

VTF3-07

# Midnight in the Garden of Law and Chaos

A Two-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK<sup>®</sup>

Tuflik, Fals, and Volverdyva Trade Route Meta-Regional  
Scenario

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It's been a long and dangerous trek up and down the Volverdyva and Tuflik rivers. Many clues have become exposed, but behind them all, only more questions. With a hot lead in your hands, the city of Lopolla in Ket may burn your fingers. With Ket ripe with tension from the possible western conflict, the next few days are certainly not going to be pleasant. What's worse the Ket Government or the Elemental Evil? Part Seven in the "Three is the Evilest Number" Series. A two-round adventure for APLs 10 to 16.

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

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## Introduction

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

### Preparation

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

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

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

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

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

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

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the Dungeon Master's Guide when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the Monster Manual when confronted with a monster.

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

### Reporting

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After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM fill out a reporting form. After the form is filled out it should be given to the senior DM.

### Living Greyhawk

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This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

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

### Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the

sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

- Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
- If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the face that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

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

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

### Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard two-round Meta-Regional adventure, set in the Tuflik, Fals, and Velderdyva Trade Route

Meta-Region. Characters native to the meta-region pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per Time nit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per Time

Unit.  
Luxury  
Upkeep costs  
100 gp  
per  
Time  
Unit.

Mundane Animals Effect on APL		# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
	6	6	8	9	10
	7	7	9	10	11

## Adventure Background

### The History of Ket, Part One

Long ago, when the populations of the different races of man (excluding the Flan who had already long passed through) began to migrate into the east, the Oeridians were the first to resettle the valley of Ket. Their migration was inspired by divine revelation of impending doom. Pushed on by monsters and other fellow human tribes, these olive skinned humans did not remain a strong force within the valley and the most powerful of the tribes moved on. Later, the darker skinned Baklunish people started to move into the valley.

These tribes of Bakluni were more organized, better equipped and frankly, just plain wanted it more. They quickly absorbed the left over Oeridian population and greatly intermarried. Like the Oeridians, these Bakluni were also refugees fleeing from their homeland,

looking for a new start. The valley of Ket became a province of the Satrap of Ghayar and the northern reaches of the Bramblewood were cleared for farming.

Before the Bakluni arrived, the few humans of the valley had a peaceful, if not painfully polite and distant relation with the elves of the Bramblewood (wood elf and to a lesser extent wild elf). The Bramblewood was somewhat larger back then, but it was still the same dark, foreboding and extremely dangerous place it is today. There are places in the forest that dark powers want no human to go to (at least not by free will). Originally, a small selection of elven tribes had been granted a divine task to safe guard a certain locations in the Bramblewoods. Over the centuries, all have failed, save one.

Within the last few years, this last tribe (like the other pockets of good in the woods) has fallen prey to the dark forces and have lost control of their ancient charge.

With the coming of the Bakluni into the valley (-466 CY), the relations with the elves of the Bramblewood started to change, but so did the Baklunish culture itself with the Invoked Devastation some 40 years later. The details of the following is something that survived in very few history books and can only be verified by the marks left on Ketite culture or in the tomes hidden away by the high temporal powers.

Soon after the Bakluni had secured their hold on the Ket valley, dark forces infiltrated the confidence of those nobles who controlled the foundling Ghayar province of Ket. Some say they came with the refugees of the Baklunish Empire and others insist the evil was always present in the valley. Either way, these forces worked from within an ultra-secret cult. They were the servants of He of Eternal Darkness.

Never daring to show themselves, for fear (and rightly so) of immediate rebellion by the populace and the forces of good and evil alike, they kept their true nature hidden, even from most of those who served them. Their influence throughout early Ketite society can be seen even today, with the fixation on the number three, and other customs that originate from policy set down by the ruling class of the time in the fledgling province.

What also came of this transition of control, was a war and steady propagandized fear of the elves of the Bramblewood. There were several unholy sites within those thick trees that the cultists wanted access to, and the elves (and their allies) guarding them did not want to give up. There were several forays of military force

made into the Bramblewood (which was a much larger forest at the time), all for double reasons. The cultists had their sights on one particular sight. There was much repeated battle. The Allatisha (meaning Children of Grace in elven), an elven clan set to guard the unholy site from access by those who should never be granted access, was weakened and never recovered even to this day.

Had the cult been able to continue its manipulation of the populace and forays into the Bramblewood, the Flanaess might be a very different place. But Istus had other plans. The Allatisha succeeded in keeping the evil puppet masters of Ket at bay long enough for those dark forces to face downfall from another source.

In -412 CY the prophet Al'Akbar ascended to the divine rank of Demi-God. For many years before this, his teachings had spread throughout the hearts of both the good and the honorable. His Exalted faith was quickly becoming the dominant faith in the Baklunish West. This was helped by his teachings of strong respect for the other gods in the Baklunish Pantheon. With the spread of Qadi throughout the fledgling province of Ket, the controlling cultists were discovered. With some shock, it was learned that even some of the Qadi had fallen to the influence of the cult, one way or another. To protect the minds of the innocent, this immoral plague was kept secret.

That corrupting influence was purged from those who fell under it (even those who fell unknowingly) within the ranks of the Qadi and thus the first Ketite Inquisition was born. The Non-Secular factions of Ket took an increased amount of sway within government of Ket as tainted nobles fell. Its Qadi became interwoven with the government, but never in control of it. The Jurats were formed, each one of these Court Judges a cleric of Al'Akbar. Those and many more traditions formed, but still, the true head of state remained the Satrap of Ghayar with his provincial Grafs acting as a Viceroy.

It never became publicly known why there was such a sudden change in social power other than the embracing of Al'Akbar and the downfall of the vile Satrap and rise of the Sultan of Zeif.

Meanwhile a small diligent order of Qadi and supporting heroes weeded out and destroyed the cultists and their conspirators. Others were sent off for secret trials. Some were found innocent and sent back, the rest were put to final death. The titles of lands and powers were redistributed amongst the Exalted faith and the more virtuous nobles and life went on.

The great dark temple remained hidden within the forest-covered hills of the Bramblewood, as did several smaller temples situated in the cities and countryside alike.

Over the years, the active remnants of the cult were driven out and most of their dark places were destroyed. Due to the deep shame and the danger of even partial knowledge, the existence of the cult was kept a secret by the Qadi and the Nobles. This was probably a mistake.

Keeping itself very small masked among normal society, the cult reformed itself in remote villages and old estates. Their day would come, but it would be many generations away. So they waited.

In circa 365 CY, the forces of Keoland were repulsed from Ket after over 15 years of total occupation. It's at this time that the True Faith sect of Al'Akbar and its Mullahs took Non-Secular control of the nation and either converting or driving out the Qadi of the Exalted faith. Many of the secret stores of information fell to new hands as the resources, both human and material, were redistributed to the True Faith. Almost as much information was lost as learned. Ever so slowly, the cult in its many aspects, started to drift back to Ket.

### **What's in the unholy temple of the Bramblewood?**

It is a site of pure evil made of strong materials and vile enchantments. It is shaped like an inverted ziggurat and more than half buried in the swampy ground. The different chambers of the ziggurat display on its walls ancient writings. A mixture of cryptic prophecies and unholy rites to the Dark God await evil to return to read it. Like the floating temple in VTF3-06 Firestorm, the different chambers hold arcane apparatus for unknown purposes, all powered by the beings held prisoner in the bottom of the temple. Spiral doors, lights and other magical phenomena are also powered by the life draining of the deep prison chambers.

This unholy site is a key to furthering the goal of freeing the Dark God from his imprisonment. The wall texts cryptically explain how the four eyes of the Elder Elemental God need to be sought out (and they have already), and used to collect fluid of the elements.

The temple also shows the current location of the Node Seeds, thus the characters are able to learn the various locations of the seeds for use in the near future. The locations are shown with a crude map of the Flanaess. A different color (representing each of the elements) is displayed as a glow, somewhere on the map. The scale and detail is not exact, but it's enough of

a clue to give the characters a start in their hunt for the node seeds and the temples that house the artifacts.

For a long time the unholy site had been guarded by a family line of Gold Dragons and their allies, celestially descended Wild Elves. They protected the site from the forces of evil whom would use the place for untold evil.

But that mission has failed. The last gold dragon that protected the site became weak and sick from the decades of guarding this place of concentrated evil. When a green dragon with powerful allies appeared, the gold dragon and the elves put up little in the way of a challenging resistance. This was made worse by a traitor in the ranks of the elves.

Soon, the gold dragon was dead, and the wild elf tribe enslaved due to their clan elders being taken prisoner and kept deep within the ziggurat.

During the first few years, the wild elf guardians were forced to pay tribute in the form of rare materials (such as obsidian, adamantine, etc), all for repair work on the unholy site. They were allowed to contact other elves and humans to accomplish this. Thus with much mystery behind it, the guardian tribe used others to funnel and smuggle goods that the New Cabal would have had more difficulty in acquiring due to their universal hatred. Besides, they had other need for their own resources.

The elf tribe is overseen on behalf of the green dragon, by the traitor elf and his monstrous enforcers (ogres, golems and a half fiend naga). When the tribe was first defeated, it was because their Ghaele (Eladrin) patriarch and the four of the six remaining Half-Celestial/Half Wild Elf princes were taken prisoner within the temple and the sacred life crystal called the Horinthian Liffex Crystal (the center of the tribes life force) was damaged. Over the years, the elves grudgingly worked for their new master, occasionally rising up in spontaneous and isolated acts of revolt. These causalities, combined with the occasional elf being transferred either to the temple or outside the forest, never to be seen again, have brought the tribes population down to a manageable level.

Of the two remaining half-celestial princes, one fled after yet another botched uprising (the life crystal can be used against the elves) deeper into the Bramblewood with a quest to rally support among the other (normal) wild elf tribes. The other prince stayed with the village, but his fate was soon sealed.

During this time, the traitor elf sought to master the sacred Horinthian Liffex Crystal and repair it for his

own power. Though his dark masters had promised him such power, they now grew concerned with what he would do with it. To foil him without destroying his loyalty, agents of the New Cabal stole away both the remaining shard of the Horinthian Liffex Crystal yet to be reattached and kidnapped the remaining prince, making it appear he fled with the shard.

Instead of being brought to the temple where the traitor has occasional access to, the prince was taken to the Ket village of Shalrees (along with the shard) and held captive there deep under the manor house of the Bey. There, a particularly sadistic barbed devil (or horned devil at APL16) who acts as resident torturer has drained both the shard and the prince into lifeless shells via the special powers of the black goo.

The prince, who originally escaped to rally support amongst the forest, has made a deal with a small coalition of wild elf tribes. They have been hunted and poached rather badly over the recent years and they've pinpointed the source to be from the Beyship of Shalrees. All of the normal wild elves are ignorant of the connection between the Beyship and the New Cabal holding the temple.

The agreement is, if the half-celestial prince leads the wild elf collation against the elf poaching humans of the Beyship, the elves will in turn follow the prince in freeing his people from what binds them.

The combined warriors of the wild elf tribes attacked the Beyship of Shalrees and the fortified manor at its center. The forces of the New Cabal have stocked this remote Ket village with forces more terrifying than hobgoblin mercenaries.

The otherworldly garrison took the attacking elves by surprise. The elves were expecting Ketite troops of a more mundane nature. The Nightwings and their summoned shadows, the Barbed Devil, the full compliment of Somb and the barghest proved to be too much. The elves fought with abandon and inflicted many casualties but they paid for those blows with their lives.

Only a few wild elves escaped back into the forest and many of those pursued by barghest and shadows. Captured on the battlefield was the remaining half-celestial prince. He was taken down beneath the manor house to enjoy the same treatment of his kin before him.

While down in the dungeons waiting to die, he learned of the drained shard elsewhere in the manor house. If only he could find it, transfer his remaining life force

into the shard to restore it, then have someone take the shard to his imprisoned kin.

Once his kin are freed, the shard can be used to take control of the Horinthian Liffex Crystal and defeat the traitor, thus making everything right with the world. What he doesn't know, is that his kin, including the traitor, have already all but collapsed where they stand. So much so, that the ogres and other guards have been mostly moved off elsewhere to guard other important sights along the trade route. The traitor didn't see that one coming. Now maybe he'll spill some info about what's going on in the ziggurat if asked nicely.

### **Details on the celestial elves**

The Allatisha that protect this place, their patriarch is a Ghaele (Elven Celestial Eladrin) and the small number of princes of the tribe are half-celestial, and all the rest are Celestial Wild Elves.

They have a mystic blood bond with the patriarch, who swore to serve the now dead gold dragon (and all those before it) and its divine cause long ago. The entire tribe is tied together with the Horinthian Liffex Crystal, an object about the size of a large bush. It rests in a special building in the center of the elf village. The Ghaele and four princes are captured and being held under magical (and life draining) bonds by the Green Dragon and the New Cabal via the temple's life furnace.

### **Why are the elves being kept alive?**

The Celestial elves don't know it, but their elders (and occasional Celestial elf) are being fed to the temple (and as nice light snacks for the dragon). Similar to the floating islands found in the Fading Land of Tusmit (See 'VTF3-05 Firestorm'), chambers in the bottom of the temple are designed to feed off life force and use it to power the temple's various functions.

The patriarch and the princes are being used in a prime roll, but every once in a while, Celestial elves are thrown onto the 'fire'. These lesser elves are sucked dry of life energy rather quickly, but the Ghaele patriarch and the four princes burn much slower and efficiently.

In addition to this, the subjected elves are being used to smuggle in exotic building materials, though the threats to make them do this have started to wear very thin. With the elves using contacts to bring in the exotic materials, its less resources the cabal need to use here, and less likely to expose themselves to the outside. The green dragon is just happy to have servants (who happen to make great snacks when no one is looking).

The Temple has been captured for several years now, but its energy consumption has been low, thus the Princes and Patriarch are still alive, only slightly weakened (but completely captive).

As for the elves, very recently (within days of the start of this adventure), with the corruption of the shard, they have become weakened. By the time the characters come across them, they are all in a state of exhaustion and worse.

## The Plot

A few years ago, a new cabal (including a green dragon) of powerful worshippers of Tharizdun captured the unholy temple within the Bramblewood forest. Using the temple, they learned of the details of the Prophecy, and of the location of the node seeds. With the powerful artifacts, information and wealth obtained from the ziggurat, the cabal was able to foster their own plan to serve the Dark God.

This new cabal was in opposition to the current Cabal of power, those of the Temple of Elemental Evil fame. When the ToEE and its Cabal fell from grace, the New Cabal moved in to pick up the pieces, reclaim the node seeds (from their ancient hiding places), set up the up node temples and support organizations, and now attempt to rule the world (by freeing their Dark God).

Ket has been free of outside influence for a long time. The only monkeys on its back were the fundamentalist zealots that try to keep control of the society and the factions of the shadow government that functions outside (but hidden within) the Beygraf and his official government.

Recently though (since before the last Greyhawk war), a secret sub-faction has developed within the already secret shadow government. This new sub-faction is actually a very old one. The cultists and powerful outsider servants of the Dark God have returned to influence Ket.

This time around, the influence is to be much more subtle. It shall all be to bring about the Prophecy and to control enough influence to protect the goings on (such as the caravans, and access to other important areas) throughout Ket.

**What happened last time in the series? And what happens now?**

The characters have so far (during the other VTF adventures) traveled around Verbobonc, Dyvers and Veluna and have passed through Ket (but did not stop) and into both Tusmit and Ekbir. In the Ekbir adventure (Smile in the Mist), the characters had the chance to hear prophetic warning from a high cleric of Istus concerning what they must do in Ket (without directly implicating the location as Ket).

As well, they had a chance to find documents concerning the trade route contraband, leading the characters to Lopolla, the capital of Ket. The characters are in for a bit of surprise though. When they cross over the border into Ket, they alert the local New Cabal of their incoming presence and a trap of sort is set for the characters.

A trap that could force the characters to show their hand and at the same time remove them from the picture entirely. It's patsy time. Things go wrong though when the Kettish Inquisition show up. No one ever expects the Kettish Inquisition.

This leads the characters on a need to escape the city of Lopolla and avoid all those wanting them on a Beygraf's Warrant. To clear themselves, the characters need to trace down a cargo shipment that could be at a small riverside estate. Unfortunately for the characters, the only thing waiting for them is an ambush.

From the ambush and empty estate, clues lead the characters closer towards the Beyship of Shalrees and the shadow of the Bramblewood.

Defeating the Bey and his disguised guards, the characters then make their way down into the dungeon and find both the shard and the dying elf prince. Combining the two, the characters receive a reenergized shard that acts as a beacon, leading the way to the elf village.

Following a clear cut trail into the Bramblewoods, the characters can find the elf village if they have the beacon, or else continue on and find the unholy ziggurat temple and its green dragon guardian.

Once the temple is cleared and searched, the characters have a chance to loot items from the dragon's horde, read the Prophecy™, and record the location of the Node Seeds™ on the big map. Once they've had their fill of that, they can rescue the elf princes and flee the temple before it sinks back into the muck.

### The Ekbir connection

In Ekbir, the characters have the chance to gain two clues to help them along the way in this adventure. The first is a bit of fortune telling by a high cleric of

Istus. This cryptic clue tells a little bit about the first part of this adventure. Mainly, that something to the effect of;

***"Hear me now and fear this later.***

***In a land of turmoil and grief you shall travel to its head.***

***Among its spires a man you will find dead.***

***Three men shall confront you, but trust them not.***

***If you draw your weapons, you will be forever sought.***

***Escape from the walls you must, if you ever wish to fulfill your desires.***

***Trust he whom tells you what has transpired.***

***Those with fingers, shadowy stretched, shall influence policy and declare you be wretched.***

***To free your souls and your necks, seek the contraband that might still be left.***

***Fear not the path, but fear the toothy maw. It all hides where humans bring their saws. "***

**The second clue**, is that in the port village that the characters raid in Ekbir, they find caravan information. In it, is information that points to a Ket noble (and previously a small time government official), who owns a caravan company (and a Moqullad Consortium contract) for some of the routes indicated, and umbrella's the trade and passage rights for Iron Rings company and other connection depots.

The HQ and warehouse for the small company are in Lopolla, capital of Ket. This noble's family (his older brother) is the Bey of the Shalrees and they also have a very small estate on the Tuflik river. It's at this very small estate where the smuggling is taking place, as only the legal cargo is taken to Lopolla from here.

### **An Easterner's Guide to the Baklunish West**

The majority of the Baklunish people follow a different pantheon than the people of the east. If you look hard enough, you can probably find a representative of most eastern religions somewhere with in the Baklunish West, but don't expect them to have much sway or influence. Major eastern gods such as Pelor, Rao, Boccob, Beory, Zilchus and Fharlanghn seem to have footholds wherever humans live, but the farther west you go, the rarer this becomes. In Ekbir, non-Baklunish faces are rather rare even inside of the major trade centers, but in Ket, the population itself would be

hard to distinguish at times from west and east, if not for accent and manner of dress. This is due to the heavy mixing of blood with the east.

At the head of the Baklunish Pantheon (as far as the mortal worshipers see it) is the demigod Al'Akbar. No divine influence is greater to the modern customs of the west than his. In theory, Honor, Family, Generosity and Piety form the backbone of all Baklunish lives, and for most, they are known as the Four Feet of the Dragon (of the ancient customs), though others have a different definition of that. Amongst these, the other divine powers of the pantheon intermix into the customs of these people. For example, the comparatively new faith of Al'Akbar has mixed into the culture of the faithful, the tenets of Guardianship, Faithfulness, Dignity and Duty. Even for those who do not revere Al'Akbar as their patron god, his tenets have become part of their customs.

A very important item to note is the difference between the two major sects of Al'Akbar. One is the Exalted Faith (LG,NG) and the other is the True Faith (LN).

The people of the west worship one sect or the other, never both. You have a better chance seeing a Pholtus cleric marrying a St. Cuthbert cleric, than you do of seeing clerics of the Exalted and True Faiths willingly share even a meal. Yet it is the same demigod that they worship.

The Exalted Faith (LG, NG) dominates Ekbir and holds sway over southern Tusmit. Their clerics are called Qadi. Their holy symbols have the image of a red cup and a black talisman. They tend to be kind men, but still orderly and usually not much for nonsense. When referring to their god in general reference, they call him "The High Cleric". Outside of Ekbir, their clerics dress in red and black. Inside Ekbir, they revert back to the local color scheme as set down by tradition to show rank. They do this in a ritualistic fashion that includes a bathing.

The True Faith (LN) dominates all of Ket and the northern reaches of Tusmit. Their clerics are called Mullahs. Their holy symbols have the image black cup and a red talisman. They tend to be stern men, but never actually evil (though their inspired deeds seem that way at times to the east). These men are zealots to the exact wordings of the scriptures and interpret them in a way that enforces control on a population for its own sake, to save the population from itself. When referring to their god in general reference, they call him "The Restorer of Righteousness". Though sometimes the Mullahs like to think they do, the



Mullahs do not control any of the governments in the west, though they do have a strong influence in Ket and Tusmit. They form the pool of Judges that interpret the law (as set by the secular government) at trials and seem to be a heavy fixture of most military and policing units. If a mullah is shaking his finger at you, chances are you're in trouble. For the majority of mullah's that don't hold a temporal authoritative office, they remain the ever watching moral watch dogs for the population, but even they must respect the proper order and policies of the government and its systems.

At a distance, the best way to tell the difference between a cleric of the two different sects, is that the Exalted Faith device is a red cup and a black talisman, and his clothing have a similar scheme. The True Faith's device is a black cup and a red talisman and his clothing has a similar scheme.

