pp. Amongst this pile of coins is a chest with 1,200 gp worth of gems, and a scroll with a unique incantation.

When a magic-user reads the scroll, a magical sword will rise from the water just to the south of the isle. It will remain above the water for 5 rounds and then disappear—it must be secured before the end of five rounds. The incantation scroll disappears upon a full reading. This weapon is a sword +1, +3 vs. dragons.

Having killed the elf lord, the black dragon took the sword and with the Shadow Lord's help, submerged it in the murky waters of the lake.

Chapter Four—THE TOWER OF GERETH MINAR

Encounter Setting

This tower is the area from which Landryn Teriak rules Denagoth. The Shadow Lord spends much of his time studying and experimenting on the *Elvenstar*. So far, he has managed to create a vast *cloudkill* spell that permanently billows around Gereth Minar. The cloud is thick and incoming visitors are difficult to spot. Most of the guards in the tower do not expect trespassers to survive the cloud and thus, often pay very little attention to the surroundings. All the guards and officers in Gereth Minar are dark lancers.

Every four hours, roll a Random Encounter check on the third column of the Random Encounters Table. A result of 80 or more means there are no random encounters for that period. If the result on the chart is "Landryn Teriak", it indicates that the Shadow Lord is scanning the tower, from area #51, through magical devices located in various rooms. These rooms are indicated on the three maps of Gereth Minar by the letter "D". If the party is in one of these rooms at the time this result is rolled on the chart, the Shadow Lord may discover the party's true identity. If the party wears guard uniforms and do not act in a suspicious way at that particular moment, the Shadow Lord will not pay attention. In any other case, Landryn Teriak will either order a team of three guards to question the "suspicious" soldiers, or alert his guards to form patrols of 6 men and hunt the party down throughout the building.

Whatever the result is, the Shadow Lord will not come out of his laboratory (area #51 on Level 3, in Gereth Minar). If the guards are defeated, Teriak will attempt to hinder the party's movement by casting spells through the magical devices whenever the opportunity presents itself. These devices are detailed in the rooms' description. Use the statistics and spells given below for the Shadow Lord, throughout the party's exploration of Gereth Minar.

Landryn Teriak, the Shadow Lord: AC 2; MU 10; hp 36; #AT 1 staff or spell; D 2-12; MV 90' (30'); Save MU 10; ML 12; AL C; S 9, In 18, Wi 16, Dx 12, Con 8, Ch 4 or 14

Spell Books and Memorized Spells: Bold-faced spells are those Teriak memorized. Spells followed with a double asterisk (**) come from his *ring of spell storing*. The other spells are available in his spell book, if the Shadow Lord has a chance to study new spells overnight.

Level 1: *charm person, floating disc, hold portal, light**, *magic missile, read magic, sleep*

Level 2: *continual light**, *detect invisible***, *ESP**, *invisibility, mirror image, phantasmal force***, *web, wizard lock*

Level 3: *clairvoyance, dispel magic, fire ball, fly, lightning bolt, hold person**, *protection from normal missiles***, *water breathing*

Level 4: *charm monster, dimension door, hallucinatory terrain***, *polymorph others, polymorph self, wall of fire, wizard eye*

Level 5: *animate dead, cloudkill, hold monster***, *magic jar, teleport*

Level 9: *wish*** (special)

The Shadow Lord obtained the *wish* by secret and forbidden means. In this adventure, he can use it for only one purpose—to escape from attackers (the PCs) if defeated in his fortress of Gereth Minar (see room #51). The *wish* is ignored in any situation other than the one in which it was meant to be used.

Magic Items: *robe of protection AC 5, ring of protection +3, ring of spell storing, staff of power, jade mask* (special).

Landryn Teriak wears a magical jade mask that hides his disfigured face and modifies his voice. The mask raises his charisma from 4 to 14, and gives him a permanent *know alignment** ability. The mask's powers will be destroyed if it is removed from his face, or when Teriak dies. The jade is worth 500 gp.

Encounter Key

Read the following whenever the party approaches Gereth Minar.

You have been riding north of the dim forest for quite some time since leaving the forest. The landscape has become bleaker and more desolate. The road beneath the horses is barely distinguishable from the cracked and broken land around you. Here and there large boulders protrude from the craggy ground on either side of the track.

At length, in the distance, you see a strange and unearthly sight. The roadway seems to end in a huge bank of sickly, yellowish fog, like a monstrous earthbound cloud. Stone ramparts are barely visible from the highest reaches of the fog bank,

with a high and narrow tower atop a larger structure below. As the mists lift and swirl you can make out the certain form of a tower nestled in the midst of the engulfing cloud.

The yellowish cloud is about 300 feet in diameter and extends up about 80 feet. This fog is the manifestation of a continuous *cloudkill* spell Landryn Teriak managed to cast through the power of the *Elvenstar*. Anyone less than 5th level of ability must save vs. Poison or die if they are exposed to the vapors of the cloud. All surviving creatures, including those of 5th level sustain 1 hit point of damage for each round of exposure. Only one saving throw is required per character or creature.

Entering Gereth Minar

If the PCs possess Leaper's map (see area #24), assist them in the initial mapping of this encounter. A careful study of the area marked "x" on the map will reveal an old tree stump with a large, flat rock beside it, both marked with a tiny wyvern. Moving the rock will reveal a tunnel leading down to the underground passage (area #29, The Dungeon Level).

Without Leaper's map the characters each have a 20% chance of taking notice of the suspicious-looking stump and rock if, and only if, they are examining the terrain within 15 feet of the "x" on Leaper's map. (There are a number of tree stumps and rocks around the tower.)

Access through the main gate (Map XIII, Level 1) will not be easy, nor is it prudent. A heavy portcullis blocks the way, as does a thick iron door beyond. *Knock* spells, bashing or other forms of battering will certainly bring make a lot of racket, causing 1-6 dark lancers to investigate. In addition, there are two war horses tethered in the corridor between the portcullis and the iron door (for the use of messengers).

The secret door to the north of Level 1 is a much more feasible approach. The door beyond is locked but may be picked. (The secret door was originally built as an escape route in case the main gate was captured by an enemy.)

There is a four foot wide buffer of fresh, pure air around the tower. Because of the cloud cover, the party will be able to reach the walls of the tower unseen. At the time of the party's arrival, all the windows of the tower are closed and barred from inside with thick metal shutters.

Gereth Minar—Dungeon Level

29. Secret Tunnel

At the east end of the tunnel, near the corner, a pit viper lies coiled and ready to strike. The creature will have the element of surprise for a first strike on a roll of 1-2 on a d6. The tunnel leads to the secret door in area #30, where part of the stone wall pivots into the room.

30. Jailer's Office

In this chamber 6 armed men are conversing around a desk against the east wall. Five of these fighters wear chain mail armor; sheathed swords hang at their sides. The sixth figure wears a leather jerkin—a sword, a bullwhip and a large key ring hang from a belt about his waist.

The movement of the secret door will be certain to draw the attention of these fighters. Currently the jailer is briefing the guards on this level. Use the dark lancer stats for the five armored fighters.

Jailer: AC 7; F6; hp 46; #AT 1; D 1-2 or entangle, whip, 1-8 sword; MV 90' (30'); Save F6; ML 9; AL C; St 13, In 8, Wi 9, Dx 12, Co 16, Ch 7

The jailer will open his attack with his 30' long whip, trying to entangle a target so that the guards can more easily attack. The victim avoids entangling if he makes a saving throw versus Death Ray. The part held by the whip is either a hand or a foot. An entangled character must make a successful Dexterity Check to free himself.

The jailer carries a belt pouch with 1-20 gp, keys to all doors and cells on this level (including the locked drawer in his desk), and a note reading, "Add Venla, the thief, and Nethelar, the cleric, to roster of prisoners".

The locked drawer in the desk holds food, a flask of mead, a sack of 75 sp and a list of every prisoner—alive or dead—incarcerated in the dungeon in the last year. The last two names on the list are Venla and Nethelar.

31. Jailer's Bedroom (locked)

A small bed lies against the west wall of the chamber. A table with a chair rest near the north wall and a chest rests atop a stone ledge on the south wall.

Carefully concealed under the bed frame is a

small leather bag with a magic-user's scroll: *knock*. The locked chest holds 312 gp, 547 sp and 597 cp, plus gems to a value of 322 gp.

32. Torture Chamber

Macabre and diabolical, this large room bears the unmistakable signs of a torture chamber. Manacles hang from the walls all around the north section. In the northeast corner, a large iron box sits atop a table. In the southwest portion of the chamber is a torture rack and wheel. The statue of a small black dragon stands in the northwestern corner of the room.

The iron box contains various gruesome tools of the trade.

The door to the southeast opens on a flight of stairs leading up to area #36 on Level 1.

The statue is the magical device through which Teriak observes interrogations. When Teriak scans the tower, the eyes of the dragon turn red and the statue pivots to scan the room. The magic in the device is destroyed if removed from its pedestal. If the Shadow Lord recognizes the PCs in this area, he will cast a *sleep* spell and sound the alarm.

33. Large Cell

(door barred from the outside)

This chamber holds the skeletal remains of a number of humanoids. In the southwest corner lies the body of a recently deceased prisoner. The corpse is dressed in tattered leather armor.

This is the body of a thief who foolishly tried to steal a valuable icon from the tower cleric. He received 20 days of confinement without food or water for his trouble. A search of the poor fellow's armor will reveal five small rubies sewn into the lining (value 165 gp).

34. Small Cells (locked)

Each of these cells has a small door with a tiny peephole. The cells contain straw on the floor and a single ledge which serves as a bed. Rats infest the cells.

The cell marked (*) on the map houses the body of a man in tattered blue robes and grey breeches. A close inspection of the body will reveal that the fellow has been dead only a few hours.

The victim is a pilgrim of sorts who went by the name of Nethelar. At one time he stud-

ied under the sage Bensarian of Kevar. While travelling in the Mengul Mountains he was captured by orcs and given to the Shadow Lord for questioning. In the last week the poor chap has been ruthlessly interrogated, which caused his recent tragic death.

The body shows so many injuries that a *raise dead* spell would be useless—he would die again within minutes. However, a successfully cast *speak with dead* spell will disclose that Nethelar revealed all he knew to Landryn Teriak. The spirit voice of the man can offer the following information:

Only Gylharen, the Wizard-King, can make full use of the *Elvenstar*, although the Shadow Lord has created a *cloudkill* effect just by chance.

Landryn Teriak seeks to know the secrets of *Elvenstar* for more than one purpose. The Shadow Lord seems to be interested in any curative properties that the stone may have. Landryn Teriak suffers from a terrible unknown malady.

The Shadow Lord resides in the uppermost reaches of the tower. One must disguise himself as one of his minions, for he has eyes and ears everywhere.

In dire circumstances, a character obedient to the philosophy of law can touch *Elvenstar*. Much good will come from it, however, a prolonged contact must be avoided, for the power of the stone may harm its user.

35. Medusa's Chamber

(bolted from the PCs' side)

A number of stone statues of people, many of them bizarre and contorted likenesses, line the walls of this chamber. As you look about, a hooded figure in black moves towards you from the southeast corner.

As the figure moves forward it will throw back its hood to reveal a horrifying medusa's head covered in writhing snakes. This creature uses her powers to threaten or execute prisoners, hence the bizarre postures of the "statues".

Although she is a chaotic creature, Felinda, as she calls herself, will cover her face if in danger, begging not to be killed. She is a prisoner of the Shadow Lord, who uses her against the prisoners. Until the PCs came in, she was not able to leave because the door was bolted from outside. In exchange for her freedom, she will show the party one of the two secret exits out of Gereth Minar (either

the one on Leaper's Map or the secret passage north of the tower). The Medusa wears a pair of *boots of traveling and leaping*. As soon as either secret passage is open, she will spring out and attempt to flee through the poisoned mist around Gereth Minar.

If the party refuses her offer, in despair she will propose to help the party in defeating Teriak, by attempting to turn him into stone—a just and well deserved reward for her evil captor. To prove her good will, she will turn a few guards to stone, as the party progresses, but as soon as possible, she will try to flee the tower. She believes Landryn Teriak is too fearsome a foe to risk her life in a foolish attempt to defeat him. She will not be above turning a few PCs to stone when she decides to flee the tower. She does not know any personal details on the Shadow Lord.

The medusa's treasure consists of a small chest with 100 gp, 225 sp and gems to a value of 77 gp.

Gereth Minar—Level 1

(See Map XIII)

All the guards in Gereth Minar are dark lancers. There are 12 guards patrolling or stationed at posts on this level (including two duty officers). The original location of the stationed guards is indicated by a "G" on the maps of Gereth Minar; the other guards are in various rooms or are patrolling the corridors. The DM should move these guards in keeping with the encounters and the actions of the PCs. All the guards wear black helmets and tunics emblazoned with the red wyvern insignia. Each of these wear chain mail beneath their tunics and each carries 2-20 sp.

Any off-duty guards will not be wearing their armor (AC 9). Any of these fighters are free to investigate disturbances on this level. Two of them are on duty just inside the main portcullis to the main gate. There are 2 war horses tethered in this open corridor between the portcullis and the main gate.

36a. Corridor to the Dungeons

The staircase at the east end of this corridor leads down to the Dungeon Level via a trap door in the floor.

36b. Circular Hall and Staircase

Brass-plated doors lead to this circular and vaulted chamber. Stairs lead up into the darkness of the ceiling vault, about

40' above. A chittering and giggling sound comes from the darkness. Four man-sized iron statues representing Denagothian lancers stand in alcoves, between the four doors of the hall. Doors are located in the north, south, east and west. In the red marble floor is a mosaic of a black dragon.

The stairs in this room lead up to area #46, on Level 2 (see Map XIV). The area 40' above the floor is affected by a *continual darkness* spell, but the strange noises coming from within are a simple permanent *ventriloquism* spell.

The Denagothian guards are magical iron statues that will animate if the party does not wear the tower's uniform. The statues are capable of sighting *invisible* creatures. The statues will not pursue the PCs out of the hall or beyond the stairs.

The black dragon mosaic in the floor is magical. Victims of the black dragon illusion in area #22d (in the Temple of Idris), will have to save vs. Spell or turn pale and feverish and fight at -2 to hit as long as they remain in the room.

If the party is in this hall when the Shadow Lord scans the tower, two yellow glowing eyes will appear in the darkness of the vault. The eyes can be blinded for one round with a *dispel magic*. If the Shadow Lord suspects the party, he will cast a *charm person* on a fighter or dwarf among the party, and sound the alarm. The *charm* will not manifest itself until the victim meets the Shadow Lord. At this time, he will order the victim to defend him against the other PCs.

37. Kitchen and Pantry

Two large ovens on the east wall dominate this chamber. Shelf areas in the north and west portions are covered by all manner of kitchen things: pots, pans, jars, grain and flour bins and utensils. Many birds and large slabs of salted meat hang from hooks throughout. The smell of curing meat is strong.

At any time there will be 1-4 servants busily cooking, cleaning, or doing other work here. There are two women and two men on the kitchen staff. Whoever is not present will be sleeping in area #44. All these servants live in mortal fear of the Shadow Lord—they will refuse to assist the characters in any way. There is an 80% chance that one of them will

attempt to flee any encounter. If successful, the servant will return with 3-6 guards within 6 rounds. Two guards are on duty just inside the door to the west, near the secret passage.

38. Storeroom (door locked)

Barrels fill the center of this room. The Shelves in the southeast corner of the east wall hold casks. Shelves on the north end of the west wall hold sacks.

Some barrels contain water, others beer. The casks hold tolerable wine and the sacks contain good quality grain or flour. The whole 10' shelf on the west wall is a secret door mechanism, opening into a 10' square room to the west of the main storeroom. There are four very large barrels in the secret room beyond—two against the north wall and two by the south.

Three barrels contain excellent wine but the barrel in the northwest corner has a false bottom (only the top three-quarters of the barrel holds wine). The bottom portion forms a separate and secret stash of 120 gp. If the barrel is drained and/or smashed the secret stash will be discovered. A tiny slot near the base of the barrel allows the coins to be dropped into this unusual "piggy bank." (The tower steward has been embezzling money).

39. Duty Officer's Room

There is a 65% chance that one of the duty officers will be present. If so, use the "Denagoth Officer" stats and modify the boxed description to include the officer.

Two beds—with a chest beside each — lie against the east wall. A table and two chairs are against the west wall.

The locked chests contain personal items and clothes. In addition, one chest holds 299 sp and the other a sack with 201 ep, a normal shield and a mace.

40. Guardroom

Ten narrow beds crowd this chamber. At any time there will be 2-5 guards in the chamber, either sleeping or gambling with dice or cards. Up to 1-10 gp and a large number of beans will be at stake on the tables. Beneath each bed is a footlocker containing personal items, clothing and conventional weaponry such as daggers, spikes and shields. Each off-duty guard will have his sword nearby.

41. Steward's Office

Two men are standing in front of a desk against the south wall of this chamber. One man is a fighter in a black tunic and the other wears a dark red robe.

The fighter is a dark lancer officer. The robe-donned man is Levy, the tower steward. Beneath his robes Levy wears chain mail armor and carries a purse with 2-40 gp. He carries a key to his desk drawer in his left hand. Although quite ready to fight, these two will attempt to call out the guard. After 3 rounds there is a 40% chance that 2-5 guards from area #40 will answer the call.

Levy: AC 5; F6; hp 39; #AT 1; D 2-9 sword +1; MV 120'; Save F6; ML 10; AL N; St 16, In 15, Wi 13, Dx 12, Co 14, Ch 16

The desktop is covered by a lantern, an ink well, two quill pens and a human skull. The skull is a magical spying device. If the Shadow Lord scans the room while the PCs are there and discovers that the party are his enemies, he will cast *darkness** on the skull itself, followed on the next round by a *cloudkill*. He will then alert his guards on the next round. A *dispel magic* will permanently negate the skull's magic.

A single locked drawer in the desk contains various papers and notes about the guard roster and the tower's supplies (mead, wine, grain, iron rations etc.).

42. Steward's Bedroom

This sparsely furnished room has a bed, wall cabinet and a single table with chair.

The locked cabinet contains clothes, boots, and sundry personal things. A small chest rests at one end of the unit. Within the locked box are 298 gp, 151 ep and a rope. This last item is a cursed *rope of constriction*. Although it resembles a *rope of climbing*, when ordered to perform it will lash itself around the neck of the user, in addition to 1-4 others. The rope inflicts 2-12 hit points of damage per round until the victim(s) are dead. Each character is entitled to an initial saving throw vs. Spell to avoid the rope. A successful *remove curse* will temporarily suspend the curse, effectively freeing the victim. The rope otherwise, is AC -2 and will sustain 22 hit points of damage before being severed. Trapped characters are unable to free themselves, nor can they cast spells while

entangled.

43. Armory (door locked)

Spears, lances, swords and maces—all on separate racks—line the walls of this chamber. Two large chests and two tall cabinets complete the contents of this room.

On the racks are 10 swords, 10 axes, 10 maces and 20 spears. One cabinet holds 10 pole arms and the other 15 javelins. One chest holds 500 arrows and the other 30 bows and 100 bow strings.

44. Servants' Quarters

Six floor mats and six sacks lay strewn on the floor of this chamber. There is nothing else in the room, and no other exit is visible.

Any of the four kitchen servants will be here if not on duty. They will attempt to flee if confronted by the PCs. If cornered, the servants offer no resistance. There is nothing else of interest in this room.

45. The Great Hall (locked)

A long oak table with many chairs lies in the middle of this chamber. To the north a large wall hanging depicts a red wyvern on a black background. Below this an immense fireplace is set into the stone. A large and very ornate wooden chest rests against the middle of the west wall. A tall wooden cabinet stands in the southeast corner.

The tall cabinet (locked) in the southeast corner holds twenty, 5-piece silver table settings (3,600 sp value) and two large soup tureens, rendered in silver with gold filigree (500 gp each).

The ten foot long wooden chest is, in fact, a sarcophagus. The padlocked lid opens like a coffin. Within is the form of a skeleton wrapped in very old and rotting cloth—the head of this coffin points south.

When the lid is removed, a dense fog pours out of the coffin and starts covering the floor. As soon as the head is uncovered the eyes of this skeleton brighten with a red glow. Those viewing this occurrence must save vs. Spell or flee from the chamber in fear. Thereafter the creature will rise up from its coffin and advance slowly towards the nearest character

(at 20' per round). Although weaponless, the skeleton will get a stranglehold on a victim, if its Hit Roll is sufficient to hit AC 2. The strangulation causes 1-6 points of damage per round. The skeleton's grip is released only when the creature is destroyed or turned by a cleric. The skeleton is a simple creature (1 HD) of its type, disguised by its grave wrappings and with an *illusion* cast upon its eye sockets. The skeleton is that of a former thief who was captured when he tried to rob the Shadow Lord. Landryn Teriak managed to animate the thief's skeleton and placed it here on guard as a gruesome means of revenge. The illusions are intended to mislead unwary intruders.

The wooden coffin is lined with golden cloth worth 1,200 gp.

The large wall hanging on the north is a magical spying device. If the Shadow Lord discovers the party in this room, he will cast an *ESP**, followed on the second round by a *fire ball*. Teriak will then sound the alarm. A *dispel magic* will disable the hanging for one round only.

Gereth Minar—Level 2

(See Map XIV)

There are six dark lancer guards on this level (indicated by the letter "G" on Map XIV). Two patrol the open-air parapets, two are stationed in the north and south corridors, and two are usually off-duty in area #49. Any melee that lasts longer than 6 rounds will attract all the guards on this level. They all wear chain mail armor beneath their red wyvern tunics, and carry 1-10 gp.

46. Entry Chamber

The entrance from the stairs below is a simple trap door on hinges. It is neither locked nor trapped.

This circular chamber has four doors, corresponding to the compass points. Four lighted wall torches burn beside each. A number of barrels sit in the south portion of the room. A large eye in a triangle is carved in the floor, at the center of the room. A trap door is located in front of the northern exit.

The barrels hold water and poor quality oil. Any attempt to go through the north or south doors will meet with an immediate challenge from one of the guards in the corridor.

The eye carved in the floor is a magical spying device. If the Shadow Lord scans this

room while the party is here and discovers the party's identity, he will cast a *hold person**, and sound the alarm on the next round.

One guard is stationed in the hall adjoining areas #49 and #50 and one is positioned between areas #47 and #48. Any confrontation in the north hall will attract the off-duty guards from area #49 within 3 rounds. The trap door in front of the north exit opens on a flight of stairs leading down to area 36a on level 1.

47. Altar Chamber (door locked)

Against the north wall is an altar-like arrangement made of alabaster. A thick black cloth is partially draped over this altar. Atop the cloth are two unlit black candles in gold candlesticks and a smoking censer filled with a bitter incense. Hanging on the wall behind the altar is a tapestry bearing the image of a black dragon on a maroon background. A small bed lies against the south wall. A chest sits beside it.

At the base of the altar is a small piece of movable stonework. This section can be pushed into the altar—this action opens a wall panel behind the tapestry of the black dragon. If the tapestry is removed the characters will find an iron chest in the wall recess. This locked box contains: a potion of *invisibility*, another of *healing*, and a clerical scroll with a *cure serious wounds* spell.

Several small slots are placed near the base of the altar. The altar is hollow and contains seven spitting cobras. The slots are large enough to allow the cobras to emerge, but the snakes will come out only if the party attempts to smash the altar, or if Kurda, their master, controls them with a *snake charm* spell (see room #51, and below). Once out of the altar, the snakes will attack the closest PCs. If the PCs have left the altar chamber, the cobras will wander into the corridors.

The black candles are supported by two gold candlesticks, each worth 50 gp. The locked chest beside the bed contains two clerical robes (black dragon insignia), breeches, boots and other personal items. At the bottom of the chest is a sack of 275 pp.

The censer is a magical spying device. When the Shadow Lord scans the tower, a image of Landryn Teriak's green jade mask will silently appear amid the censer's thin grey fumes, silently studying the characters. The PCs will not notice the image unless they are looking in the direction of the burning

censer. If the party is in this room for any reason when the Shadow Lord scans the area, he sends his follower, Kurda (see room #51) to cast a *snake charm*. Kurda will take over from there and have the seven spitting cobras come out of the altar and attack the party. On the following round, the Shadow Lord sounds the alarm. A *dispel magic* spell is necessary to negate the censer's magic; a separate *dispel magic* would be needed to cancel the *snake charm*.

48. The Shadow Lord's Bedroom

A large four-poster bed occupies much of this room, its headboard flush against the north wall, in the middle of the wall. The red wyvern token is etched on the headboard. In the southeast corner a large wall cabinet stands almost to the ceiling. Beside the door is a desk against the west wall. In the northwest corner a chest rests atop a wooden table.

The wooden cabinet is locked. Several black robes typical of those worn by a magic user hang within. A small chest in the bottom of the cabinet contains bandages, scissors, a potion bottle with small traces of *healing* potion inside—not enough to cure, and a bottle of acid.

At the back of the cabinet there is a hanging curtain. Behind this is a *mirror of life trapping*. Anyone who looks directly into the glass must save vs. Spell or be immediately drawn into the mirror, equipment and all! The device will hold up to twenty such victims.

While trapped, creatures are powerless to do anything but talk to others (outside the mirror). If the glass is smashed, all victims will be released.

The locked chest in the northeast corner holds 998 gp, 671 ep and 379 pp. There is also a smaller wooden box with strange ivory inlay (worth 40 gp itself) within the larger chest. The box contains several types of herbs and plants, both fresh and dried types. Most of these herbs are medicinal in nature.

The desk has one securely locked drawer. Within are various writing materials and a black book. The front inside cover is a *cursed* scroll. Any magic user who fails to save vs. Spell after looking at the scroll will be struck blind. The blindness lasts until removed by a *remove curse* spell.

The book is both a diary and a record of medical problems containing entries written

by Landryn Teriak himself. The writing is in a very old style of the common tongue but is still legible. The entries discuss a terrible rotting disease that afflicts the wizard's body. He suffers intense discomfort and pain virtually all the time. One of the last entries discusses a failed attempt to effect a cure by using the magic of the "star." The last entry muses on the possibility of securing a new body in which to inhabit.

The bandages, the potion, and acid are all the trappings of Teriak's daily treatments for his rotting flesh.

At the back of the drawer there is a key for the padlocked chest in room #45.

The front right leg of the desk is hollow. Neatly tucked inside a portion of the leg is a *wand of fear* with 5 charges. This device casts a cone of fear 60' long and 30' wide. All within the range of the cone must save vs. wands or be turned away from the wand user at three times their normal rate (for 30 rounds).

49. Barracks

Two off-duty dark lancers will be found here if the PCs have not caused enough of a disturbance elsewhere on Level 2 to draw them away from this room. Off-duty dark lancers are armed but wear no armor (AC 9).

Six narrow beds, each with a footlocker, occupy much of the space in this chamber. A number of swords, shields and spears line the walls on racks.

A complete ransacking of the chamber will turn up 100-400 sp, 100-400 ep and 3-60 gp. The rest of the booty consists of clothes, personal items and 12 of each normal weapon mentioned above. In addition, there are two caches of arrows: 200 crossbow quarrels and 150 arrows. Beneath each bed, wrapped in oiled cloth, is a crossbow and a bow.

50. Meeting Room

In the middle of the west wall an elaborate fireplace is flanked by the carved effigies of wyverns which form the sides of the mantle. Above the fire a wall hanging depicts a red wyvern within a pentacle design. On the right side of the fireplace hangs a large leash of black varnished leather, inset with small diamonds and small golden studs.

A decanter of amber liquid and three glasses are on a low table in front of the fire. Three large chairs form a semicircle around this hearth. In the middle of the room is a larger table with a large silver dish. The silver platter holds several large chunks of fresh meat.

In the southwest corner a steep and narrow staircase leads up into the darkness of the ceiling vault, 14' above the floor. A winch is secured to the wall, about half way up the stairs.

At the right side of the stone mantle is a small, unobtrusive lever accessible from the chair to the right of the hearth. Pulling the lever will fire two darts from the mouths of the wyvern effigies in the mantle. The darts fly directly at the middle chair. Anyone in front of the chair (or in it) will have to make a Dexterity check at -3 or sustain 1-4 hit points of damage from each dart. If hit, a character must then save vs. Poison or lose consciousness for 1-4 hours. Upon awakening, the victim will have 1 hp left, unless a *neutralize poison** spell is cast immediately as the victim loses consciousness. If cast in time, the spell not only revives the victim, but prevents the loss of hit points due to poison.

The decanter on the small table near the fire place holds excellent brandy.

The stairs lead up to a solid metallic trap door that opens on area #51 on Level 3. The *darkness** in that area is due to a magical spell. The winch on the wall causes the trap door to slide back over the ceiling (east to west). The sliding door makes very little noise. The trap door can be opened with the winch, by a successful Strength Check with a -4 penalty, or by a *knock* spell.

As soon as the trap door slides open, Teriak's pet will slowly come down the stairs. The creature is a large tamed owl bear that has been made permanently *invisible*. Opening the trap door means to the creature that food has been brought downstairs. The owl bear will come down, push aside whoever stands in the way, and, if not attacked, walk toward the fresh meat in the silver dish.

If the party is not disguised as the Shadow Lord's soldiers or minions or if they initiate melee, the creature will attack them at once. If the PCs wear the dark uniforms, the owl bear will ignore them. When it is eating, the owl bear will let any PC wearing the Denagothian uniform slide the leash around its neck. The leash is magical and gives the holder a limited control over any creature of animal intelligence held by the leash. As long

as a PC holds the owl bear with the leash, the creature will follow simple orders. The owl bear will execute orders in the most simple manner for a creature of that intelligence and temperament. For example: ordering the creature to open a door would result in the owl bear attempting to break through the opening. The diamonds and gold studs on the leash are worth a total of 800 gp. The leash will lose its magical powers if the diamonds or the studs are removed.

Gereth Minar—Level 3

(See Map XIV)

51. The Chamber of the Shadow Lord

IMPORTANT! This encounter is complex, and can be run two different ways, depending upon what the PCs have done in Gereth Minar. Read the entire encounter description carefully before playing the encounter.

Beyond the metal trap door (see room #50 on Level 2) is a long steep stairway leading up. These stairs lead to the uppermost chamber of the tower, the Shadow Lord's private laboratory. There is a second trapdoor at the top of the stairs leading up from room 50, but this trapdoor will be open.

Surprise

1. If the PCs have made it this far without causing an alarm, without being detected as enemies by a spying device, and without fighting the owl bear in room #50, they will automatically surprise the Shadow Lord (they've earned it!).
2. If the PCs have not been detected as enemies by a spying device on Level 2 and have not fought the owl bear, they have a normal chance to surprise the Shadow Lord.
3. If they have been detected as enemies by a spying device on Level 2 or have fought the owl bear, they have no chance of surprising the Shadow Lord.

Note that the PCs will not have been detected as enemies by a spying device if they were wearing Denagothian uniforms at the time the device was used. (The Shadow Lord will pay little attention if the party is detected only by the spying devices in the Dungeon Level and Level 1—he feels threatened only if the party is also detected on Level 2.)

If the PCs have surprised the Shadow Lord, read the **True Description** of room 51 to the players. If the Shadow Lord has sur-

prised the PCs, read the **False Description**, which includes the effect of a *phantasmal force* and a *hallucinatory terrain* spell cast by the Shadow Lord. If both sides are surprised, read the True Description. If neither side is surprised, read the False Description.

True Description

As you climb the stairs, you can see many lights flickering across the ceiling of the room above. There is a strong scent of sulphur in the air. The stairs lead to a very large eight-sided chamber. Each of the eight walls appear to have round windows heavily shuttered by iron portals. The south loop, however, is open.

There are three people in the room and one animal. A guard in glowing armor and a bare-headed man in maroon robes stand near the southeast wall. A hooded figure in black robes stands near the middle of the south wall. A huge black wolf stands at his side.

There are four workbench fixtures against the north, south, east and west sides of the chamber. In the middle of the south bench you see a brilliant blue stone sitting on a cushion enclosed by a large glass cover. The other benches are littered with bottles, flasks, scales, funnels and other things common to an alchemist's workshop. Here and there are odd boxes or small chests.

The hooded figure in black is Landryn Teriak, the Shadow Lord. The creature sitting next to him is Pyrokloris, his hell hound.

The guard is Gevren, Teriak's army commander and erstwhile bodyguard. He has a *plate armor +1* and *sword +1*. Around his neck he wears the token of the red wyvern rendered in rubies (value 311 gp).

The bare-headed figure is Kurda, a high cleric of Idris and Teriak's principal advisor. He wears a *chain mail +3* under his robes, a *ring of water walking* on his left hand, and fights with a *flail +1*. His purse holds 2-20 gp and a black dragon token (value 35 sp). (If Kurda has been captured or killed by the party earlier, delete him from the encounter.)

Gevren: AC 1; F7; hp 47; #AT 1; D 2-9; (MV 90' (30')); Save F7; ML 10; AL N; St 17, In 16, Wi 14, Dx 15, Co 13, Ch 13

Kurda: AC 2; C7; hp 49; #AT 1 or spells; D 3-6; MV 90' (30'); Save C7; ML 8; AL C; St 13, In 15, Wi 17, Dx 12, Co 16, Ch 15;

ALLONRIK (6th level fighter)

Str 16 **Int** 13 **Wis** 14 **THACO** 17
Dex 14 **Con** 15 **Cha** 11 **AL** L

AC 0
hp 50

Equipment: sword +2, dagger, spear, plate mail +1, large shield +1, great helm, potion of heroism, scroll of protection vs. wraiths, 35 gp.



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KAVIEN (7th level thief)

Str 13 **Int** 14 **Wis** 12 **THACO** 17
Dex 17 **Con** 15 **Cha** 15 **AL** N

AC 5
hp 28

Equipment: sword, dagger +2, leather armor, ring of invisibility, potion of levitation, golden medallion (value 50 gp), 10 cp



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MIRIDOR (6th level elf)

Str 14 **Int** 15 **Wis** 14 **THACO** 17
Dex 16 **Con** 14 **Cha** 16 **AL** L

AC 2
hp 35

Spell Book

Level 1: charm person, detect magic, light, read magic, ventriloquism

Level 2: detect evil, knock, web, wizard lock

Level 3: clairvoyance, haste, water breathing.

Equipment: sword, bow +1, 20 arrows, 6 arrows +2, silver dagger, chain mail, small shield, helm, elven boots, 45 gp.



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RENIA (7th level fighter)

Str 17 **Int** 12 **Wis** 13 **THACO** 15
Dex 12 **Con** 16 **Cha** 14 **AL** N

AC 3
hp 55

Equipment: two-handed sword +1, spear, hand axe, chain mail +2, great helm, rope of climbing, scarab of protection, 25 gp



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Background: After a daring but nevertheless failed robbery attempt upon the imperial palace of Thincol the Brave, Emperor of Thyatis, Kavien has been recently pulled out of the Thyatian jails. The imperial bailiff has *strongly* suggested that Kavien succeed at any mission Lord Gylharen of Wendar may demand of him, until he is officially dismissed. Only at this time will Kavien regain his legal freedom and a pardon for his crime from the Thyatian government. The Bailiff mentioned that if he received a note from Lord Gylharen that the mission failed, or that Kavien did not show up, then a powerful and magical curse would surely consume the thief's heart causing a slow and utterly painful death.

Kavien stole the golden medallion in the palace just before leaving, as a small revenge for his current situation. It bears the symbol of a kingfisher. Kavien will never reveal he has stolen the medallion, for obvious reasons.

Player's Notes: _____

Background: Renia is a loner by nature. Orphaned as a child, she has struggled and made her own way for many years. She despises soldiers in general. She has suffered too many times from arbitrary injustices during her childhood and she is eager to defend her freedom and status as a great warrior.

She wears a golden ring inscribed with the emblem of a kingfisher, a token she takes to be her family insignia. Although she never discloses her secret quest, she is ever vigilant for a sign or clue to the whereabouts of her kin. Renia has some affection for Sergeant Burrows whom she treats as a child, essentially because of his size and the fact she has been lonely herself during her youth.

Player's Notes: _____

Background. This human fighter hails from the northeastern mountain country. Fearless and fierce in battle, Allonrik comes from a tribe of barbarian warriors. He served for a time in a professional army where he learned civilized fighting arts. He dislikes to be reminded of his barbarian roots. His goals are fame, fortune and ultimately the title of Baron, which he hopes to gain in Thyatis as a "champion for hire".

Allonrik does not like spell-casters in general, but he will make an exception for Mirva the cleric. He finds her truly charming. He dislikes Renia's arrogant attitude and sees her as an aggressive rival. Allonrik sympathizes with Sergeant Burrows, a brave warrior, and with the dwarf for his sincerity and spontaneity.

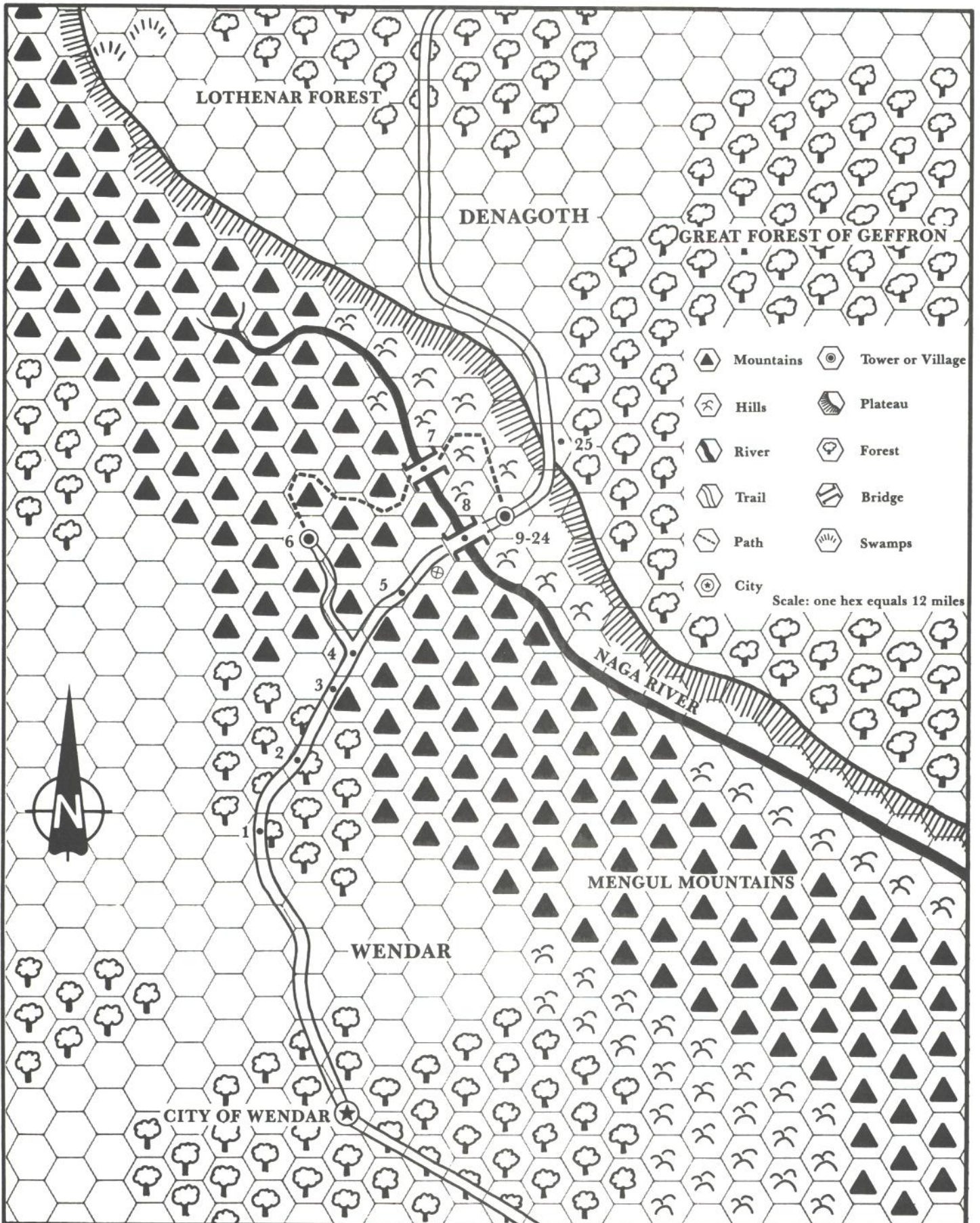
Player's Notes: _____

Background: Miridor Feadiel is the nephew of a clan leader in Alheim. Because of constant bickering and rivalry with his cousins, he decided to leave and seek glory and fortune to prove his value to his clan. Dignified, and at times quite arrogant, this elf however does possess excellent judgement tempered with compassion. He usually is perfectly at ease in a court environment, or within the presence of a monarch. This fellow naturally thinks he is the obvious choice for group leader.

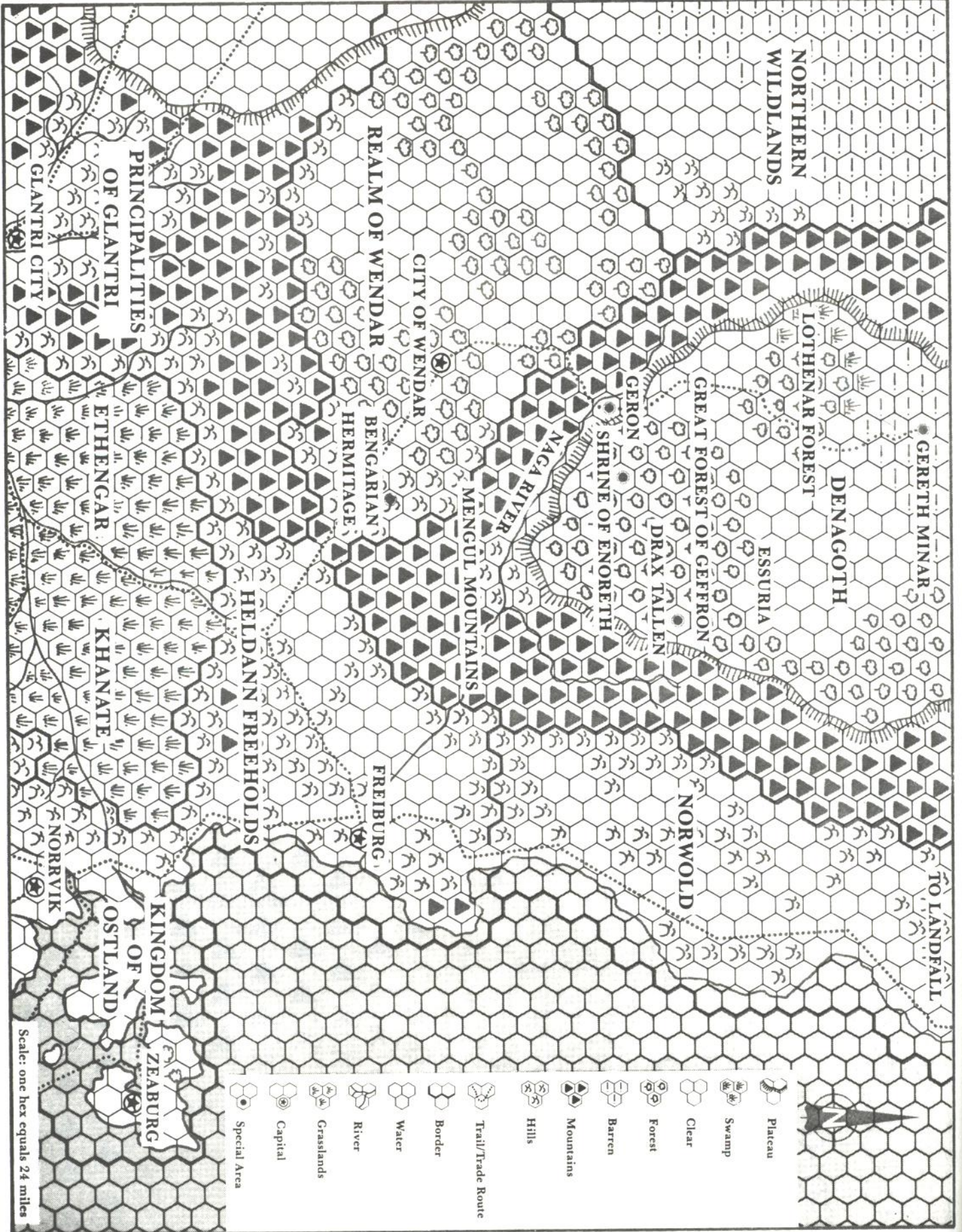
Miridor has also been commissioned by the Bailiff of Thyatis to ensure all PCs will accomplish the mission without treachery and later report on his fellows' attitude during the mission, for which he has received 25 pp (and will receive another 25 pp later). Miridor will be quiet about this minor detail.