It is written that a cleric of Istus said these words after observing a prolonged and heated argument between the opposing sects in a royal hall:

*"Both were of the same stock, same tongue, wearing the same garments. Both held a holy book in his hand, authored by the same soul. As they argued, it was as if one was the echo of the other, but with a completely different meaning once the sound had stopped bouncing. Still they argued and their arms caused their robes to whirl about. It was then that I realized the true difference between them. The Qadi's robes were red on one side and black on the other, and the Mullah's robes were black on one side and red on the other."*

Clerics of the Exalted faith can be found in Ket, but most are there as official representatives of Ekbir (via the small embassy in Lopolla) or as members of the Consortium. Others are allowed into the borders under the auspices of being part of Trade Caravans or travelers passing through. Their names and information are recorded by the authorities as they enter the country. A close eye is kept on them. If they are found to be attempting acts of 'subversion', they are expelled from the country, or worse.

## Ket

< For more detailed information on the life and times of Ket, go to <http://ket.living-greyhawk.com/> >

Ket is a feudal monarchy that has a bloated bureaucracy and a very influential church (True Faith) that acts as a self appointed watchdog.

This relationship has made the less informed confused into mistaking Ket for a Theocracy. In truth, the

tenants of the True Faith force the church to follow the government just as they teach the their flocks to do. At times, the church takes exception to this when it strongly feels the government has failed in its own laws, but these times are rare and civil disobedience is never taken upon lightly. Official channels are the normal medium for the church.

To balance all of this, the church of the True Faith has used its influence to weave itself into the government and services of the nation. Though they may not officially be in control of the various branches of the government (that is always the Beygraf) they extend much influence by having their clerics serve as the actual administrators.

**Jurats:** These are the judges of Ket. They come exclusively from the ranks of Mullahs of the True Faith, but are an organization, in principle, separate from the church, and in the employ of the government. Thus, the Jurats are considered a section of the Military, though a para-military at best. In the cities and large towns, they have permanent residence. In the rural area's, several wander the districts, overlapping each other, stopping in to judge the trials of any serious crimes that await them. In cities, when serious charges, such as murder, or anything to do with the arcane, three Jurats come together, and use their infamous "Triple Zone of Truth". Some of the rare, yet powerful Jurats, are able to use *discern lies* (few Jurats have cleric levels that high, many cap out, and take levels of Expert, focusing in Law). But all criminal procedures are long and thorough. Both innocent and guilty alike are subject to intense questioning, searching for signs of guilt in many topics.

Who watches the watchers? In addition to Jurats looking out amongst their own ranks and the government who they are responsible to, Inquisitors of the Truth Faith frequently look for signs of weakness amongst all the Mullahs (including Jurats) of Ket.

**Threshers:** These men are usually raised from childhood to become thug servants of Ket. Many come from orphanages or other institutions where propaganda can be drilled into their heads. Others are from notable families or Thresher offspring. These men handle the 'trials' for lesser crimes, minor theft, disorder, suspicion of disorder, suspicion of suspicion of disorder, etc. These crimes, the Threshers will enact judgment with out any need for a Jurat. They have the authority to use lethal force in carrying out their civil duties should it become warranted. Should a criminal be taken alive, and it is for a crime that needs resolution by a Jurat, then the prisoner will be held over (with few rights, always assume flawed until

proven righteous) till a trial can be held. Typically, if it's punishable by stocks, then usually the Threshers handle it. In rural areas, villages and small towns usually have about 5 or so Threshers stationed permanently. They sometimes take families in the community. Cities and large towns on the other hand, can have Thresher Barracks, of 50 to 100 strong. Many rural areas have none, and have to wait for Thresher patrols to come check up on them. These patrols have a set territory. The Capital city of Lopolla is entirely policed by Threshers. In the countryside, Threshers share their authority with the local Beys in a complicated and often chaffing manner. The Threshers represent the Beygrafs involvement (as morally sanctioned by the True Faith) in affairs, and the Beys represent their own noble rights to enforce their wills in Ket's feudal system. Tensions over jurisdiction are always high and unclear. What is clear, is that Bey's are not above the laws of Ket, but do function with a different set of them.

**The Black Scorpions** are an elite investigative branch of the Threshers. They are trained to study intelligent opponents and divine/guess their intentions/goals. When important personages go missing, it is frequently the Black Scorpions who investigate the kidnappings. Like wise, when there is something strange in a District, these are the men who are called, much unlike the regular Threshers. They are a secretive branch of the Threshers and rarely ask for outside assistance. It is rumored that a highly skilled Black Scorpion can walk into a bar, close her eyes and pick out a lawbreaker by vibration alone – but that is just a story...

Generally speaking they are combinations of Fighter and Rogue, with more ranks in the former.

**Beys:** The term Bey is used to denote a noble of some type but less in standing than a Graf (duke). A Bey could have lands as small as a single village, to as large as several towns and the lands in between. The term Bey said as a title (at the front of a name) denotes that person to be the nominal head of the noble house hold and usually the primary land holder. If the term Bey is used, but without the capital 'B' and attached to a last name, it means that person is still a noble, but not the head of the noble household (though they may still hold lands, but usually as stewards for the family head, though in private circles, the lands would be considered 'theirs' for all practical purposes).

Nobles are not above the law, but they are not held by the same laws the commoners are. They have their own limits, rights and privileges. In theory, the lawful

requirements of the different nobles are designed to mimic those of the commoners, but in feudal practice, Bey's and Grafs have the potential for a fair bit of freedom to exercise their will on the serfs and commoners on their lands. The more powerful the noble (or more removed from the watchful eye of others) the more divergence the noble can have and still function. Those who diverge too much and without the political clout to back themselves up, fall victim to their own extremes. Other nobles, the church or some other powerful organization may use the proper channels to call the noble out and defend his actions.

Such call outs are rare though, for those there are many cases where they should occur, all such incidents send ripples in the water and from those ripples emerge instability. In many cases, blind eyes are turned in order to keep the greater whole stable.

The estate of a Bey is his castle- meaning that in his home, his word is law. Of course, the Bey himself has feudal superiors, so a Bey must be careful what words he makes law. Typically, its not a commoners place to question his social superior nor to act on their own to correct the perceived wrong doings of a Bey. Though there is nothing stopping an influential commoner from trying to set the wheels in motion to have the proper channels deal with a divergent Bey. But the wheels of justice can take a long time, or even stop spinning if there is not enough force to keep them going.

For example, a 'Good' noble might get himself into trouble for being too forgiving and an 'Evil' noble might open himself up to charges of extreme cruelty causing disorder. In more extreme cases, a 'Good' Noble might do himself in by aiding bleeding hearts against the tyranny of certain elements within Ket, and an 'Evil' noble might become greedy for power and ally himself with devils. Though completely opposite, both extremes take away from the pursuit of order.

**Ethics over Morality:** Due to the heavy influence of the True Faith as well as other factors, the national identity for Ket is one that empathizes orderliness and structure over disorder and chaos. So much so, that 'chaos' in some ways has replaced 'evil' as the enemy of the dominant culture. Though it is not a crime to have a 'chaotic' alignment (for what does that truly mean in a court of law?), it has a clear stigma attached to it. Where there is smoke, there is fire, and a chaotic person disrupts order, and order is what keeps society safe and functioning. This is not to say ever person in

Ket believes this way, but many of those in power do (or at least heed it with lip service).

An addition to this, Good and Evil as a force in the universe are often seen as a form of weakness by those who proclaim order and lawfulness as supreme. As with Chaotic, it is not a crime to have a Good or Evil alignment, but it tends to carry a smaller stigma of weakness (be it either softness or hardness). Those with these morality extremes are still expected to function within the expected guidelines of the nation, culture and laws. Those who do not risk exposure, soon find themselves being taken care of.

A side effect of this is that Evil (mostly in its Lawful form) has taken a strong hold among the alignments of Ket, mainly in the ruling class. Harshness and tyranny has corrupted the laws which were originally intended to bring about orderly bliss. Though the more extreme infringements have been smoothed out by the mullah's who act as the Jurats and judicial advisors, it is still the role of the Nobles of the land (which make up the government to make the laws. What this means as well is that Lawful Evil is a common alignment within Ket.

Woe to the easterner who comes to Ket and tries to vanquish every 'Evil' aligned person he meets.

### **Keeping a Low Profile**

Due to various reasons of social, political and racial tension, the characters may find them selves being treated differently by the people of Ket. These views change with the times and can come and go quickly or stay for generations. All of the following penalties stack.

General disguise rolls need only be made once at the beginning of the adventure (or when ever the character decides to first disguise himself). Only when authorities are scrutinizing need a second check be made.

### **Tusmit home region:**

Tusmit has a distinctive accent in both Common and the Baklunish tongue. Dress and mannerisms are slightly different when compared to the typical Ketite. Unless a Tusmit character passes a Disguise check (DC15) to purposely fake his nationality, the character suffers a -4 circumstance penalty to all charisma-based social skill checks. When dealing in-depth with a Ket authority figure, the Disguise check is harder (DC17). If the authority figure catches the person trying to misrepresent themselves, there is a 50% chance that character is rounded up at the end of the adventure for questioning at the cost of an additional TU (One Time

Unit). Other than the penalties to skill checks listed above, there is no TU penalty from authorities for a Tusmiter who is open to begin with about his nationality.

**Note:** Non-Human's from Tusmit have a +10 circumstance bonus to their Disguise checks for the above check only.

### **Ekbir home region:**

Ekbir has a distinctive accent in both Common and the Baklunish tongue. Dress and mannerisms are slightly different when compared to the typical Ketite. Unless a Ekbir character passes a Disguise check (DC15) to purposely fake his nationality, the character suffers a -1 circumstance penalty to all charisma-based social skill checks. When dealing in-depth with a Ket authority figure, the Disguise check is harder (DC17). If the authority figure catches the person trying to misrepresent themselves, there is a 50% chance that character is rounded up at the end of the adventure for questioning at the cost of an additional TU (One Time Unit). Other than the penalties to skill checks listed above, there is no TU penalty from authorities for a Tusmiter who is open to begin with about his nationality.

**Note:** Non-Human's from Tusmit have a +10 circumstance bonus to their Disguise checks for the above check only.

### **Eastern Nations home region:**

Easterners typically stick out like a sore thumb when they visit Ket. The difference in cultures can be quite shocking at times, even for one as mixed as Ket. There is also a distrust of Easterners due to wars and perceived political disruption. If it were not for the dependence on mixing for trade, these rifts would be much greater.

Unless an Eastern character passes a Disguise check (DC20) to purposely fake his nationality, the character suffers a -1 circumstance penalty to all charisma-based social skill checks. When dealing in-depth with a Ket authority figure, the Disguise check is harder (DC25). If the authority figure catches the person trying to misrepresent themselves, there is a 50% chance that character is rounded up at the end of the adventure for questioning at the cost of an additional TU (One Time Unit). Other than the penalties to skill checks listed above just for being Eastern, there is no TU penalty from authorities for an Easterner who is open to begin with about his nationality (unless the adventure text specifies otherwise).

**Note:** Non-Human's from the East have a +10 circumstance bonus to their Disguise checks for the above check only.

### **Knights of the Watch**

Members of this organization are hated by most Ketites and despised by the authorities.

Unless an KotW character passes a Disguise check (DC20) to purposely obscure his membership, the character suffers a -8 circumstance penalty to all charisma-based social skill checks. When dealing in-depth with a Ket authority figure, the Disguise check is harder (DC25). If the authority figure catches the person trying to misrepresent themselves, there is a 75% chance that character is rounded up immediately and sentence to life in the copper mines for spying (this character is removed from play and must petition the Ket Triad for permission resume play). Make sure the KotW gets the feeling that pushing things in Ket is not a wise idea.

A KotW who does not try to disguise is membership still receives the -8 penalty, but does not risk extra TU penalty (unless the adventure text specifies otherwise).

Other than the penalties to skill checks listed above just for being Eastern, there is no TU penalty from authorities for an Easterner who is open to begin with about his nationality (unless the adventure text specifies otherwise).

### **Of the Elven persuasion**

The elves of the Bramblewoods and the humans of Ket have been in constant conflict. Due to propaganda and the ignorance of the common people, elves of the Bramblewood are considered monsters, and elves from other lands have a bit of this stigma attached to them as well.

Elves and Half-Elves suffer a -4 circumstance penalty on all Charisma based skill checks when dealing with human Ketites (unless the adventure text specifies otherwise).

## **Lopolla**

This is the capital of Ket and the largest of the four cities. Lopolla is also the home for most of Ket's Non-Secular powers.

Just after the last Greyhawk war, the city was the site of a small (mostly bloodless) civil war, after the last Beygraf was killed and different factions tried to seize control. One of those factions was a sub-faction of the

Church of the True-Faith and another was the military backing their own candidates of Beygrafship.

Ket came close to becoming a Theocracy, but the entire Church of the True Faith was not behind this move, so in the end, it failed. The leading general at the time became the new Beygraf.

In keeping with the explosive nature of the power structure of the nation, the capital is garrisoned and policed only by Threshers (no Lower Watch) and the Royal section of the city is watched over by the Thorns (the Beygraf's Own). Law enforcement here is strict and those without political protection can find themselves in hot water, real quick.

The following are lists of laws and regulations that those entering the city should learn and abide by (though it is by no means the full extent of the long list of rules and regulations, just those that are relevant to this adventure).

### **Rules for Weapons and armor in Lopolla**

- No Armor is allowed
- Small weapons (daggers, staffs, saps, double purpose utility items) are allowed if kept visible and declared upon entry.
- All gear not allowed in is placed in a backpack, a number is given, and the pack is securely placed away. It is then handed off storage by a neutral entity, the temple of Mouqual.
- Characters paying a Luxury lifestyle are allowed to carry a scimitar or falchion within the city. A Disguise check (DC15) combined with a Bluff check (DC20) trick the Threshers into thinking that the character is of the luxury status and thus allowed those privileges. < Once into the city, do not make the character re-roll to trick new Threshers, unless that character does something extreme to break the pretense>.
- Should the characters make a claim of carrying in a cargo shipment of arms and armor, the procedure is to call for a representative from the Mouqollad as well as a city official and then have the shipment escorted (and its paperwork checked). It's unlikely that the characters have any of this.
- Only those with special permission (almost exclusively from the Beygraf or his proxies) may enter the city with full arms and armor on. These people are typically heroes of the realm, heads of churches and other VIPs.
- Clerics of the True Faith may carry in a falchion or a scimitar, but no armor.

- <Not actually read to the characters> Bribing has no effect here. The men are Thresher zealots with little concern for gold. Only the pain and misery of others warms the cockles of their hearts, and sometimes the sub-cockles. Any attempt at bribing lands the characters in the stocks for 2TUs.
- Being caught in the city with prohibited items means the permanent confiscation of the items and 20 TU in the slave mines.

#### Rules of Magic (Arcane)

- Only those belonging to the Archons (Wizards Guild) or the Brotherhood of Sorcery (Sor/Bard Guild) may sell magic (items and spells) in the city and even then only by the set rules within those organizations.
- Only their members may cast such magic, but still have to obey the laws of the city, the nation and the internal laws of the guilds.
- <These Temp Writs are not needed for active members of the Archons or the Brotherhood> Temporary Writs can be purchased to practice limited magic within the city, but they still must obey the strict laws regarding magic use. These writs can be easily purchased from the representatives at the given organization (and directions to them provided). The cost is 100 gp per week, renewed on a weekly basis. This Writ only covers the casting of magic, not the selling of magic or the sale of magic items.

#### Rules of Magic (Divine)

- Only members of recognized churches (those with a charter agreement with the city) may cast and sell divine spells within the city. A charter agreement for a church covers all of its clergy (even foreign ones) within the city (assuming the church decides to extend that privilege). It's customary to give a donation and check in with the main temple when visiting the city.
- Churches with charter agreements are: Al'Akbar (both sects), Azor'Alq, Bleredd, Boccob, Bralm, Celestian, Fharlanghn, Fortubo, Geshtai, Hextor, Istus, Jascar, Mouqol, Moradin, Pelor, Ulaa, Xan Yae, Zilchus, Zuoken.
- Some churches in the city (not on the above list) have private agreements to cover only those clerics actively apart of a particular temple and does not cover all clerics of that faith in the city.
- A temporary Writ can be gained by registering with the authorities and paying a 200 gp per week fee.

- Particular temples have agreements for the selling of certain magic items, but all items must at least pass through the proper mage guild (be it Archon or Brotherhood, depending on what is being sold).

#### Punishment and guidelines for magic use

- In a nutshell, the laws of magic are that if a spell causes public disruption, the caster is held accountable.
- Only those with the authority to do so may violate another's person privacy, so casting of detect type spells (especially in public) is against the law (unless you have authority to do so).
- Casting of enchantments to influence a person is considered assault.
- A caster is accountable for property damage his spell may cause.
- The use of illusions (such as *invisibility*) or transmutation (such as teleportation or *alter self*) in public to avoid the authorities ranges from public nuisance to attempted burglary. This is most certainly a no-no in the Bazaar where the authorities are always on the look out for it.
- Punishment for casters that cause disorder is usually 1-3 TU's in the stocks and payment for the damages (if any).
- Assault is 5-10 TU's of various imprisonment
- Using a spell to cause damage or death is the same as using a weapon.

There are two levels of curfew within Lopolla.

#### General Curfew starts at 6pm

- Children must be off the streets unless accompanied by an adult.
- Those who have been previously ordered to Obey General Curfew as a punishment must be off the streets.
- Open air street vendors and performers must be off duty. This is waved at times of festivals and celebrations, and by permit in certain city districts.
- Typically, any who are drawing attention to themselves and any who have less than Adventure's Standard as a lifestyle will be harassed by any Thresher patrols they encounter.
- Breaking this curfew rarely results in more than fines and a strong talking to (except for habitual offenders)

#### Final Curfew starts at 9pm

- All residents must be in their homes or other expectable place (work, tavern, stocks, etc).
- Residents are not allowed to leave their city district. It is permissible to be in transit from home to tavern (or similar place), but it is up to the discretion of the Thresher if that is indeed the case.
- Non-Residents must be registered with an Inn or other place of temporary residence (a flophouse, a church, or residence of a local, etc). Like residents, they are restricted to the city district of the place they're staying and being caught on the streets without a good reason (going to a nearby tavern, caught their clothes on fire and using the horse trough to put it out, having important business with a powerful local, etc) can get them in trouble at the Threshers discretion.
- Shops and places of public commerce must close down. Private business (such as caravan companies within a walled compound) may function within their walls as normal. Taverns and other such business stay open by paying for a special permit.
- Trade Permits are available for those moving large amounts of goods (such as caravans) in and out of the city.
- VIPs and others like them can gain permits to make them immune to curfews.

### **Basic Thresher Patrol**

Typically, Threshers function in squads of 3 to 5 (in the larger group, the fifth member is a Sergeant). They patrol the different city districts frequently. The poorer districts tend to have less patrols though. In times of need, Archons and Mullah's, who are attached to Thresher companies, respond with the Threshers.

The following are typical examples of these units.

♣**Thresher Officer:** Male human Ftr7; 60 hp; Breastplate, falchion or scimitar, crossbow.

♣**Thresher Sergeant:** Male human Ftr4; 36 hp; Breastplate, falchion or scimitar, crossbow.

♣**Thresher:** Male human Ftr3; 28 hp; Breastplate, scimitar, glaive, crossbow.

♣**Thresher Mullah:** Male human Ftr1/Clr3; 33 hp; Breastplate, falchion, crossbow, spells.

♣**Archon (FS):** Male human Wiz4; 33 16 hp; Dagger, Spells (mainly damage and subduing).

### **Language**

The common tongue is spoken by all, but Ancient Baklunish (or sometimes just called 'Baklunish' for short) is spoken by the social elite, clerics of Bakluni gods, most entertainers, etc.

Using the common tongue in a socially delicate situation (such as talking to a noble, or defending oneself in court) incurs a -1 circumstance penalty to all charisma based skill checks. The judge as final discretion on if the situation warrants this (for the particular noble may not even be Bakluni in decent, etc).

Native residents of Ket speaking Baklunish or common have a distinctive accent.

### **Pets**

Large and/or wild animals are not allowed to be brought into the city unrestrained and without a permit. Wolves, bears, any dire animal and other dangerous creatures must be leashed and muzzled or caged. Dire animals must be caged. A one week permit costs 10gp, then squared per size category of each animal.

Horses, trained dogs, birds and other common domesticated animals cost a copper each to enter the city, but do not require any special restraints, but the master is responsible for any damage the animals cause.

### **Crime and Punishment**

**Ket Region Judges:** For a detailed listing of the Laws of Ket and the game mechanics for Judges to use, see the Ket Region website at <http://ket.living-greyhawk.com/>.

**Veluna, Verbobonc, Dyvers, Tusmit, Ekbir Judges:** Due to the complex nature of the Ket Laws and policies, a simplified version is listed below. When running this VTF adventure in a region other than Ket, use these simplified mechanics.

As well, in the Players Handout section are copies of a FAQ (in a quasi-in game style) for players to read to better understand what they are getting into.

### **Simple Mechanics:**

Jurats (Mullahs) tend to be real partial to Straight Talk. Fancy Lawyering tends to get people into more trouble sometimes when it backfires. But a character can use Diplomacy or Knowledge (Local) to ease his criminal burden once he has been convicted. But this also has a chance to increase the sentence.

If the person is convicted of the crime of murder (lets call it 'Manslaughter') by \*accidentally\* killing someone who was trying to kill them, assign them 20 TU's in the Slave Mines. If they can win an opposed diplomacy check against the Jurat (if level not given, assume 7th level, and Diplomacy of +10) then allow them to cut the time in half. If they fail, increase it by 25%. Those who are found guilty of First Degree Murder, can not use this.

**Note:** When I say first and second degree, don't confuse it with real world definitions of those laws, the Ket laws are not the exact same. Many (but not all) of the laws of Ket are not specifically codified, and exists as a paragraph of scripture defining right from wrong. These passages are left up to the trained Jurats to intenerate.

As a Judge, you will know out of game if the character truly committed the act or not. If the character is actually innocent by the standards of the law, then let them go free. If they are guilty, convict them. The interrogation and trial need not be role played out. Jurats and Threshers use extensive interrogation techniques combined with *zone of truth* and other magic.

A special note for this adventure is that, if a character is arrested/captured by the legitimate authorities of Ket, they are a great risk of assassination by agents of the Shadow Government. See Encounter Six for these mechanics.

## Adventure Summary

### Introduction:

The characters enter Ket and pass through the border point, thus alerting the bad guys to their presence. A note is found with a murdered cleric of Fharlanghn.

### Encounter 1:

Entrance into the restrictive city of Lopolla. Check your bags at the door.

### Encounter 2:

Investigate the burned ruins of the Rees Trading Company and pick up a few clues on where to go next.

### Encounter 3:

Wander the city researching clues and making friends, but there is a limit on how much can be done before the next encounter is triggered.

### Encounter 4:

The characters are brought in for questioning by an the elite Black Scorpions. It's actually all a set up, but they are saved at the last minute by the Kettish Inquisition.

### Encounter 5:

While on the streets avoiding curfew, the General of the Thorns and best friend of the Beygraf meets you and warns you of a conspiracy and offers to smuggle you out of the city. If the characters refuse, the authorities grab them and it's the end of the adventure.

### Encounter 6:

The characters ride about the countryside. This encounter explains what they need to do to avoid getting caught, and what happens if they do get caught.

### Encounter 7:

The characters arrive at their second clue, only to find it in ruins and an ambush of Somb waiting for them.

### Encounter 8:

Wagon tracks lead to a nearby Beyship. It's a horrible place filling with hanging elves. The people are oppressed and scared.

### Encounter 9:

The characters need to take their beef up with the management. In this case, it's a rakshasha disguised as a Bey. He has a team of greater barghest disguised as hobgoblins.

### Encounter 10:

Beneath the manner, is the potential lair of a nightwing, and the unholy place of Tharizdun and its half-fiend dark naga keeper, and hellwasp pets. Later on, a barbed devil is the torturer and he wants info out of a captured half-celestial elf.

### Encounter 11:

The characters are warned that they need to keep moving if they don't want the authorities catching up with them.

### Encounter 12:

The characters need to save a village of dying elves by fixing the life crystal they are all tied to. They might get a warning here of the dragon waiting for them in the temple.

### Encounter 13:

The final combat. A green dragon is the new owner of the temple and he doesn't want to give it up. In the bowels of the temple, a Ghaele is held prisoner, but a trap-like device must be bypassed to save him.

### Conclusion:

A list of 'What Ifs' in the form of rewards for characters who did thinks right and wrong.

## Reminder to the Judge

A general note on representing the in-game word usage for NPCs when referring to the names of gods. Due to the reverence (and sometimes fear) of these most divine and powerful beings, the NPCs do not use the true name of the god in vain during idle conversation. Only when the god's power is truly being invoked (though not necessarily by a spell) is the true name used. It's a firm belief that to use the gods' true name invokes that being's attention. The descriptive name used can also sometimes refer to which sect or view the worshipers have of their god, but this is not always the case. For instance, when the NPCs in this scenario wish to refer to Nerull, they say, "The Reaper", in an attempt to avoid his attention. Also, the NPCs in this Scenario refer to Zilchus as "The Money Changer", for the sect that is being referenced dealt with that aspect of the god more so, than those who would refer to him as "The Great Guildmaster". To say, "Fharlanghn Rules the Roads" is a blessing, invoking the god's power. To say "Zilchus be poor" is profanity.

## Introduction: The Garden's Picket Fence

This adventure begins with the characters crossing the Tusmit-Ket border. The majority of the text assumes that the characters have participated in previous adventures in this concurrent series. If none of the characters present have had any previous involvement, adjust the box text and story approach accordingly.

In VTF3-06 "A Smile in the Mist", the characters had a chance to obtain clues that would lead them to the capital city of Ket, Lopolla. Their trip has brought them from Ekbir, through Tusmit and now the western border of Ket. Due to the rising hostilities between Tusmit and Ket, the border is being heavily scrutinized. There are no unusual entrance bans (only increased scrutiny), but rumors talk of approaching war. At one of the small border forts that oversee legitimate entrance into Ket, the characters are stopped along with all other travelers and merchants.

***After many days of following the trade route from the Dramidj coast towards the heart of the Flanaess, the different caravans and travelers that share the route with you have all started to bunch up. You have reached the Ket-Tusmit border and it does not look to be its usual smiles and handshakes. It will***

***soon be your turn to pass by the guard post and the questioning soldiers.***

During the trip along the trade route, it is assumed that the characters would converse and ask questions of fellow travelers. The customs of Ket would be one such topic. To represent this, give the players the Player Handout #4 from the appendix that answer some common questions about Ket (this is the interim substitute for the Ket Gazetteer while it is being worked on).

Several forts and blockhouses protect this section of the river valley that connects Ket and Tusmit. The road the characters are on is the main land route. All other trails across the border in the valley are guarded by similar border crossings. Someone wishing to avoid these outposts would be best served using the rugged (and dangerous) Tusman hills to smuggle themselves through.

This border crossing is guarded roughly a company of heavy infantry (Neyze) and backed up by a squadron of medium cavalry (Somb). Twice this amount of troops and support units are on patrol at any given time away from the border points.

In addition to the military forces, each crossing has unit of 5 Threshers stationed to assist in matters of political and civil disorder. The Threshers keep out of the military jurisdiction of handling the border flow, but are prepared to step in to assist should the need arise.

Assuming the characters do not try anything rash and go ahead with the border crossing when their turn comes up;

***The haggard looking infantry captain waves your lot to approach. The wagons of the caravan in front of you seems to have fared well with a minor search of its cargo, scrutinizing of manifests and personal questions for its crew. The same treatment is now in store for you.***

The captain and his men are tired and grouchy. Because of this, they are easy to fool (and careless in their searches) but quick to anger should they be provoked. The characters are asked the following questions and the identities they give (along with a description the guards record) are all logged. The information is of little interest to the soldiers, but certain forces shall take great interest when their agents report in.

### Questions:

- What is your name and affiliation?
- What is your destination?



- Where did you come from and the route you took?
- What is your business in Ket?

As long as the answers can pass for legit, the soldiers accept them. Should the characters upset the soldiers or become overly suspicious, the soldiers narrow in on that character and prepare to search him and give him the fifth degree. Only an opposed Diplomacy check (+8 to the soldier's roll) can prevent the individual search of each offender. This check can be made by the person being searched or by anyone in the party not considered search worthy.

#### What is a search looking for?

- Typically anything illegal. The soldiers bring in support units (Archons and Mullahs) to cast detection spells and identify items and substances found. They've seen it all, so identification is automatic if extreme counter measures are not taken by the characters.
- Poisons of all types are illegal for those that do not have the proper permits (permits are extremely rare and fake documents are easy to spot because of this). If caught, all poisons are confiscated and the character is sentenced to 5 TU's worth of stock time and hard labor.
- Assassin weapons. This is a broad category and takes some judgment call by those doing the searching. Typically any weapon or device that is designed kill and make resurrection difficult or impossible is an Assassin's weapon. If caught, the character is sentenced to death.
- All other minor offences are dealt with either by a fine of 100 gp per offense or 1 TU of stock time. All stock time must be served immediately and thus the character is unable to continue with the rest of the adventure for 5 days. Though this does not automatically end the adventure, all time related events (such as saving the elves) are 5 days past when encountered and unrecoverable. All reactionary events (such as the ambush or the interrogation) still take place as listed.
- Some characters may not wish submit themselves to the justice of Ket. At high APL's such as this, simple boarder guards are not enough to subdue the characters. Though with reinforcements, a massive fight would be long and costly, assume that the characters can escape using magic or superior abilities (or else, they risk wasting all eight hours of the adventure fighting over 100 troops and support units). Should this be the case, make a note on the AR that these characters are 'Fugitives of Ket'. This does not automatically end the adventure, but it does have an effect on the

outcome of the adventure when their crimes catch up to them.

- Any character that has it, can expend one influence point with the Mouqollad Consortium and be allowed through the border without being searched. If the point of influence is spent after being searched, all illegal items are still confiscated, but the character is allowed to go on his way without punishment. This is a special agreement the Consortium has and is not a guaranteed use for elsewhere in Ket.

The importance of this encounter is that enemy agents have been waiting for the characters to arrive and take the information from the questioning (along with the descriptions) and teleport back to their superiors in Lopolla.

#### Just past the border

*A quarter of a mile past the border the main road leads deeper towards the rural interior of Ket, all the while following the snaking Tuflik river on the right and the Tusman hills on the left. Your uninteresting trek is interrupted by a peculiar disturbance in the distance. A few hundred feet ahead, at the top of the next rise in the road, a mist or smoke forms. The cloud must be as big as an ogre but without any shape. Moments later, the smoke, or perhaps dust, clearly forms a round symbol with a simple arch pattern in the middle and a smaller but more curved arch just above the larger one. After a moment, the form moves out of sight over the crest of the hill along the road.*

A Knowledge (religion) check [DC8] reveals this to be the symbol of Fharlanghn (The Dweller on the Horizon). Worshipers or clerics of Fharlanghn automatically recognize this.

Knowledge (arcana) and Spellcraft do not reveal what the dust cloud was other than it is not a known spell effect.

Knowledge (planes) [DC 26] reveals the dust cloud to be a Bramlani (Eladrin). This is an increased difficulty due to the range of the sighting, the short length and the alternate form it takes on.

*Upon reaching the hill that the cloud was last seen, there is no evidence of it or anything else on the main road. Not far to the left is a small side trail that leads some 50ft to an obvious wayside shrine of Fharlanghn. Trees and bushes obscure most of the resting area around but no people are visible either at the shrine or in the distance along the main road.*

The rest area is comprised of a stone shrine with images and slogans typical to that of the teachings of Fharlanghn, a tree shaded rest area of sleeping and picnic styled eating, a grouping of small lean-tos and a small cemetery in back for where those who have died on the road are brought to be buried.

The rest area has been used within the day, probably that morning. One of the lean-tos is serving as the humble quarters for Walker Otilmat and contains his small amount of possessions, all being standard equipment and nothing of interest to experienced adventurers. The cemetery contains some forty graves over many years, the last interment being made over a month ago. The only section of note is the shrine, its secret compartment and the young cleric impaled to the shrine itself.

Curious characters probably investigate the shrine. Once closer to the shrine, it is clear that the comfortable rest areas are indeed empty of people and have not had any for several hours. On the far side of the shrine is a grizzly sight.

A teenaged green robed Walker of Fharlanghn slumps limp standing up against the back of the stone shrine. The young cleric is dead, impaled through the chest to the stone shrine by a blood covered javelin.

In addition to the javelin, the body has several implement wounds (but no weapon present) and claw marks. Parts of the young Walker's skin had been peeled off before he died. A Heal check (DC15) shows that the cleric was alive while the wounds were being inflicted and it was most likely torture. A Spot check (DC15) reveals that at some point (it was after the torturer had left) the Walker used his last ounce of strength and paint in blood the symbol of Fharlanghn on a section of the shrine that was just barely within reach.

A successful Search or Tracking check (DC20) finds the prints of the creature that did the torturing. It has no tracks entering or leaving so it must have had some other means of transport. Once the prints are found, a Knowledge (the planes) (DC28) reveals the torturer to be a Barbed Devil (Hamatula).

A Search check (DC23) of the area that the young Walker did the symbol reveals a secret compartment in the side of the stone shrine. Clerics of Fharlanghn receive a +2 bonus on this Search check. Inside the compartment is a note intended for the characters. It reads;

***Friends of the Road;***

*I had wished to pass this information on to you personally, but pressing matters disrupted my schedule and called me away. I leave this letter in the safe keeping of Walker Otilmat with instructions that it is to be passed on to you and only you.*

*Though we were both in Ekbir at the same time, I was unable to seek you out. As you may have learned also, something odd is happening with certain caravans of the trade route. The name Koosha bey'Rees has come up. It seems he was once a minor bureaucrat within the Ket government, but after a rich inheritance from his father's death, he purchased cheaply the ownership of a caravan company that has regional ties to the Iron Rings. The Rees Caravan Company's headquarters can be found inside Lopolla, capital of Ket. Be careful while you are there and try to keep your mouth shut. A wagging tongue will attract more than just our enemies. Do not underestimate the power that the locals can bring down on those who vex them.*

*I shall seek you out after the snows have melted. Be safe and stingy with your trust. Though our enemies need to hide in the shadows, they are still immensely powerful. I fear their ultimate goal would be the end of us all.*

***Walker Salidius***

< The above is available as a **Player's Handout #1** >

#### **Bardic Knowledge check on Koosha**

- **[DC 12]:** Koosha bey'Rees is just one of many second sons of minor nobles to be enlisted in the Ket bureaucratic corps. A common practice to keep a back up heir skilled and employed.
- **[DC 18]:** Koosha quit the bureaucratic corps when his father died and unexpectedly left him a sum of money (though the lands and title went to his older brother). Almost immediately, Koosha jumped into the caravan business when he bought out the business previous owner for a song. He has many contracts for regional access with the Iron Rings Consortium of Veluna.
- **[DC26]:** Koosha is from the rural village of Shalrees where his family has held the beyship for many generations. The beyship is quite close to the edge of the Bramblewood forest.
- **[DC 28]:** The beyship of Shalrees is remote and rumored to be a hotbed of elf poaching. As well, in the distant past, several battles between the new Bakluni settlers and the elves of the Bramblewoods took place in that area.

**Note:** All DC's are raised by one for any bard that does not have a home region of Ket. The DC's are raised be two if they do not have a home region within the VTF.

**Salidius, Barbed Devil, & what the young cleric saw:**

The dead young cleric is named Otilmat (or just Otil to his friends) and other than being a real stand up guy, he doesn't have any knowledge of the goings on of Walker Salidius or what the quest that characters have become involved in.

The following is what Walker Otil knows and experienced should the characters use such magic as *raise dead* or *speak with dead*, refer to those following bullets as to what information can be passed on.

- His name is Walker Otilmat originally from a village near the city of Falwur. He is 17 years old. His friends call him Otil.
- Otil has been watching over this shrine for the past six weeks, taking over from Walker Krolan who headed off towards Zeif.
- During his six week stay, nothing unusual has happened. The only incident of note is when Walker Salidius passed through (heading east) about a week ago and stayed one night. Salidius was fairly tight lipped about his activities, but not in an unfriendly manner.
- Walker Salidius entrusted Otil with the important task of securing the delivery of a letter to a certain group of adventurers. Salidius was confident that the group he described (or at least a group containing some of these people) would be arriving within a month's time. It was important that no others gain access to this letter, for in the wrong hands it would be damaging. Otil took this duty to heart and hide the letter in a secret compartment that some wayside shrines have, intended for passing on important correspondence to incoming Walkers.
- Walker Otilmat, though never having met Walker Salidius before, he has heard mention of him. The mentioning was mixed with a vague whispering of a secretive sect known as the Fharlanghni (Old Oeridian for 'Of/From Fharlanghn').
- Only a few hours before, during the crack of dawn, Otil was alone in the shrine area only to be attacked suddenly by total surprise.
- A creature from the pits of the Baator, covered in body spikes, apprehended him without much trouble and quickly impaled him against the shrine with a javelin it carried.

- In a cruel manner, the devil proceeded to torture him and ask him a narrow range of questions.
- All the questions centered around what he knew of Walker Salidius, what the Walker had done while here, what did he say, where did he go, who was he with, etc.
- In a fit of determine, Walker Otilmat mocked the devil and was refusing to answer any questions. Otil knew his resolve would end soon so he was hoping for death, when the devil suddenly became distracted. It tilted its head as if listening with interest to something, then turn back to Otil and said something to the effect of, "They've arrived. I wish I had more time to play with you, but there are more important matters to attend to. Perhaps we shall meet again when your soul arrives in Baator" and with that, the devil gave the javelin a final twist, then teleported away.
- With his last ounce of strength, Otil managed to reach with his hand the area of the shrine that held the secret compartment. With his own blood, he inscribed the symbol of Dweller on the Horizon hoping it would act as a clue to those who should know it. Then he died.

The real adventure begins with the characters arriving at Lopolla City in Ket. The city is still over 100 miles away (3-4 days by horse) along the main road. The trip between here and the city is uneventful.

The road follows the snaking Tuflik river until it starts to turn away from Lopolla. While in range of the hills, herdsman, forts and frequent military patrols are the order of the day. Once away from the hills, the land opens up to fertile fields dotted with villages and small towns, each one with a fortification of some sort overseeing them.

**Development:** Its quite possible that certain characters do not want to pass through the official check points of the Ket border. In that case, it is relatively easy for high level characters to sneak on through. This requires going through the Tusman hills. Though normally such a trip would attract the various monsters of hills, that can be ignored this time.

Simple allow any characters wishing to sneak into Ket free passage thus emerging into the heart land of Ket. This means though that the characters never encounter the Fharlanghn Shrine nor the note. The same goes for any characters that fought their way through the border checkpoint.

## Encounter One: Outside the City

*After several days of travel along the main road, Lopolla, the capital of Ket comes into view. The city is surrounded by high walls and heavy battlements. A sea of tents flow across the land directly outside of the city walls. You are entering a hub of trading activity found in few other cities on Oerth.*

**Timing Note:** Typically, it should be about 9am when the characters arrive outside the city. This leaves them approx. 7 hours to explore and get what they need before general curfew starts when it gets dark around 6pm and final curfew sets in at 9pm.

The city has the primary 'interior' city, with a strong wall around it, and a loose sprawl of a tent city called an Ourmistan. More permanent buildings and mini-communities act as islands among the sea of tent fabric. This is largely made up of trade traffic and caravans. Foreigners are quite common here as they come with the caravans.

*The main road leads through the hustle and bustle of the tents and their merchant occupants and stop at the open main gates of Lopolla. Though many of the structures around you are tents, a few permanent buildings dot the terrain like little islands. Some of these are obviously barracks for law enforcement and troops. A line of carts, wagons and pedestrians wait in line to enter the city. The professional looking troops at the city gates seem to be taking their jobs seriously.*

In this city, only the authorities are permitted weapons within its walls and magic-use is strongly prohibited without permit and authority. The city is policed entirely by Threshers (harsh LN and LE zealot soldiers who act as the federal law enforcement in Ket) and the Beygraf's personal regiment, The Thorns.

Knowledge (Local) [DC10] reveals that the entrance rules for Lopolla require that weapons and armor (with some exceptions) are confiscated and safely returned on leaving the city. As well, that the law enforcement of this city are elite zealots who enforce rather laws with a draconian slant. They are called Threshers.

**The Ourmistan:** Should the characters decide to explore the tent city before entering the gates into Lopolla

*The many tents form rows and alleys that swarm with people. A person from every nation of the Flanaess could probably be found somewhere*

*within the crowd. All those who do not wish to pay the entrance tariffs to access the main bazaar of Lopolla stay out here in the Ourmistan. Amidst the various trinket tents and Thresher patrols, you come across a tavern with stables.*

The characters can visit the Inn or the other small places that dot the tent city, but not much comes of it, expect maybe for those who want to search out for an alternate way into the city.

Spending an hour to specifically find a thieves guild contact, the characters may attempt a Gather Information check (DC10+APL) to find a reliable contact. If successful, the characters are told to 'go see a man about a horse' at a particular tent. Once there, they can negotiate a fee of 50gp per person (no medium/large sized animals or mounts) to be safely smuggled into the city with all their gear. Of course, once in the city, the characters risk being spotted with the gear, but that's their own problem.

Once the agreement has been made, the nameless thief suggests the characters store the animals and any thing else they don't want to risk being confiscated if caught, and come with him.

The thief uses his contacts to gain special access to the sewers (a relatively clean access) and into the city proper.

For those looking to stable their mounts and companions, the local inn can do that. The cost is covered by the characters standard upkeep for horses. Non-standard mounts and animal companions require 3gp per day.

**The City Gates:** Once the characters are ready to enter the city

*Six heavily armed guards stop you at your approach. Peering past them into the busy city, you see a barracks with many more similar guards, obviously reinforcements should trouble arise. "Halt and obey the Thresher of the Merchant Gate. To gain entrance to the city you must swear to abide by the laws and surrender your weapons and armors until you pick them up on your way out." says the Thresher Sergeant. Just catching your eyes are two large statues of armed warriors flanking the inside of the gates. Those passing through the gates cringe away from them.*

This is the Merchant's Gate, the main gate of the city. Foreigners and cargo traffic take it in and out of the city. There are other smaller gates about the city walls, but those are reserved for local traffic. Unless the

characters have regional documentation stating they are a resident of Lopolla, then they must use the Merchant's Gate.

Flanking either side of the gate (on the inside) are two regular stone golems, dressed up as ancient heroes of the city. They can be activated by the Archon (Wizard Guild) on duty, should the need arise.

Even if they could use another gate, the exact same laws and restrictions are applied.

**Note:** The rules for weapon, magic and curfew restrictions are found in the Lopolla section of the Judge's Briefing.

### Development:

#### Alternative methods of entry

In the end, it should only require a small amount of effort for powerful adventurers to make it into the City. All of these restrictions are made with typical people in mind, not super heroes and villains. There are other foils for their kind.