Player's Notes: _____

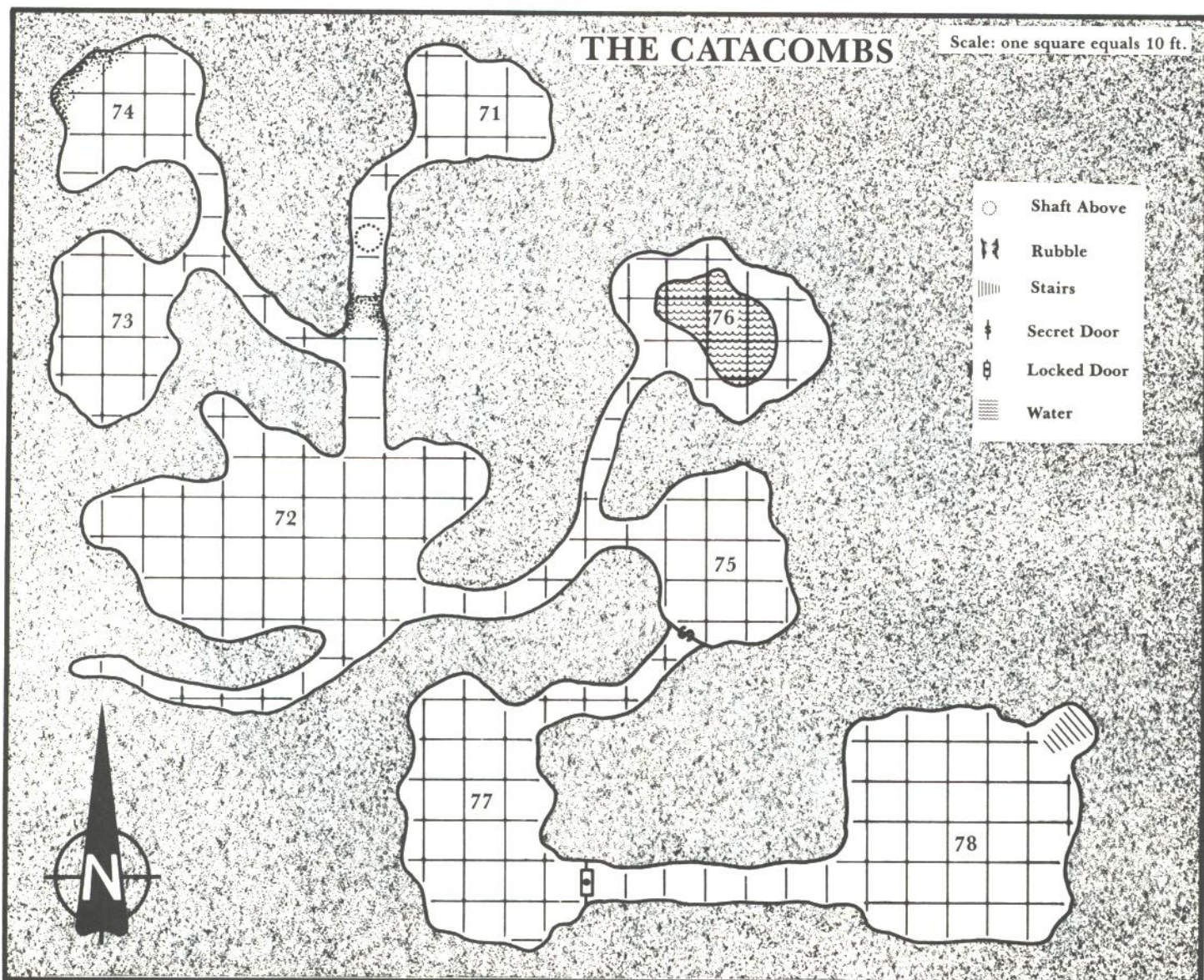
MAP VI TRAIL TO DENAGOTH



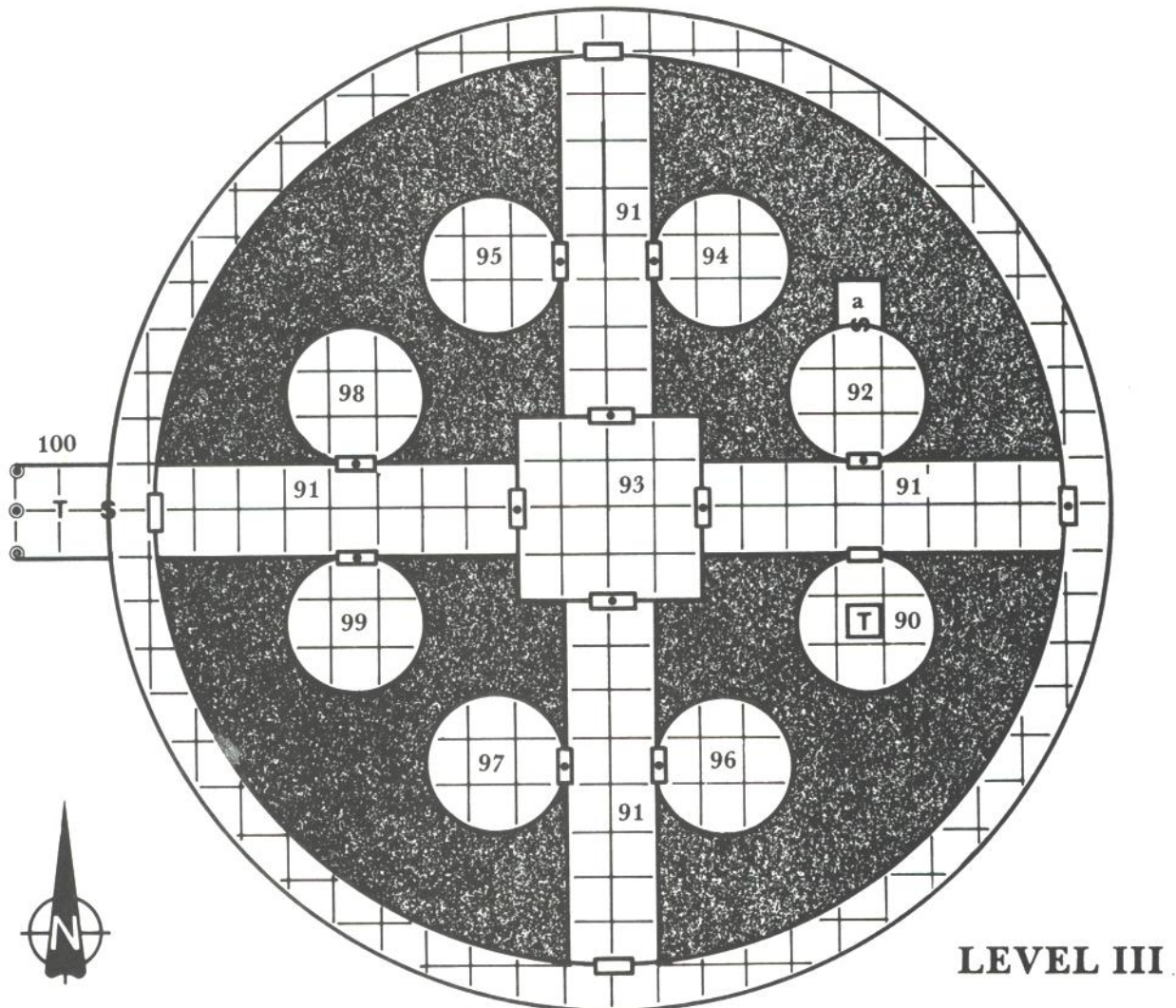
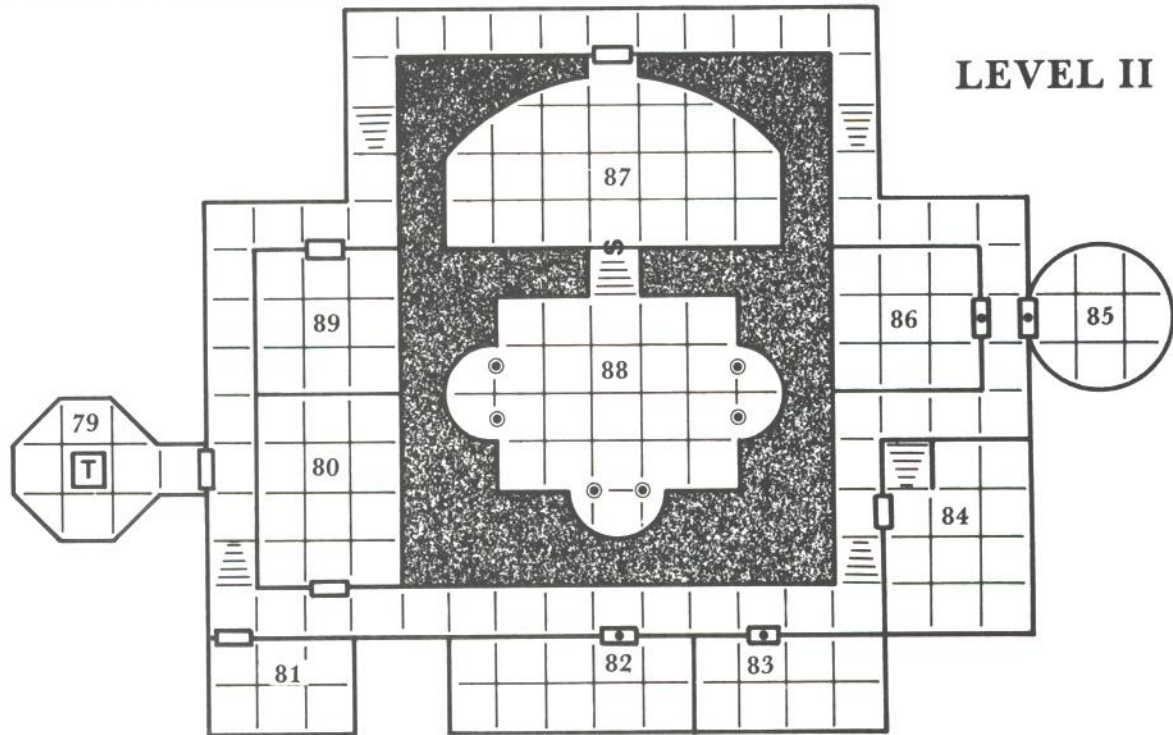
MAP VII CONTINENTAL OVERVIEW OF WENDAR AND DENAGOTH



MAP VIII DRAX TALLEN LEVEL I



MAP IX DRAX TALLEN LEVEL II & III



MIRVA (6th level cleric)

Str 15 **Int** 12 **Wis** 17 **THACO** 17
Dex 14 **Con** 15 **Cha** 17 **AL** L

AC 2
hp 30

Equipment: *mace +2*, *chain mail +2*, large shield, gold plated hammer, leather helm, *potion of animal control*, *staff of withering*, 60 gp

Spells: 2 First Level, 2 Second Level, 1 Third Level.



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RANNULF (7th level magic-user)

Str 12 **Int** 17 **Wis** 13 **THACO** 15
Dex 16 **Con** 14 **Cha** 14 **AL** L

AC 4
hp 21

Equipment: silver dagger, *staff of striking*, *ring of protection +3*, *potion of healing*, *displacer cloak*, *potion of gaseous form*, 60 gp.

Spell Book

Level 1: *detect magic*, *hold portal*, *light*, *magic missile*, *protection from evil*, *read magic*, *shield*, *sleep*;
Level 2: *detect invisible*, *invisibility*, *knock*, *mirror image*, *wizard lock*;
Level 3: *dispel magic*, *fire ball*, *fly*, *haste*, *protection from normal missiles*;
Level 4: *dimension door*, *massmorph*, *remove curse*, *wizard eye*



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DREAGO (6th level dwarf)

Str 17 **Int** 12 **Wis** 14 **THACO** 17
Dex 11 **Con** 18 **Cha** 10 **AL** L

AC 4
hp 52

Equipment: *war hammer +1*, dagger, crossbow, 20 quarrels, 6 *quarrels +1*, chain mail armor, silver plated horns on helm, *small shield +1*, *ring of fire resistance*, 100 gp in gems, 5 pp, 15 gp, 20 sp



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SERGEANT BURROWS (7th level halfling)

Str 14 **Int** 12 **Wis** 13 **THACO** 17
Dex 16 **Con** 17 **Cha** 14 **AL** L

AC 1
hp 42

Equipment: *short sword +1*, *+3 vs. dragons*, dagger, sling, chain mail armor, *shield +2*, leather helm, *bag of holding* with tea service for eight people, *horn of blasting*, 20 sp.



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Background: Rannulf is a secretive fellow who rarely discusses his vocation. He is highly suspicious of clerics and he has no time for thieves, dwarves and brutish fighters. Despite Renia's status and secrecy, he has unveiled her quest to find her lost kin, and regards it as a deed of honor. He will discreetly oppose he who would mock and insult her goals. Out of respect for Renia's feelings, he will remain quiet about his knowledge of her, and about his opinions.

He also harbors a secret admiration for elves, however, and is fascinated by their close relation to magicks. Rannulf is eager for this quest because he has been told by a seer in Thyatis that his quest would unveil a powerful elven artifact and arcane secrets galore. He will often support the elf in decision-making.

Player's Notes: _____

Background: She is a distant relation of Lord Henadin, a great warrior of the Northern Wildlands. She has not heard of her far cousin for years, but eventually would enjoy meeting him again. She has been sent by her order to offer her help to a lord in the north, in a realm bordering the Northern Wildlands. Since she has met Rannulf, she finds the discreet man fascinating and would enjoy unveiling his personal feelings.

Mirva is a highly motivated representative of her order. Wise in the ways of clerical magic, this gifted cleric is devoted to the cause of subduing chaos and restoring virtue to the world. She has been told that the oracle of the temple, in his divine wisdom, has declared her best suited for this expedition. This decision has caused some jealousy among patriarchs, so Mirva is eager to prove her worthy of the oracle's claims.

Player's Notes: _____

Background: Sergeant Burrows has just finished his time in the Thyatian army. After many successful years in the Imperial Engineers Cohort, Sergeant Burrows decided to leave and seek fortune as a civilian. Perhaps he hopes to establish himself as an expert in mining. He still retains the sympathy of his old army commander in Thyatis, who told him about an expedition to the north.

Sergeant Burrows is a very disciplined warrior when it comes to combat. Before starting a battle, he will often roll his moustache thinking of the best plan to defeat the enemy. His plans so far are usually based on the "blasting" of the enemy. Sergeant Burrows is a staunch supporter of Dreago the dwarf, a fine fellow warrior.

Player's Notes: _____

Background: This dwarf is typically suspicious of the elf in the party and resents his constant arrogant attitude. He will do a good deal of grumbling when it comes time for the group to enter any forests.

He hails from the well known dwarven land of Rock Home. He claims to be the uncle of an important clan leader in that region. Dreago is typical of his people, rough, gruff, disagreeable at times, but always ready for a fight. The dwarf loves spending time in the taverns and starting brawls at the worst moments. Eager to avoid potential diplomatic difficulties with Rockhome (and rid Thyatis of his presence), the Thyatian bailiff has given the dwarf 100 gp in gems, as an advance payment for completing a mission in the north—which Dreago has spontaneously accepted.

Player's Notes: _____

Spells

Level 1: *cause light wounds**, *darkness**, *cause fear**

Level 2: *bestow curse**, *snake charm*

Level 3: *speak with the dead**, *striking*

False Description

The stairs open onto a vast, gloomy, torchlit hall 110' square and 30' high. In the center, a black dragon beats its wings and glares evilly at you.

Next to the dragon, on the dragon's left, is a 30' black sphere—a *darkness* spell. There is a 30' gap between the southernmost edge of the *darkness* sphere and the south wall itself.

Nothing else can be seen. The hall is bare and cold. You are alone with the dragon.

The illusion makes Level 3 seem to have the same size and shape as the indoor part of Level 2, but as one vast room, rather than the several rooms of Level 2. The dragon illusion is actually standing in the square marked "51"; it seems to be standing in the same position as the square marked "46" on Level 2. The PCs are standing in the square marked with the trapdoor; they seem to be standing in the same position as the stairs in room 50.

All the evil characters are actually standing in the same positions as given under the True Description, but they are hidden from the PCs sight by the dragon illusion and by the *darkness* spell. The *darkness* is being used to hide the Elvenstar on the south bench.

Run the illusions as though they were real, until the dragon takes damage; then both illusions are dispelled and the PCs can see Level 3 in its true shape. The *darkness* spell is not an illusion and will not be dispelled when the illusions are.

Remember to apply effects of the black dragon *curse* (-2 on Hit Rolls and saving throws) for any character affected by the trap in the Temple of Idris (area #22d) for as long as the dragon illusion lasts.

Evil Tactics. Gevren will attempt to block physical attacks directed at the Shadow Lord. Pyrokloris will help him in this. Kurda will cast a *striking* and a *cause fear** spell after positioning himself between the party and the *Elvenstar*. He will cast a *darkness** on the star (if it is not already cast before the PCs arrive).

As long as Landryn Teriak remains out of

reach of the party's physical attacks, he will use his *staff of power* and remaining spells against the PCs. He will first cast a *hold person**, and then use the *telekinesis* ability of the staff to hinder spell-casters. He will only use *fire balls* or *lightning bolts* if he is sure not to wound any his own followers.

If the PCs Capture Elvenstar. If a PC of Lawful alignment can take the Elvenstar, the party will gain several advantages in the combat:

1. The person holding the Elvenstar can heal two injured PCs, even to the point of resurrecting dead PCs. The affected PCs are then brought back to their full original hit points, ready to fight again. The star will only function like this once (maximum of two characters) and it must be handled by a PC of Lawful alignment.
2. Any illusions cast by the Shadow Lord or his henchmen in this room are immediately dispelled.
3. The Shadow Lord's henchmen and pet must each make an immediate Morale Check; they flee if they fail. If they succeed, their Morale Levels for future checks are reduced by 2.
4. Any PCs affected by the "dragonfear" curse from area #22d are immediately cured of this fear.
5. The *cloudkill* effect about the tower will be dispelled immediately.

The Shadow Lord's Escape. It is important for the adventure that the Shadow Lord survives this encounter and escapes if defeated.

If the Shadow Lord is in danger of being captured or killed, he will use a *wish* spell to teleport him from Gereth Minar to a place of safety in the in the Great Forest of Geffron (see Adventure Two). Regardless of the outcome of this encounter, Landryn Teriak will abandon Gereth Minar and move to Essuria, the eastern region of Denagoth, since he believes his older headquarters of Gereth Minar is not safe enough.

Workbench Contents. All benches are covered by bottles of chemicals, bowls, and mixing equipment. These were used in futile attempts to find a cure for the Shadow Lord's affliction. The east and north benches also have important treasures of their own.

On the east bench, a small chest holds a scrying crystal that can be used to observe the areas containing spying devices. The crystal works only in Gereth Minar.

A locked chest rests in the middle of the

north bench. Inside are 3,098 gp, 6,198 sp and 5,376 ep. Under the chest, in the bench itself, is a well-concealed hollow-space beneath a square foot of the bench surface. Pushing down on the panel will cause the section to pop-up on hinges. Here lies a small silver-inlaid box (200 sp value). Inside the box is a crown of gold and rubies, worth 1,700 gp.

The west bench contains only the laboratory equipment. The only treasure on the south bench is the Elvenstar itself.

Epilogue

If the PCs Are Defeated. Captured PCs will be locked up in the dungeon cells, and their equipment stored in room #31. Allow the party a reasonable chance of escaping, or have Sean the Trapper (the spy in Geron) sneak into the tower and free the PCs. He will say that he felt bad about not helping the party more.

If the PCs Are Victorious. The armies and minions of the Shadow Lord will disperse, ending the military threat to Wendar. A grateful Wizard-King will offer each member of the group the title of baron or baroness and a dominion covering 2-3 hexes each (on Map VII), in the plains and forests bordering the Northern Wildlands. (Use the D&D® Companion Set to deal with all details concerning dominions). The king will also pay the reward promised by the Thyatian agent.

Failure to Recover the Elvenstar. Without the star Wendar will fall to the invaders. Gylharen will meet the members of the party, and ask them to prepare a second expedition for the recovery of the star. The Wizard-King will remain in Wendar and try to hold out as long as possible. Even if the realm is occupied by hostile armies, the situation is not hopeless if the Shadow Lord is defeated. Proceed to Part Two of this adventure.

ADVENTURE TWO—INTRODUCTION

History of Landryn Teriak

Landryn Teriak first came to Denagoth thirty years before the time of this adventure. Vanquished and overthrown in his own realm to the east, Landryn Teriak fled across the Plains of Avien in a race for his life, for close on the evil magic-user's heels was a gold dragon that had played an important part in the evil one's defeat.

At last the dragon swooped down on the magic-user and burned him down in a terrible blast of fire. For two days the body of the evil one lay under the sun, a charred and blackened corpse. But the fates are capricious at times and so it was that a passing pilgrim, a cleric, chanced upon the remains. In his compassion the cleric cast a *raise dead* spell upon the corpse, assuming that the deceased had been the victim of an evil dragon.

The magic-user's user's soul and personality were restored but the body was beyond repair. Treacherously, Landryn Teriak used a *magic jar* spell to seize possession of the cleric's body. The cleric, now trapped within an enfeebled shell of a body, could not protect himself and was killed by Teriak's spells. Picking up the scarred remains of his old form, the evil one continued his journey west.

Upon entering Denagoth, Landryn Teriak found that he liked the primitive and barbaric country, a land ripe for the taking. Here in Denagoth he could make a new beginning. Before many years passed he established another kingdom of evil.

Things went well for Teriak except in one respect. To his horror the magic-user discovered that his new body was slowly degenerating. He tried everything to restore the deteriorating flesh but no spell or potion worked to forestall or reverse the corruption of his body. The power that had raised him was then a divine curse upon him.

Landryn Teriak in Adventure Two

Landryn Teriak has returned to his homeland, to the bastion of evil called Drax Tallen. From his tower of Gereth Minar, the Shadow Lord has fled to Essuria and the darkness of his old capital.

After using his *wish* to escape from Gereth Minar, Teriak found that the deterioration of his body was increasing rapidly. Too late, he realized that the dark powers from which he obtained the spell had warped the effects of the teleportation, and despite his elaborated medications, his body was weakening rapidly.

Soon after reaching Drax Tallen, Landryn Teriak paid the final price for his evil deeds, lapsing into a horrid undead condition. Now Teriak has fully embraced the darkness so akin to his soul as he roams about the shadowy halls of Drax Tallen in a new and even more terrible form—the Wraith Lord (see Appendix Section).

Landryn Teriak, however, has not returned to Drax Tallen merely to remain a shadow of his own glory—in this monstrous inhuman guise the evil one pursues a new stratagem of conquest. The Wraith Lord seeks dominion over the realms of the undead so that he might raise a legion of unliving minions to do his bidding.

To this end the Wraith Lord requires an ancient artifact, a magical rod of untold power. The Blackstick, a *rod of undead rulership* (see Appendix Section at the end of the booklet), has been lost for ages and its existence has passed from the memory of most men. But Teriak knows that it still exists and his lust for its power forms the premise of this adventure.

The Wraith Lord begins his search for the Blackstick with Bensarian, the Sage of Wendar. At the outset his servants lay siege to the sage's hermitage in the Hills of Kevar.

Landryn Teriak, the Wraith Lord: AC 2; HD 10; hp 80; #AT 1 touch (Energy Drain) or spell; D 2-12; MV 120' (90'); Save as MU 10; ML 12; AL C; St 17, In 18, Wi 14, Dx 15, Cn Not applicable, Ch Not applicable

Special Abilities: Immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, cold-based and mind related spells. The touch of the Wraith Lord causes 2-12 points of cold damage and the loss of one level of experience. The Wraith Lord can cast spells as a 10th level magic-user.

Spell Books and Memorized Spells: Bold-faced spells are those Teriak memorized. The other spells are available in his spell book, if the Wraith Lord has a chance to study new spells overnight.

Level 1: *charm person*, *floating disc*, *hold portal*, *light**, *magic missile*, *read magic*, *sleep*

Level 2: *continual light**, *ESP**, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *phantasmal force*, *web*, *wizard lock*

Level 3: *clairvoyance*, *dispel magic*, *fire ball*, *fly*, *lightning bolt*, *hold person**, *protection from normal missiles*, *water breathing*

Level 4: *charm monster*, *dimension door*, *hallucinatory terrain*, *polymorph others*,

polymorph self, *remove curse**, *wall of fire*, *wizard eye*

Level 5: *animate dead*, *cloudkill*, *hold monster**, *magic jar*, *teleport*

If the Elvenstar is still in Teriak's possession at the beginning of Adventure Two, he will be unable to use it in any way against the PCs. The Elvenstar's magic is linked to the preservation of life, and the gem had value to Teriak only so long as he had a living human form. Now that he has become an undead creature, the Elvenstar is useless to him. Its magic can still be used by the PCs, if they obtain it.

More information is available on the Wraith Lord in the Appendix Section.

Beginning Adventure Two

The circumstances under which this part of the adventure open depend upon whether or not the PCs have recovered the Elvenstar (see the Epilogue of the previous chapter). Regardless of whether or not the PCs have succeeded, King Gylharen will request that the PCs continue the fight against Landryn Teriak. (Teriak's destruction will be even more important if the PCs did not recover Elvenstar, for the evil armies will overrun Wendar.

The party will have to seek out the place where the dark one may have taken refuge. King Gylharen suspects Landryn Teriak's abode to be in Essuria.

Particularly if the PCs have not managed to recover *Elvenstar*, the party must try to find it again, and finally defeat the dark one in order to permanently disband his hordes. Adventure Two starts with the party meeting Lord Gylharen.

Chapter Five: TO THE KEVAR HILLS

Encounter Setting

Before before the party's departure for their second mission in Denagoth, King Gylharen will summon the party once again. Read the following boxed text.

My friends, I have requested your presence here because I would ask you to take up an investigation on my behalf...

You may know of the Hills of Kevlar to the east of here. They form our eastern boundary but these hills are also the home of Wendar's great sage, Bensarian. The sage lives alone in complete seclusion, rarely receiving visitors from the lowlands.

For the last five nights out scouts to the east have seen strange, unearthly lights in the vicinity of the sage's hermitage. These lights have been likened to exploding bolts of lightning and yet we are in a stormless season.

I fear for the safety of our great sage and I ask that you go forth to the Hills of Kevlar to investigate his condition. I know that you have served Wendar before, and bravely so. But I am persuaded that only you can undertake this mission. Already I fear the worst in this business. If you seek out the sage I will be once more greatly in your debt.

The PCs may make use of as many as 10 war horses, provisions and any non-magical weapons from the Wendarian arsenal. They will also be given a small cage with two carrier pigeons, each equipped with a message-holding clasp about the leg (the birds fly back to Gylharen).

The party should have little difficulty in locating the track leading up into the hills and further to the sage's cave. If necessary, a guide will point out on the players' map where the hermitage should be.

When the party reaches the hill country, check once per night and once per day for events/encounters on the fourth column of Random Encounters Chart. A score of 80% or more indicates that no encounter occurs at that time.

Encounter Key

52. Hermitage of Bensarian

You have been following the narrow track through the Kevlar Hills for several days. The incline has brought you a few thousand feet above the lowlands further west.

As you ride into higher country the forest presses in on the track.

At length you come to a small level steppe above the Wendarian plain. Straight ahead, fifty feet from the apparent end of the track, is the mouth of a cave set against the hillside. This opening is about six feet high and five feet wide, and closed by a sturdy-looking portcullis which has been built right into the rock.

Upon closer inspection it is evident that the portcullis is barred from within by two padlocked sliding bolts. Although still holding up, the portcullis has sustained some damage from an obvious bashing. A number of very large, claw-like impressions are evident in the disturbed earth in front of the cave.

The damage to the portcullis and the claw prints on the ground have been caused by two wyverns. These creatures have been sent by the Wraith Lord to dispose of Bensarian. They have been conducting nightly raids on his hermitage. The sage has been combatting their attacks with *phantasmal force* spells cast from behind the cover of the portcullis. Light-fearing and somewhat stupid, the wyverns have become quite disoriented by the visual effects. This, combined with a few *magic missile* spells, has been sufficient to ward off their attacks for now. The effects of the spells have been seen by Wendarian scouts further west.