If the characters come up with a reasonable plan to enter the city using their high level powers, then let them. Tricks such *invisibility*, *teleport*, or even climbing and flying can work. Basically, as long as the players put in a little effort to come up with a reasonable plan, then let it work. If they become abusive about getting away with things, then call in the proper foils.

There are high walls and a sewer system, so both of those could be used for entrance or exit in the city. Just remember that just because the characters get past the outer defenses, it does not give them the right to break the laws once inside. Sneaking in all their armor and weapons only to carry them around and getting spotted by one of the frequent Thresher patrols is counter productive.

## Encounter Two: The Ash Pit of the Mind

### Arriving at the Rees Caravan Company HQ

There are three main ways the characters would find their way to this encounter. The first of which is that while investigating the source of the contraband trade in Ekbir (VTF3-06), the characters came upon information that points to a Ket Noble and the caravan

company his family owns and he personally operates (he has an older brother, more on that later). This small caravan company seems legitimate and has a legitimate contract with the Mouqollad Consortium to do the cargo runs and connections with the Iron Rings Trading Company. The HQ for this local company is located in Lopolla.

The second method is to follow the instructions given to the characters by Walker Salidius in the letter he left for them. It has enough information to seek out the location of the HQ and warehouse within Lopolla.

The third method is to just ask around (Gather Information check [DC20], 4 hours per attempt) if anything unusual has happened in the last few days. The news on everyone's lips is the mysterious warehouse fire that happened the night before (or adjust to one night before the characters arrived in Lopolla). This should be enough to get the characters going in the right direction.

*Passing through the many sights and sounds of Lopolla, you make your way to the majestic warehouse district. The lucrateness of the east-west trade shows among the different trade compounds and freestanding warehouses. Hanging a right at the high walls of the Zilchus Western Company, you eventually arrive at your destination, a collection of smoking ruins. Two Threshers stand guard at the wide open gateway.*

The walls of this comparatively small compound still stand, but the gates leading into it lay knocked to the ground and the three buildings that occupied the interior are nothing but ash and charred timbers.

Standing guard at the wide open gate hole are two Threshers. They are keeping out slack jawed gaugers and looters while the authorities continue a routine investigation into the incident.

Currently, there are no investigators inside the crime scene, but some can be expected back in a few hours, not that they will be interested in disclosing information. The investigators may be at the scene for many hours and visitors would not be welcomed.

### So what happened here?

The (now deceased) owner of this caravan company was Koosha bey'Rees. He had only a few years in the trade business running this caravan company. Before this, Koosha was working as a government official dealing with trade and tariffs (these people worked closely with the Mouqual Church and the Consortium)

when suddenly his father Bey Cotys al'Shal-Rees died and the two sons came into a windfall of money.

The eldest brother Jalaal bey'Rees (now al'Shal-Rees), took on the Beyship of the small village they were from and the other brother retired from the government and bought this small caravan company and bought up the Consortium contract with it. This all happened right about the same time that the New Cabal were first taking over the temple in the Bramblewoods.

What few knew was that the father and eldest brother were murdered. The eldest brother was replaced with a Rakshasa and the younger brother was corrupted into serving as a pawn of the New Cabal. Now the bad guys are both clearing their tracks and setting up an elaborate trap to lure in those who are on their trail and get to the bottom of what the adventurers truly know.

The two guards are normal Threshers, keeping away looters and any risk of disorder. These two have nothing to do with the bad guys or shadow government.

The characters have the chance to 'interview' the two Threshers for what they may know of the case, as well as obtain access to the crime scene either through trickery, stealth or plain old brow beating. They had better do it now though, before dark and curfew approaches and their date with destiny it brings.

What the characters are very unlikely to notice is that an invisible imp familiar is keeping an eye on the scene, waiting for the characters to arrive so it can shadow them.

### Questioning the Questioners

Threshers don't like to answer questions, they prefer to ask them. In this case, the two Threshers are low on the totem pole and just acting as flunkies. Thus, with the right kind of persuasion, the two Threshers reveal some limited information. On a Diplomacy check

#### **[DC 15];**

- This is a crime scene under investigation. Only authorized persons are allowed inside.
- This was the site of the Rees Caravan Company HQ. It burned down last night **<adjust this time if need be>** and investigators believe it to be highly suspicious due to the quickness and spread of the fire and other information determined by our superiors.
- The owner, Koosha bey'Rees and 8 of his employees were found dead, killed in the fire. There bodies were badly charred but the

investigators seem certain it was at least Koosha. The bodies have been taken away.

- We had never heard of Koosha before this, but from what others mentioned last night, it seems he was once part of the bureaucratic corps in the trade and tariffs section until going into business for himself a few years back.

#### **[DC30]**

- The investigating officer in charge is a man named H'jor al'Tresher and is currently at the local Thresher barracks preparing. He'll be back in 5 or 6 hours, but he won't want to be disturbed at the crime scene and has a bit of a temper.
- In addition to the charred bodies, a small selection of arcana items were taken out and the investigators suspects a magical attack.
- Two witnesses from nearby locations saw all three buildings go up in flame simultaneously yet the fire did not spread far from the buildings. The flames dissipated after a short time, leaving only the charred husks and a few embers.
- The fire crews used magic to break down the gates of the compound in order to attend the situation before it spread, but found that the fire had dissipated.

♣**Thresher(2):** Male human Ftr3; 28 hp each; Spot +3, Listen +3, Sense Motive +1.

### Lopolla: CSI

The Threshers are not supposed to allow anyone into the crime scene. It is possible for a Mullah of the True Faith to intimidate the Threshers by brow beating them (Intimidate check [DC 10+APL]). This gains an hour's worth of access time. Expending an Influence point with the Threshers of Ket also gains the party access for an hour.

The easiest way to gain access is to sneak in either with magic or by climbing the back walls and sneaking around. If the two Threshers are kept busy with conversation and questions, they receive -15 to their Listen checks for characters moving around in the compound. Unless the Threshers are given a reason to turn around and look into the compound, they automatically fail any Spot checks required for those in the compound (therefore Judge, sneaking characters should be making Move Silently checks, not Hide checks).

The compound is a courtyard 80 ft. by 70 ft. surrounded by 10 ft. high stone walls. The three buildings were a warehouse, a stables and the main

office/living quarters. All three buildings have only charred timbers marking the skeleton of the structure. The gateway is 30 ft. away from the cluster of buildings. There is little risk of collapse unless the characters start applying rough force to the timbers.

Not much has been left by the first search by the investigators. But characters who spend one minute searching and have a successful Search check of

- **[DC 25]:** Find a secret compartment in the floor of the office. The compartment contains two broken open metal lock boxes. Though it does not appear that the flames reached inside the compartment, the contents of the boxes are missing (the boxes are empty). Spellcraft check [DC25] reveals that a *shatter* spell was used to break the locks.
- **[DC 32]:** A piece of a Black Scorpion Thresher's uniform was torn away during the battle. On it was a metal insignia denoting it as such. During the fire, most of the fabric burned away, but the scorched metal insignia remained. The searching character finds it between the cracks of the burnt floorboards of the warehouse. A Knowledge (local) check [DC12] identifies it as a membership insignia for the BS Threshers. A Knowledge (nobility) [DC14] identifies it as belonging to an officer (but the character still needs to get the first check to know an officer of what). <This insignia belonged to a disguised Rakshasa who participated in the assassination. This particular Rakshasa does not appear elsewhere in this adventure, though is compatriots do>.
- Spellcraft check [DC28] confirms it was magical fire that consumed all three buildings.

#### What actually went down?

In case the players come up with a clever or magical way of probing for more details, the following is a brief break down of the events.

Koosha and his caravan employees were bedding down for the night when they were surprised. Three Rakshasa, one disguised as a Black Thorn Thresher, another as an Archon and the third as a Mullah paid Koosha a visit as they have often before to relay orders. This time though, they used magic to hold him then slit his throat with a claw. Koosha did not go down without a fight though. In the struggle, he managed to land a good blow on the BS Thresher. Though his blade did not penetrate the skin of the Rakshasa, the blow did rip off the insignia. Koosha fell shortly after. The three attackers then located and looted the contents of

the secret floor compartment. They took documents relating to the caravans manifest and destinations.

Using an area effect spell (*cloud kill*) the employees were killed off in the bunkroom. Using magical devices, fire erupted at the same time in the three buildings consuming them quickly, but not spread as the magical fire dissipated. The drained remains of the devices were recovered and taken away by the investigators the next morning.

**Development:** As previously hinted at, the party of adventurers have now picked themselves up a tail. With specific instructions to wait for them and then discreetly follow the party, the constantly invisible (and hiding) Imp stays at a discrete distance and follows the characters around. Since it can fly and is tiny, it stays about 50 ft. to 100 ft. away and above at an angle, to spy of the characters. It is extremely unlikely the characters have a chance to spot it. If it is spotted, it flees into the nooks and crannies of the buildings and the crowds to get away. All the while, it is reporting on the whereabouts and goings on of the party.

After the characters have had enough with this encounter, they should still have most of the day (at least five or six hours) to check around the city for other leads or to sight see. They may also wish to stay at an Inn. If so, direct them to the one listed in Encounter Three.

Either when the time in game hours is up, or when a certain number of locations have been visited, Encounter Four is triggered.

## Encounter Three: A walk about town

Lopolla is a big city and while the adventure does not require the characters to do sight seeing, there may be locations the characters want to visit in order to double check clues or seek side business. The characters have some time on their hands to do these things (the remainder of the day) but are also limited to the number of locations they can visit before Encounter Four is triggered. That is the encounter where they are pulled off the street is a timed event.

After the characters have visited three of the following locations or the time has reached 6pm, Encounter Four is triggered and the Black Scorpion Threshers come enmass and escort the characters away for interrogation.

If the Black Scorpion Thresher come for the characters before it is dark, have the characters held in a cell to kill time, so that when the interrogation is finished (interrupted) the characters are let go onto the streets only 15 minutes before start of Final Curfew, thus being in an awkward position should they be caught out on the streets (regardless of their reasons).

Do not start counting location visits till after Encounter Two.

### The Thorn Trooper Inn

This Inn is managed and owned by the son of a ex-Thorn (the Beygraf's elite guard). Though never a Thorn himself, the owner has brothers in the Thorns and is loyal to any secretive activities they need to perform.

**Note:** Checking Inn to the Inn does not count for the 3 location limit. Only if the characters participate in the upstairs meeting of the Zief Merchant does the location visit count against the limit.

The characters might think there going to be adventuring in the city of the rest of the adventure and not want to keep having to cross the city gate every time. So they can set themselves up in one of the nice Thorn Trooper Inn. Room space across the city is currently at a premiere due to the large number of extended stopovers from caravan delays. The Thorn Trooper Inn is the first Inn the characters find with rooms available. Unfortunately, only the smaller main floor rooms are available as a merchant from Zief and his entourage have rented out the top floor suites for many days now.

This Inn is set up with fully functional stables. Horses are a big thing in Ket and treated very well. If a character had to abandon their horse (like fleeing from the city) and came back for it much later, they'd still find it being kept well and out of harm.

The Inn keeper is constantly being interrupted and/or cursing about the demands and needs of his rich guest. The inn keeper mentions the Ziefers name as Rashodd Yaaseen.

Some players might remember this name as being on their AR's for VTF3-02 Undertow, and may owe their characters a favor.

### That Merchant from "Undertow"

**Note:** This take places in the upstairs of the Thorn Trooper Inn and counts from the trigger limit.

This encounter is useful to the characters only if one (or more) of their party has the proper influence point awarded in VTF3-02 Undertow.

If they do, Rashodd Yaaseen recognizes those characters and welcomes them by name. He invites the entire part to be his guests and enjoy his hospitality.

Rashodd Yaaseen and his household are waiting for their cargo (eastern wool) to be cleared by the Ket Inspectors so that it can be moved on to Zeif. He's been here for five days and expects to be here a few more. He knows nothing of the Elemental Evil or any of the other conspiracies the characters have been chasing.

What is clear, is that Rashodd is very grateful for the rescue of his son by the adventurers (his son is back in Zeif now) and would be willing to help the characters (at the cost of one Consortium Influence Point from the Dyvers AR) should they ever need it.

If the characters ask Rashodd about Koosha or other trading companies, he'll (truthfully) say he doesn't know a whole lot (never even heard of Koosha, but that doesn't mean much), but suggest that if the characters want good information, they should go to the Mouqollad Consortium HQ (and use an Influence Point) to possibly gain the information that they seek.

Should the characters ever ask it of him (and spend the Undertow AR influence point) he would agree to smuggle the characters out of the city at a moments notice.

### The Consortium HQ

The characters may wish to seek information related to trade and money. For the Baklunish perspective, this would be the place to go.

*Not far from the tent temple of Mouqol in the center of the bazaar, the stone structure ringed with attached tents and awnings of the Mouqollad Consortium Lopolla HQ stands tall, ever watchful of the merchants in its shadow.*

After spending a single point of Influence with the Mouqollad Consortium, the following information is available from their records and off hand knowledge, assuming the characters ask the right questions.

- Koosha bey'Rees is confirmed as being a legitimate caravan company owner and sub-member of the consortium (a person who pays the rights to do business and use certain trade rights, but not a fully privileged member of the Consortium body itself).



- He has been the owner of the Rees Trading company for 3 or so years and before that was part of the Ket Bureaucratic Corps, Trade and Tariffs division. During that time, he has had no infractions or trade disputes with the Consortium.
- The Rees company HQ here is listed as being used for cargo destined for Lopolla only. Usually coming in by land route, but water traffic along the Tuflik River and cargo with destination further east is off loaded at a small riverside estate. The estate is called Likshal and it is technically owned by the Rees family, with Bey Jalaal al' Shal-Rees (of the Shalrees Beyship) as the title own, but Koosha uses it for the Rees Caravan Company.
- Directions to the Likshal Estate are available. It is approximately 40 miles south by southeast from Lopolla (on the bank of the Tuflik river).

### **The Zilchus Western Company (ZWC)**

Not a large place, but it has many interests here in Ket and therefore needs a branch office in the city. It has very little official power but they keep their eyes and ears open from within their secure compound.

Information can be had, for a price, or influence point. Perhaps even sanctuary and smuggling out, should it be needed later. But something like that requires a lot of pull, other then just money.

### **The Log books from VTF3-03**

Check the player's AR's for VTF3-03 Between Mitrik and a Hard Place. Count up how many gave the logbooks to the Cleric of Zilchus and how many gave the books to the Cleric of Rao. If 50% or more of the party gave the logs books to the Cleric of Zilchus, consider that to be the parties outcome. Treat any character with any other result (or no AR) has not counting for the total.

If the characters gave over the Logs from VTF3-3 Between Mitrik and a Hard Place then there is a letter from Hurvin the cleric of Zilchus waiting for them.

<This is always available as a Player Handout #2>

***Dear Friends;***

***I have been using my contacts to investigate the matter of the mystery on the western trade route. I wished I had more conclusive news, but it seems after your visit here in Mitrik, the smugglers have***

***been tying up loose ends and making the tracking of their activities difficult.***

***But I write you to tell you that I have found one tidbit of information you may find useful perhaps if put into context.***

***Over the last few years, I suspect no more than three years, there has been a noticeable influx of rare treasures and arcane items flowing out of the western Bramblewood, and even more curious, smuggling of exotic materials into the Bramblewood.***

***I don't know if these two flows are connected or not, but unknown Ketites using a Ziefian front have been selling off cheap ancient valuables, such as coins, gems and art. I suspect a its long hidden loot being sold off for less traceable coinage. That's about as much as I could trace on that.***

***As for the influx of exotic materials, it seems that several tribes of elves within the Bramblewoods have been making secret overtures to several different merchants and suppliers. Many seem to have rejected the offers of the elves, but some agreed to do business. Though the shipments seemed to have stopped a few months ago, exotic and expensive materials such as obsidian and adamantine have been smuggled in (mostly through the Tusman Hills). It seems that several different elf tribes are behind this. I'm perplexed as to why this would be. But what is curious, is that a contact of mine mentioned what was used for payment and it seems its very similar coinage and treasure to what was being sold off by the Ziefian front men out of the western Bramblewoods.***

***If I have more news, I'll be sure to send it along via the ZWC outposts.***

***Hurvin of Mitrik.  
May you always profit***

For the price of one Money Counter Note, the following information can be obtained.

- The Iron Rings Consortium used the Rees Caravan Company as their local agent for moving goods in this area or picking up extra goods should the IRC not be able to.
- There is another warehouse for the Rees Caravan Company located on the shore of the Tuflik River at an estate called Likshal.
- At one point, a delegation of wood elves from the Bramblewoods approached the ZWC about supplying them with obsidian, but for complicated

reasons, the ZWC decided not to pursue the arrangement. As a side note, they got the impression that the elves were being coerced into the obtaining the obsidian, that it wasn't for them.

If the characters ask, the ZWC representative confirms that should the characters need to get out of Lopolla in a hurry, that for the cost of two Money Counter Notes, the ZWC can smuggle the characters out of the city safely and quickly.

#### **Thresher Authorities:**

The characters may want to inquire about the fire of the Rees warehouse. They won't get much info, but some is possible. A lot of it is just a minor rehash of what they can get in various other places (should they have missed those encounters). Note: This is the Thresher Barracks for the warehouse district. This should not be confused with the Black Scorpion Barracks of Encounter Four.

The investigating officer is H'jor al'Tresher. With a Diplomacy check (DC20) the characters can obtain the following information from him (though he answers in a very grumpy manner).

- Koosha bey'Rees was confirmed killed, as well as 8 of his laborers. Their burned bodies are being investigated. And no, you can't see the bodies.
- Two witnesses reported pillars of fire consume all three structures at the same time. The same fires dissipated as fire crews burst through the main gates. And no, you can't speak to the witnesses.
- Small arcane devices, that we suspect are the source of the fires were found in the ash. They are currently being examined by our attached Archon. And no, you can't see the items for your self or interrupt the Archon.
- The next of Kin for Koosha is his brother, Bey Jalaal al' Shal-Rees.

#### **Some other Location**

It is quite possible the characters will want to visit some other location not listed above in their quest to find clues. Allow them to do this, but keep the information that they learn from these locations very limited (or non-existent). Such locations might be the various temples of their gods, the Archons or government offices, etc. Each location counts against the trigger limit.

**Development:** This encounter ends with the characters being surrounded by a large number of

Black Scorpion Threshers and take into custody. Their location is given away by the ever present imp.

## **Encounter Four: I shot the Thresher**

This encounter is triggered either by the characters visiting any three locations in Encounter Three, or when 6pm arrives. It would be best to start this encounter while the characters are on the streets, but it can happen anywhere (adjust the box text accordingly).

*As you make your way through the streets of Lopolla, five armed and armored men in uniforms exit from ally ways in front of you blocking your path. Ten more men, all dressed in the same way come appear from the flanks to block your rear. Within moments, 30 of the meanest looking Ketites you've ever seen have surrounded you. Their leader speaks, " Halt for the Black Scorpion Threshers. You are wanted for questioning. Come with us peacefully. Do not resist. "*

In a rather common occurrence in Ket, the characters are escorted off the streets and taken in for interrogation.

The round up is performed by a squad of Black Scorpion Threshers on special assignment to a Jurat whom himself is on special assignment investigating the fire, the death of the Koosha in said fire, as well as many of mysterious goings on lately.

This group of BS Threshers are lead by a Sergeant. He does not answer any of the demands to know why the characters are being brought in. He simply says that he has his orders.

Assuming the characters figure out that they need to come quietly, the party is escorted to the BS Thresher barracks assigned to this detachment and taken down to a room in the basement. In the room, the BS Thresher Officer, a Jurat and an Archon await them.

Should the characters resist, the BS Threshers handle the characters quickly and professionally. Though they have no qualms about harming or killing the characters, they first priority is to try and subdue the characters to bring them in alive.

The Threshers follow their orders blindly, even if they have not been thoroughly briefed on what the extended mission is or the reasoning behind it.

#### **Creatures:**

## ALL APLs

♣ **Archon Support:** human male, Ftr6/Sor4/Rog3, see Appendix One.

♣ **Sergeant Dosa:** half-orc male, Ftr5/Rog3, See Appendix One.

♣ **Ftr3/Rog1 “Black Scorpions” Threshers (30):** human, male; hp 30, See Appendix One.

## What’s the Twist?

The Thresher officer, the Jurat and the Archon are all well disguised Rakshasas, that have murdered the three real patriots of Ket and now take the opportunity to figure out what the characters know. The New Cabal are very curious about who or what the characters truly are. Or more so, who they are working for.

The plan (that is going to be interrupted) is to either provoke the characters into combat after they have let slip their information or let them go only to frame them for the murder of the alter ego’s of the three Rakshasa (who’s bodies are being kept on ice on the lowest level). But that plan is going to need a rapid change before the night is over.

All of these questions are under the guise of coming from a special branch of criminal investigation within the Ket government. And indeed, there is such an organization, but as said before, these particular agents have been recently replaced. The Rakshasa disguised Jurat does not have access to zone of truth and other such staples of Mullah interrogation. Therefore, he uses a *Candle of Truth* (or two), centered in the room, around the characters, but his own troops are out of the way. The maximum spell penetration by a *Candle of Truth* (CL 5<sup>th</sup>) is 25. All Rakshasa have SR of 27. Therefore the Rakshasa have no fear of the effects of the candle.