The characters may summon Bensarian by name, to which an old man's voice will shout from inside the cavern, "What's the price of gray breeches?" If the party answers "Not much, unless the trim is gold!" the sage will come up to the entrance. If the party, for any reason, is unable to answer correctly, a reasonable explanation of their purposes and identities as agents of Wendar will suffice. The sage will emerge from a door 50 feet behind the portcullis at the end of the cave passage.

Beyond this door is Bensarian's 40' by 40' cave. The dwelling consists of a large firepit in the center, a table with two chairs, a single bed, an alchemist's workbench area and two large chests. The workbench holds pestles & mortars, scales, funnels, potion bottles, small burners and assorted jars. Numerous shelves on the cave walls hold books, icons, collectables, foodstuffs and pots.

After amiable introductions Bensarian will usher the party into his cave after securely bolting the portcullis and the inner door. He will offer the characters food and wine, while

bidding them to make themselves comfortable. The horses may be safely housed in the cave passage. If it is late in the day the sage will lock the portcullis and begin his address to the party. Otherwise, he will wait until day's end to speak to them, apparently in a state of deep meditation.

Well my friends, your coming is timely indeed! For many nights now I have been under siege from two winged creatures—they are wyverns I believe. Rarely do such beasts show such singleness of purpose. They are, I fear, servants of a far greater foe, a demonic enemy who dwells far to the north. Some of you may know of the evil one. He, or it, is called by the name of Shadow Lord, an evil mage who was lately ascendant in the dark land of Denagoth. Only one such as he could command the winged horrors....

I am well acquainted with the arts of divination. I have seen his evil written in the stars.

Years ago the Shadow Lord had another name, though his spirit has always been evil. In his youth, the Shadow Lord was called Landryn Teriak and he was a prince of Essuria, the younger brother of King Vespen. For generations the house of Teriak had ruled the ancient kingdom with not a little virtue and wisdom.

By Vespen's time, the realm was in decline. Vespen was a warrior of some bravery, but he lacked other qualities a king must have. Prince Landryn, with some reason, thought that he was better suited for rulership. Prince Landryn, a magic-user by vocation, hated and envied his brother, but so cunning was Landryn that none suspected him until he struck.

The unthinkable occurred—the king died. Officially it was described as sudden illness but many suspected foul play. Nonetheless, Landryn took his brother's place as king. Once Landryn was on the throne, many felt it wiser to keep silent, not voicing their many dark suspicions.

King Landryn established his seat of power at Drax Tallen, the ancient Essurian capital to the east of the Great Forest of Geffron. Teriak sustained his dark regime through an insidious combination of black magicks and blatant terror. Essuria passed through a time of darkness such as few realms had ever known before. Landryn thought that such ruthless terror would make his realm both respected and feared by all who knew of it.

Chapter Five: TO THE KEVAR HILLS



Never was greater folly conceived.

Essuria's reputation grew so foul that a great barbarian clan marched on Drax Tallen. A strong and virtuous warrior, Henadin, led these forces in a crusade to smash the evil one. Two gold dragons accompanied Henadin and his warriors in their westward march.

From without and within Drax Tallen the battle raged until both sides had sustained shocking losses. Henadin himself perished in the conflict just before the tide of war turned in favor of the virtuous. With defeat and death imminent, Landryn Teriak fled.

The evil one had almost made good his escape until the last gold dragon overtook him and burned him down in a blast of deadly fire. Yet somehow the evil one returned to the world of men through some stratagem that I cannot know. These things are in shadows too dark to decipher...

I fear that the dark king has returned to his original seat of evil. But in what form I cannot tell...

Bensarian's narrative will be suddenly interrupted by a hideous cry and a loud crashing

sound from without the cave. Over the nervous neighing of the horses in the passage the player characters will hear a terrible, crackling voice:

"Come forth Bensarian! Do you not know when you are summoned! Come! Show yourself, old man and look upon the like of me!"

At this, the sage will leave the cave and walk down the passage to the closed portcullis. The hideous voice will speak again:

"Oh yes, here you are, venerable sage of Wendar. Mark me well, elf-blood—I have come for that which was lost long ago. You know it well so wait upon my words. Come Bensarian, give me your answer."

The bearer of this demand is a wight in the company of two wyverns. The wight is riding one of the winged creatures.

The wight and the wyverns will tarry for a few moments, waiting for Bensarian's answer. The sage, of course, will command them to be off. Thereafter, the dark creatures will attack by bashing the portcullis. The iron gate will sustain 80 hit points of structural

damage before giving way. Bensarian, although quite old and frail, will beg the party for help.

Bensarian (AC 8; MU 3; hp 10; #AT 1 or spell; D 1-4 dagger; MV 60'(20'); Save as MU 3; ML 11; AL L; St 7, In 17, Wi 18, Dx 15, Co 11, Ch 16

In this melee Bensarian will use two *magic missiles* and a *phantasmal force* spell to keep the creature at bay.

After the battle with the creatures, Bensarian will resume his narrative within the safe confines of the cave:

Well fought, and well-won, my friends! I had not seen the foul creature who rode the wyverns before now. I believe that the enemy is growing desperate if he sends one of his servants to personally lead the evil beasts. As you have witnessed, it is not simply my death that the evil one requires. His creatures seek a singular rod, a thing of great power that was forged many years ago when magic was but an infant art. This dark thing is *Blackstick*, although in ages past I deem it has had other names.

Sages have known of the rod for countless years although in these latter times its existence has been passing from memory.

The Blackstick has the power to resurrect the undead. It may also slay the undead upon command. But even more than this, the dark artifact may function as a *rod of undead rulership* in the hands of one who can wield it for the purpose of ultimate chaos.

After tonight's episode it is clear that we must first secure the *Blackstick* before assailing the Shadow Lord. Even now he would have the thing if he knew where it was. The fact that his minions lay siege to my hermitage bodes well for now.

Blackstick lies in the great Forest of Geffron to the northeast of here. I know this because I delivered the dark thing into the hands of the elves at their shrine in the great wood. I never dared to keep the rod here for fear of such a day as this.

You must journey to Geffron and secure the rod from the elves. None but a magic user, cleric or an elf may hold it. To bring the undead back to life, hold the thing with a true aim and speak the incantation *vifica*. I do not know the incantation for destroying the undead. But know this: expect no mercy at the hands of an undead creature returned to living flesh. With resurrection, the flesh alone is restored, not the good will in the soul of such a one, if any existed.

Once the thing is in your possession I urge you not to hold the rod overmuch lest you attract the original darkness that empowered it. If you elect to destroy the rod cleave it in two pieces with a dweomered sword wielded by a true hand. But I fear you must keep the Blackstick as a sure weapon against the Shadow Lord, divining if you can the incantation for slaying the undead.

To find the elfhome in Geffron is not an easy task for it lies deep within the forest. I will give you my hawk, Vensul, to lead you through the wood. The bird will guide you to your destination and by its presence the elves will know your quest is true. If you have the ability to speak with animals you may communicate with Vensul for it is wise for one of its species.

I must advise caution, for I believe that many evil creatures now inhabit the western reaches of the great forest. Indeed, I have heard that the elves of Geffron are hard-pressed in these latter days. I know

not of their actual condition for my scrying powers cannot penetrate the veil of the wood elves. Happily, the same is true for the evil one's arts or else we would already know disaster.

And so my friend, your quest is now two-fold: to recover the rod from the sacred woods and then make your way east to Drax Tallen and lay wast to this Dark Lord who will not perish!

Bensarian will provide the characters with a number of useful items for their quest: a *potion of extra-healing* and a *Book of Essurian Runes*. The sage will explain that this latter item will be useful in deciphering the ancient writing of the Essurians. Show the outer cover of the folder to the players if you haven't done so yet. Bensarian will also remind the party of the carrier pigeons—he will suggest that they simply send a message to Gylharen stating that all is well with the sage.

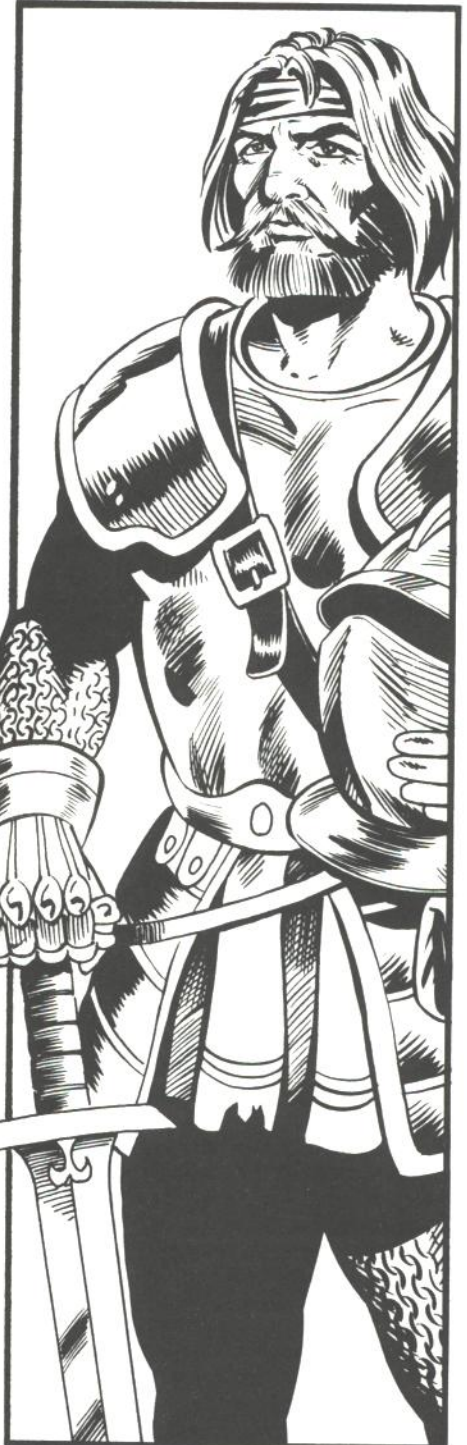
Finally, Bensarian will introduce the hawk, Vensul. This creature will lead the party from the hermitage to the Shrine of Enoreth in Geffron. The DM may wish to randomly select one PC with whom the bird shows an affinity i.e. the bird will always land on this individual's backpack.

In the unlikely event that the characters elect to search the sage's cave, the following items are present: one chest contains Bensarian's spellbook (*charm person, floating disc, light*, magic missile, read languages, read magic; phantasmal force, wizard lock*), and a book on alchemy, useful only to sages. The other chest holds two cloaks typical of clerical garb and a magic user's robe with the following spell scrolls tucked into inner pockets: *conjure elemental, ice storm*.

Needless to say, Bensarian will not look kindly upon anyone who attempts to steal from him. The sage wears a *medallion of ESP* 30'* and will certainly know if a thief has been at work. The sage will confront such a thief in an unobtrusive fashion at first. If the PC fails to own-up and return the goods, Bensarian will appeal to others for support, or if possible, wait for the next day and cast a *charm person* on the culprit. The DM may arrange for the sage to act in a more strident manner, like sending a message of protest to Lord Gylharen and Thyatis.

If the PCs find Denolas' Diary (area #26, Lothenar Forest) and give it to the sage, he will be delighted and quite touched. Bensarian is a unique individual, a sage of men and elves and well acquainted with the cultures

and histories of many peoples. (The wight referred to him as "elf-blood" in this encounter, despite the fact that the old man appears to be human. Such ambiguity marks well the reputation of the great sage.)



Chapter Six: THE GREAT FOREST OF GEFFRON

Encounter Setting

Once the party leaves Geffron, they will enter Denagoth at the pass through the Mengul Mountains, searching for the *Blackstick* and the Wraith Lord. Ignore encounters that have been already played in Chapter One, or modify them to match what happened earlier.

If Denagoth occupies Wendar, the army camp (area #25) will still be there, although it is 50% smaller, and guards will patrol Geron searching for the party.

If Denagoth has been defeated, the camp will be gone. Human troops are neutral and will ignore the PCs unless they attack. Humanoid troops will be reduced to lawless rampaging bands.

Bensarian's bird will lead the PCs to the southwest of the Great Forest of Geffron. No paths are visible from the plain, however, once undercover, a small path will become evident to the PCs (see Map X, page 44).

Once per day, and once per night, check for random encounters. A score of 80% or more on the fifth column of the Random Encounters Chart means nothing happens at that time. Run the encounters below when the party reaches the Great Forest of Geffron. A few optional encounters are described at the end of the chapter for the DM to choose from.

Encounter Key

53. Dawn of the Wolves

From Bensarian's hermitage you have ridden many miles. Since your departure, the hawk, Vensul, has stayed close at hand. At the edge of the wood the bird takes to the air, disappearing into the dark shadows of the trees.

At length, the hawk returns to a tree just ahead. It shrieks and rapidly flaps its wings. Upon investigation, a narrow path is evident at the foot of the tree. The way is narrow and you must ride your horses single file through the dense wood.

The bird disappears from time to time and then suddenly reappears above your heads, screeching softly as if to endorse your forward progress. After a few more hours of riding you come to a clearing in the wood, although leaf and branch still arch above your heads. From the settled cries of the bird it seems the creature favors the spot for a resting place.

As the party camps for the night they will be surrounded by 12 dire wolves. In this situa-

tion there is a 70% chance that the hawk will warn the party 1-6 rounds before the wolves arrive, screeching loudly. The wolves have little fear of humans and will attack boldly.

In the course of melee there is a 30% chance that each of the horses will bolt from the camp (roll for each animal), unless the horses were properly secured (tied to a tree, hobbled, held by a handler, etc.). If a horse bolts, there is only a 50% chance of the mount being recovered.

54. The Gnoll Camp

The trail runs among wooded hills, some of them hundreds of feet high. The trail winds through thick underbrush bristling with thorns and brambles.

At one point, a narrow side trail leads off the main trail, winding up the slope of a hill. The trail is steep and the hill itself is at least 500 feet high. The main trail continues ahead.

You suddenly notice that the hawk is nowhere nearby. Most of the time the hawk has flown high above or far ahead of you, waiting for you when there was a new course to follow. It seems that your guide has disappeared.

If the party chooses to follow the trail up the hill, run encounters 55 and 56 first. If the PCs stay on the main trail, continue with this encounter.

You ride on past the side trail, staying with the main trail. After about four miles, you suddenly see the hawk returning in a frenzy, shrieking harshly.

Some five hundred yards from this point is an encampment of eighteen gnolls in a large clearing (70' by 60'). There are two large pitfires burning, each with a large boar suspended on a turning spit. Around each fire there are groups of hungry gnolls crowding in for the feast. Each gnoll carries a sword and a large bow slung over the shoulder, in addition to 1-20 sp in their filthy pouches.

The characters will have little choice but to fight the gnolls. The underbrush is so thick in this area that outflanking the gnolls would be impractical—the PCs would have to cut through the underbrush with weapons, and the gnolls would certainly hear them. If the PCs attempt to slip through the brush without cutting a path, each character not in metal armor suffers 1 point of damage for each 50 yards he goes through the brush;

each horse taken through the brush suffers 2 points of damage per 50 yards traveled.

55. The Hill of the Shrine

The side trail is narrow but distinct, as if travelers had recently passed. The slope is steep and slippery, treacherous for your horses. A few dozen yards along the trail, you spot the tracks of several travelers. The tracks are unrecognizable, as if someone deliberately tried to erase them.

The tracks were made by gnolls (see encounter #56). If the PCs leave their mounts behind and proceed with caution, they will have a 60% chance of catching the gnolls by surprise. If the PCs take their mounts up the hill, the gnolls have double the normal chance of surprising the party.

If the gnolls surprise the party, they will begin shooting arrows when the PCs are 100 yards away. The gnolls have partial cover (+2 bonus on their Armor Class). The number of arrows the gnolls can fire before the PCs reach the hilltop depends upon how fast the PCs move. To avoid excessive dice-rolling, roll *one* arrow attack against each PC, with a +5 bonus on the Hit Roll. This is the only arrow that counts; all others miss automatically. In this situation, tell the PCs that the gnolls are firing a shower of arrows, most of which are near-misses.

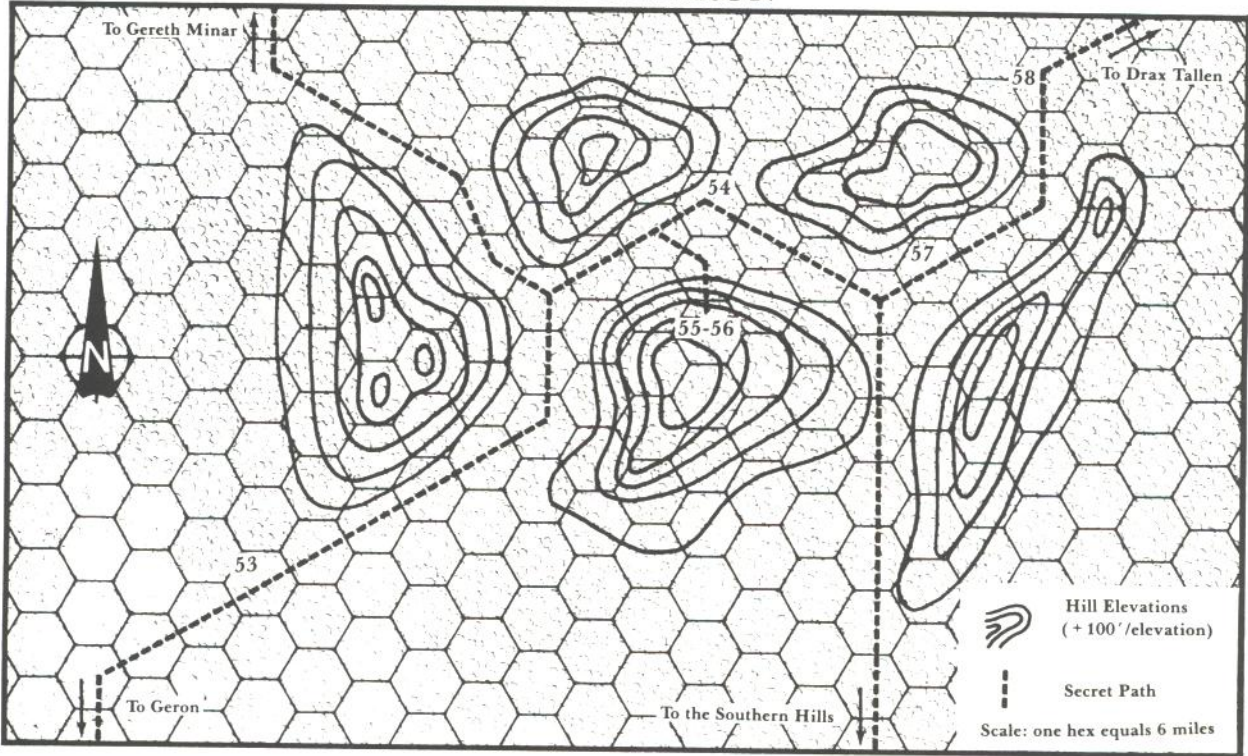
56. The Shrine of Enoreth

If the PCs have to fight their way up the hill, finish the fight before reading the boxed text describing the building. If the PCs made it up the hill unseen, read the boxed text.

Atop the hill is a ramshackle hut crudely built in a haphazard fashion from wood and stone. The hut is 40' square and from its appearance, the structure is recent. A thin wisp of smoke rises from the roof made of branch and mud. At each corner of the hut tower oak trees with immense, overarching branches. These trees and others in the vicinity have been ravaged, evidently to provide the wood for the hut. You can see barbaric gnolls in and around the hut.

The whole area about the hut is patrolled by a dozen gnolls. A gnoll chieftain lives inside the hut, a shaman who goes by the name of Ahooww. This creature attacks as a 3HD monster.

MAP X THE GREAT FOREST OF GEFFRON



Ahooww: AC 5; HD 2; hp 16; #AT 1; D 4-9; MV 90' (30'); Save F3; ML 10; AL C

The shaman carries a *flail* +1, 2-40 gp, a *cure light wounds* potion and a silver medallion studded with emeralds (540 sp value). This medallion is rendered to depict the face of a terrible gnoll-like demon, with the green studs serving as eyes.

In the melee the gnolls will initiate their attack with arrows. However, if they are surprised they will use swords. The chieftain will emerge from the hut within 4 rounds of melee. Read the following boxed text to the players upon visiting the gnoll's hut.

This chamber is dominated by a large stone issuing from the earthen floor near the east wall. The rock is about three feet high and five feet wide; it is carved by an inscription in the elvish language. Atop the stone is a four-foot high alabaster statue of an extremely ugly gnoll. Two shining emeralds form the eyes of the statue. In front of the rock stands a lit brazier, befouling the air with some rank incense. Smoke from the fire rises through a small aperture in the roof above. Against the south, north and west walls,

on either side of the door, are benches. To the south of the stone is a large chest lying on the ground.

The statue's emerald eyes are worth 30 gp each. The statue itself is worthless. The chest holds the chieftain's green robes, a cache of foul-smelling incense, a *sword* +1 (with elaborate inlay of elven workmanship), a quiver with 15 *arrows* +1 (also elven) and a sack with 379 gp.

The rock below the statue is the Stone of Enoreth, the shrine mentioned by Bensarian. Many of the elves have left this part of Geffron to fight orcs in the southeast. The handful of elven shrine-keepers have been massacred by the gnolls who have taken the opportunity to move in—from the north—on the rich elven holdings about the shrine. In their crude fashion the gnolls have sullied the sacred place and built a tasteless temple of their own—they have even had the effrontery to erect a statue on the stone itself!

The shrine contains the *Blackstick*. Any character in the party who speaks the elvish language will understand the inscription on the shrine: the stone marks the fact that the elves are blessed with longevity and that it contains a rod of powerful and dark magic. If

no one in the party speaks elvish, give them a 20% chance of understanding the runes. Otherwise, a *read magic* or *read language* spell will enable them to understand the inscription.

The inscription does not say how the artifact can be removed from the rock. To do so, the PCs must first remove the vile and polluting gnoll statue from the top of the rock. Once the statue is gone the stone will begin to glow with a golden light. Any spoken command for the Blackstick or the shrine to "come forth" or "appear" (or word to that effect) causes a small, beautifully carved mahogany-and-ivory box to rise from the depths of the stone, finally floating on the stone as if in water. The box can easily be removed from the stone. When the box is removed, the rock becomes solid once more, but continues to glow with its pure light. The box itself is worth 50 gp.

Within the box is a 16-inch, jet black rod glowing brightly with a strong magic. The Blackstick has the following powers:

If pointed at any undead creature it will render the subject alive and restored to living flesh if the incantation *vifica* is spoken. The rod has two charges left for this function, and may not be recharged.

Chapter Six: THE GREAT FOREST OF GEFFRON

In the same manner the rod will slay undead creatures, including the Wraith Lord, if the incantation *decima* is uttered by the user. Again, this function has two charges and may not be recharged.

The DM will note that the PC's do not know the incantations for slaying at this time. Any spell caster has an 8% chance per week of study to understand the second function and discover the incantation. This can only be applicable after a full week of study. After the Blackstick is removed from the stone, the stone will become solid and unyielding once more.

57. The Enchanted Wood

This encounter will occur only if the PCs succeed in recovering the Blackstick in encounters 55 and 56. If the PCs fail to do so, ignore this encounter.

After the recovery of the Blackstick the hawk will leave the party after indicating the northeast path that leads on through the wood and Essuria beyond. As the party makes its way they will come at length to an unusual portion of the forest where they will meet with the following:

You have been riding most of the day, following the path north and east. At length, you come to a strange and still portion of the wood. All about you the trees and leaves are shimmering, charged by a wondrous, gold light. Your horses stand uneasy. The air is still and no birds or other forest sounds are heard. The moment seems suspended in time.

Suddenly you hear the faint strains of a lute. The music engulfs you, flowing and swelling all about the trees. In the midst of the music a fair voice rises, clear and haunting:

*From Genalleth to Geffronell outriding
came the fair,
From Kevareth to Greatwood in search of
Landryn's bane,
The wolf was on the prowl and the fire was
in the air,
But still they rode with blazing hearts in
praise of Geffron's name...
Came they to slay the gnoll chief with
blades of flashing light,
To free the sylvan wood once more and
bring an end to night.
And ere the demon image fell the dark folk
tasted death.*

For on the hill fair stood the brave by the
Stone of Enoreth.

As the voice and music fades the
wood returns to normal and the golden
light recedes into the shadows about
the path.

A careful perusal of the area will reveal a leather pouch hanging from a tree overhead. This packet contains a potion of *healing* and a potion of *longevity*. Any elf in the group will recognize the elvish accent of the voice, but the PCs will not be able to catch the singer or find any trace of the singer's presence.

This tribute has been the player characters' reward for liberating the shrine. If there are no elves in the party then the PCs may muse on this encounter as they may. Genalleth is the elven name for Wendar.

58. The Bugbear Camp

This bugbear camp is located about 20 miles east of the fork of the main Geffron track. This group has assembled here because they are waiting to rendezvous with another troop of bugbears coming up from the south. Under the direction of their chieftain, Hega the Bear, they have been mobilized to conduct a sortie to the Shrine of Enoreth on behalf of the Wraith Lord. Their job is to eliminate the elves so that a proper search of the shrine area may be undertaken by the Wraith Lord's more subtle servants.

At this time the bugbears are not aware of the gnoll activities about the shrine — the gnolls have been acting independently and have no allegiance to the Wraith Lord. Hega and his warriors are very anxious because they fear a surprise attack by the elves. To forestall such an event the bugbear chieftain has stationed guards two hundred yards to the east, west, and south of their camp (near the paths). These guards will alert the main camp to an intrusion by means of an owl call (one long hoot and three short ones).

If Hega and his bugbears are alerted, they will ambush the party at the campsite. As the player characters approach the fork there is a 10% chance of spotting the bugbear lookout at his position two hundred yards to the west of the camp. If this sentry is killed, then the party will be in a position to surprise the bugbears. (In this case the DM should simply inform the players that they have come upon a bugbear camp and that all these creatures are huddled round a fire. The following encounter is based on the assumption that the bugbears ambush the party.

Judging from the miles you have covered, it would seem that you are approaching the eastern reaches of the great forest. The density of the trees has lessened somewhat compared to the thick cover of the elven shrine. There is considerable wildlife activity all about you: squirrels dart across the path; birds swoop from tree to tree; from somewhere a woodchuck grunts and you hear the hoots of an owl. At length, you come to an apparent fork in the forest path; a track veers south from the main track. In a small clearing here you see two bear-like creatures huddled around the smoking remnants of a fire. These creatures seem pre-occupied with their dinner.

Hega and his warriors are well hidden in the trees all around the clearing. The two bugbears by the fire have remained as an easy bait. As soon as the party attacks the two bugbears, the other fifteen will attack from the cover of the trees: five from the north, five from the east and five from the south. Hega will hang back to the east and fire his great longbow at the party. If more than half of the bugbear are vanquished, the whole will flee to the south.

Hega: AC 5; HD 3 + 1; hp 26; AT 2 bow or 1 axe; D 2-7 arrow or 3-9 axe; MV 90' (30'); Save F3; ML 10; AL C

Hega employs a *bow +1* and also wields a huge axe in melee. He wears a red wyvern medallion around his neck (value 23 gp) and bears gold armbands around his hairy limbs (value 30 gp each). He carries 37 gp and 49 sp in a pouch about his waist. In his small shoulder bag he carries dried meat, iron rations and a potion of *extra healing*. The other bugbears carry 1-20 sp each.

Ending Chapter Six

Run Chapter Seven whenever the party reaches Drax Tallen.

Chapter Seven: TO THE HALLS OF DRAX TALLEN

Encounter Setting

From the eastern edge of Geffron it will be apparent that a well worn road leads due east to the ancient fortress of Drax Tallen in the fallen kingdom of Essuria. By this time Essuria is a land that has fallen into a state of anarchy, however, the presence of the Wraith Lord has further reduced it to a ghostland. Tribal folk, brigands and the scattered populace have cleared out of the area in recent months. For this reason the party's ride will be uneventful.

At the height of its glory Drax Tallen consisted of a village built around the great citadel, with both surrounded by a wall. At this time all the village buildings are gone, many of them razed to the ground in the battle that first overthrew King Landryn. Most of the stone wall has fallen or crumbled to the ground. Only the pillars of the stone gatehouse and the main citadel still stand in testimony to former glory.

Apart from the citadel (areas #90-100), only three structures on the grounds of Drax Tallen bear any resemblance to walled buildings: area #61, area #62, and the large edifice (areas #63-89). Although roofless, the three buildings still have stone walls. All the other structures, originally wooden, have been razed to the ground.

Running Events in Drax Tallen

As in Gereth Minar, the Wraith Lord may discover the party's presence in his stronghold. At that time, he will attempt to impede the party's advance as he did in Gereth Minar, however, the system he uses is different, relying more on his control over undead rather than on magical items planted in various places of Drax Tallen.

The Wraith Lord has posted many undead guards in key areas of his domain (Levels I to III of Drax Tallen). In most cases, their role is to return to the Wraith Lord and warn him of the intruders' presence. The Wraith Lord will then send one or more creatures after the party. Ignore these guidelines after the Wraith Lord has been destroyed.

One of the Wraith Lord's abilities is to bestow some of his magical powers upon undead under his control. The power bestowed upon the undead creature acts as a delayed spell effect. The creature may discharge the spell effect anytime within six turns. The spell effect is otherwise automatically triggered when the creature is destroyed. The spell effects and their durations will be detailed in the Encounter Key below. Monsters carrying spell effects will

chase the party and discharge the spell effect upon the intruders at first opportunity.

The Wraith Lord can also see and hear through the ears and eyes of the undead. However, he cannot cast spells directly through an undead from a remote position. Unless the Wraith Lord has been alerted of the party's presence, he will not originally be looking or listening through his undead creatures. All along the party's advance through Drax Tallen, the Wraith Lord will remain in area #88, on Level II (see Map IX).

There are no random encounters during this chapter except on Level III of Drax Tallen (see Map IX). Check for wandering monsters on this level three times during the night. There are no random encounters during the day. Use the second column on the Random Encounters Chart, a score of 80% or more indicating that there is no encounter at that time.

Run the encounters described below when the party reaches the gatehouse ruin.

Encounter Key

(Maps VIII and IX)

59. Approaching Drax Tallen

As you ride eastward the great forest gives way to the grasslands of Essuria. This is a land in decline. The very road beneath the horses has fallen to disrepair despite evidence of considerable recent traffic. To the north and south of the roadway once-arable land is cracked and overgrown by wild grasses and thorn bushes.

At length, the road leads to the ruins of a once-formidable gatehouse. Stone pillars flank this decrepit gateway and a crumbling wall extends to the north and south.

A quarter-mile to the southeast you see an unusual stone edifice shaped like the top half of a sphere. All around this citadel are the charred and crumbling ruins of a number of wooden buildings. From this vantage point a grisly smell of death and decay is carried on the wind.

Eight ghouls and their leader, a wight, lurk out of sight in the forest just beyond the gate. When the party rides to the fork in the trail, the ghouls attack. The wight will not attack immediately, but will try to wait until all party members are fighting the ghouls. He will wait a maximum of three rounds.

In the midst of the battle with the ghouls a dark figure in shining plate armor will ride out of the forest. Two large hellhounds stand

on either side of the dark warrior. The warrior is the wight, encased in the armor it wore when living. In life this creature was Landryn Teriak's troop commander before the fall of Drax Tallen.

The wight is armed with an extraordinary magical sword, which it will use in combat (rather than using its Energy Drain touch). The weapon is a *sword +2*. In addition to damage, each strike will cause the PC victim to save vs. Paralysis or become paralyzed by the cold magic touch of the wight's blade. The paralysis lasts for 2-8 rounds, and unlike the ghouls, the sword's magic can affect elves.

Each round there is a 33% chance that the hellhounds will breathe fire instead of biting. The breath weapon does 1-6 hit points of damage (save vs. Dragon Breath for half damage).

If the wight is slain the blade may be retrieved but if taken by a Lawful or Neutral character, the weapon will function like a *cursed sword -2* (-2 to hit and damage). The unfortunate owner of the sword will be unable to get rid of the weapon unless a *remove curse* spell is used to free him.

60. Dragon Carcass

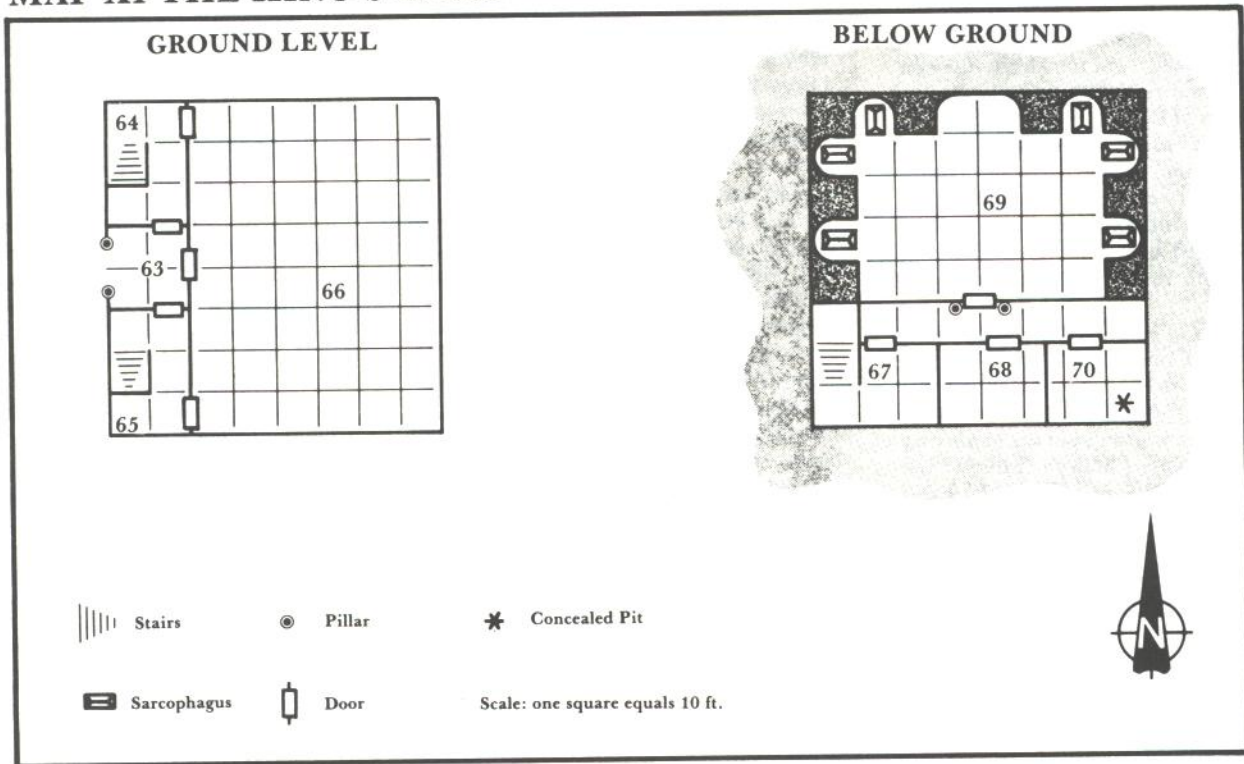
As you follow the north trail, the smell of death and decay grows ever stronger. Finally you see the cause. In the middle of the plain, not far from the trail, lies the old carcass of a gold dragon, near a large broken pillar. Part of the gold skin still hangs dry on the mighty ribs of the creature.

Inside the carcass lives a blind hobgoblin called Fumblewomp. He has been rejected by his kin because of his old age and constant rheumatism. Some goblins say he is a sage in the matters of goblin lore.

Among the ribs are several concealed wasp nests. If the hobgoblin thinks he is in danger, he will prod the nests with his walking stick and drop to the floor. An insect swarn will immediately form and pursue anything moving out of the dragon carcass. Fumblewomp has no treasure.

Near the base of the large pillar, partially buried in the ground, is a marking stone with runes upon it. The DM should show the players the first runic message at the back of Players' Map XII. The runes translate as, "*Drax Tallen Truth and Hope.*" Such was the motto of the ruling family of Essuria in the days of virtue and glory.

MAP XI THE KING'S HALL



61. Goblin Headquarters

Unless the characters approach cautiously, there is a 50% chance that the goblin sentries will see them from without the ruin. Two of these creatures are on patrol outside the wall, one covering the north and west and the other watching the south and east.

If the PCs are spotted, a squad of 14 goblins and 1 hobgoblin will emerge from the ruin and attack. In each of the next three rounds, a reinforcement squad of the same size will arrive. The chieftain will be with the second reinforcement squad.

If the PCs manage to reach the building without being seen, only 14 of the goblins, 1 hobgoblin, and the chieftain will be ready for combat. The remaining goblins will need 2 rounds to seize their weapons and prepare for combat. The boxed text below assumes that the PCs have achieved surprise.

Within this roofless structure there is much activity as a large number of goblins are busy at different tasks. Some are tending to mess duties around three firepits while others are cleaning and repairing weapons and armor. Amongst this group are at least four taller and heavier goblin warriors.

This 40' square building at one time was a large granary for the Drax Tallen community. With open door frames and a number of breaches in the wall, the goblin camp is quite apparent from without the ruin. In addition to fifty six goblins, there are six hobgoblins and their chieftain, calling himself King Tarl I, the Orcbane.

Tarl Orcbane: AC 6; HD 5; hp 22; #AT 1; D 2-9 *sword* +1; MV 90'; Save F5; ML 10; AL C).

Although not a king, this leader is highly stationed among his dark kin. He carries a *dagger* +1 and a pouch with 27 gp around his waist. Around his neck is the red wyvern token (value 69 sp).

In the far southwest corner of the ruin is the encampment of the chieftain. Beneath a pile of animal skins is the hobgoblin's treasure chest with 397 gp, 787 sp and 211 ep.

62. Armory

Although the ceiling of this building has been heavily damaged by fire, about half of the roof remains intact. Three large oak beams are still connected to the walls.

Considerable debris lies scattered on the earthen floor of the ruin. The remnants of iron chests and a number of rusting weapons are evident.

Currently this place is home to two giant crab spiders. These beasts have used their chameleon-like abilities to hide themselves in the rafters above. They will attack anything that enters, dropping down on their targets. Each PC has a 20% chance of noticing the delicate threads of the spiders' webbing on the walls and on the beams above when glancing in from the entrance (50% chance if they make a thorough check).

This ruin used to be the main Drax Tallen armory before the destruction of the fortress. At one time it was full of all manner of weapons; lining the walls, stacked in piles and housed in chests and cabinets.

In the southeast corner, buried under a pile of rubble and decaying weaponry, is a trap door. This portal is padlocked by a device that is almost rusted through. The lock and the door will quickly give way (Strength Check +2).

In a large hole beneath are two large iron chests. Both are locked but they may be forced open or picked by a thief. One chest

contains: 5 crossbows, 200 quarrels, 30 *quarrels +1* and a rather useful crossbow repair kit, complete with spare triggers, strings and tools. The other chest contains 12 bows, 400 arrows and a leather bag with 20 spare bowstrings.

Beneath the chests, scattered at the bottom of the hole, are 277 sp and 47 ep. A rotting sack holds 219 gp. Years ago Landryn Teriak's master-at-arms buried his treasure here.

63-88. The King's Hall

(Map XI above)

Upon approaching this large edifice, it will be evident that the top floor of this two-story building has been blasted away by a tremendous force. The walls show considerable fire damage.

Although the top story of the structure has been destroyed, the floor of this level still serves as a ceiling for the ground level.

63. Entry Chamber

The large wooden doors to the west entry arch lie smashed to pieces on the stone floor of the chamber within. A large pool of water has welled up in the middle of the floor. The stains on the stone indicate that the water has drained from the north. Inside the entry, in the north and southwest corners, lie the stone shards of statues. Doors open to the north, south and east.

The water has drained into the chamber from the hole in the roof of area #64, where the stairs lead down from the upper level. The water is about 6" deep at the center. Quite a bit of debris has collected below the murky water including a few bones, small stones, 13 cp, 2 sp and a silver ring (value 28 sp). The smashed statues once resembled red wyverns cast in granite.

64. Stairway Chamber

This chamber is dominated by a stone staircase in the northwest corner. It is obvious that these stairs once led to an upper level. Now there is a large hole leading to the open air above. The floor of the chamber is littered with debris and the skeletal forms of at least 9 humanoids. A number of weapons and 4 shields lie in the southwest corner. From the stains on the stairway it is evident that the water has

been draining from the large hole in the northwest corner. As you look about the room you hear a faint chirping sound from the top of the stairs.

The chirping sounds are being made by six stirges nesting in the shattered rafters near the top of the stairs. These insect-like birds will attack immediately. If the stirges fail a Morale Check when required to make one, they will escape via the large hole in the ceiling.

A close inspection of the debris in the southwest corner will reveal a blood-stained axe. If the axe is cleaned it will be apparent that it is a *hand axe +1*. All the shields bear the token of the red wyvern. The skeletons are those of King Landryn's warriors.

If the characters investigate the roof, there is a 10% chance per round (per player) that the roof will cave in. In this event the victim should make a Dexterity Check or fall right through into area #66. Such a fall will result in a loss of 3-6 hit points.

65. Guard Room

The door to this chamber is almost falling off its hinges (Strength Check +2).

The splintered remnants of wooden beds or benches litter the floor in this chamber. Half a dozen skeletal forms lie amidst the debris. In the southwest corner a staircase leads down into the darkness of a lower chamber.

A careful search of the room will turn up a number of rusting weapons; swords, daggers and spears among them. In the northwest corner is a leather bag with 17 gp and 39 sp.

An inspection of the stairs will reveal two skeletons sprawled on the steps—more evidence of the desperate struggle that took place at Drax Tallen many years before. The stairs lead down to area #67 at the lower level.

66. The Great Hall

Three long oak tables dominate this room, one near each of the north, east and south walls. The scores of chairs for these tables lie smashed and splintered throughout. In the middle of the east wall a large dais has the look of a throne platform. The shattered fragments of a padded oak chair lie atop the dais. At the base of the wall a

huge tapestry lies in shredded remnants.

The floor of this chamber is strewn with the skeletal remains of dozens of humans or humanoids. Some of the skeletons appear to be those of goblins or orcs. Countless shields bearing the red wyvern token are to be seen everywhere.

In the northeast and southeast corners large wooden cabinets have been toppled, their doors ripped asunder and their contents strewn about the room. Much of this latter material is cheap copper. Amidst the debris in the southeast corner there seems to be movement.

The movement is caused by two rust monsters who have just entered the chamber through a small breach in the south wall. These two are in search of a good metallic meal. These two will attack the party insofar as they are attracted by the shiny swords and shields. The creatures will disdain the apparent worthless copper on the floor because it is, in fact, a metal not to their liking, silver. Actually there are 3,875 sp worth of tarnished silver lying throughout the chamber.

The ripped tapestry on the dais bears the emblem of the red wyvern—this will be evident if the tapestry is rolled out and inspected. Beneath the bodies and the debris in the center of the chamber is a large firepit. Directly above the pit are smoke holes in the ceiling. The cawling above the fire that once funneled the smoke away has long since collapsed and shattered into pieces.

After the melee with the rust monsters and through the course of inspecting the chamber the player characters will experience the following encounter:

As you poke about this large hall an eerie stillness descends upon the chamber. Suddenly a light begins to glow in the vicinity of the dais. After a time this light begins to take shape. A translucent figure stands atop the platform, the outline of its insubstantial form shimmering with an unearthly light. As the visage becomes clearer you see the unmistakable figure of a warrior armored in elaborate plate mail with a long sword at his side. This warrior wears the crowned helm of a king.

The vision will last for just a few seconds and then disappear. Upon seeing the vision, everyone must save vs. Spell or flee the chamber in terror. This visage is the harmless spirit of King Vespén, Landryn Teriak's brother,

Chapter Seven: TO THE HALLS OF DRAX TALLEN

whom the Wraith Lord murdered years before in order to seize the throne of Essuria. Vespen's spirit has appeared to the party as a forerunner of grave danger. Ironically this spirit serves to warn the characters of the threat of the undead at Drax Tallen.

Vespen cannot be turned by a cleric, and the Blackstick will not resurrect him because he is not a true undead but a mere vision of what he used to be. Any attempt to use the rod will fail in this situation but will not use up charges.

If the characters inspect the dais after the spirit has disappeared, they will find a gold medallion on a gold chain lying in the debris. The medallion bears the token of the eagle on one side and the name "Vespen" in common tongue on the other. This item is worth 793 gp.

67. Seneschal's Office

A large desk against the east wall dominates this small chamber. A large wooden cabinet lies face down in the middle of the room. Hundreds of pieces of rotting parchment are scattered everywhere.

A family of seven giant shrews makes its home beneath the overturned cabinet. If this cabinet is disturbed in any way then the creatures will attack. The stairs lead up to area #65 on the upper level.

Within the shrew nest, underneath the cabinet, is a sack of 49 sp and a gold ring with the red wyvern insignia etched in delicate ruby inlay (value 297 gp). This item once belonged to the seneschal whose skeletal remains lie slumped beneath the oak desk.

An examination of the desk will reveal that the seneschal died from a spear thrust into the chest (a spearhead is still lodged in the ribcage). It is apparent that the fellow foolishly thought to hide himself here as the lawful forces of Henadin overran the place.

The drawers of the desk have been ripped out and smashed to pieces. There is, however, a secret compartment at the bottom of the south side of the desk. A panel slides out from the desk, much like a tray or a table leaf. Here, in a secret compartment within the desk, is a non-descript bag. This shabby and oil-stained bag is a *bag of holding*. Magically housed within are 2,978 gp, 4,976 sp and the seneschal's medallion of office (310 gp value).

68. Wine Cellar

This chamber was once a wine cellar as suggested by the many splintered casks

and barrels throughout. Dark stains show through the dust on the stone floor.

This chamber is home to 10 giant rats who will attack ferociously if the characters poke about in the room. In the southeast corner is a skeleton of a large hobgoblin. Beneath the body, buried in the dust and debris, there is an emerald (value 396 gp). Beside the grisly skeleton is a small cask still intact. It is full of excellent brandy with a market value of 50 gp. The hobgoblin's *battleaxe +1* lies beneath a pile of splintered wood in the southwest corner.

69. Royal Shrine and Vault

The double bronze doors to this chamber are sealed from without by spikes and two long iron bars that have been driven into the stone about the frame. Elven runes have been etched into the surface of the bronze portals. The common tongue meaning of the inscription is: *A plague on those who would break this seal*. Notwithstanding the warning, the spikes and bars may be removed easily enough (normal Strength Check).

The atmosphere in this chamber is heavy with stale air. At first glance the room appears to be some kind of sacred shrine. A painting of a large black dragon covers the floor of the chamber. The walls are indented by niches that hold sarcophagi. In the middle of the north wall a larger niche is occupied by a statue of a beautiful woman. The outstretched arms of the statue hold a small chest.

The inscription on the bronze doors was written many years ago by an elf lord who rode with Henadin in the battle that first overthrew Landryn Teriak in Essuria. Rather than destroy this vault, the lawful forces of old thought it best to seal it off. Furthermore, they trusted to the vigilance of the gold dragon guardian.

Before the time of Landryn Teriak's great grandfather this chamber was used as a royal crypt. With the construction of the Rotunda (areas #90-100), this facility became redundant. The remains of the dead kings were removed and the sarcophagi were left empty.

When Landryn Teriak seized the throne, however, he converted the chamber into a shrine dedicated to Idris. The statue is of Idris and the black dragon, of course, is her symbol. If any characters were affected by the

illusion in area #22d in the Temple of Idris, remember to invoke the curse for all characters who see the black dragon symbol.

The sarcophagi against the east and west walls are empty. The sarcophagi to the east and west of the statue hold mummies who function as guardians. These undead will rise from their tombs and attack the party 3 rounds after the PCs enter the chamber.

The coffin to the west holds a sack of gems worth 1,899 gp. The coffin to the east holds 3,887 sp and 3,190 ep in a large coffer. The small chest in the statue's arms is locked and trapped. Any attempt to tamper with the lock will release a cloud of deadly gas. Anyone within 5' of the chest must save vs. Dragon's Breath or die within 10 rounds.

The chest contains two potions, *poison* and *delusion*, and a larger brass bottle with a stopper. If the *poison* potion is tasted the imbiber must save vs. Poison or die immediately. The *delusion* potion will have no real effect but the imbiber will believe that he has been transformed by a *gaseous form* potion. Others in the party will, realistically, beg to differ.

The brass bottle is the prison of an efreeti. If the stopper is removed this creature will be released from its constraints and attack the party.

The efreeti will fight for 5 rounds or until half its hit points are lost, then laugh loudly in mockery of the pathetic characters. It will then beat a hasty retreat through the doors and out of the building. Although evil, this monster serves no master and seeks its freedom.