*You are brought to a room deep beneath the barracks. Ten or so Threshers stand guard in the corridor as you are escorted into a room and seated at a table in the center. Another ten Threshers line the walls at attention. Also in the room is a Black Scorpion Officer, a Jurat and sitting silently in the corner, an Archon. In the middle of the table are two candles. The Jurat lights one as the officer brings a heavy bar down across the only door in the room.*

Thus begins the interrogation. The characters need to make Will saves verse the *zone of truth* from the candle. The Jurat and the Officer do all the talking.

During all this, a third Rakshasa, disguised as a representative from the Archons (the Ket Wizards

Guild) stays in the far corner, silently observing. It is his familiar that has been following the characters (the Imp stays outside and never leaves Lopolla).

The room is 40 ft. by 40 ft. with a solid wooded door in the middle of wall opposite the side the Archon sits in. Approximately 20 more BS Threshers and the Archon Support unit are upstairs ready to assist if called. They respond in 2d10 rounds.

**A Picturesque Interrogation:** The characters are seated in a room with armed Threshers lining the walls and more still out side the room. In the room with the characters are the disguised Jurat and the disguised Thresher Officer and the disguised Archon. This special detachment are part of the Black Scorpions, an elite branch of the Threshers. The original (actual) Jurat was a Consecrated Harrier yet to find the enemy he was looking for, but they found him first. They have all the proper documents that the original agents had.

The characters sit around a table, but there weapons are not taken away, nor are they searched. The Rakshasa are leaving a chance open that the characters might just attack and give just cause for them to be killed and the bodies to be accidentally burned beyond repair. Such a display in front of the innocent Threshers would be more than enough testimony during the legitimate investigation that would follow.

As stated before the Rakshasa are immune to effects of the candle (due to SR) and its irrelevant if the regular Threshers are in the zone. The Archon Rakshasa, using his *detect thoughts* (Su) to keep track of the characters actions and motives (secretly roll Will saves for the characters).

All three Rakshasa have *undetectable alignment* cast on them. Though its not unusual to have Threshers with LE alignment, all of these Threshers are LN.

Part of the beauty of the situation is that the Rakshasa’s Change Shape ability is a Supernatural ability, thus does not detect as magic, nor is it dispelable, and the high SR of the Rakshasa renders *true seeing*, *zone of truth*, and most other tell-tail spells unreliable.

Ask some questions. Make insinuations, but never truly reveal anything. Don’t answer the characters questions, instead have one of the Threshers approach the character, gently lay a hand on his shoulder and whispers in his ear, ***“Your speaking out of order. Don’t do that.”***

Ask about Walker Salidius. Ask about where the characters came from and what they’ve been doing. Get the characters paranoid.

Though you and the players may be having fun with this, don't let it drag on too long for there is still a lot of adventure to go. Once you think the players have gotten the right impression, moving on to the next part of the encounter, Rat Pudding.

#### Creatures:

#### All APLs (EL 18)

✶**Rakshasa, Jurat:** Male Outsider Sor8; hp 111; see APL 16 of Encounter Nine, Appendix One

✶**Rakshasa, Officer:** Male Outsider Sor8; hp 111; see APL 16 of Encounter Nine Appendix One

✶**Rakshasa, Archon:** Male Outsider Sor8; hp 111; APL 16 of Encounter Nine see Appendix One

**Tactics:** The Rakshasa do not initiate combat with the characters. They only fight to defend themselves. At the same time, they limit their spell use and abilities (especially the officer) as not to reveal their true identities to their duped Black Scorpion underlings.

Should the characters reveal the three for what they true are to the troops, the Rakshasa are left with no choice but to kill everyone in the room, including the troopers, then blame the deaths on the characters.

#### No one ever expects the Kettish Inquisition:

*With out warning, your questioning is interrupted by the ringing of a chime. Your interrogators and the Thresher guards all turn to watch the bar drop from the door as it swings open with a kick. Marching through the door, is a young mullah followed by two burly looking church troopers. In the stunned silence you hear one of the Thresher guards gasp, "The Inquisition!". Your interrogators try (badly) to hide their surprise.*

The inquisitor shows up not too long into the interrogation calmly walking into the room with two of his troopers with him. The two forces have a verbal exchange and credentials are presented. The Rakshasa get nervous when they realize the Inquisitor may have the powers to reveal them, depending on how powerful he is. A *chime of opening* was used on the door.

Lucky for them, he's only a 1st level Church Inquisitor, a hot shot, bending the rules himself. At this point, the interrogation is quickly wrapped up. At no time are the exact charges (as there are none) presented to the characters. They are just being interviewed in an investigation. The Rakshasa want to get away from the

Inquisitor as well, or better yet, keep him here, get him alone, then do away with him.

*The Jurat turns to you as says, "This interrogation is over for now. Don't leave the city. Guards, escort them to street and seal the building for the night. Bring refreshments for our honored guests of the Inquisition. "The guards move to escort you out the door and the young Inquisitors says to you, "I shall want to have words with you come morning. I shall seek you out".*

The characters are now on the streets of Lopolla. The time is 8:45pm. As a cruel joke, the Rakshasa have put the characters out on the street only 15 mins before Final Curfew starts. The characters are three districts over from their Inn. If they want to avoid the Thresher patrols and arrest for being out of District after Final Curfew, there going to need to sneak around the back alleys.

**Development:** All of this is leading into the characters meeting up with an important person who has the power to track the characters down wherever they are in the city. This may lead to a back alley meeting, or in the room of their Inn, or what ever route the characters end up taking.

Meanwhile, back inside the Black Scorpion HQ, the Rakshasa are secretly murdering the young Inquisitor and his two bodyguards. But the interference and uncertainty of the interruption have fouled their original plan for the characters.

They quickly need to formulate a new way of removing the characters from the equation, while at the same time, drawing attention away from themselves.

## Encounter Five: Call me Mint Jelly

While the characters are carefully making their way through the city during curfew, perhaps on the way to the Inn or some other destination, they are beckoned into a dark alley (or preferable, intercepted in one).

In the alley are three men, covered in dark cloaks/robes. Underneath the covering, they have weapons and armor. The lead man is General Tourak bey'Hirvo and the other two are his Thorn bodyguards.

*Emerging from the shadows of the alley are three large men in cloaks and hoods. The light of the full moon in the sky glints off their armour. The man in*

*the lead removes his hood to reveal a mature and battle hardened face. " Quickly. Gather round, we have very little time for you are in grave danger. I am General Tourak bey'Hirvo, servant of the Beygraf and commander of his Thorns".*

Knowledge (Nobility) [DC 15] identifies the man as General Tourak bey'Hirvo, and the two men with him as Thorns. The Thrones are the elite guards of the Beygraf and control the Palace District of the city. Bardic Knowledge [DC20] reveals that General Tourak is a long time friend of the Beygraf, some suggest his best friend. They served together in the wars (when the Beygraf was a general) and rose through the officers ranks together.

Once in a secluded area (deeper into the alley), the general (identifying himself as a servant of the Beygraf) tells the characters that they are in danger. The General tries to keep from revealing as many secrets as he can, but the gist is:

- He has received reliable information that the characters are being setup for murder and within maybe minutes, the alarm is going sound across the city.
- He comes right out and says that the characters are about to be framed by members of a secret shadow government within the legitimate government of Ket. They are going to be pinned with the murder of a Jurat and an Archon, maybe more.
- If the characters are captured, even by legitimate authorities, not only will he be powerless to help them, but knowledge of his involvement could spell the doom of the legitimate powers of Ket.
- As long as the 'enemy' believes the Beygraf to be ignorant of them, they can be watched and managed until it comes time to strike them down. This is made difficult by being unsure who is apart of this corrupt and evil fifth column.

The 'enemy' consists of an unknown number of powerful government figures in Ket, but exactly who is a mystery. Over the last few years they have been up to something and strange things have been happening.

The Beygraf and General Tourak are not sure who to trust. They have learned through a spy of the plot to first arrest and convict the characters and kill them when they 'resisted' arrest. But with the unforeseen intervention of the Inquisitor, the 'enemy' has changed their plans. Something about framing the characters for murder of the Jurat and an Archon, which is strange because of the way it was phrased as if it wasn't themselves. It was the General who arranged for the

Inquisitor to interrupt the interrogation and save the characters. The Inquisitor is the General's nephew. What the General doesn't know, is that his nephew, the Inquisitor, is now also to be a victim pinned on the characters.

The General warns the characters again, that knowledge of his involvement can not become known, or it will tip off the enemy.

*"The enemy fears you. Why they fear you, I do not know. But the enemy of my enemy is my friend, or at least a strange bedfellow. To help me, you must help yourself, for the only other option is death, possibly for us all. You must flee the city immediately. A Beygraf's Warrant is to be issued for you, this can not be helped for now. This means the powers of the city defenses shall be summoned forth, magic and all, to bring you in.*

*I have arranged for your equipment to be secretly removed from storage and placed securely in a trunk in the closet at the Thorn Trooper Inn. Not far from there, is a small gate on the west wall of the city. Two trustworthy Thorns have taken control of the gate for a short period. Your mounts are there waiting for you. But first, drink these potions, then take my ring, it may prove convenient to you before this is all said and done".*

These are *non-detection* potions.

They can not hold the gate for a long time though, for as the alarm goes, regular Threshers shall flood the gates and streets and the excuse the Thorns have for holding the gate will become suspect.

Why is the General helping the characters? If the enemy wants the characters dead, then the characters must be a threat to the enemy. The Enemy of my Enemy is my college roommate. If the general exposes their knowledge too quickly, it could bring about a brutal civil war that may leave a dark and evil group in power.

So the characters must be the ones to help foil the bad guys and perhaps bring them out into the open. The greatest threat to the Beygraf is that they do not know who is apart of the shadow government and if they randomly tried to piece meal the traitors out it could spell disaster.

### What is it the characters can do for the Beygraf?

The spy in the ranks of the enemy learned of another bit of information at the same time as learning of the murder plot. The riverside estate of Likshal was

mentioned several times and it was implied that there was important cargo their awaiting transport.

The characters are told that to help clear their names, they need to uncover the traitorous acts of this one cell of the enemy and expose them. When that is done, the General can lead his forces on the info as if discovered with no connection to him or the Beygraf.

He assures the characters that once they have uncovered the enemy cell and has proof of their traitorous intent, that he will be able to free the characters of the false crimes. He warns the characters that if they are captured before that, (even by legitimate Ket Authorities) they will most assuredly be assassinated by the enemy before any trial has started.

He also warns the characters that this is not a general amnesty, the characters would have to pay for any crime that was committed that had nothing to do with this mission. So no killing villagers and claiming it to be part of the mission. As well, killing innocent Threshers that have been sent to capture them is also a large no-no. They characters must avoid the legitimate forces that have been duped into trying to enforce a Beygraf's Warrant.

But, the General swears he will use all of his influence and know how to secretly delay and mislead the pursuit forces for as long as he can.

Lastly, the General hands the characters a map to Likshal, showing a back route amongst the low hills and farm country. The distance is roughly 40 miles. If the character follow the map with the aid of the full moon, they can reach the estate in about 6-8 hours.

***"Come daylight, it will be very difficult to avoid patrols. You must avoid them, both for your own sake, and theirs. Those are innocent men being sent after you. You are powerful yes, and could kill many of them, yet they would keep coming for it is their duty. And if you knowingly slaughter those innocent men, Al'Akbar help you, for I will not be able to. Just watch out for the troops of the enemy."***

It is at this point the Imp that has been shadowing the party all day, flies back to its master for a new assignment.

♣ **General Tourak:** human male, Ftr6/Div6.

♣ **Thorns (2):** human male, Ftr6.

### Alternative Routes out of the City

It's quite possible that the characters will not trust the General. They may suspect a trap if they flee the city. They may even try to attack him or go to the 'proper' authorities, including seeking out the Inquisitor. None

of these actions get the characters very far, for in a short time, the fire alarm bells and the whistles of Threshers fill the streets.

Patrols scourer and lock down the city. The longer the characters stay in the city, the more risk they are at for being caught.

As a rule of thumb, as long as the characters are actively trying to get out of the city and avoid the patrols, allow them to succeed automatically.

Should the characters get caught, or turn themselves in, then it's game over. See the listed encounter further down for details.

Otherwise the following are the ways the characters can successfully make it out of the city.

**The Zeif Merchant/Consortium:** This merchant has interests setup on both sides of the walls. In the tent city outside the walls, he has his caravan workers. Within the walls, he has his personal retinue with staying with him on an entire floor of the same inn the characters are staying at.

With the expenditure of all the related influence that party gained in VTF3-02 "Undertow" (since this repays the debt of all involved, and he doesn't mind bringing along extra party members) the entire party is successfully smuggled out of the city within the hour aboard a wool caravan with all their gear and mounts.

After that, the merchant parts ways with the characters (on friendly terms).

**Zilchus Western Company:** The characters may have come here already, to collect on information provided from Hurvin and his investigation of the documents and sent here for the characters to collect.

Should the characters come back to the ZWC compound while the Threshers are out to get them, for the price of three Money Counter Notes, the Temple of Zilchus is willing to smuggle the characters out of the city.

Within the hour, the characters are outside the city with all their gear and mounts.

**The General:** As stated already, the General has two Thorns that have taken over a small gate for a short time. The characters Gate Bags have been moved to a trunk in the closet of the Inn that the characters (and the Zief Merchant) are staying at (no matter which method the characters choose for escape).

The general is not doing this out of any love for the characters, but for a sense of duty to his Beygraf (and

fear of the enemy faction taking over). The characters may assume that the General and his two Thorns are in fact the enemy, so they may end up battling it out., but this is not recommended.

**Manual escape:** The characters might try to escape from the city under their own power. This could be flying, teleporting or magically disguising themselves to pass the gates. For powerful adventurers, this should not be too much of a problem, though they will be facing off against the magical might of the church and the tyrannical experience of the Threshers and Archons. As long as they come up with a decent plan they will succeed.

**Getting Caught:** If the characters are caught by the authorities or intentionally give themselves up, they run a very big risk. First off, that's it for them in the adventure.

By the time they get free all the goals of the adventure are gone. Though there is a good chance that the holders of the characters are completely legitimate, and that once the characters is interrogated/put on trial, the truth comes out and they will be mostly exonerated, those legitimate holders will be unaware of the big evil gunning for the characters.

Agents for the Shadow Government and/or the Cult will be sending 'assassins' to silence the characters. In the individual holding cells.

What this all comes down to is this. The characters spend time and resources defending themselves from the trials and assassinations.

Each captured character rolls to see how many TU's all this effort to keep himself alive costs.

APL10: 2d8

APL12: 2d6

APL14: 2d4

APL16 1d4

Characters who have not been captured may still carry on with the adventure if they wish.

Any character who wishes to flee the region of Ket may do so automatically if he has yet to be caught (and nothing else hinders him), but that ends the characters involvement in this adventure as well, that character gains the Ket Criminal entry on their AR.

## Encounter Six: Oompa Loompa Land

### Behind the Curtain

The bad guys have had to change their plans some due to the both the surprise visit from the Inquisitor and the interference of the General.

Instead of dragging the characters down into the cells to be murdered and then their escape and bloody murder of their Ket agents staged, they instead are going to be ambushed by military forces at the Likshal Estate.

Meanwhile a Beygraf's Warrant has been issued for the capture or death of the characters. This is for the murder of the Jurat and the Archon that the Rakshasa were disguised as.

### Traveling by Night

Its 40 miles to the Likshal estate. Mounted characters can arrive in 6-8 hours (leaving Lopolla around 9-10 pm). Thus they should be arriving while it is still dark.

During this trip, the characters are being successfully scryed upon. The sryer is actual the General himself. He is focusing in on his own ring. He is keeping a friendly eye on the characters to better know whats going on and to keep the pursuing forces off their trail.

Thanks to the General, the party of characters have 24 hour lead on the legitimate pursuers. Keep track of the time party spends resting or stopped. Once their time is up, they've been caught. If the characters push themselves during movement they may also gain time on the pursuers.

Should the time run out and pursuers catch up with the characters, they are attacked by the follow;

### ALL APLs (EL 20)

🐉 **Archon Support:** human male, Ftr6/Sor4/Rog3, see Appendix One

🐉 **Sergeant Dosa:** half-orc male, Ftr5/Rog3, See Appendix One

🐉 **Ftr3/Rog1 "Black Scorpions" Threshers (30):** human, male; hp 30, See Appendix One

🐉 **Heavy Warhorse (32)** hp 30 each, See page 273 of the *Monster Manual*.

## Encounter Seven: Ambush on the Riverbank

Assuming the characters keep to the schedule and arrive at the outskirts of the riverside estate before daybreak.

***The churning river glides gently down as far as the eye can see. Skirting the edge of it as you walk is quite easy and it is not a problem. After a few miles of walking (or riding) a thick layer of smoke can be seen dancing in the high sky further beyond.***

It is assumed the characters push on to investigate the matter. The bad guys have been informed (via the ease dropping invisible familiar) that the characters are on their way here. The bad guys have had enough time to ride out and destroy the small riverside estate, transport the cargo that was waiting there to the Beyship, and slaughter the people who lived and worked at the estate.

A company of elite Somb based out of the Beyship of Shalrees conducts the ambush. These Somb units are minions of the Shadow Government. A powerful Ziefian sorcerer and a Ziefian bard support the unit.

At higher APLs a nightwing(s) lives under the Beyship to support the ground-based units. It is loyal to the New Cabal. The basic troops in the Somb unit are not aware of the affiliation between their leaders and the Dark God. If they truly knew the truth (convinced of it) they would turn on their leaders. In these men's mind, they serve the Shadow Government in a cause to bring about a new revived Ket under stronger leadership. They fear the nightwing, but they trust their superiors to know what's best.

Only the Somb leader, the bard (Reoled Fairta) and the sorcerer (Akmed) know whom they truly serve. The men are aware of the nightwing but do not know what it is. They have been convinced it's a creature under the control of the mage. There is one more thing that keeps the men of the Somb willingly ignorant. They have been blessed (bribed) with gifts from Al'Akbar, or so they have been told.

They all have been given an otherworldly perfect horse. These are Axiomatic heavy warhorses of particular stamina and breeding. The men are so taken with these perfect horses they ask few questions.

### The Estate and Thorp of Likshal

The very small manor house and the accompanying peasant buildings (and warehouse) are located in a

micro valley amidst the tail end of the hilly region that begins in the Bramblewood forest. There are small barge docking facilities and a warehouse for storing cargo. This is normally expected, however there are no wagons currently present (they've been used recently to move the cargo out). All the people that lived here are dead. Their bodies have been dragged into the cellar of one of the buildings. Most of the buildings have been destroyed by a very powerful spell. (*meteor swarm*) Black smoke can be seen from the sky as the characters approach so they may know something is amiss. Everything of value has been removed from the small manor house.

Once the characters enter the thorp read the following:

***Various houses are demolished while a few others are still smoldering. No bodies can be seen anywhere. A few of the buildings are still intact and look to be in perfect condition. Nothing can be heard but the rhythmic beating of your hearts.***

The basic plan of the ambush, is for the mounted Somb and support units to stay up on the ridge overlooking the estate and wait for the characters to enter the micro valley and investigate. Of course, the characters should be expecting a trap and take precautions.

The Somb is split up along the east and west ridge, hidden by paths that provide a stealthy approach to flank the approaching characters.

There is a full moon out and a small amount of light provided by the small fires remaining on the buildings.

The characters can choose to search the area any way they like. The Somb sit atop the ridges overlooking the micro valley watching the characters as best as they can.

The mage is inside a house with all the dead bodies. Which building does not matter as the judge can choose. A Spot check [DC 15] can see movement inside (remember the negative modifiers for distance and darkness).

The person inside the building is the sorcerer who has *see invisibility* cast upon himself, then *mage amour* and *shield* upon first spotting the characters. He sees the characters coming as he was expecting them. As soon as he knows that they have seen him he will use his scroll of *teleport* to join his troops up on the ridge then signal the attack.

Once the characters have entered to investigate the torch lit estate, the bad guys leave their hidden positions and attack in a spread pattern from both sides of the valley.



The estate itself is about 50 ft. wide by 50 ft. long. There are other buildings scattered about as well.

Scattered about the ground away from the estate are the long dead bodies of elves. They have arrow shots into them to make it look like they were killed while attacking the estate.

Once it comes time for the Somb to attack:

*The thundering of hooves is deafening as a huge force comes riding off the hillside towards the estate house. Troops brandishing lances scream towards you while riding strange but yet beautiful horses.*

Among the goodies in the bad guys bag, is a *wand of dispel magic* with a reasonably high caster level. Also at high APLs Akmed has a *staff of evocation* at his disposal.

#### Creatures:

##### APL 10 (EL 13)

♣Akmed: Male Human Sor10; hp 48; see Appendix One.

♣Somb (6): Male Human Ftr3; hp 27, 27, 27, 27, 27, 27; see Appendix One.

♣Advanced Axiomatic horses (6): hp 30, 30, 30, 30, 30, 30; see Appendix One.

♣Advanced Axiomatic horses (3): hp 59, 59, 59; see Appendix One.

♣Reoled Fairta: Male human Brd4; hp 21; see Appendix One.

♣Pelaf Weidia, Somb Officer: Male human Ftr9; hp 88; see Appendix One

##### APL 12 (EL 15)

♣Akmed: Male Human Sor10; hp 48; see Appendix One.

♣Somb (6): Male Human Ftr6; hp 55, 55, 55, 55, 55, 55; see Appendix One.

♣Advanced Axiomatic horses (9): hp 59, 59, 59, 59, 59, 59, 59, 59, 59; see Appendix One.

♣Reoled Fairta: Male human Brd8; hp 42; see Appendix One.