Landryn Teriak gave the efreeti (trapped in the bottle) to the followers of Idris as an offering many years before.

70. Catacomb Entry Chamber

The part of the floor corresponding to the (*) on the map contains a pit five feet in diameter. The section appears to be part of the stone floor because it has been camouflaged by the application of a permanent *hallucinatory terrain* spell. In reality, this hole is covered by a rotting trap door in the floor. Anyone stepping in this area must make a Dexterity check or fall through the collapsing door. The concealed pit connects to a tunnel adjacent to area #71 (see Map VIII), in the catacombs.

This fall will cause a victim to sustain 7-12 (1d6 + 6) hit points of damage. The illusion of a solid floor will be dispelled as soon as the section is touched in any way. Pay attention

to the position and movements of the characters in this chamber. Read the boxed text below to the players whenever their characters observe the room.

This facility has the look of a storage chamber. Many shelves line the walls and four large barrels sit near the west wall. Many rotting grain sacks lie strewn about, their contents long since decayed. A shelf in the southeast corner is covered by a number of dusty bottles and an old chest. As you look about the chamber you detect the presence of a faint but cool draft.

The first character to investigate the southeast corner will undoubtedly step on the floor illusion. The DM will note that the chest is tucked right into the corner on a shelf about five feet from the floor.

The barrels are empty. The bottles contain chemicals that have become stale and useless long ago. The chest holds various parchments, mostly administrative records of the Royal Hall dating thirty years ago. Most of these papers have the same sort of heading in common tongue script e.g., "*In the Reign of the King.*" The names of the following kings are chronicled: Mirimar, Halvan, Gallathon, Vespen and Landryn.

Drax Tallen—Level I, The Catacombs (See Map VIII)

The vertical shaft from area #70 opens in the catacombs at the point marked on the map. The shaft has iron ladder rings fixed into the rock. A careful descent should bring the PCs safely into the tunnel below.

South of this spot is a pile of rubble that blocks the way to the southern reaches of the catacombs. At one time this was a secret way to the bastion (areas #90-100) from the Royal Hall. It no longer serves this purpose.

71. Storage Cave

This cave is dry and the air is very stale. The floor is littered with the rotting vestiges of barrels that once held water or provisions. The metal hoops about the barrels have rusted away.

Amongst the debris is a gold ring (value 100 gp) with the insignia of the wyvern. This item once belonged to King Landryn, who lost it as he made his escape from Drax Tallen.

The tunnel that leads out to the south is blocked by a large pile of rubble, about 10'

south of the shaft. An energetic and sustained excavation of the rubble here will clear a way to area #72.

72. Cave of Lights

A maze of stalactites and stalagmites crowds this large cavern. Here and there, at odd intervals, lights seem to dance about the cave, flashing in and out of the calcium formations. The air is particularly cold and clammy in this strange and other-worldly cavern.

The lights will dart away from the characters as they move through the cavern. These lights are bats that have been stained by the phosphorescent drippings from the cave ceiling. The vibrations of the adventurers' movements disturbed the creatures.

As the party moves further into the cave, however, they will be attacked by eight shadows moving toward them from the south. If more than half of the creatures are destroyed, one of the remaining one will flee to the south and attempt to warn the Wraith Lord (in area #88 on Level II).

If the shadow succeeds in its attempt, the Wraith Lord will bestow upon the shadow a delayed effect *fire ball* and send it back to attack the party. The *fire ball* effect is limited to a maximum of 5d6 points of damage.

The tunnel leading to the west of the cave ends in a pile of rubble. If the party searches the rubble, it will become evident that something was once buried here. Indeed, a chest lies under the stones, but it is empty.

73. Teleportation Cave

A skeleton lies near the entrance to this cavern with a rusty sword beside it. The light you carry flashes briefly off something imbedded in the middle of the western wall.

The body is that of one of Teriak's soldiers. Five gp and 7 sp lie beneath the brittle bones. The western wall contains a hidden magical *teleportation* device to area #99 on Level III (see Map IX). The device is operated by two stones imbedded in the wall.

The stones imbedded in the wall are quite noticeable, being large quartz-like crystals. The stones are four feet from the ground and three feet apart, and radiate a magical aura, if they are examined with a *detect magic* spell. The stone to the west is a ruby and the one to the east an emerald. If a person's

hands are touching both stones at the same time then there is a 50% chance that the person will be teleported to the chair in area #99. The device will function up to 3 times per day. If the stones are removed the whole system will be permanently deactivated. The stones are worth 200 gp and 150 gp respectively.

74. Cave of Skeletons

The skeletal remains of many humans are scattered throughout this cave. Numerous pieces of rotting vestments and leather armor have fallen away from the bones. On the opposite side of the cavern is a pile of rubble.

This cave is where Teriak's minions made their last stand against Henadin's forces. By counting the skulls the party could estimate the total number of skeletons to 30 individuals.

When a party member reaches the rubble on the other side of the area, the bones start animating. Within one round, the bones click back together and reform the skeletal bodies. On the second round, the creatures may attack the party. A dozen skeletons will position themselves in an attempt to encircle any PCs on the rubble side of the area.

Skeletons destroyed on the Cleric Turning Undead Table immediately fall to the ground and form a lump of dust. Skeletons that are only *turned* away will attempt escape from the room. When half or more of the creatures are defeated, all the skeletons in the room suddenly deactivate and fall to the ground.

If the party still is in the cave four rounds later, the scattered bones reassemble, but this time forming one single large skeletal beast. The giant undead will appear as a skeletal dragon with as many HD as there are skeletons remaining in the room. Skeletons that fled the room or were destroyed do not count in the HD total for the dragon. The creature has the same statistics as a black dragon, except for its HD and the fact that it does not have a breath weapon. This creature cannot be *turned*.

There is nothing of any interest or value in the rubble.

75. Dungeon Cave

The walls of this cavern are dotted with manacles and hanging chains. Most of them have almost rusted away. A number of bones are scattered on the ground.

In the southwest corner is a secret door in the rock wall. Two rings disguised as prison manacles are fixed to the stone at eye level, two feet apart; tugging on these will make the door easier to open once the secret door is located. If a thief closely examines the manacles (use the Find Traps check), the false nature of the manacles will be obvious.

Once the secret door is opened, the corridor to area #77 will be revealed. The door is 4 feet high and 3 feet wide.

76. Chamber of the Poison Pool

A pool of yellowish steaming water occupies this circular cavern. Sickening and unwholesome vapors rise from the bubbling water. The atmosphere in the cave is reeking with a nauseating rotten-egg smell.

Anyone who stays in the cave longer than one turn must save vs. Poison or succumb to the terrible vapors in the chamber. This debilitation will cause the victims to hit at -2 and causes a -2 penalty on initiative rolls for 5-20 rounds. Anyone who enters the water must save vs. Poison at -4 or fall unconscious; and will drown if not rescued. For every minute in the water the character(s) must make such a save or succumb.

These waters are subject to natural deposits of gas below the pool. There is also a high level of sulphur in the bedrock giving rise to the terrible rotting egg odor. The combination is quite obnoxious.

Nonetheless, at the bottom of the pool, in the middle, lies the sword and scabbard of Henadin, the great warrior who led the assault on Drax Tallen years ago. This weapon is a magical sword +1, +3 vs. undead. The sword is not visible through the foul, murky waters, but it will be detected if detect magic is cast on the pool.

77. Cave of the Zombies

When the party gets past the secret passage, coming from area #75, warn the players about a horrid stench and a cold feeling. Read the text below when the party reaches area #77.

Upon entering this cavern you see the hideous form of a creature with three heads; a goat, a lion and a dragon. Its body also bears the sundry parts of these creatures, but what strikes you the most are the patches of skin peeling off and revealing the bones and rotting flesh of the creature. The beast moves menacingly toward you. A dark metal door appears in the southeast corner of the cave.

The Wraith Lord created this horror after defeating a chimera. The creature has the same statistics as a chimera, except that it is undead. Instead of breathing fire, the undead chimera will breathe a *cone of cold* for the same amount of damage. The beast can be turned by a cleric; the creature is equivalent to a vampire for this purpose. If the attempt is successful, the beast moves away from the cleric and stands still if no exit is available.

Whenever the beast is defeated, the soil in the room starts moving and crawling. Twenty zombies are slowly digging their way out of their graves. The undead are slow and will take 4 rounds before they can attack the PCs. It should be clear to the party that they are outnumbered and that they should either exit the cavern to area #75 or #78 and lock the creatures in the room. The zombies will not be able to open any of the two passages if the party shuts them.

The zombies will return to their graves 1-4 hours after the party escapes. The door to area #78 is locked. A thief can pick the lock provided he remains out of reach from the zombies, or a *knock* will open the door. The door can be opened by a Strength Check, with a -2 penalty.

If zombies manage to slip past the party, two of them will try to reach the Wraith Lord in area #88 (on Level II) and alert him of the party's presence. If they succeed, the Wraith Lord will send them back after the party. Each of the zombies will be capable of releasing a *magic missile* effect (5 missiles, each causing 1d6+1 points of damage). The power is automatically triggered if the zombie is destroyed before it has a chance to cast the spell. When this happens, fizzing missiles of light spark from the zombie's remains, hitting one living target at random.

In the southwest corner of the chamber is the beast's treasure trove, a large chest with 1,579 gp, 4,375 sp and 679 pp. At the bottom of the chest there are two scrolls: a magic user's *lightning bolt* and a clerical *remove curse*.

78. Henadin's Cave

Many old skeletal forms lie near the west entrance to this cavern. A number of rotting weapons and sundered pieces of decrepit armor are scattered amongst the grisly debris. Near the north wall lies the large skeletal remains of a man hunched against the rock wall. Beneath these bones is the rusting remnant of a shield.

The large skeleton is Henadin's remains. The shield beneath the body of Henadin is stained with old blood and covered by layers of grime and lichen growth. Nevertheless, this is a magical *shield +1*. Below the shield is a gold chain with an eagle medallion, also rendered in gold leaf (150 gp value). This is the token of Henadin's noble family.

In the ceiling in the northeast corner of the cave is a large trap door, 8' square. A smaller, 3' square door is set in the middle of the larger one. Although locked from above (area #79, Level II), this door may be opened by an enterprising thief. The larger portal is securely bolted from above and would require a *knock* spell to open. The larger trap can be forced open by a Strength Check with a -2 penalty. The ceiling is 12' high.

The citadel of Drax Tallen was built over a hundred years ago as a mausoleum for the kings of Essuria. Although Level II is above the Catacombs (Level I), it is still below the surface of the ground, directly underneath Level III. After the death of King Vespen, Landryn Teriak refurbished the lower level of the tomb (Level II), converting it to his own personal quarters. In his twisted mind Teriak thought it appropriate to re-locate the throne room within the macabre tomb.

The inhabitants of this level are a mixture of normal men, adventurers, and monsters (many of which are undead creatures). Some of the normal humans and adventurers wear *rings of servitude* which were given to them by the Wraith Lord. These rings are fully described in the Magic Items section of the **Appendix**. The ring robs its wearer of free will, leaving him subject to the commands of the Wraith Lord. In many cases those who wear the ring will totally ignore the PCs if the Shadow Lord is unaware of their presence in Drax Tallen.

79. Entry Chamber

A tall powerfully built fighter slouches in a chair against the north wall of this octagonal chamber; his eyes seem dull and lifeless. His head is quite bald and a greasy mustache accentuates his cruel and rather stupid face. A large dagger is tucked into the man's waistband. He wears leather armor and holds a huge sword in his right hand.

What happens next depends upon whether or not the Wraith Lord has detected the PCs within Drax Tallin; this fighter, Sifferin by name, wears a *ring of servitude*.

If the Wraith Lord is aware of the party's presence, Sifferin will stand up and attack, moving slowly all the while. Sifferin has been bestowed the spell power of casting a *lightning bolt* (maximum damage 5-30 points).

If the Wraith Lord was not aware of the party's presence, Sifferin will remain seated, staring blankly to the walls, ignoring the party.

Sifferin: AC 6; F8; hp 58; #AT 1 sword; D 4-11; MV 60'; Save F8; ML 10; AL C; St 18, In 12, Wi 13, Dx 13, Co 14, Ch 10

Sifferin is one of the Wraith Lord's human warriors recruited from the barbarian ranks in northern Essuria. He wears bright red pantaloons with a black sash around the waist. Two large earrings are stuck through the lobes of his absurdly large ears. He is wearing silver armbands high on his arms and a silver ring on his right hand. Each of Sifferin's armbands are worth 20 sp and he carries a pouch with 17 gp. The silver ring on his right hand is a *ring of servitude* bearing the insignia of a wyvern.

There is a winch in the chamber that raises and lowers the large trap door in the floor (once two sliding bolts are disengaged). In the middle of this portal a smaller door is opened by means of a catch. When an undead creature coming from Level I knocks four times or moans, Sifferin will open the smaller door and let the creature(s) in.

80. Servants' Quarters

Two filthy mats lie on the floor of this chamber. Two emaciated humans, a man and a woman, are reclining on the mats. These people ignore you as you peruse their chamber. Upon closer examination, the man and the woman appear to be in some kind of trance. Each of them wears a silver ring with the wyvern depiction.

Both of these slaves wear the Wraith Lord's *rings of servitude*. Neither of these servants will provide any information to the group. Rather, they will simply lie on their mats in a deep stupor.

81. Kitchen

This small chamber has a fire pit in the southeast corner. Most of the east wall is occupied by a bench covered in kitchen things. A long table with two benches occupies the west portion of the room.

This area is where the few human servants of the Wraith Lord take their food. It is currently unoccupied.

82. Storeroom (door locked)

Many barrels are stacked in racks in along the east wall of this chamber. Shelves holding smaller casks and sacks occupy the west portion of the room.

Some barrels contain oil; others hold water. The casks are full of mead. The sacks hold grain, flour and other dried foodstuffs.

83. Laboratory (door locked)

This large chamber is filled with the equipment of alchemical science. Work benches are covered by pestles, mortars, scales, small oil burners, jars, bottles and finely rendered metal tools. In the middle of the south wall bench there is a large chest.

A ransacking of the benches will turn up the following: two sprigs of wolfbane, 5 pearls (267 gp total value), 1 diamond (311 gp value), gold nuggets (367 gp) and a *potion of speed*.

The locked chest contains a large hourglass with bright red sand within. If this item is turned upside down the glass will reveal crystal ball-like pictures as the red sand sifts through. In the bottom sphere the adventurers will see the following visions:

1. A golden-haired king is sitting on a throne in a splendid royal chamber. A dark-haired figure in magic user's robes is offering the king a goblet of wine. The monarch sips the wine at first and then drinks deeply. Moments later the king's head drops and the goblet clatters to the marble floor. The vision fades....

2. The dark-haired figure is sitting on the same throne, his black robes now trimmed in gold and ermine. Upon his head sits a gold

circlet punctuated by rubies. Before this figure three barbarian chiefs kneel in homage. The vision fades....

3. A great army is marching behind a splendid-looking warrior on a white steed. Above the column, swooping and gliding on the air currents, are two gold dragons. At length, this force arrives at the gates of a fortress and a terrible battle takes place. The defenders, comprised of dark-clad warriors and goblin folk, fight in desperation to forestall the attackers. After a time the tide of battle turns in favor of the invading force as the dark folk reel before the onslaught of men and dragons. The vision fades....

4. The dark-haired king and six warriors clad in shining, black plate armor are riding away from the fortress at a breakneck gallop. One of these fighters carries a spear with a pennant depicting the token of the red wyvern. As the vision unfolds another group of horsemen is seen in hot pursuit of the first group. After a time the second group overtakes the first and a skirmish takes place. In the midst of this melee the dark-haired king rides away at a gallop. From afar a single gold dragon pursues the rider. It is apparent that before long the dragon will overtake the fleeing rider. The vision fades....

5. Once more a familiar throne room appears. A dark entity sits upon the throne, now veiled in the darkest shadows. As the image becomes clearer it is apparent that the thing on the throne is not a man, but something dark and formless. The vision fades and the sand has run its course.

If the glass is turned again a green glow will encompass the glass until the sand re-enters the original sphere. If turned yet again, the same vision sequence will unfold. Although this is only an artifact providing information, a sage will pay up to 4,000 gp to own it. This glass has been imprinted with the Wraith Lord's story.

84. Study Chamber and Library

Six writing desks dominate this large room, three of which are occupied by figures in dark robes. The walls of the room are lined by high bookshelves that reach the ceiling. A flight of stairs leads up in the northwest corner of the room.

As you scan the chamber the figures appear to be perfectly still except for their right arms that move delicately over the scrolls atop the desks.

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The dark-robed figures will continue to scribe on their parchments until they are attacked. If any of them are disturbed, they will cease their endless writing and rise to do battle. Each of them has been writing one word on the parchments—Blackstick. These figures in the scholar's robes are skeletons, but they will write until attacked.

As soon as any character reads one of the scrolls (which the skeletons will not attempt to prevent, unless attacked) the room will become very dark with all torches and other non-magical light sources extinguished. At this point the party will be attacked by three wraiths. A fourth one will fight for 3 rounds, then attempt to escape from the room.

The darkness in the room will last for 5 rounds. If the wraiths are slain or turned, the robed skeletons collapse, their brittle bones crumbled to dust.

The fourth wraith will attempt to alert the Wraith Lord (see area #89) after fighting for 3 rounds. If it succeeds, the Wraith Lord sends it back to attack the party. He will bestow the power of *polymorphing* one of the PCs into a goat. The wraith will have one hour in which to cast the spell.

Upon inspecting the books in the chamber the characters will find that most of the volumes turn to dust when handled. At one time this chamber was a great library and on its shelves were many volumes concerning the life, times and endeavors of many generations of Essurians. The party will see that many of the books are written in common tongue, though there is ample evidence of Essurian runes.

In the southeast corner there is a secret compartment in the wall behind the bookcase. Here, five feet from the floor, there is a sliding panel in the stonework of the wall. Simply pushing this piece aside will reveal a wooden box sealed with lead about the edges. The box can be easily opened with a dagger or a spike. Within is a scroll wrapped in a well-oiled leather pouch. On the scroll are runes (show runic message #2 on the back of Players' Map XII, to the players). The translation of this writing reads as follows:

*"For Life the Darkness
For Death the Day
Secrets of the
Blackrod say."*

This riddle explains how the Blackstick functions. The spoken phrase itself is also a word clue to understanding the incantations for slaying and resurrecting the undead. The following procedures apply:

For Resurrecting Undead: If the Blackstick is held aloft in total darkness, and then the riddle is spoken aloud in common tongue, the runes for the word *Vifica* will appear on the rod itself. However, only elves and magic users will be able to see these symbols on the artifact. In this case simply tell the concerned PCs that they see the runes for *Vifica*.

For Slaying Undead: If a *light* spell is cast on the rod, or if a magical item (magical sword, etc.) is brought close to the artifact, or if the Blackstick is held aloft in daylight, then the runes for the incantation *Decima* will appear upon the recitation of the riddle. In this case the DM will show runic message #3 at the back of Players' Map XII to the players, for any elves or magic-users in the party.

In both cases the riddle must be spoken aloud for the runes to appear on the artifact.

The stairs lead up to a trap door below area #90 on Level III. The trap door opens slowly when approaching. For example: if a PC approaches and then stops to observe the trap door, it also stops moving. If the PC backs up, the door slowly closes, etc. A purplish light comes from the area above.

85. Chamber of Riddles (door locked)

Fine mosaic tiles line the walls of this circular chamber. The domed ceiling is formed from gleaming bronze. Various astrological symbols decorate the curved walls; stars, the moon in its phases, the sun, the earth and assorted star formations. In the center of the room there is a circle on the floor colored in deep purple. At the center of the circle are three intertwined rings etched in silver. In the north, east and south there are chairs against the wall.

The circle on the floor is four feet in diameter and constitutes a magical door that leads to a cave below this chamber. This door can only be opened by a three-word password. Each of these words is provided by the riddles of the chairs. The three chairs are magical, sphinx-like wonders that pose riddles. Whoever sits in the chairs must save vs. Spell or fall asleep for 2-8 rounds, effectively losing an opportunity to hear a riddle. Those who do save will hear the riddle of the chair they're sitting in.

North Chair Riddle:
"It goes where it wills
and seeks many spaces,

And when it is gone
It leaves few traces."

Answer: *Water*

East Chair Riddle:
"A show of kindness,
a kind of loss...
The selfish deem it foolish,
when they measure its cost."

Answer: *Giving*

South Chair Riddle:
"A joy for many,
a struggle for some,
A mystery to most
under the sun."

Answer: *Life*

Of course, the magical phrase is "water giving life." If this is uttered out loud then the easternmost silver ring on the purple circle will suddenly become a solid handle and will pop-up from the floor. The purple circle will then appear as a trap door in the floor. The characters may then lift the portal and discover the steep staircase below.

This steep stone staircase leads down 40' to a cave. Dazzling and intricate crystal rock formations are evident throughout this large cavern. At the far side of the cavern, some 40' from the bottom of the stairs, there is a pool of shimmering water. Above the pool droplets of water fall with a slow but steady drip from a strange crystal stalactite directly above the pool. As you look about the cave you see something move suddenly from a crevice beside the pool.

This cave is home to a caecilia (giant worm) and the creature is preparing to attack in defense of its lair. If the party backs away and closes the secret opening, the worm will ignore the PCs.

The worm's attack may result in PCs being swallowed by the creature. Swallowed victims will sustain 1-8 hit points of damage per round until the worm is slain. The creature is 25' long. In its lair in the rock is a pile of precious gems worth 978 gp. The worm has eaten these stones and been unable to digest them.

The waters of the pool are magical. Once, and only once in this adventure the waters of this pool may be transformed into life sustaining and restoring liquid. If the password "water giving life" is uttered again, then the

crystal rock above the pool will glow with a green light. The droplets falling into the pool and the water below will turn green. This effect will last for 3-6 rounds. Anyone bathing in the water will immediately recover any lost energy levels and all hit points at the current stage of experience (prior to the adventure). This pool is another Essurian wonder left over from better days—it only has a smattering of magic left. This restoration is the final one the pool is able to provide.

86. Teriak's Bedchamber

(door locked)

This large chamber is occupied by an imposing four-poster bed against the south wall. Thick black curtains form a drawn canopy around the bed. Elaborately carved bedposts are rendered in the shapes of wyverns. At the four corners of the bed, adjacent to each post, black candles are set atop narrow wooden pedestals.

A large chest rests on a table in the northwest corner of the chamber. On the north wall a finely rendered painting depicts a cruel-looking, dark haired man with a gold and ruby-studded circlet around his head. The figure in the painting is clothed in the ermine and gold-trimmed robes of a magic-user.

The air in the chamber is quite foul with the undeniable smell of death and decay.

Behind the curtains, lying on the bed, is the body of a young man in dark magic-user garb (similar to the picture on the wall). *This is an illusion.* If the body is touched in any way then the illusion will dissipate and the characters will see the real thing lying on this bed. In fact, the body is that of the cleric who originally lost his life to Landryn Teriak many years ago. This cadaver is in a shocking state of decay.

With the dissipation of the illusion the room will become very cold and the characters hear a terrible, hideous laughter. Each person in the group must save vs. Spell or flee the chamber in panic.

The chest on the table is *wizard locked* and trapped. If an attempt is made to open the chest, anyone standing in front of it may be stricken by the trap; two darts will shoot from the chest. If more than one person could be affected, select two PCs at random and have them each make a saving throw vs. Death Ray. If the save is not made then the character will be hit for 1-4 points of damage.

Thereafter the victim must save vs. Poison or take 2-20 points of damage from the poison.

The chest contains the following: 2,200 pp, a golden statue of a wyvern, (value 3,000 gp), 12 silver-tipped darts (value 120 sp total), a *dagger +2*, a *ring of protection +2* and a *ring of spell storing* which holds *magic jar*, *remove curse**, and four *magic missiles* at 10th level.)

87. Throne Room

As you enter, you see a dark-robed figure with his back to you in the act of making an offering of incense to a brazier that burns with an unearthly purple flame. Each time the figure casts forth a cloaked arm a flash of orange light rises from the brazier. The air is foul with the odor of the incense.

The brazier that which he works stands before a large throne placed against the middle of the south wall. The throne is flanked by red alabaster wyverns. The throne itself appears to be carved from the darkest mahogany and intricately dressed in fine chisel work.

The brazier is one of many that light this semi-circular chamber, their flames casting dancing shadows on the walls. The floor is blood-red and marked in places by the black symbols of dark necromancy.

Suddenly the flames burn brighter and from the shadows in either corner of the chamber large humanoids move toward you with long swords gleaming in their hands.

The Wraith Lord will always be watching this area from area #88 and the Wraith Lord will be aware of any creature's presence in this room.

The two fighters in this room will intervene if the party enters. These warriors wear the Wraith Lord's *rings of servitude*. Use dark lancer statistics for these warriors.

The dark-robed figure is a mummy. As the thing turns to face the party the characters will see its rotting bandages under its robe. This undead horror was Landryn Teriak's steward and advisor when the Shadow Lord was King of Essuria. His name was Mando and he has been lately "raised" by the evil one to take up office once again.

If the characters use the Blackstick to resurrect Mando he will be instantly transformed into a human, as shown below:

Mando: AC 10; MU 5; hp 19; #AT none; D none; MV 90' (30'); Save MU 5; ML 2;

AL C; St 11, In 16, Wi 15, Dx 13, Cn 7, Ch 12; Spells: none memorized.

Mando will be alive but without weapons, spells, or morale. He will cower in the chamber and beg for mercy. If the party uses the Blackstick to slay Mando, he will be blasted out of existence in a burst of fire.

If the mummy and the warriors are slain or otherwise dealt with, read the boxed text below to the players immediately.

A deathly silence falls upon the chamber and the flames of the ceremonial brazier die down. The room is almost dark except for a faint glow of incense...

Suddenly the flames from the incense brazier burst forth in a flash of orange flame and a voice seems to emanate from all about the chamber:

"So my resourceful friends, you have dealt with my steward and the guards, it would seem. Very enterprising but insufficient! Did you think you were dealing with me when you assailed my servant? Come now, my brave friends, do you think so highly of yourselves and so little of me? You have brought me the very thing I desire. Verily, you have delivered it unto my lair and for this I thank you.

"But now your task has come to an end. Surrender the Blackstick at once! If you do, you may taste swift and merciful death. If you do not comply than you show know everlasting torment at my hand. You shall take the place of my mummified steward and my other minions. You will not require your armor or your pathetic skills for these tasks. Your skeletal frames and your precious spirits will suffice in my service.

"Therefore, look to yourselves if you wish to die without ado. Leave the Blackstick beside the fire in front of the throne. You have twenty heartbeats to comply with my will."

Anyone in the group wearing a *ring of servitude* (see Appendix Section) will insist on obeying the Wraith Lord. If there is opposition then the ring-wearing characters will attack the keeper of the Blackstick. These *charmed* characters will fight until subdued or slain. If the keeper of the rod wears a *ring of servitude* then, of course, he will comply with the directive, and place the Blackstick beside the pedestal.

At the end of two rounds, smoke will start to pour from the flame in front of the throne and quickly fill the chamber. This grey smoke

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is the manifestation of a special *phantasmal force* spell. As it covers the ground, wicked tentacles, gibbering mouths and blinking eyes seem to form in the mist's swirls. Puffs of a yellowish billowing smoke pour out of the mouths while the tentacles attempt to get hold of the Blackstick.

The illusion cannot be *dispelled*, nor will it fade away if it is touched. If attacked, it will seem to the PCs that the creature regenerates new parts instantaneously. Each character will be attacked by 1-4 illusory mouths, attacking as 3 HD monsters and causing 1-6 points of illusory damage per bite. The tentacles, 1-6 in number, will attempt to pull the Blackstick free from its bearer. The PC holding the item must make a Strength Check each round. If the PC fails the Strength Check, he sees the tentacles taking the item and are carrying it into the purple flames (actually, of course, the character simply drops the Blackstick, which lays concealed by the illusion). The illusory monster will remain in the room if the PCs leave, and then fade away at the end of the day (or night). The Wraith Lord is able to cast this illusory horror only once per week.

If the PCs leave the room, any damage caused during this combat will "heal" itself within 1-10 turns, dead characters miraculously returning to life! Once the damage heals, the PCs will probably realize the nature of the illusion; if they return after that, treat the illusion as a normal *phantasmal force*.

There is a secret door behind the throne, which leads to the Wraith Lord's final refuge. The door is larger than the throne in front of it, and characters have the normal chance to detect it. A small switch on the base of one of the wyvern statues opens the door. If the switch is pressed, it will cause the whole throne and the secret door behind it to move out from the south wall about 2 1/2 feet, revealing the entrance to area #88.

88. The Wraith Lord's Vault

The Wraith Lord is present in this chamber but he has used an *invisibility* spell to conceal himself. If his *ESP* spell is available, he will cast that as well before the PCs enter.

This chamber is lighted by four braziers that stand in each corner. In the middle of the room, just to the south of center, a pedestal stands four feet from the floor. Atop this stand is a large black book in a shimmering red aura.

In the west, south and east are semi-circular alcoves. Large chests sit prominently within each.

The Wraith Lord is waiting to see what the characters do in this situation. He will attack if it is obvious that he has been spotted; otherwise he will try to take the PCs by surprise.

The book on the pedestal is the Wraith Lord's spellbook, however, it is now *cursed*. Any magic-user or elf who attempts to read the book must save vs. Magic or die! On the other hand, the book may be manipulated as long as it is not perused. And of course, the book may be destroyed with fire. The Wraith Lord cannot allow the destruction of the spellbook. If the party attempts to destroy the tome, the Wraith Lord attacks the principal PC with a touch attack. This will make the Wraith Lord vulnerable to the Blackstick, however. If the combat turns against him, he will seek to cast a *magic jar* spell on a spell-caster, and pretend to be that PC. He will choose the most appropriate moment for betraying the party, later during the adventure. If the *magic jar* attempt fails, the Wraith Lord will attempt to get hold of his spell book, *dimension door* to area #93 and hide until he can relearn his spells. He will then hide his book in one of the coffins and *wizard lock* it. The Wraith Lord will thereafter attempt to ambush the party with *fireballs* and *magic missiles*.

If the characters leave his spellbook undisturbed the Wraith Lord will wait until an opportunity to attack arises. The Wraith Lord's statistics appear in the Introduction (Adventure Two, along with the spells he has memorized, and those on his spell book).

The Wraith Lord will refrain from using the kind of spells which will endanger his spellbook, such as *fire ball*. If he is certain that the characters are about to destroy his book, he will cast a *hold person* before attacking. If the Wraith Lord is slain with the artifact, he will be consumed in a ball of fire. If resurrected, the Wraith Lord will be transformed into a human magic-user (but in the decaying body of the cleric from area #86).

Decaying Landryn: AC 10; MU 10; hp 10; #AT Nil or spells; D Nil or as spell; MV 90' (30'); Save MU 10; ML 6; AL C; St 5, In 18, Wi 17, Dx 12, Cn 5, Ch 3; Spells: any spell the Wraith Lord has not yet cast.

If restored to this form of existence, the Wraith Lord will be totally incapable of taking physical offensive action—his body is useless. However, he will be able to cast spells at the cost of one Constitution point for each

spell cast. If his Constitution reaches 0, Landryn Teriak finally dies.

The following treasures are in the chests:

East Alcove: 9,100 sp, a silver sword worth 800 sp, and a *crystal ball*. The chest is not locked.

South Alcove: 7,200 gp, a gold dagger worth 800 gp and a *staff of power*. The chest is locked.

West Alcove: 5,400 pp and a *helm of reading languages and magic*, decorated with platinum studs.

If the party sacks this chamber but leaves the spellbook intact, the Wraith Lord will choose another, more opportune, occasion to attack them. See CHAPTER EIGHT for more on the possible endings to this adventure.

89. Guardroom

This chamber has the look of a guardroom. Spears and axes line the walls. Six very large sleeping mats lie on the floor—three of these positions are occupied by very large humanoids.

These three are the off-duty warriors. They all wear the *rings of servitude* (see Appendix Section). If the Wraith Lord is not aware of the party's presence in Drax Tallin, these guards will show absolutely no reaction to the PCs, completely ignoring them. If the guards are alert, treat them as AC 9; they do not wear armor off duty, but do have their weapons handy.

There is a total of 180 gp, 450 sp and 38 ep bound in sacks in the chamber.

Drax Tallen—Level III (Map IX)

Since returning to Drax Tallen the Wraith Lord has set about renovation work and now some of the chambers in this level serve purposes other than tombs. There are no living things on this level, since this is the realm of undead creatures. Check for random encounters on this level, thrice per night.

90. Entry Chamber

Three large braziers burn with a purplish light in this chamber. A trap door is in the middle of the floor. A tall and very large creature, draped in purple robes, is standing beside this portal.

This monster is a bone golem, stationed here to prevent passage between Level II and Level III. Unless the PCs are disguised as guards or dark lancers, the bone golem will attack whoever comes into the room from either entry.

If the characters leave the chamber the golem will not pursue them but will remain on guard until destroyed. The stairs lead down into area #84 on Level II. If the party enters this room while pursuing an undead creature, the golem will let the undead escape down the stairs, and then attack the PCs.

91. Main Corridors

These four corridors connect to a circular passageway at the periphery of the rotunda. They are affected with a *continual darkness** spell.

Eight shadows will be lurking in the first corridor the party enters. They will attempt to prevent the party from getting past them. Seven will bear the main burden of battle, while the eighth will fight for 4 rounds, then attempt to escape, trying to reach the Wraith Lord in area #88. This shadow will elect to flee through the door the party opened; it will thus become visible to any PC remaining out of the *darkness** area. These characters should have a reasonable chance of pursuing the undead.

All characters in corridors numbered #91 are considered blind if fighting without magical light (or until the darkness is dispelled). Combat in darkness causes a -4 penalty to all Hit Rolls. PCs in the same square on the map have a 25% chance hitting each other each time they strike in the darkness.

92. Vespen's Tomb

(door locked)

The bronze door to this chamber is marked by a crown. Atop the door are the words "King Vespen" in common tongue.

The air in this chamber is stale and heavy. Dark maroon walls in the room contrast with the white alabaster floor. In the center of the chamber, lying east to west, is a large stone sarcophagus. The finely carved death mask suggests a noble warrior.

Within the sarcophagus are the skeletal remains of the Wraith Lord's brother, Vespen. The body is wrapped in fine maroon silk embroidered with gold filigree at the edges (400 gp value). Around the neck is a silver

medallion with an eagle insignia (200 sp value). Beside the body is a *sword +1*.

92a. Secret Room

This secret room is concealed by a false wall of brick and masonry. A careful examination of this section will reveal a difference in the texture of the stone. This wall section can be torn down in one turn to reveal weapons lining the walls and a chest upon a stone ledge. The weapons include: a bow, a crossbow, a *spear +1*, a flail and a mace. The locked chest contains a suit of *chain mail +1*, a ruby-studded helm (600 gp value) and a shield with the crown and eagle insignia etched in platinum work (200 pp value).

93. Vault of the Old Kings

(doors locked)

This large chamber is occupied by nine sarcophagi lined up north to south in three rows of three. Eight of these stone coffins have been desecrated—the death mask tops have been ripped asunder. Many pieces of smashed stone lie scattered about. The sarcophagus in the northeast corner is intact.

Hiding behind the coffins are twelve ghouls. As soon as a PC gets close to one of the coffins, the undead creatures will jump over the graves and attack them.

One of the creatures will, however, attempt to escape the room. It will be seeking to reach area #88 (on Level II), in order to alert the Wraith Lord of the party's presence. This ghoul will not fight unless attacked by a PC, preferring to run away instead. If forced to fight, it will try to paralyze any pursuers, ignoring them once they have been paralyzed. If the ghoul manages to reach the Wraith Lord, it will not return to this battle.

The coffin in the northeast has the name "Nebunar" inscribed on the side. Within the sarcophagus is a skeleton wrapped in a black shroud. Around the neck is a silver chain with a black dragon medallion (75 sp value).

Nebunar was the first Essurian King and also a devoted follower of the evil ways of Idris. Nebunar was the first recipient of the Blackstick (see area #97 for more details).

The devastated coffins are those of the eight kings who preceded Halvan, Landryn Teriak's great-grandfather. Their remains have been defiled by ghouls on this level. Nebunar's coffin has remained intact due to the strong influence of evil that shrouds the sarcophagus.

94. Chamber of Visions

(door locked)

An elaborate pedestal dominates the center of this chamber. At the top is a font-like basin full of a quicksilver solution. A ledge around the basin holds a number of gems, four large crystals and twelve smaller stones.

The walls of the chamber bear finely rendered images of workaday scenes in a thriving community. Clerics, scribes, soldiers, laborers, children and finely attired merchants are revealed against buildings and street scenes.

An overview of the vision pool corresponds to the accompanying diagram. The DM may wish to reproduce this on a piece of paper and hand it to the players. The four compass points are rendered in Essurian runes, not common tongue letters.

The pool of vision is an ancient Essurian artifact used of late by the Wraith Lord for scrying. Only spellcasters will be able to see into the quicksilver solution so the DM may wish to dismiss others from the gaming area for the purposes of this encounter.

The pool functions through a combination of the user's will and the finely tuned magics of the stones on the rim. The stones act as compass point switches and merely touching them will open up a view of the selected direction without the citadel. For example, if a magic user touches the (N) stone the pool will reflect the landscape immediately north of the building. Distance or depth of field is determined by the user's will (up to 10 miles per point of Intelligence and Wisdom combined). The exact functions of the pool are explained below:

Touching a large stone opens up a view to one of the four compass points.

Touching a smaller stone will adjust the vision e.g., northwest, southeast etc.

Detailed focusing within the field of vision is very taxing on a character's stamina and mental energy. For every round of detailed focusing the character will lose 1 point in Constitution, and 10% on movement rate. Recovery time is at a rate of 1 Constitution point (10% movement rate) per turn of rest.

No visions are available for the immediate area of Bensarian's hermitage and the Shrine of Enoreth in Geffron Forest. This item will

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not be available to the characters subsequent to this adventure. The vision pool is a permanent fixture at Drax Tallen, and cannot be removed.

95. Mirimar's Tomb

(door locked)

Above the bronze door to this vault are the words "King Mirimar."

The stone sarcophagus in this chamber bears the death mask of a scholar or scribe. The chamber is very plain and the walls are austere and undecorated.

This is the tomb of Landryn Teriak's father, a king who was, by vocation, a scholar and not a soldier. A single gold medallion is around the neck of the earthly remains (60 gp value). This token bears the image of a scroll.

96. Landryn Teriak's Tomb

(door locked)

There are no markings on the bronze door to this vault and no name above the portal. This circular chamber is completely empty. This chamber was to be the resting place of Landryn. The last Essurian King was never entombed.

97. Halvan's Tomb (door locked)

The bronze door to this tomb is marked by sorcerous symbols familiar to magic users. Above the door are the words "King Halvan." A magic user or elf will understand the implication of the symbols on the door—namely, that this is the tomb of a magic user monarch.

The death mask on the sarcophagus in this tomb bears the likeness of a figure in the attire of a magic-user. The walls of the chamber are decorated with numerous astrological symbols: stars, moons, planets and symbols common to alchemy.

If the stone sarcophagus is tampered with in any way six darts will be fired from the walls of the chamber. These darts are arrayed in an equidistant fashion and are aimed to the center of the room (at the sarcophagus). Anyone standing in the center square on the map (the square with the room number) must save vs. Spell or sustain 1-4 points of damage. If hit, the character(s) must then save vs. Poison or be paralyzed. The paralysis will last until a *neutralize poison** is applied to the victim(s).

Within the stone coffin is the perfectly preserved body of a man with gray hair and beard, fine chiseled features and the dignified bearing of a noble man. About the head is a royal circlet emblazoned with the magic user symbols (500 gp value). A ring on the right hand glows with a faint *dweomer*. This is a *ring of protection +1, 5' radius*.

At the foot of the sarcophagus is a concealed compartment within the stone coffin itself. A thin stone panel 1' square may be chipped away to reveal a small metal box. It contains a *potion of shadow control*, a magic user's spell scroll, *protection from magic* and a number of letters and papers. One of these parchments is dated 135 years ago and reads as follows:



Sire,

I have received the *Black Rod* from your messenger and I will keep it safe as you have bid me. I wonder that such a dark thing has even come into being. I commend you, lord, for your wisdom. Some in your high station would seek to keep the dark thing and wield it for their own glory. I trust now the years will lie more lightly on you.

Your Servant,

Bensarian of Kevar

This letter has been written by the Sage of Wendar to King Halvan, Landryn Teriak's great-grandfather. The paper acknowledges receipt of the *Blackstick* from the Essurian King. Halvan was a magic-user by vocation and came to kingship late in life. As a youth

this Essurian prince had travelled far and wide in search of knowledge concerning the magical arts. Ironically, the greatest discovery of his career was made at Drax Tallen where he found the *Blackstick* in the tomb of the first Essurian King, Nebunar. Halvan kept the *Blackstick* in his possession for years until he ascended the throne. At this time the king decided to get rid of the artifact and deemed, in his wisdom, that Bensarian of Kevar was a fitting custodian.

It should be noted that family tales of the "black wand" were handed down from the time of Halvan and thus Landryn Teriak was aware of his forefather's treasure.

98. Gallathon's Tomb

(door locked)

Above the bronze door to this tomb are the words "King Gallathon."

The death mask atop this sarcophagus shows the likeness of a wealthy trader or merchant. The walls of the tomb are decorated with scenes of communities from all over the Empire of Thyatis.

This is the tomb of Teriak's grandfather, King Gallathon, who did a great deal to promote Essuria's trading position in this part of the known world.

Within the sarcophagus are 4 sacks of coins: 500 gp, 500 sp, 500 pp and 500 ep. The body is wrapped in fine silk and linen (70 gp) and a gem-studded medallion hangs on a gold chain about the neck (750 gp value).

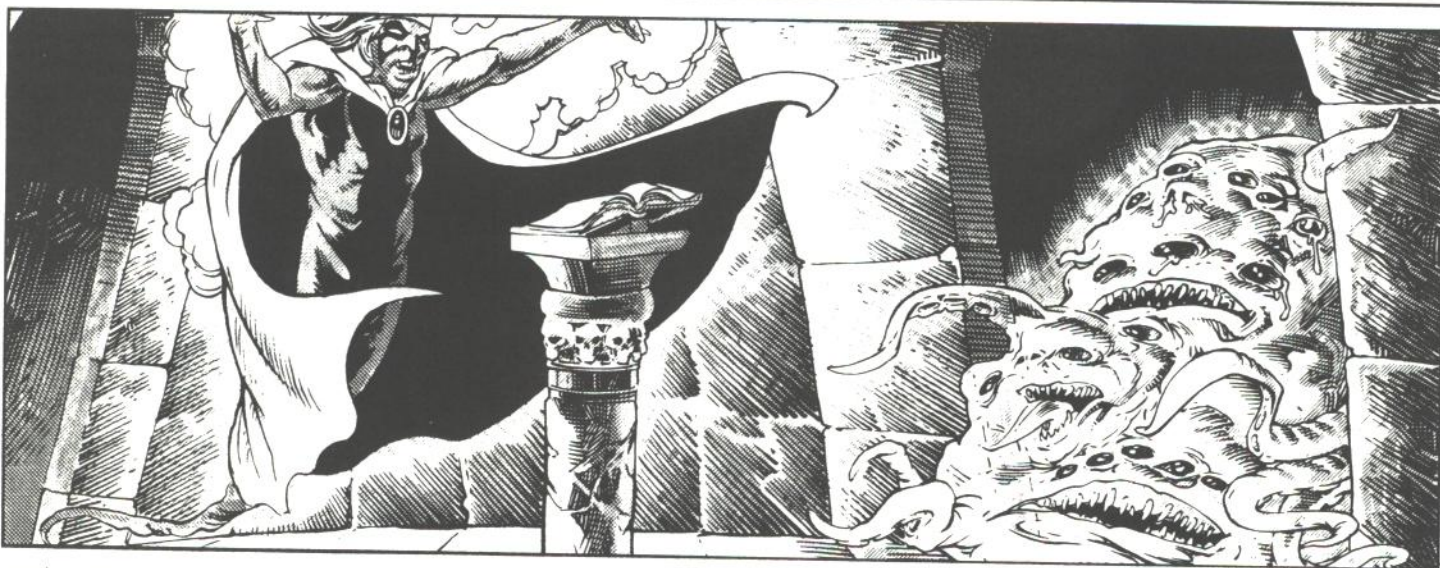
99. Teleportation Chamber

(door locked)

This chamber has a wooden door, reinforced with iron. It is *wizard locked* at 10th level magic-use.

The south side of this circular chamber is dominated by a large chair sitting atop a dais. Two large jewels are set at the ends of each armrest: a ruby to the west side and an emerald to the east. Each of these gems is the size of a man's fist. The chair itself is made from fine hardwood and elaborately decorated with silver filigree. The rest of the chamber is bare except for six unlit oil lamps fixed to the walls.

This chamber is a wondrous artifact that functions as a *teleportation* device linked to area #73 on Level I. The chair will send or



receive things to or from this cave, however, due to the old age of the device, there is a 10% chance it will malfunction during each use. If this happens, instead of *teleporting* its load to area #73, it will send it (or the character) to an random area in this adventure. Roll percentile dice; the result is the encounter number in this module. Ignore creatures that have already been destroyed in previous encounters, otherwise, play the encounter without changes, if applicable.

The chair functions as described below:

A person must be sitting in the chair with each hand touching the proper stone at the same time.

In the situation above there is a 90% chance that the chair will send the person to the cave on Level I. This opportunity will be available only once per turn.

When the device is activated, both gems will glow brightly and a green aura will rise up the person's right arm while a red light will rise up the left limb. The two lights will meet at the character's head. At this point the individual will de-materialize. In an instant this person will re-materialize in area #73 with hands touching the two stones in the wall there.

The device in area #73 functions in a like fashion when the two gems are touched.

This *teleporting* system will send or receive one individual at a time (or up to 250 pounds if the material touches both gems).

If the stones are removed from the chair the system will lose its magical powers permanently. Once detached from the chair the ruby is worth 200 gp and the emerald is worth 140 gp. This device will not function if

removed from Drax Tallen.

100. Exterior Entrance to Drax Tallen

This encounter may be played if the party attempts to enter the citadel from outside. In this case, read the boxed text below to the players when the party approaches the dome from outside.

The west side of this large dome structure is dominated by a covered archway with three pillars. Within the archway, on the wall, there is the depiction of a red wyvern. This insignia is about 5 feet from the ground and about 3 feet in diameter.

The red wyvern depiction marks a secret door that encompasses the insignia. This portal is 8 feet tall and 5 feet wide. The door is opened by means of two levers, one at the base of the northernmost column (south side) and one at the base of the southernmost column (north side). Both levers are carefully concealed behind moveable pieces of stonework at the bottom of each column.

The north lever opens the secret door inwards. However, the southern lever neutralizes the archway trap. The southern lever must be activated first, for if it is not, then the whole archway will come crashing down as soon as 100 pounds of pressure is applied on the area marked by "T" (see map IX).

Anyone standing under any portion of the entry arch will sustain 15-34 hit points of damage (1d20 + 14) from the falling stone. Players may save vs. Breath Weapon for half damage. On the inner wall of the dome is

another lever that closes the door (just to the north or the exit).

Chapter Eight: EPILOGUE

In the unlikely event that there has not been a final confrontation with the Wraith Lord, then the DM should force the issue. The Wraith Lord wants the Blackstick. Accordingly, the Wraith Lord will attack the party using a *mirror image* spell to maximize his chances against the Blackstick. He will be aided in this all-out sortie by three other wraiths. The Wraith Lord and his mirror images will be distinguishable from the lesser undead by a shining silver circlet about the lord's head.

In this attack the Wraith Lord will keep his images moving about in an attempt to confuse the characters, especially the rod-bearer. In the melee the DM should take care to establish the exact position of the real Wraith Lord with respect to his mirror images and the other three wraiths. If the Wraith Lord is aware of who bears the rod he will direct the lesser wraiths to attack this individual while the Wraith Lord images (and the evil one himself) engage the others.

If this battle goes badly for the Wraith Lord he will retreat. If the lesser wraiths are turned or slain, he will not play the mirror image shell game for too long, especially if his spell is reduced to the point where he has one or two images remaining. Here again, the DM must take care to establish not only the positions of the images in relation to the real thing, but also the exact motions and movements of the bearer of the Blackstick. The rod does not affect the images of the Wraith Lord (and does not use up charges in this case).