♣Pelaf Weidia, Somb Officer: Male human Ftr11; hp 107; see Appendix One

##### APL 14 (EL 17)

♣Akmed: Male Human Sor10; hp 48; see Appendix One.

♣Somb (6): Male Human Ftr6; hp 55, 55, 55, 55, 55, 55; see Appendix One.

♣Advanced Axiomatic horses (9): hp 59, 59, 59, 59, 59, 59, 59, 59, 59; see Appendix One.

♣Reoled Fairta: Male human Brd8; hp 42; see Appendix One.

♣Pelaf Weidia, Somb Officer: Male human Ftr11; hp 107; see Appendix One

♣Advanced Nightwing: Large Undead; hp 189; see Appendix One.

##### APL 16 (EL 19)

♣Akmed: Male Human Sor10; hp 48; see Appendix One.

♣Somb (6): Male Human Ftr6; hp 55, 55, 55, 55, 55, 55; see Appendix One.

Advanced Axiomatic horses (9): hp 59, 59, 59, 59, 59, 59, 59, 59, 59; see Appendix One.

♣Reoled Fairta: Male human Brd8; hp 42; see Appendix One.

♣Pelaf Weidia, Somb Officer: Male human Ftr11; hp 107; see Appendix One

♣Advanced Nightwing (21 HD): Large Undead; hp 189; see Appendix One.

♣Advanced Nightwing (25 HD): Large Undead; hp 225; see Appendix One.

**Tactics:** At APL 10 and 12 the riders advance upon the characters charging them and using ride by attacks to discourage the characters, preferring to use their lances as best as possible. The sorcerer uses *greater invisibility* on himself and horse and then tries to blind the characters with *glitterdust* or *deep slumber* on their mounts. If none of this seems practical, the sorcerer tries to use damage spells.

The bard tries to fascinate the characters or follows the Officer around to buff up the fighters as soon as he can. The Officer goes after the largest fighter in the party or a mage if one presents itself.

At APL 14 and 16 the nightwing(s) approach one round after the combat starts, from opposite directions. They first search the sky for invisible flying characters, with their aura taking out the potions of the characters. The summoned undead of the nightwing(s) attack as a pack from yet another angle. These are disposable attackers that go after a single character first.

The riders use ride by attack once again but move away from the nightwing. The sorcerer has his familiar try to touch characters with the spell *touch of idiocy* (preferably fighter types or arcane spellcasters). The bard buffs up the fighters and tries to cast *confusion* the characters. The officer tries to charge at the characters and use his weapons to the fullest advantage.

The axiomatic horses are primarily used as mounts, but they are intelligent (Int 5) in their own right. If their rider is killed, the horse guards the body and attacks any who come near it.

#### Treasure:

**APL 10:** L: 187 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *medium +1 lance* (192 gp), *ring of protection +1* (166 gp), *arcane scroll of eagles splendor* (12 gp), *wand of dispel magic 8<sup>th</sup> level caster* (1500 gp)

**APL 12:** L: 474 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *medium +1 lance* (192 gp), *ring of protection +1* (166 gp), *arcane scroll of eagles splendor* (12 gp), *wand of dispel magic 8<sup>th</sup> level caster* (1500 gp), *medium scimitar +1* (192 gp), *pearl of power 2<sup>nd</sup> level* (333 gp), *potion of shield of faith +3* (25 gp)

**APL 14:** L: 474 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *medium lance +1* (192 gp), *ring of protection +1* (166 gp), *arcane scroll of eagles splendor* (12 gp), *wand of dispel magic 8<sup>th</sup> level caster* (1500 gp), *medium scimitar +1* (192 gp), *pearl of power 2<sup>nd</sup> level* (333 gp), *potion of shield of faith +3* (25 gp)

**APL 16:** L: 474 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *medium lance +1* (192 gp), *ring of protection +1* (166 gp), *arcane scroll of eagles splendor* (12 gp), *wand of dispel magic 8<sup>th</sup> level caster* (1500 gp), *medium scimitar +1* (192 gp), *pearl of power 2<sup>nd</sup> level* (333 gp), *potion of shield of faith +3* (25 gp), *staff of evocation* (5416 gp)

**Development:** There is very little left in the estate to help the characters get out of their current jam with the law. The following are leads the characters can pick up here.

- 'Fresh' wagon tracks lead from the estate all the way to the Beyship of Shalrees. Survival check [DC 10].
- The Somb have heraldry that a person with Knowledge [Nobility] [DC 20] can trace to belong to the Beyship of Shalrees.
- The Somb leave tracks that go back to the Beyship of Shalrees. Survival/Search check [DC 10]
- *Speak with Dead* on the humans can reveal some information from the corpses (nothing major, mostly confirmation stuff). They were attacked and slaughtered by the Somb who used to patrol and protect them. The peasants have nothing to do with any wrong doing, besides looking the other way for some possible smuggling.
- Speak with dead from the elves reveal some clues. These are normal wild elves from the Bramblewoods. They were pouched and killed

some time ago as they ventured forth to look for missing comrades among the Beyship of Shalrees.

- The soldiers themselves are fanatics to their cause and tough as nails, so they choose not to be raised from the dead. If one is captured he does not willingly give out any information. He knows nothing of the plans of the New Cabal, and knows very little about the Shadow Government of Ket.
- The Beyship of Shalrees is only 10 miles to the south east.

The interesting part is that there is a few wild elf corpses spread about. But while the human corpses are just getting cold, these elf bodies are long stiff. Heal check [DC 15] to realize these wild elf corpses have been dead for at least a few months. They were killed some time ago, and transported here, then arranged to look like they died attacking the thorp. These elves are normal wild elves (not the celestial kind) that recently attacked the Beyship. They are wild elves from another tribe that have allied with a lone celestial elf and are attacking the Beyship out of revenge for its elf hunting.

Either way, once the authorities see another violent elf attack, all the events of the day will be written off in racial hatred. Most Ketites hate those forest elves. They're considered monsters.

Should the Somb and/or nightwing either flee from the battlefield or retreat, they return to their respective home bases, ready for action should the characters meet up with them again. This could happen because they engaged the characters, and despite trying to chase after them, the characters may have gotten away. Or, the great hero characters may rout the Somb, or even magically turn away the nightwing. If the bad guys hold the field at the end of the battle, they take all their own dead, as well as the any captured or dead characters.

If not rescued in a day or two, the captured dead characters become lost when fed to the barghest after being tortured. Characters that flee the battlefield, perhaps heading into the hills, should have a reasonable chance of escape, if they put some effort into it. The nightwing would keep looking and the Somb would search for a bit too.

If the characters have completely skipped this encounter and went straight for the Beyship (from information learned in Lopolla) they meet this same fight as the troops return to the Beyship after it seems like the characters are not going to show up. In that fight, the bad guys have less of an advantage because they are not in such an ambush pattern.

## Encounter Eight: The Beyship that Al'Akbar Forgot

### The approach

This adventure is taking place in the Lopolla District of Ket. The majority of it is the breadbasket of Ket, with its rolling fields and pastures and numerous small agrarian settlements. But the closer one gets to the Bramblewoods, the less populated the area and the more hilly the terrain becomes.

The characters shouldn't have too much trouble with the hill paths and trade trails leading to the estate. This is far from any trade routes and the proper authorities do not come out here very often, especially now that the Shadow Government has used its influence to divert patrols away from here.

As the characters approach the village read the following:

*A light drizzle softly hits the ground and leaves as you venture towards the village ahead. Sloshing through the muddy makeshift road tells the tale of an old settlement not heavily traveled. Up ahead a few, what appears to be rugs hanging from trees, swing from side to side. As you step closer a smell that you recognize far to often overcomes you. Looking further down the path you see many humanoids lined up and down the road swinging from the trees.*

When they get really close to the village, they start to run across elves hanging by their necks, on posts, along the roadside and hanging in the hills and fields. Most are in a decent onset of decay. Most have been smeared in meat, then rolled up in a rug, then hung (a traditional Ketite punishment). Ket characters automatically know this is a common punishment reserved for the most serious of offenses to Ket society. Foreign characters can learn this on a Knowledge (Local) check [DC 15]. The main trails leading into the Beyship are lined with a plethora of such hanging and decaying elves.

The elves have been dead for 4 months and longer. If the characters wish to spend the money needed to raise them that is fine. The wild elves are 75% CN and 25% CG just roll randomly to determine which the characters get. If they successfully speak with the wild elf then they are told of them attacking the human

village. Fighting ferociously to the bitter end. There are also images of a princely elf giving orders.

They list the enemies as a huge bat made of shadow, a dark naga with wings, human cavalry, and demonic hobgoblins.

### The Village

The hamlet itself is small and rests among the hills in the shadow of the Bramblewoods. The few peasants left know nothing of what's going on, and don't rightly care. They do what there told, for they fear the harsh new Bey (he's been in charge only a few years, inheriting it from his father). The community has little contact with the rest of Ket.

The hamlet has a small temple of Al'Akbar (as all communities do) and a fallen Mullah, Sallah, looks after it. He was once a neutral Mullah, but was seduced by the dark side and turned evil via the poisoning of the black goo. Now he has secretly rededicated himself to He of Eternal Darkness, but keeps up the charade of being a faithful of the True Faith. He's not particularly powerful (Clr4), but he keeps the villagers in line with wrathful dogma and handles the real authorities (such as Tax collectors, other Mullahs, and Circuit Jurats checking in for any crimes to judge over) with the assistance of the Bey.

But these visits from outside authorities have been increasingly few due to subtle management by the Shadow Government. If the characters wish to destroy him they may. They will receive no experience for doing so as he provides little challenge plus he is powerless outside of his temple (for clerics of Tharizdun need to be in contact with places of connected power to cast or ready spells).

Should he be exposed to the villagers, they would rather flee than rise up. Keep in mind; they distrust the elves just as much so there won't be any alliances here. As such they will act as normal when the characters enter the town. They do not mind the elves hanging alongside the roads (though the smell is a bit much).

The village also houses the Somb Barracks, but now all of the cavalry are away from the village. Some lay dead after the fight with the characters, the other half are far from the village on another mission unrelated to the characters, so the barracks are empty.

In between the village and the not too far Bramblewoods is the fortified manor house that overlooks the village and the approach from the forest. Traditionally, the fort-like building served as the front line against incursions from the forest. A prominent

road leads up to the estate from the center of the village and is lined with more dangling elves.

### Locations in the village

- A small Inn/Tavern called Kurant's.
- Local housing for the field workers and families
- The very small church of the True Faith (Al'Akbar) and its fallen cleric. In the temples basement, the shadow juice of evil that was mentioned before seeps into the walls and the ground. It's how the Mullah was converted to evil so easily.
- Blacksmith/Weapon Smith.
- Small Merchant shop that sells spices and meat.
- Somb Barracks/ 'Threshers' Square - There is nothing of value at the barracks. At the town square there are a few more dead elves rotting. Inside the stables however are several unattached Axiomatic Warhorses. These can be convinced to serve a character (should it pay the requirement on the AR) but it takes several days to negotiate the bond.
- The battlefield: Outside of town a few hundred feet lay elves that were slaughtered by the Nightwing and the army of the Somb. The villagers make no mention of this and show no ill will towards those fallen elves. The characters may search the area to show that the elves just died of battle and that many succumbed to wounds or were probably hung up on the posts on the roads.

**Talking to the Villagers:** If any of the characters try to speak with the villagers they will cower but be appreciative that someone is finally caring. If the characters have taken out the Bey and the fallen Mullah then they will be cheered. They will tell the characters though that the army is still out and about and could come back at any time.

Most of their people have been killed by the wild elves or so that's what the Bey has told them. They will also tell the characters it's been a while since a Thresher or Jurat patrol has come to their remote village. The villagers refuse to aid in combat, but they will welcome characters (including civilized looking elves) as their saviors

## **Encounter Nine: The Upper Level of the Manor**

*A procession of hanging elves leads up to the main gates of the fortified Manor. They all have been killed in various manners. A few entrails lie by the ground but most have been eaten away by various animals. These appear to be much older than the rest of the bodies. No villagers appear to even come close to the manor as you walk up the long pathway up the hillside.*

The majority of them were killed in the attack the elves conducted, not expecting such fierce otherworldly support with the bad guys. Amongst the entire beyship, there are more than 150 dead and hanging elves.

### The Manor Exterior and Courtyard

*Coming upon the large downtrodden manor house you see a few figures walking alongside it. Walls, about 10 feet high, surround the entire manor house with the main gate being a mere 50 feet from where you stand now.*

(Ask the characters what they want to do)

This manor house is very old, and has been rebuilt and added onto several times. It has a wooden palisade supporting the original partially collapsed stonewall. At its foundation is the same evil structure that housed secret rites used by the Cultists that turned to the Dark God, when Ket was just a province of Ghayar. Deep below the manor house, hidden away, are the sub levels that have stayed the same for over 1,000 years. The Manor has luxury amenities one would expect for a rural estate as well as innocent servants (girls) from around the beyship.

The walls and interior of the manor house are patrolled by greater barghest (8 ft. tall) disguised in armor, to appear to be (very large) hobgoblins.

### That's a BIG Hobgoblin!

Hobgoblins are fairly common as mercenaries in Ket, and most Ketites won't know these from the barghest that they are, with only the height being an oddity. In fact, these barghests have been disguised with paints, costumed armour and helmets and clothing to make them look like large sized hobgoblins. As well, these particular strain of barghest naturally look more like hobgoblins than goblins.

It is a Spot check [DC 30] to notice that the hobgoblins are not what they appear to be. After the successful Spot check, that character may make a Knowledge (Planes) DC 20 to determine it to be a greater barghest.

If the barghest's thoughts are ever read, what comes across is "FEED! FEED! Must FEED!".

There is a main gate but no other side doors or wall surface windows. To enter, the characters need to either go over (or through) the walls or through the main gate. The 'hobgoblins' are armed with heavy crossbows, glaives, or heavy flails.

Should the characters just walk up and try to enter the estate diplomatically, the guards will halt them and speak with them.

If the characters attack the manor directly (or sneak in with hostile intentions) the Bey responds in kind. Though should the characters sneak in and get caught before they act overly hostile, the Bey gives them an opportunity for his hospitality. He gives them numerous chances and wishes them to dine with him.

Should the characters become guerrilla-like annoyances in the countryside, the Bey can send his wolf-shaped barghest to track down and harass the characters, with a possible second wave of any remaining Somb troops that survived the Ambush encounter.

***Two gruff looking hobgoblins step in front of you all. "Halt! Who go there?" (Let the characters explain, if they give an acceptable reason they will let them in) Oh ok. You come with us inside. Bey will see you, no funny stuff though."***

***The two rather large hobgoblins walk you through the gate and into a large courtyard where a man in his mid forties wearing a long silk robe smoking a pipe sits.***

***"Ah welcome to my humble abode adventurers. I am Bey Jalaal al' Shal-Rees. What might I do for you?" A thick Baklunish accent slurs each word.***

If any paladins are in the party and demand to know why the elves are out there dead he will answer. The characters can roll Sense Motive [DC 15+APL] to realize he is holding something back. **Note:** The Bey has an *undetectable alignment* spell in place.

***"Ah that is because they are monsters of the land, my friend. They attacked my village and I had to put a stop to it, nothing more than that. I lost quite a few good men but I assure you we were victorious. Please before you ask any other questions why don't you eat a meal with me? I would be most grateful and honored."***

If the characters comply he will be most pleased and ask them to come inside to an extravagant dining hall. There food is already being brought out with some

things already placed on the table. The dining hall is about 60 ft. wide by 60 ft. long. The table itself fills up 15 ft. long and about 5 ft. wide, but it is only 1 ft. high, but lined with pillows for sitting.

***As you are led into the grand dining hall of the Bey numerous paintings of past Bey's line the entire length of the room. Set in the middle of the room is a huge rectangular table made of what appears to be sturdy ironwood. Seven silver plates and utensils sit neatly around the table as well as finely crafted crystal goblets filled with a lush red wine. Flowers decorate the middle of the table giving off an unusual aroma. There is a covered bowl at each place setting.***

***"Please sit down and enjoy this most extravagant meal. My best chefs have prepared it for us this evening." The Bey sits down and awaits you to do so.***

Let the characters sit and then open up the covered bowls. Once they do it will reveal a kind of weird gelatin like substance. The Bey will tell them that what they are eating is chilled kech brains and he will dig in eating them up.

The servants bringing in the meals are just peasants. All of the barghest are watching through the peepholes of the paintings and when combat breaks (as signaled by the Bey with a clap or verbal command) all of the barghest *dimension door* to surround and flank the characters. If any character wishes to inspect the paintings you can give them Search checks [DC 15] or Spot check [DC 35], but unless the characters provoke the Bey let the charade go on for a while before he tires of their conversation. Provoking can be being rude, or casting spells, or reading for combat in some fashion.

Since the Bey fully expects the characters to die soon, he may let slip certain details of the master plan, in a teasing innuendoes manner.

- He rambles about the cycle of life and how if one could stop it, it would collapse into pieces. And if in pieces, it can be picked up again and reshaped as one wants it.
- On a different subject, he talks about history. How this manner house dates back to Ghayar times. That life was simpler then and the weather was better too (hinting as if he was around to see it).

***Once the first appetizer is done the Bey claps his hands and numerous servants wheel out a very large bird cooked to a crisp (Giant owl) "Ahh a delicious delicacy in my lands. This bird is enough***

*to feed most of the villagers below but I saved it for you all because you truly deserve it.*"

The Rakshasa has *nondetection* and *undetectable alignment* as one of their spells and keep it up. Between the very high spell resistance (Note, the Rakshasa has higher SR at higher APLs), and the Will save, the Rakshasa has a good chance to avoid such detection spells, including thought probes.

#### Creatures:

##### APL 10 (EL 13)

✦ **Greater barghests (3):** Large Outsider Ftr2; hp 94, 94, 94; see Appendix One.

✦ **Greater barghests (3):** Large Outsider Rgr2; hp 91, 91, 91; see Appendix One.

✦ **Rakshasa:** Male Outsider; hp 52; see *Monster Manual*.

##### APL 12 (EL 15)

✦ **Greater barghests (3):** Large Outsider Ftr2; hp 94, 94, 94; see Appendix One.

✦ **Greater barghests (3):** Large Outsider Rgr2; hp 91, 91, 91; see Appendix One.

✦ **Rakshasa:** Male Outsider Sor4; hp 87; see Appendix One

##### APL 14 (EL 17)

✦ **Greater barghests (3):** Large Outsider Ftr8; hp 153, 153, 153; see Appendix One.

✦ **Greater barghests (3):** Large Outsider Rgr8; hp 140, 140, 140; see Appendix One.

✦ **Rakshasa:** Male Outsider Sor4; hp 87; see Appendix One

##### APL 16 (EL 19)

✦ **Greater barghests (3):** Large Outsider Ftr8; hp 153, 153, 153 each; see Appendix One.

✦ **Greater barghests (3):** Large Outsider Rgr8; hp 140, 140, 140; see Appendix One.

✦ **Rakshasa:** Male Outsider Sor8; hp 111; see Appendix One

**Tactics:** The barghest *dimension door* into the room, trying to flank the characters while the Bey moves about firing spells. One of the barghest *dimension doors* to block the only exit from the dining room. If the characters are loosing badly, the Bey orders his barghest to attempt to capture the characters (grapples, pins then tying up). Captured characters are brought down to the cells of the torture chamber.

Once the characters have defeated the bad guys they are free to explore the estate. The actual riches that the vaults and chests usually hold are somewhat empty, having been used to make some important payments and the rest squandered by the imposter Bey on his personal indulgences.

The characters can explore the estate, and eventually find the entrance(s) to the sub levels. Amongst the warehouse is evidence that the cargo was here but was moved fairly recently. A trail leads off to the well kept road leading deep into the Bramblewoods.

**Treasure:** Walking through the estate and below the characters find various trinkets and expensive items.

**All APLs:** L: 0 gp; C: 400 gp; M: 0 gp

#### Rooms to be explored (but with little value)

- The main hall/dinning hall
- Assorted bedrooms
- Pleasure chamber
- Stables
- Kitchen/Pantry
- Shrine to Al'Akbar that hides the passage to the sub levels of evil
- 'Hobgoblin' barracks
- Family crypt (the entrance way to the nightwing lair and ancient escape route – leads to **Encounter Ten**)
- An empty warehouse

## Encounter Ten: The Lower Level of the Manor

### Area A: The Nightwing Cave

Hidden away in the family crypt, leading away from the estate and its sub levels is a tunnel that ends in a large underground chamber. This chamber is in the hills near the village. This is the lair of the nightwing, since ancient times. A sloping and winding opening in the hillside allows for the nightwing to fly in and out of when called into service. At lower APLs the nightwing just isn't around at all in the adventure, its lair empty for weeks. It's assumed to be off doing some other grand mission on behalf of its masters.

There are no traps or dangers in the tunnel, but should for what ever reason, the nightwing be present in its lair (if it retreated from the ambush, or the characters avoided the ambush, etc), then it guards the tunnel. It also alerts the rest of the bad guys in the estate and sub levels.



## Area B: The Ancient Shrine of Evil and Friends

Hidden in the same area as the family shrine to Al'Akbar, a passageway leads deep beneath the estate to a sub-level. The secret entrance is hidden and needs the 'escape key' that the Bey has on his person to safely open it. Otherwise, if opened, it lets out a loud magical alert sound that echoes down the passage, but otherwise does no harm. As a foreshadowing clue for a later encounter, the characters discover the door requires ten rounds, from once the key is inserted, to open instantaneously. The door then closes three rounds after, whether the key is in the slot or not. The key needs to be reactivated (and another ten rounds) for the door to open again. There is a key slot on each side of the door. It's very important for the characters to pick the key up before they go through the door and its shuts again.

These doors are shaped like a metal iris. The *knock* spell opens these doors as if the key was used once.

Going further down, the sub level starts to displace clues and such. Small rooms that hint at what has happened before, tapestries that commemorate evil events. Living quarters and prayer rooms and other evil headquarters type stuff.

Among clues to find, an ancient shrine (but in recent use) to He of Eternal Darkness, and though the place is badly damaged from age and battles of long ago, some secret ancient history of Ket is revealed. Information no PC Ketite (or all but a handful of NPCs) knows. That the Exalted Faith rose to power in order to throw down those who had been corrupted by the Dark God.

Eventually, these apartments lead to the shrine area. To enter this temple area, the characters have to go through another time-delayed iris door using the escape key. So it takes ten rounds to open it, it stays open for 3 rounds, and then it takes another ten rounds before it will open again. This is important to note.

*After inserting the key a loud grinding echoes through the hall and much like before the door takes about one minute before it rapidly opens. A dark haze enshrouds the room.* (Wait till the characters enter the room completely before continuing) *Standing amidst the rocky room are various stalagmites high above you. Sticking out in the distance is a raised altar along with decorated chests and chairs. The air of the room has an unnatural chill to it that creeps to your very bones.*

*Then a feeling of dread overcomes you all as in the center of the room, not first noticeable because of how well it blends in the shadows is a pillar of black shadowy liquid. It falls from the ceiling and through various stone drains emptying into a large stone fountain where it bubbles and boils. You can almost feel the evil energy emanating from the pool.*

*Bobbing at the surface of the goo is a white crystal that is partially stained by the tar like substance.*

Once within the room, and the door is shut, the half-fiendish dark naga attacks. From the large stalagmite, swarms of hell wasps emerge and with their fiendish hive mind, work in conjunction with the naga to raise a little hell. The swarm goes after flying characters first, then after large groups of characters. The room is 160 ft. wide and 160 ft. long with various obstacles in the way.

The Naga starts up on a 30 foot high altar with a stair case leading down on the far side. The naga has wings though.

### **Creatures:**

#### APL 10 (EL 12)

☛**Half-fiend Dark Naga:** Half-Fiend Dark Naga: hp 74 each; see Appendix One.

☛**Hellwasp Swarm (2):** hp 93, 93; see *Monster Manual*.

#### APL 12 (EL 14)

☛**Half-fiend Dark Naga:** Half-Fiend Dark Naga Sor1: hp 81 each; see Appendix One.

☛**Hellwasp Swarm (4):** hp 93, 93, 93, 93; see *Monster Manual*.

#### APL 14 (EL 16)

☛**Half-fiend Dark Naga:** Half-Fiend Dark Naga Sor4: hp 95 each; see Appendix One.

☛**Hellwasp Swarm (4):** hp 93, 93, 93, 93; see *Monster Manual*.

#### APL 16 (EL 18)

☛**Half-fiend Dark Naga:** Half-Fiend Dark Naga Sor6: hp 106 each; see Appendix One.

☛**Hellwasp Swarm (6):** hp 93, 93, 93, 93, 93, 93; see *Monster Manual*.

**Tactics:** For characters taken by surprise and wanting to retreat, it takes ten rounds for the door to open only the key is in.

An object of dark and evil nature takes up the center of attention in the large vaulted room. Shadowy liquid oozes from it and seeps into various stone drains, like a fountain in Hell, just without the blood. [This is an minor artifact of Tharizdun. It has strange and eerie powers, that combine into a higher purpose, but none of that is important here. What is important is that this item allows clerics of Tharizdun to prepare and cast spells. The aura, via the shadow juice, filters up into the village, and into the cellar of the Al'Akbar temple.

Drinking or touching the liquid confers one negative level (or tries to, Will Save DC 10 + APL to). The negative level lasts for one hour then goes away without any risk of permanent loss.

The artifact also imbues the area with a *desecrate* at all times. The whole area has the deep chill of the other Tharizdun temples the characters have encountered.

Bobbing in the shadow juice is a shard of crystal that has been turned dark by the powerful negative and evil energy. This is the shard of the Life Crystal that is so important to the Celestial elves. Once it has soaked long enough, it will be ready for reinsertion into the Life Crystal in the village and corrupt it all once and for all. Any character who picks up the shard must have a Protection spell up (Like *magic circle against evil* or *protection from evil*) or make a Will save [DC 10 + APL]. If they fail the save they have receive two negative levels that last for an hour then go away without risk of harm. been overcome with the taint of Tharizdun.

Read the following to these characters:

***As you grasp the blackened shard a fierce pain runs up your arm and into your chest. It's almost as if the blackened juice is covering your entire insides as it then fills up your eyes. (Spot check [DC 5] for the other characters to see that the PCs eyes are now totally black) An image of a thick lush forest spreads out before you as you see many golden hued elves defending a huge temple. Their battle is a lost cause as many of them are being ripped to shreds and then a moment of darkness as a low guttural laughing begins to emit from somewhere in the blackness. You see 5 elves protecting a elder elf holding their ground but they are quickly over run and the elder is left helpless as a grotesque hand plunges into his chest and rips out the shard you now hold in your hand.***

A Search check [DC 25] of the altar and surrounding area will reveal a few 'fake' rocks where there is a hidden magical ring that was taken by the naga over

the years, as she was disgusted that she couldn't use them.

#### **Treasure:**

**All APLs:** L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *ring of feather fall* (183 gp)

### **Area C: The Elf in the cold-iron mask**

Leading off from the altar area is another door. This one leads down to another level, the dungeon level.

***Dank corners, empty hallways, and eerie silence greet you as you descend further into the complex. The evilness of the liquid seems to permeate throughout and makes its presence known even down here. Blood stains the walls and ceilings as a chamber presents itself up ahead.***

***Tables smeared of blood and horrific tools and utensils emerge as you enter the room. Skeletons work the room as they carry pieces of flesh from one corner to the other. Others perform unique cuts on half a torso on another table. None of them appears to pay any attention to your presence.***

Amongst the cells and torture equipment, teams of harmless skeletons do the physical manipulation for the cruel torture master, the bearded devil. When combat starts the skeletons don't interfere, they just clear out of the way (or fall to pieces). The devil uses his spells to the best of his abilities. He wishes a most painful death coming to the characters. If any characters tries to *detect evil* the whole room will radiate strongly so it will be hard to locate the devil. However he is above this chamber in his secret room and will *teleport* in the back of the chamber 40 ft. away from the characters (The chamber is 80 ft. by 40 ft.).

#### **Creatures:**

##### **APL 10 (EL 12)**

☛**Globulous:** Barbed devil (Hamatula) Ftr1: hp 136; see Appendix One.

##### **APL 12 (EL 14)**

☛**Globulous:** Barbed devil (Hamatula) Ftr3: hp 155; see Appendix One.

##### **APL 14 (EL 16)**

☛**Globulous:** Barbed devil (Hamatula) Ftr5: hp 174; see Appendix One.

##### **APL 16 (EL 18)**



✚ **Advanced Cornugon:** Large Outsider (Horned Devil); hp 106; see Appendix One.

Over the years there have been various people tortured and thus any magic was taken by the devils and used to pawn off to the Bey. However some things were kept by the devil and a Search check [DC 15] of the cells will reveal the following:

**Treasure:**

**APL 10:** L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *headband of intellect* +2 (333 gp)

**APL 12:** L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *headband of intellect* +2 (333 gp)

**APL 14:** L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *pearl of power 3<sup>rd</sup> level* (750 gp)

**APL 16:** L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *pearl of power 3<sup>rd</sup> level* (750 gp)

The cells have several previous victims, including some Ket authority figures and elves captured in the battle. All but one of them is long dead. The living one is the celestial elf that led the combined wild elf tribes on the village attack. Their purpose was to obtain the crystal shard. Obviously, they failed and failed badly. This elf was captured and taken down here. As a taunt, he was made aware of the shard being corrupted in the pool. Now he has on him torture marks and bits of the shadow juice.

Once the characters break into his cell, Strength check [DC 15] to break the rusty bars.

*Lying before you is a decrepit old elf, his skin barely covering his bones. You see his chest rise ever so slightly to indicate he still yet may be alive. He is covered in black splotches similar to those that cover the shard.*

They will find that he is near death. Any heal spells seem to back fire on him and actually hurt him more and fail to heal. As soon as the characters begin speaking with him he will recognize they are not the evil devil and try to communicate with them.

Opening his mouth seems like a severe strain to the elf while lifting a finger in your direction he slowly speaks, “Sh..Sha..Shard” (He is looking for the shard that they would have picked up. If they show it to him then he continues. If not have him tell them to bring the shard to him)

*“Foll...follow...shar...bee..ware..of...Gelzifa.”*

*“Kill...die...you...will.” “Let..me..hold..the...shard.”*

If the PCs allow him to touch the shard continue on.

*The elf slowly reaches out to grasp the blackened shard. As soon as his fingers touch the shard a bright light emits from the room as you hear a one low-pitched word “Free”. The elf’s head falls back and he goes limp. The shard however is now clear and beams brightly.*

What this all comes to is that he only has some of his life force left and it would take him along time to recover (assuming he had proper magical care). But this elf knows his people don’t have that long to wait. He transfers his remaining life energy into the shard, thus dying. But the shard has been cleansed. It now can act as a beacon; pointing the way back to the Life Crystal it came from.

The characters need to bring the crystal back to save the slowly dying elves.

*The crystal begins to glow new. Touching it, you somehow get the impression in your mind that if you were to let it lead you, it would bring you to its home.*

## Encounter Eleven: If you go into the Bramblewoods today..

After defeating the bad guys in and around the estate and searching everything thoroughly, the characters may want to stick around for a bit, at the estate or in the village to rest for the evening. The villagers show a bit of thanks but not too much towards the characters as they are still fearful of the higher powers.

The pursuit clock (of the pursuing authorities) is reset to 24 hours once Encounter Ten has been cleared. This gives the characters the day to rest and look around.

Some time into that 24 hours, a lone rider comes into town. He has only simple gear and no armour all wrapped with a heavy cloak, but beneath it all is a veteran Thorn. This is Captain Refalih of the Thorns, trusted servant of the General. He has been sent to warn the characters and update them as to what is going on.

Seeking out the character, calling for them by name if need be, Captain Refalih expresses the following to them:

- Greetings from the General. He has been observing your movements via magic and his ring you carry. He has been using this information to divert the search parties away from you, with limited success.

- Someone else has been manipulating the search parties as well, guiding them towards you. That same power has redirected them here. They will be here in less than a day < adjust that statement to fit the 24 period that the characters may be at by now> and they are bringing a lot of firepower.
- If you can risk it, escape into the Bramblewoods. The pursuit parties won't follow you, at least not right away.
- The General has been learning much from what he has observed you discovering as well as clues from our own sources. He feels that within a week, we will be in a position to covertly expunge the ones responsible for all this.
- One realization that we learned thanks to you, is that we are dealing with two separate groups. There is the Shadow Government that we've always known about and tolerated on some levels, and now there is a sub faction formed from these evil creatures that disguise themselves. We suspect they are manipulating the Shadow Government for their own purposes. Once that fact is made known and in a discreet manner, the Shadow Government will do half our work for us and restore the balance.
- I have sad news though. The man who saved you from the interrogation, the General's nephew in the Inquisition, he is dead. His murder, along with that of the Jurat and the Archon, are pinned to you.
- Stay out of the hands of the authorities and commit no unrelated crimes and the General gives his word he will clear your names within seven days.
- You will not be held accountable for the killing of these Tharizdun cultists or the otherworldly creatures that serve them. Nor accountable for the human minions that choose to serve them.

If the characters have committed crimes other than those directly related to fighting the Tharizdun cultists and the evil Somb unit, such as killing innocent Threshers, killing peasants, looting from non-cultist source, etc, and if the characters do not turn themselves at the end of the 7 days to face punishment for those crimes, they gain the Beygraf's Warrant entry on their AR.

Once the reset 24 hours are up, and if the characters are still in the village (and make no attempts to flee into the Bramblewoods) they become captured by the overwhelming forces of the authorities.

*Not far from the village, with wagon tracks visible in the muddy earth, is a wound cut into the might forest line of the Bramblewood. A path has been clear cut, with axes, saws and other more exotic methods. It leads deep into the hilly region of the Bramblewood.*

**Development:** This encounter should end with the characters heading off along the clear-cut trail into the hilly region of the Bramblewood, somewhat near the headwaters of the Tuflik River.

## Encounter Twelve: The Celestial Wild Elf Village

**Note:** The following encounter only takes place if the characters successfully retrieved the shard and had the half-celestial elf prince use his remaining life force to cleanse it. As well, the characters need to be carrying it with them. Other wise, they have no beacon, and go right past the trail to the village and keep heading down the clear cut trail.

*The clear cut trail through the Bramblewood goes on for miles and miles. Along the this path, the trek only takes a day, but with out it, the same distance could take a week within the thick of the Bramblewood.*

*It's at this point the crystal shard you carry begins to pulse rapidly, giving you a feeling of urgency to move off the trail and head down a small side path (one of a hundred you've passed so far). The clear-cut trail continues ahead. Do you follow the urges of the crystal or continue along the clear-cut trail?*

Normally all the elves (both wild and wood) of the Bramblewood are extremely xenophobic. Shoot first and ask questions later, much later. They don't even get along that entirely well among themselves most of the times. This particular elf tribe is even more cut off from all the rest, due to their sacred duty handed down from their ancestors, and their eternal patriarch.

But now their numbers have been greatly thinned, their leaders held prisoner, the great gold dragon corrupted and killed and the 'unholy site that must be guarded' has fallen back into enemy hands.

*Traveling through the entangled brush of the thick Bramblewood has not been easy. Keeping silent is made even harder when not much is stirring in the forest. In the few hours of travel you have not seen any life. Breaking through the weeds and underbrush is a run down village. Various huts*

***have been burnt down or severely destroyed from unknown forces. Curiously not a sound can be heard.***

If the characters search around they find various humanoid tracks (ogres, goblins, barghest, misc.). Nothing major and nothing that tells them which way the enemy went as they lead every which way. When they look inside any of the huts they will see emaciated elves. All are under the effects of fatigue and exhaustion with many being stunned as well. They also have negative levels on them and this cannot be cured, except by repairing the Life Crystal.

***Looking into one of the straw huts you see a brown skinned elf comatose in the corner barely breathing. He does not appear to even notice that you are inside. After a few moments of trying to wake the elf he smiles.***

(If any characters attempts a heal the elf will speak)

***"Thanks for the attempt but we cannot be healed by your magics as our life force is tied to that shard which you now hold"***

This is the only elf left in the village that can manage to speak. Even when he does, every breath, every syllable is a extreme effort. He lapses into unconsciousness and back again frequently. He loses his train of thought, and has a limited range of information he can concentrate on to relay to the characters. And only then, if they ask him it three times.

- We are the Allatisha (meaning Children of Grace in elven), it was our sacred task to guard the temple of the Dark God. We have failed.
- Our Patriarch and our remaining princes have been taken hostage and held within the temple.
- The ogres and other powerful creatures that garrisoned our village left several days ago to where we know not. Like the vermin they are, goblins came from the woods to pick clean any loot the others did not get. It is only their fear of Gelzifa and we as his property that stayed the goblin hands from killing us.
- Gelzifa is the creature of evil that leads the powerful forces used to defeat us and occupy the evil temple we guarded the world from. It is a Glaitiomoquao <Meaning adult or older green dragon in the elven tongue, because the elf doesn't know the common tongue word for dragon in his weakened state>. Attack Gelzifa at the temple before he comes here investigating. Save our kin in the temple.

- There is a traitor in our midst, one of our own kin. He turned to evil and betrayed us and ruled us like a puppet for his new masters. Now he has been betrayed and sentenced to the same fate as the rest of us. When the Life Crystal was shattered and corrupted, he began to fade too. Now he sits in his throne, made from the skull of our long time ally who occupied the inside of the temple so that evil could not. Slay the traitor not, let him suffer our fate.
- Seek the temple in the middle of the bog at the end of the human scar.
- < Once any five questions have been answered, the elf collapses and can not be restored to consciousness >

As for the traitor, he is in the same dying boat as the rest of his people. His giant throne made of the skull of the old gold dragon that once guarded the evil temple. His contemptuous minions (who were on loan in the first place) have stripped his weakened body of all its adornments and left him to wallow in his dying regrets.

In the middle of the village is the gazebo that holds the Life Crystal. The Life Crystal is simple enough to repair. Inserting the shard into the obvious space, a bright light, and everything is ok again. The good news is the elves do not get any worse, the bad news is that they do not start getting better for another seven days.

So to stop this from happening, the elves suggest the characters go take on the dragon at home, before he becomes aware and strikes first.

#### **Important Time Limit**

Keep track of how many hours it has been since the characters first arrived at the gates of Lopolla. From that moment, they have 96 hours (4 days) till the all the elves die and are beyond raising.

Should the characters arrive too late and all the elves are dead, then they can still match wits with the dragon, but rewards offered from the village are no longer offered.

## **Encounter Thirteen: The Day the Ziggurat stood still**

To reach this point, the characters must follow the clear-cut path to its end- a bog with a sturdy gangway leading to a huge inverted ziggurat temple.

***The path finally ends at a wide open bog nestled between two hills. A sturdy looking gangway leads***

*from the shore of the bog to a giant black ziggurat covered in moss that impossibly rests on its tip in the middle of the bog. From the lip of a large opening, a sturdy adamantite ramp plunges down into the bog. On tufts of dry land, rickety shacks and bizarre foundry buildings are nestled like a workman's village around the apex of the temple. Near the edge of the bog is the wagon you have been following. Its bed is empty, its horses missing, and no sign of the crew.*

If the characters continue on they'll have to choose what method to take. Either take the gangway across the bog, or slog through the bog itself.

Taking the bog, they will be knee deep in muck for medium creatures, which is not pleasant. The characters have to muck through 500 ft. of it to get to the big opening in the impossibly large temple accessed by the ramp. A few shacks and abandoned metal foundries once worked by humanoids. Using the bog method give the characters a chance to sneak up on the dragon inside stealthfully (assuming the use of other normal precautions).

Taking the gangway keeps them about 5 ft. above the muck of the bog. The gangway is sturdy enough, 10 ft. wide with a 20 ft. by 20 ft. platform 200 ft. away from the ziggurat. The down side to using the gangway is that the dragon is very attune to the creaks and vibrations it gives off when anything more than 100 pounds moves across it. Characters using the gangway (even slowly) alert the dragon that someone unexpected is coming.

### **The Muck Effects**

Any character slogging through the muck must make a one time Fort save [DC 10] or be sickened for one hour. In addition, any character without the benefit of the *freedom of movement* effect has his movement rate reduced by half and can not run (but can still charge and double move).

### **Looking at the Temple**

The temple itself is about 500 ft. wide and 500 ft. long. Of course unlike a normal pyramid it gets smaller the deeper you go in (because it is upside down). The very tip of the pyramid just touches the bog, as it magically floats and balances.

The black obsidian temple has evil magical properties, like if radiation could have a moral bias. Thus, the inside of it is *unhallowed* and *desecrated* and has that cold to the bone chill like all other Tharizdun temples. In this case, due to the troubles the bad guys are having

with restoring the temple, the *unhallow* does not have any additional spells attached to it as normal.

Inside the big opening is a sloped chamber that the dragon nests in. When the temple was brand new, before the bog developed, only the tip of the pyramid touched the ground, and the rest magically balanced on it. Over the years, the magic waned, as it lost connection with the dark powers that fueled and maintained it, thus the temple slowly sunk, till it was buried in the bog right up to the opening. But, the sinking has been stopped, because the patriarch has been harnessed as a power source to keep the thing floating. It will take another ten years for the patriarch's life force to be fully drained, and charged into the temple to raise it back up and keep it up for another lifetime.

Characters who get close enough to the temple can (with a successful Spellcraft check [DC 30]) tell that its some sort of powerful divine *levitation* spell that is keeping the thing this far out of the mud and from toppling over.

Within the opening and down an interior ramp, is the lair of the green dragon (and some golems at APL 12 and 14). The temple used to have many riches, most of it belonging to the horde of the previous (gold) dragon. Much to the frustration of the green dragon, large amounts of the treasure horde have been used to pay off suppliers and many high-powered minions. Not to mention, the expenses needed for those high-powered minions to bankroll the various Node Temples and organizations in the VTF region.

So, this leaves the dragon in such a bad mood that not even eating tubs of celestial wild elf treats can bring him out of his funk. It also means that the large amounts of coins he rests on are of the lower denomination variety. As well, should the temple every sink very suddenly, not saying it will, just that if it did, that entire dragon horde would go down with the temple.

The inside of the ziggurat is completely void of natural light. The ramp meets the lip of the opening and a ramp inside the temple goes down 20 ft. and opens into a 100 ft. by 100 ft. by 40 ft. high chamber that is the lair of the green dragon Gelzifa.

The ramp does not give off vibrations that give Gelzifa any extra detection ability, but he does have all his normal methods (Listen checks, Blindsight, etc).

If the dragon detects the characters while they are out in the bog (in the muck or on the gangway) he takes a few rounds to cast buff spells then goes out to attack.

At APLs 12 and 14, the dragon has control of some of the left over defenses of the temple, golems. He sends them out as well, through the muck, but the golems are immune to the movement reduction of the mud (as is any large or larger sized creature).