If the Wraith Lord is forced to retreat yet again, he will use his other spells to their best effect. This monster must materialize—at least in visible wraith form—at the instant spells are cast. Ironically, this powerful entity will be forced to employ hit-and-run tactics for fear of the Blackstick. The DM will note that the Wraith Lord has no way of knowing how many *Decima* charges are in the rod. Even if the rod is spent the Wraith Lord will be kept at bay unless he succeeds in neutralizing the rod-bearer.

If the PCs choose to destroy the Blackstick, the Wraith Lord will lose all reason and engage them in straight melee. At this point, he becomes desperate. If the PCs succeed in destroying the artifact, he will attempt to get revenge using spells until he or all of the PCs are defeated.

The Aftermath

With the successful completion of this adventure the PCs will find themselves in the possession of a number of intriguing items,

including the Blackstick. If the artifact has lost its charges it will remain a *rod of undead rulership*. However, the mastery of such a dark thing is not something lightly undertaken, involving dire consequences for anyone who used such a weapon foolishly (see the description of the Blackstick in the Magic Items section of the Appendix).

If the Blackstick has remaining charges the PCs may be more tempted to keep the item. However, if the PCs return either to Wendar or to Bensarian and express the intention to keep the rod, use the information in the Appendix and in Bensarian's speeches to make them aware of the hazards. The PCs best courses of action involve either destroying the thing or returning it to Bensarian.

Another item of worth is the *hourglass of seeing*. Bensarian will offer 4,000 gp for this item and he will raise the figure to 6,000 if the PCs surrender the Blackstick. If the rod has been destroyed Bensarian will simply offer 4,000 gp for the glass.

In either eventuality Bensarian will give the characters a personal note for the gold pieces, redeemable from the treasury of Wendar. Gylharen, the Wizard-King, will honour the sage's debt without question, unless the country has been devastated. In this case, extra lands would be awarded to the PCs, at the rate of 1 hex on Map XI for each 5,000 gp or debt. It is up to the PCs to divide the estate among them, or sell it. Remember also to pay them the sum promised by the Thyatian agent, if this reward has not already been paid.

Once the party is safely back in Wendar the characters may be in terrible condition, despite a relatively successful quest. If the adventurers have been devastated by energy level loss, due to their encounters with undead, Bensarian will be inclined to show compassion. By administering small amounts of a special *enchanted elixir*, the sage will be able to restore one, and *only one*, experience level to each character. (The DM is advised to use his or her judgement in this situation. Multiple experience level restoration (per character) is not possible.)

If the PCs require a summation of the adventure and a de-briefing on the Wraith Lord then Bensarian will offer the following account. Although this is presented as a full speech, answering questions not only about Landryn Teriak but also about the history of the realms, feel free to paraphrase or omit any details that are of no interest to the players. If the PCs have been quick to understand the various clues scattered throughout this adventure, this summary may be unnecessary.

Bensarian's Final Narrative

Yes my friends, it is true. I did not give you a full account of the Shadow Lord, nor of my involvement with one of his forefathers many years ago. You must forgive me but sages keep their secrets, you know. In any case, none of it would have been of use to you in your struggle against Landryn Teriak or whatever he had become at the end. Despite your victory it grieves me to see the last of the royal Essurian household come to such an ignoble end. Nevertheless, I will now provide you with the history of Essuria and the germane details of the Shadow Lord's career....

Hundreds of years ago this part of Thyatis was a wild and barbarous region and I deem much of it remains so. In any event, at that time a warrior chieftain came from the north in search of new lands to settle. Nebunar was his name and his fierce warriors met with victory after victory in their bid to win the rich lands we now call Essuria. Eventually this force remained unopposed and Nebunar took the title of king over his newly won lands.

It was in this time that the first signs of the evil goddess Idris were seen in this part of the world. It was perhaps lesser known that Nebunar was a follower of Idris. I do not doubt that a good measure of Nebunar's success was due to his affiliation with this dark force.

The Blackstick enters the tale during the reign of King Nebunar. I do not know how he came to possess the rod, but possess it he did. Indeed, it is certain that he became obsessed with the artifact during the final years of his life. Perhaps Nebunar was not content with lordship over men, he may well have aspired to an even darker dominion in his lust for power. Nevertheless, Nebunar went the way of all flesh and was buried in a pit grave at the present site of Drax Tallen. The Blackstick was buried with him.

Hundreds of years passed and seven kings ruled Essuria, each one building on the power and glory of the former until the realm was at the height of its majesty. It was during the reign of the eighth monarch that the king's brother, Halvan, came to me here in the west to study the wisdom of the ages. At this time Essuria was no longer a barbarian kingdom, but a civilized realm with a growing reputation.



The young prince who came to me was a splendid fellow, bright-eyed and eager for knowledge.

Halvan stayed with me for a time and learned much about the arcane arts of the wise. But the time came for him to return to Essuria and he had much to do there. It was his ambition to build Drax Tallen into a wondrous capital and something considerably more than a barbarian's fortress. To this end he wished to build a mausoleum as a tribute to the bygone kings of Essuria.

With his brother's permission Halvan set about his work of excavating and building. In due course he uncovered the old pit grave of his forebear, Nebunar. Of course he also discovered the Blackstick. As a student of magicks Halvan was understandably intrigued by the rod and so he kept it unto himself.

Soon after the construction of the royal mausoleum the king died suddenly and Halvan found himself monarch of the realm. He had not looked for this eventuality and I daresay he did not accept it happily. As king, Halvan had less time for the esoteric arts and yet his mind was troubled by the Blackstick. After some

deliberation, he decided to give the dark thing to me for safekeeping. It was a mark of the man's great wisdom that he did so. Naturally I accepted.

Once I had possession of the Blackstick I began to experience the unbalancing effect of the artifact. Essentially it was a thing of untold evil and chaos. After a time I knew that I could no longer keep it. I did consider destroying it but something prevented me from taking this action. At last I decided to give it to the elves of Gefron for safekeeping. As payment for this heavy custodianship I offered to write the history of the elven folk wherever they may be in this part of the world.

Typically, the elves were so moved by my request and offer that they insisted that I accept the Elvenstar in exchange. Furthermore, so that I might do their chronicles justice, they gave me longevity, a thing of which I cannot speak.

But I have my own innate abilities and I saw that a great evil would arise ere the fall of Essuria. Although I could not see how, I knew that the Elvenstar and the Blackstick would have their places in a great struggle to come.

Through the years I followed the slow but certain decline of Essuria. It began with the death of Halvan. As soon as Landryn Teriak took the throne I knew that he was the face of evil... Nebunar born again, you might say.

Only a few years after his overthrow in Essuria Teriak rose again in Denagoth. Of course no one knew the identity of the evil lord of the north for quite some time. In those days I deemed that Wendar should have the Elvenstar lest the realm should fall to the dark hordes.

And the rest, my brave friends, you know for you have fulfilled the promise of the great artifacts. You have saved Wendar for a second time, liberated the elves and destroyed the Shadow Lord once and for all! I think this calls for a toast, don't you?

APPENDIX

Magical Items

Blackstick

This item is a *rod of undead rulership* that forms the main focus of the second part of the adventure. Having taken the form of the Wraith Lord, Landryn Teriak requires this item to attain mastery over would-be legions of undead. At the outset of Adventure II the *Blackstick* is housed at the elven Shrine of Enoreth in the Great Forest of Geffron.

Apart from its darkest purpose, the *Blackstick* also functions as a *rod of undead slaying and resurrection*. Through using specific incantations—*decima* for slaying and *vifica* for resurrection—the PCs will have in this an invaluable weapon against the forces of darkness. However, the *Blackstick* only has two charges for each function and may not be recharged.

Various riddles and clues in the adventure provide the characters the means of learning the incantations needed to use the *Blackstick*. The incantations are engraved in runes on the rod and will appear when the PCs follow the proper procedure in the adventure.

Undead who are resurrected by the *Blackstick* will be returned to living flesh and blood. Undead who are slain by the rod will be blasted out of existence in an explosion of light.

Learning how to use the *undead rulership* function is dangerous to the owner. Studying it slowly taps the life force of any magic-user who attempted to wield it. Ultimately, the user would finally become a creature like the Wraith Lord. Before this, however, the character would become chaotic and fall under evil influences. The user would also be attacked by powerful undead who would want to prevent the use of the rod.

Elvenstar

The origins of the *Elvenstar* are veiled in the mists of time. The gemstone is however, a very powerful magical item, initially bestowed upon Lord Gylharen by the Sage Bensarian. It was Bensarian who named the stone but offered no account of its history.

Upon receiving the star Gylharen was given a special tome of incantations. By invoking special spells the Wizard-King was able to cast spells through the star itself. The gem acted as a fulcrum or transformer, effectively amplifying the magic-user's spells 10 to 50 times their normal effect (range, area of effect, damage, etc). In addition, some spells would have a duration of up to a year. Several *protections from evil 5,000 feet radius*, cast

around the city, have been more than effective. At other times amplified versions of *dispel magic*, *ice storm*, *cloudkill* or *gust of wind* were capable of routing an invading army. Some of the procedures were decisive in the first wizards' war.

Elvenstar also acted as a sentinel-like crystal ball, alerting the Wizard-King to the presence or encroachment of evil. In effect, the star functioned as an early warning system, accurately detecting and identifying an evil incursion within the bounds of Wendar. (Unfortunately the star did not ascertain the evil intentions of Camla who effectively masked his true aims from everyone. In the end the evil agent substituted a worthless blue stone for the fist-size magical sapphire.)

At the outset Gylharen was fully aware of the importance of *Elvenstar's* tome of incantations so he guarded them so well that Landryn Teriak had no clue as to how they might be obtained. Without access to the special spells, Landryn Teriak has little success with his efforts to make the star function. The Shadow Lord has succeeded (accidentally) in amplifying a few spells through the star.

Thirty years after the Wizard's War, the *Elvenstar* has been stolen by the Shadow Lord's agent in order to eliminate Wendar's defensive capability. At the outset of Adventure I the gemstone is in the Shadow Lord's possession at Gereth Minar. Landryn Teriak has succeeded in putting a limited *cloudkill* spell through the star—this effect surrounds the dark tower. The PCs, however, will not be able to cast spells through *Elvenstar* in this adventure.

Once per month, the *Elvenstar* can heal up to two characters in mortal danger; however, only a Lawful character can use *Elvenstar* in this way. Healed characters' hit points are fully restored. As an option, the DM may instead restore one lost experience level to one or two characters under the same conditions of mortal danger.

In this adventure, *Elvenstar* has additional specific effects against the magic and followers of the Shadow Lord (see area #51). These additional effects stem from his own use of the gem, which made him vulnerable to its magic.

It is harmful to remain in contact with the gem (i.e. with unprotected skin) for a prolonged period. After one turn of exposure, the bearer will feel a slight pain in the heart and *gain* five hit points over his normal maximum. Each subsequent turn, the bearer gains another 5 hit points. When the new hit points total equals the character's previous maximum, the character dies. If the bearer

interrupts the contact before this happens, he immediately loses the "new" hit points. Each subsequent day, the character will permanently lose one hit point, up to the previous total of "new" hit points. The process can only be interrupted with a *remove curse** spell, cast at 10th level. Permanently lost hit points cannot be restored.

Hourglass of Seeing

This unusual device is found in Drax Tallen (Level II). Somewhat similar to a crystal ball, this glass offers visions of the past when the red sand is allowed to run through. Unlike a crystal ball, this item always reveals the same visions—in this case, a pictorial history of Landryn Teriak himself. When the glass is turned after a vision sequence the sand will glow with a green color as it falls through. This procedure recharges the glass for another display (with a red hue about the sand).

A magic user of 11th level or higher can charge the item with new visions by casting an *ESP** spell for each new vision.

Rings of Servitude

These cursed rings are used by the Wraith Lord, and lose their power with his death. Their powers are the following:

The Wraith Lord can communicate telepathically with his NPC servants.

A PC of 5th level or less who dons the ring is *charmed* and will obey verbal instructions from the Wraith Lord. Higher level characters are not controlled.

fearsome undead creatures.

Undead controlled by the Wraith Lord will not attack someone who wears the ring, unless attacked by the character.

Once donned, the ring can only be removed from a living character by a *remove curse** spell, even if the character is not controlled by the ring.

New Monsters

Skeletal Beast

Armor Class:	2
Hit Dice:	Variable
Move:	90'(30')
Flying:	N/A
Attacks:	2 claws/1 bite
Damage:	2-5/2-5/2-20
No. Appearing:	1
Save As:	F 7
Morale:	12
Alignment:	Chaotic
XP Value:	Variable

The skeletal beast can be created in an environment where many bones are available. It is the result of a powerful curse upon the remains of wicked creatures on a battlefield.

The skeletal beast forms several rounds (usually 5-10) after the arrival of enemies. All the bones in the area assemble within one round, forming a monstrous skeleton creature. Its number of hit dice depends on the amount of bones available in the area. The creature cannot form if there are less than 5 HD worth of skeletons within a 30' radius. A *dispel magic* will not prevent the creature from assembling.

After the first round, in which the creature assembles, it may attack whatever trespassers are in the area. The skeletal beast will not leave the area of the battlefield more than 100 feet away (or for more than 1-4 turns). If for any reason one of the two conditions do not apply any longer, the creature collapses and falls to the ground, forming a large stack of bones.

The creature usually has the shape of a skeletal dragon (although the DM may choose another more appropriate shape, depending on the theme of the adventure). The creature can have the physical attacks given in the statistics above, but no magical powers (spells, breath weapons, immunities to normal weapons, etc.).

As a form of undead, the skeletal beast is immune to *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*, cold-based, mind-reading spells and poison. Blunt weapons inflict normal damage, however, other types of weapons only cause half damage. The skeletal beast cannot be turned when within the area of the battlefield it guards. If away from the area (within a 100' radius), it can be turned as a spectre with no further penalty.

Undead Chimera

Armor Class:	4
Hit Dice:	9****
Move:	120'(40')
Flying:	180'(60')
Attacks:	2 claws/3 heads + breath
Damage:	1-3/1-3/2-8/1-10/3-12
No. Appearing:	1
Save As:	F 9
Morale:	12
Alignment:	Chaotic
XP Value:	2,500

The undead chimera is similar to its living cousin, except that it does not breathe fire but instead, a cone of cold of the same range and damage.

As with all undead creatures, it is resistant to *charm*, *sleep*, *hold*, cold-based, mind-reading-spells, and poison. Normal weapons can damage it and the creature can be turned by a cleric. Treat the undead chimera as a vampire for turning, with a -2 penalty on the roll, unless turning or destroying is automatic.

Landryn Teriak, Wraith Lord*

Armor Class:	2
Hit Dice:	10*****
Move:	120'(40')
Flying:	180'(60')
Attacks:	1 or spell
Damage:	2-12 + energy drain
No. Appearing:	Unique
Save As:	MU 10
Morale:	12
Alignment:	Chaotic
XP Value:	3,000

As an undead monster, the Wraith Lord is immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, cold-based, mind-reading spells, and poison. Similarly, the monster drains one energy level per hit. Characters that reach level 0 become wraiths under his control.

In addition, the Wraith Lord is able to employ a full range of spells as a 10th level magic-user, his former profession as a living human being. The Wraith Lord needs his spell book to memorize the spells that he uses. In this regard his dependency is the same as a living magic-user.

The Wraith Lord can only be hit by magical or silver weapons, the latter doing half damage. This horror can be turned by a cleric at the same level of difficulty as a vampire, but with a -5 penalty to the die roll. Thus, clerics under level 8 cannot turn the creature, and all other levels need at least a

score of 6 or more to turn the creature. He cannot be automatically turned or destroyed, whatever the level of the cleric. A *raise dead** spell will cause the Wraith Lord to lose two-thirds of his current hit points if he fails his saving throw (the creature is destroyed if he has less than three points at the time the spell is cast).

The Wraith Lord can give some of his spells to undead creatures under his control, for their own use. He can bestow one memorized spell to one creature (when this is done in the adventure, it is noted). The bestowed spell is available for an hour after which it is either negated or automatically triggered, whichever is appropriate for the spell. Spells bestowed this way are considered as cast by the Wraith Lord. A creature to whom a spell is bestowed does not acquire any other abilities or penalties as a magic user, and cannot memorize the bestowed spell on its own.

Once per week the Wraith Lord can cast a *nightmare illusion*. It is a powerful illusion, similar to a *phantasmal force* with the following differences: it cannot be *dispelled* and will not disappear when first touched. The illusion can fill a 60' x 60' x 60' volume, and last a maximum of 8 hours after which it fades away. The illusion created is usually that of a hideous monster of any shape. The illusory monster cannot be harmed, and can attack any number of targets within the area of effect, as a 3HD monster (see area #88 for this illusion in use).

Any damage, however, is never fatal to the victims; 1-10 turns after the combat, wounds will fade and the "dead" characters revive. At that point, the true nature of the illusion is revealed, and the *nightmare illusion*, if still in effect, is treated as a normal *phantasmal force* spell.

COMBINED RANDOM ENCOUNTERS CHART

Mengul Mounts.	Lothenar F. Drax Tallen	Gereth Minar	Kevar Hill	Forest of Geffron	Encounters
01-10	01-05	—	01-05	01-05	Roll for Events below*
—	06-10	—	—	—	Roll on Column #1*
—	—	—	—	06-10	Roll on Column #2
11-20	—	—	—	11-30	Roll on Column #4
—	11-12	—	—	31-33	Bat, giant 1-100
21-22	—	—	06-15	—	Bear, grizzly 1-2
—	—	—	16-20	—	Boar 1-6
23-40	—	—	21-25	34-36	Brigand 10-40
—	—	—	—	37-40	Bugbear 2-8
41-42	—	—	—	—	Cobra, spitting 1-4
—	—	01-15	—	—	Common man, servant 1-4
43-50	13-20	16-35	—	—	Dark Lancer* 3-12**
51-55	21-23	—	26-30	40-50	Dragon, blue (Brulefer)*
—	—	—	31-40	51-55	Elf 2-24
56-57	24-25	36-50	—	56-57	Follower of Idris 2-8
—	26-28	—	—	—	Ghoul 1-6
—	—	—	—	58-60	Gnoll 1-6
—	29-34	—	—	—	Hell Hound 2-8
—	—	51-79	—	—	Landryn Teriak
58-60	—	—	—	—	Lion, Mountain 1-4
61-65	—	—	—	61-63	Ogre 1-6
66-70	—	—	41-60	64-68	Orc 2-8
—	35-49	—	—	—	Shadow 1-8
—	50-54	—	—	—	Spectre 1-2
—	—	—	61-65	—	Stirge 1-10
—	55-59	—	66-70	68-70	Thoul 1-6
—	—	—	71-75	71-73	Troll 1-6
—	60-64	—	—	—	Wight 1-4
71-74	—	—	—	74-79	Wolf, dire 1-4
—	65-70	—	—	—	Wraith 1-2
75-79	—	—	76-79	—	Wyvern & mounted wight 1d6
—	71-79	—	—	—	Zombie 2-8
80-00	80-00	80-00	80-00	80-00	No Encounter

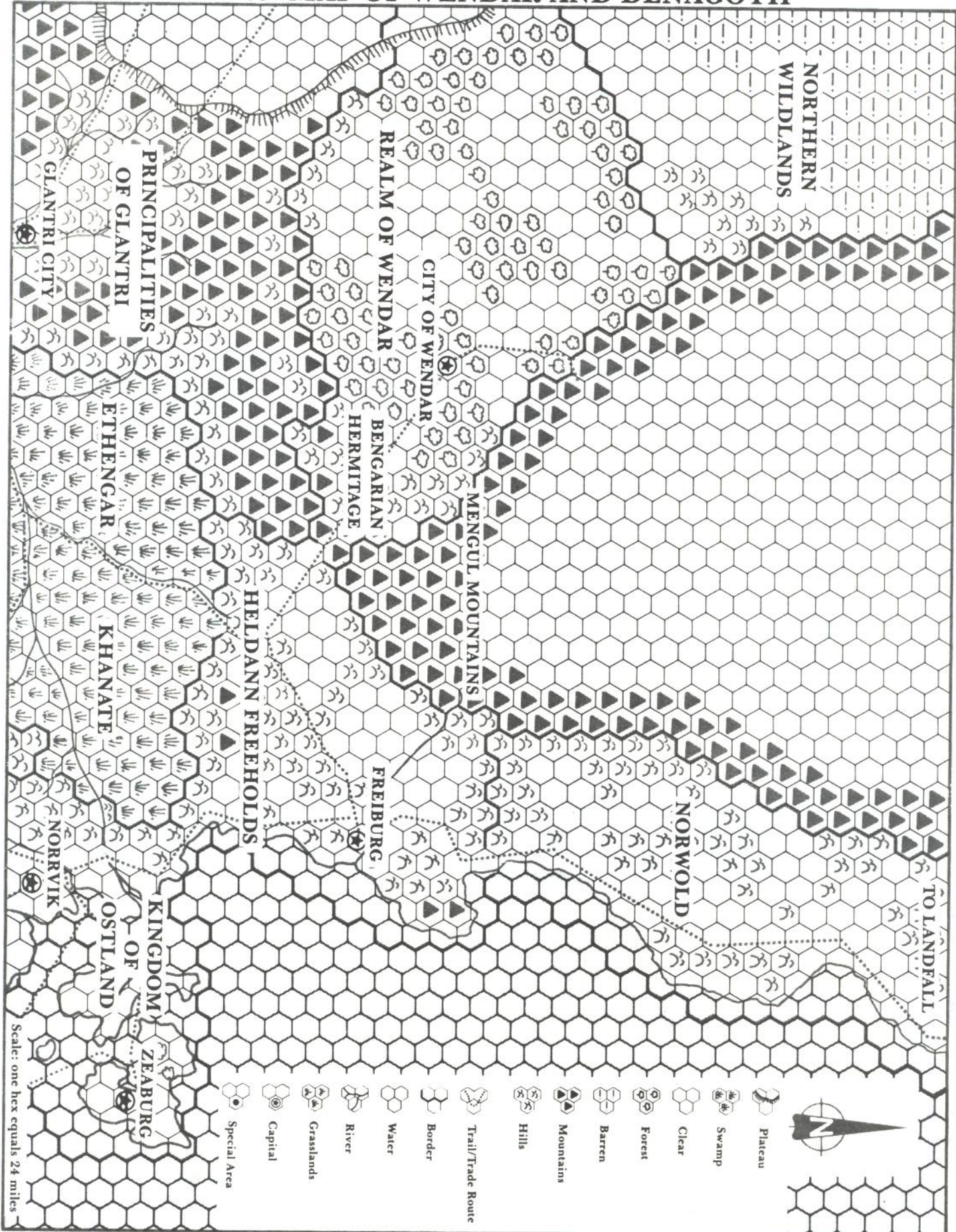
*Treat as No Encounter if in Drax Tallen

**When encountered outside, Dark Lancers are always riding war horses, and are led by a Denagothian Officer.

Random Events (roll 1d12)

- | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1 Small earthquake: a few trees fall down, wooden structure are slightly damaged. If in the mountains see event #2 below.</p> <p>2-3 Terrain slide: rocks slide down a mountain or hill slope (D 1-20).</p> | <p>4-6 Violent thunderstorm: heavy rains will pour for 3-18 hours. All the trails are covered with mud. MV is reduced 50% for two days.</p> <p>7-9 Violent Winds: no travelling possible by air. Vision is reduced to 100 feet in the barren lands. Winds will last for 1d8 hours.</p> | <p>10 Thick Fog: vision is reduced to 20 feet. Make an extra Random Encounter Check immediately, ignoring random Event results. The fog will last for 2-12 hours.</p> <p>11-12 Brulefer, the blue dragon (see Chapter One) has caught up with the party. He will approach them <i>polymorphed into an old hermit</i>.</p> |
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MAP XII PLAYERS' MAP OF WENDAR AND DENAGOTH



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Expert Game Adventure

Saga of the Shadow Lord

by Stephen Bourne

An insidious peril threatens the peaceful kingdom of Wendar. When a traitor stole the realm's greatest treasure, the magical *Elvenstar*, disease, drought, and famine struck the land. For the first time in decades, hostile armies were poised to invade Wendar.

Yet even greater danger looms. The traitor has delivered the magical gem into the hands of the Shadow Lord, Wendar's greatest foe. This evil being has returned from the dead to seek revenge on Wendar, and the *Elvenstar* is the key to an even more sinister plot.

You must evade the Shadow Lord's army, penetrate his fortress, recover the *Elvenstar*, and foil this heinous plan!

This adventure is for use with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Basic and Expert Rules produced by TSR, Inc. You must have both rule sets to play the adventure.

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