#### **Creatures:**

##### **APL 10 (EL 13)**

🐉**Gelzifa:** Adult Green Dragon: hp 255; see Appendix One.

##### **APL 12 (EL 15)**

🐉**Gelzifa:** Adult Green Dragon: hp 255; see Appendix One.

🐉**Iron Golem;** hp 129; see *Monster Manual*.

##### **APL 14 (EL 17)**

🐉**Gelzifa:** Mature Adult Green Dragon: hp 293; see Appendix One.

🐉**Iron Golem;** hp 129; see *Monster Manual*

🐉**Stone Golem;** hp 107; see *Monster Manual*

##### **APL 16 (EL 19)**

🐉**Gelzifa:** Very Old Green Dragon: hp 390; see Appendix One.

**Tactics:** Assuming the dragon becomes aware of the characters, he takes time to prep himself with spells before taking the battle to the characters above the bog.

First round of pre-combat buffing Gelzifa casts *invisibility* on himself, then in successive rounds the following: *mage armor*, *shield*, *cat's grace*, *bear's endurance*, then Judge's option (dependent upon APL). If the characters get the relative drop of the dragon (such as making it undetected to the lip of the opening) the dragon goes straight into combat, casting spells only if it best suits the opportunity.

The first round of combat the dragon of course uses its breath weapon.

If the characters have cornered the dragon inside the ziggurat, and if things are looking bad, the dragon attempts flee past the characters to take the fight out into the bog area.

If need be, Gelzifa chases characters that try and hide inside the ziggurat or escape the bog.

**Treasure:** After the defeat of Gelzifa the characters can quickly look around and gather up the following treasure. Two things about this, since Gelzifa had to siphon off many of the treasure to fund the cabal there is not as much as there usually is in a dragon's horde

also the characters only have enough time to grab a few items before the ziggurat collapses.

**APL 10:** L: gp; C: 1000 gp; M: *gem of brightness* (1083 gp), *wand of levitate* (375 gp), *staff of fire* (1479 gp), *divine scroll of transmute mud to rock* (94 gp), *rod of lesser empower* (750 gp)

**APL 12:** L: 0 gp; C: 2000 gp; M: *minor cloak of displacement* (2000 gp), *stone of good luck* (1666 gp)

**APL 14:** L: 0 gp; C: 3000 gp; M: *+1 animated heavy steel shield* (764 gp), *rod of lesser maximize* (1166 gp), *amulet of natural armor +3* (1500 gp), *horn of blasting* (1666 gp)

**APL 16:** L: 0 gp; C: 4000 gp; M: *+1 keen holy longsword* (2693 gp), *headband of intellect +6* (2500 gp), *pearl of power 5<sup>th</sup> level* (2083 gp)

#### **The walls of the lair**

The characters need to bring in a light source of their own, for the natural light of outside does not penetrate the boundaries of the temple.

In addition to the pile of dragon's treasure, the characters notice the walls of the main chamber are covered in wiggling symbols and letters. Just like D'gran's sword or the air bubols, the script changes randomly, without making any sense or forming any meaning.

The alphabet and script of Infernal and draconic (as the four elemental languages, as well as infernal and abyssal are meant to be represented, if only the letters would cooperate).

No amount of magical deciphering by the characters can make sense out of the flowing scripts.

There are two area's on the walls that are useful and important to the characters. They are as follows.

#### **The Node Tracker Map**

A 10 ft. by 10 ft. crude map of the Flanaess is carved into the wall. Knowledge (Geography) [DC15] shows the map only roughly represents major geological features and does not show settlements or details of the land. Knowledge (History) [DC25] shows that many of the features are out of date, such as forest borders, diverted rivers, swamps, etc. The layout suggests that this is an image of the land from over 1,000 years ago.

There are four bright pinpricks of colored light on the map. A red light shows itself to be in what is modern day Tusmit. A blue light shows itself to be off shore of modern day Dyvers City. A white light show itself to be in Ekbir. A grey light shows itself to be in Veluna.

With the detail of the map, that light could represent a fairly large area, nothing specific.

A chair made for a human rests nearby the map. As well, a backpack filled with blank parchment, ink and quills. A cultist used to have the job of recording the new locations of the lights on the map. These lights represent the current locations of the four node seeds.

Its advisable that the characters make a copy. If they do, record on the appropriate entry on the AR.

#### **The partially deciphered wall script:**

Not all of the wiggly letters on the wall are unreadable. In a small section, the text has been stabilized and can now be read if you know the right language. The following is written in Infernal and is available as a Player's Handout #3.

*...and He of Eternal Darkness was sealed away.*

*In darkness he did say to his left hand, "bring forth the story of my return, keep it hidden only for the faithful. Bring about my will as only you have the power to do. Free yourself from imprisonment to come, to free me from imprisonment that is.*

*Send servants to seek out the four eyes of my elemental disguise for they have been sundered and lost. Scattered they are, but collected they will bring about your freedom.*

*The tears of my eyes shall wash away the bonds that hold you. Be wary, for my eyes are windows to the realms of powers that can be used against you, as much as for you. Trust not the gatekeepers that are motes in my eyes.*

#### **The Many Rooms of the Ziggurat**

Like the floating islands in Firestorm, this giant temple has rooms for other things as well, but none of them are relevant.

Many metal iris doors lead off from the main corridor, but do to the state of the temple, none of them can be opened or traveled through (*teleport*, planar travel, etc).

The only other accessible part of the temple of the characters other than the main hall, is the 'engine room' down at the very bottom of the ziggurat. Stairs lead down to it.

Note: The stairs and the main corridor is all large enough for the huge sized dragon to squeeze through when it needs to access the engine room.

#### **The Prison/Engine Room**

In the lower reaches of the ziggurat temple, is a large room a magical control device above four iris doors in the floor. The room itself is 30 ft. by 30 ft. by 30 ft. high. The control device activates the prison doors in the floor. There are four ways to operate the control panel. The device is covered in the wiggly letters. This makes understanding the controls extremely difficult. There is a round indentation that is exactly the same size as the air bauble picked up in VTF3-06.

**The first way** is to be the being that has the invested control of the temple. In this case, it was the dragon. The characters have no way of gaining invested control of the temple.

**The second way** is to place into the round slot the air bauble and the words suddenly become clear, assuming the character understands Auran (or has a way to read Auran magically).

In this case, a character need only make a Knowledge (Arcana) [DC 5+APL], or a Disarm Device [DC 1+APL]. Or a straight Int check of [DC5+APL]. Success opens all four prison doors in the floor. If the character fails by 5 or more, see critical failure results below.

**The third way** is to use Disarm Device skill. Since the character doesn't have a lot to go on and the controls are complex and alien, he's in for a rough time. The DC is [15+APL]. If the character fails by 5 or more, see critical failure results below.

**The fourth way** is for characters with no Disarm Device and no air bauble in the party. They can just take a random stab at it. Whenever the character attempts this, first roll a 1d6.

**1-2:** Int check 3+APL.

**3-4:** Wis check 3+APL

**5:** Cha check DC 8+APL

**6:** Dex check DC 10+APL

Failing any of these checks by any amount results in Failure (see below). If the above roll is successful, the character has a 50% chance of actually opening the cells. Failing the percentile roll results in a critical failure (see below).

#### **Critical Failure Results**

Every time a critical failure result is achieved, the characters do something wrong and overload the control device. This is not a trap, but a malfunction, so it can not be searched for and disarmed. Roll 1d6 and consult the following each time the device critically fails.

- 1- *horrid wilting* (CL15), 30 ft. burst
- 2- *mass inflict critical wounds* (CL15), 30 ft. burst
- 3- *incendiary cloud* (CL15), 30 ft. burst- 1 rnd duration
- 4- *fire storm* (CL15), 30 ft. burst, 1 round duration only
- 5- Nothing happens
- 6- Roll twice more ignoring results of 5 or 6 (treat this roll as a 2 at APL 10 or 12).

### Once the cell doors are opened:

***You have successfully operated the control device and the four iris doors in the floor open. Each cell is a 10 ft. by 10 ft. chamber, filled with a foot of ash. In three of the chambers are being that show signs they were once graceful and majestic, but now are diminished waifs of their true selves.***

These three creatures are the Ghaele Patriarch of the Wild Elf clan, and his two sons, Half-Celestial Wild Elves. They are extremely drained of life force and must be carried out. They lack little energy to speak, more than to say, ***"we must flee this place or be doomed with it."***

As soon as the Ghaele is removed from his cell, the temple starts to lose power and quickly starts to sink.

The characters must use their best efforts to flee the sinking ziggurat or killed inside it as it fills with mud and sinks 500 ft. below the surface.

A rule of thumb is 10 rounds for it to sink, but as long as the characters are making a heroic effort to escape, then allow them to make it. This is meant to be a dramatic closing, not a trap to kill them.

Should any character defiantly stay inside while it sinks, they are killed and their body lost. The evil energy of the temple surges once under the mud, killing all living things inside.

If everything works out right, then the characters run down the swamp's board walk, carrying the celestial prisoners, while the sinking temple that over shadows them (because its bigger at the top then at the bottom) crushes the planks of wood they were just on.

If they try doing that through the bog and have a movement rate of 15 or less in the muck, then they get crushed, sucked under and killed.

## Conclusion

So where are the characters at this point?

If they've done everything that they should, there standing just out side the swamp area, with the weakened celestial patriarch over their shoulder and two princes in tow. They should have copies of the node map and a copies of the prophesy text.

The wild elf village is safe and they recover their strength with the restored Life Crystal, and the characters are free to wait out the rest of the 7 days till its safe to go back to Lopolla and turn themselves into the safe custody of the Thorns.

What have the characters earned for themselves?

- Once 7 or so days have passed, the characters can safely return to Ket proper and Lopolla where men loyal to the General and the Beygraf safely escort the characters to help clear there names. All 'crimes' that were committed in direct relation to the quest their were assigned by the General are forgiven during the private inquest. The magic of the inquest reveals any crimes the characters committed unrelated to the goal of the quest and the characters receive 2 TU's per infraction. But other than that, are allowed to go on their way with the thanks of the General, who assures the characters that the Beygraf is thankful too.
  - If the characters do not wish to return to face the inquest, and choose not to turn themselves in, then they gain the Beygraf's Warrant entry on the Adventure Record.
- If the characters slew the dragon and saved the elf village from extinction; The elves promise to craft +3 Green Dragonhide Banded Mail, with Acid Resistance, at MetaRegional Frequency for one character who wants it.
- If the Ghaele was successfully saved, then he offers to craft for the characters a copy of his own +4 holy greatsword.
- If a character was captured some time during the adventure by the legitimate Ket authorities, and released at the end of the adventure (after paying the listed TU's), assuming the other characters can prove everyone's innocence to avoid gaining the Beygraf's Warrant
- Either by capturing them in combat, or by befriending one or two left behind in the stables of the Somb barracks, the characters have a Freq: Adventure chance to purchase the 7 HD Axiomatic Heavy Warhorse, partially as a gift from the Ket Government (it's a big honor to be given a special Horse in Ket). The initial cost for the horse is 5,000 gp, but it has its own special upkeep cost.



## The End

### Experience Point Summary

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

#### Encounter Seven: Riverbank

Defeat the attacking Somb

APL 10	390 XP
APL 12	450 XP
APL 14	510 XP
APL 16	570 XP

#### Encounter Nine: The Upper Level of the Manor

Defeat the evil Bey and his minions

APL 10	390 XP
APL 12	450 XP
APL 14	510 XP
APL 16	570 XP

#### Encounter Ten: The Lower Level of the Manor (Area B)

Defeat the dark naga and her hellwasps.

APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	420 XP
APL 14	480 XP
APL 16	540 XP

#### Encounter Ten: The Lower Level of the Manor (Area C)

Defeat the torturer

APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	420 XP
APL 14	480 XP
APL 16	540 XP

#### Encounter Thirteen: The Day the Ziggurat stood still

Defeat Gelzifa the green dragon

APL 10	390 XP
APL 12	450 XP
APL 14	510 XP
APL 16	570 XP

#### Encounter Thirteen: The Day the Ziggurat stood still (Engine Room)

Survive the opening of the cell doors

APL 10	270 XP
APL 12	330 XP
APL 14	390 XP
APL 16	450 XP

#### Story Award

Good roleplaying

APL 10	270 XP
APL 12	315 XP
APL 14	360 XP
APL 16	405 XP

#### Total Possible Experience

APL 10	2,700 XP
APL 12	3,150 XP
APL 14	3,600 XP
APL 16	4,050 XP

### Treasure Summary

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

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

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

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*,



*analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

### Encounter Seven: Riverbank

Defeat the Somb.

**APL 10:** L: 187 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *medium lance* +1 (192 gp), *ring of protection* +1 (166 gp), *arcane scroll of eagles splendor* (12 gp), *wand of dispel magic 8<sup>th</sup> level caster* (1500 gp)

**APL 12:** L: 474 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *medium lance* +1 (192 gp), *ring of protection* +1 (166 gp), *arcane scroll of eagles splendor* (12 gp), *wand of dispel magic 8<sup>th</sup> level caster* (1500 gp) *medium scimitar* +1 (192 gp), *pearl of power 2<sup>nd</sup> level* (333 gp), *potion of shield of faith* +3 (25 gp)

**APL 14:** L: 474 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *medium lance* +1 (192 gp), *ring of protection* +1 (166 gp), *arcane scroll of eagles splendor* (12 gp), *wand of dispel magic 8<sup>th</sup> level caster* (1500 gp) *medium scimitar* +1 (192 gp), *pearl of power 2<sup>nd</sup> level* (333 gp), *potion of shield of faith* +3 (25 gp)

**APL 16:** L: 474 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *medium lance* +1 (192 gp), *ring of protection* +1 (166 gp), *arcane scroll of eagles splendor* (12 gp), *wand of dispel magic 8<sup>th</sup> level caster* (1500 gp) *medium scimitar* +1 (192 gp), *pearl of power 2<sup>nd</sup> level* (333 gp), *potion of shield of faith* +3 (25 gp), *staff of evocation* (5416 gp)

### Encounter Nine: The Upper Level of the Manor

Defeat the Rakshasa Bey and his barghests minions.

**APL 10:** L: 274 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

**APL 12:** L: 274 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *cloak of resistance* +1 (83 gp), *lesser extend rod* (250 gp)

**APL 14:** L: 174 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *cloak of resistance* +1 (83 gp), *lesser extend rod* (250 gp), +1 *mighty composite longbow* [+4](233 gp)

**APL 16:** L: 174 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *cloak of resistance* +1 (83 gp), *lesser extend rod* (250 gp), +1 *mighty composite longbow* [+4](233 gp)

### Encounter Ten: The Lower Level of the Manor (Area B)

Defeat the dark naga and her hellwasps.

**All APLs:** L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *ring of feather fall* (183 gp)

### Encounter Ten: The Lower Level of the Manor (Area C)

Defeat the torturer and find the treasure in the cells.

**APL 10:** L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *headband of intellect* +2 (333 gp)

**APL 12:** L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *headband of intellect* +2 (333 gp)

**APL 14:** L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *pearl of power 3<sup>rd</sup> level* (750 gp)

**APL 16:** L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *pearl of power 3<sup>rd</sup> level* (750 gp)

### Encounter Thirteen: The Day the Ziggurat stood still

Defeat Gelzifa in her lair then loot the majority of the dragon's loot and get it out of the temple before it sinks.

Treasure:

**APL 10:** L: 0 gp; C: 1000 gp; M: *gem of brightness* (1083 gp), *wand of levitate* (375 gp), *staff of fire* (1479 gp), *divine scroll of transmute mud to rock* (94 gp), *rod of lesser empower* (750 gp)

**APL 12:** L: 0 gp; C: 2000 gp; M: *minor cloak of displacement* (2000 gp), *stone of good luck* (1666 gp)

**APL 14:** L: 0 gp; C: 3000 gp; M: +1 *animated heavy steel shield* (764 gp), *rod of lesser maximize* (1166 gp), *amulet of natural armor* +3 (1500 gp), *horn of blasting* (1666 gp)

**APL 16:** L: 0 gp; C: 4000 gp; M: +1 *keen holy longsword* (2693 gp), *headband of intellect* +6 (2500 gp), *pearl of power 5<sup>th</sup> level* (2083 gp)

### Conclusion:

Access for but not the item itself is offered from several different sources if the sub-missions are successful. See conclusions for specifics.

### Maximum Possible Treasure

**APL 10:** 4,200 gp

APL 12: 6,000 gp  
APL 14: 12,000 gp  
APL 16: 18,000 gp

## Special:

☛ **Gift of the Beygraf:** For your services to Ket you have been granted access to a rare and beautiful horse. You may purchase one of the Axiomatic Heavy Warhorses. This is a great honor in Ket and the horse must be maintained in a high status at all times or it leaves.

☛ **Axiomatic Warhorse, Advanced (7HD):** CR 4; Large magical beast (augmented animal, extraplanar); HD 7D8+21; hp 59; Init +1; Spd 50 ft. (40 ft. barding); AC 22 (Touch 11, Flat-footed 18)[-1 size, +2 Dex, +4 natural, +5 breastplate barding]; Base Atk +5; Grp +13; Atk +8 melee (1D6+4, hoof); Full Atk +8/+8 melee (1D6+4, hooves) and +3 melee (1d4+2 bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA: smite chaos; SQ Low-light vision, scent, darkvision (60 ft.), Fire-Electricity-Cold-Sonic Resistance 5, SR 8, Linked Minds; AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 13, Cha 6.

*Skills & Feats:* Listen +7, Spot +6; Endurance, Run, Track.

**Smite Chaos (Su):** Once per day the creature can make a normal attack to deal additional damage equal to its HD total (max +20) against a chaotic opponent.

**Linked Minds (Ex):** Axiomatic creatures of a particular type within 300 feet of one another are in constant communication. If one is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If one in the group is not flat-footed, none of them are. No axiomatic creature in the group is considered flanked unless they all are.

**Honor Pact:** This warhorse is a gift to its owner. It fights to the death to follow what it best believes to be its owner's wishes (even if the owner is killed). Part of this agreement is that the horse is to be very well kept (50 gp per TU of adventuring).

☛ **Beygrafs Warrant:** Every time you play an adventure set in Ket, you must roll a 1d20. If a One, you must pay one extra TU to avoid the authorities **or** roll again. If another one is rolled, you are captured and executed. You always suffer a -2 Circumstance penalty to all Charisma based skill checks in the region of Ket until a pardon is granted.

🗺️ **Map:** This character has a copy map for the location of the four node seeds.

☛ **DragonSlayer:** For defeating the dragon Gelzifa, the Patriarch of the wild elf clan has offered to craft a single suit of +3 Green Dragonhide Banded Mail, Acid Resistance for one player at the table. Frequency: Meta-Regional; Cost: 27,400 gp.

☛ **Favor of the Patriarch:** For saving Ghaele the Patriarch of the wild elf clan you have earned his favor. His weaponsmiths will create a copy of his own sword for a character at a future date. This character now has access to purchase a +4 Holy greatsword. Frequency: Metaregional.

## Appendix One: NPCs

### Encounter Four: I shot the Thresher

#### All APLs

**Archon Support:** Male human Ftr6/Sor4/Rog3; CR 13; Medium Humanoid (5' 6" tall); 6d10+12+3d6+6+4d4+8; hp 98; Init +5 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+5 Dex, +2 Ring of Protection, +2 Amulet of Natural Armor); Atk +13/+8 melee (d6+5, [Crit 15-20] [x2], +1 keen scimitar); or +17/+12 ranged (d6+6 [Crit 20] [x3] +1 (+2 Strength) Mighty Composite Shortbow); Face/Reach 5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.; SA; None; SQ Evasion, Trapfinding, Trap Sense +1, Sneak Attack +2d6; AL LN; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 18/20, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 14.

*Skills and Feats:* Diplomacy +11, Handle Animal +9, Jump +10, Knowledge (Arcana) +6, Languages: Baklunish, Common, Ride +10, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +6, Tumble +14; Combat Reflexes, Far Shot, Toughness, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus Composite Shortbow, Weapon Focus Scimitar, Weapon Specialization Composite Shortbow, Weapon Specialization Scimitar.

*Spells (6/6/3) 0 Lvl Daze, Detect Magic, Flare, Light, Ray of Frost, Read Magic 1 Lvl Mage Armor, Magic Missile, Shield. 2 Lvl Cat's Grace*

*Possessions:* Large Steel Shield, +1 Scimitar, +1 (+2 Mighty Strength) Composite Longbow, 20 arrows, *Gloves of Dexterity* +2, Light Warhorse, Tack.

**Sergeant Dosa:** male half-orc Ftr5/Rog3; CR 8; Medium Humanoid (6' 5" tall); 5d10+10+3d6+6; hp 62; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+3 Dex, +4 Masterwork Chain Shirt, +2 Masterwork Large Steel Shield); Atk +13/+8 melee (1d6+5, [Crit 18-20] [x2], masterwork scimitar); or +13/+8 ranged (d6+4 [Crit 20] [x3] Mighty Masterwork +2 Composite Shortbow); Face/Reach 5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.; SA; None; SQ Orcish Blood, Darkvision 60'; Evasion, Uncanny Dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +1; Str 20, Dex 16/18, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Diplomacy +6, Languages: Baklunish, Common, Orcish, Dwarven, Ride +12, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7; Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus Composite Shortbow, Weapon Specialization Composite Shortbow.

*Possessions:* Masterwork Chain Shirt, Large Masterwork Steel Shield, Masterwork Scimitar, *Gloves of Dexterity* +2, Masterwork +4 Strength Composite Longbow, 40 masterwork arrows, Light Warhorse, Tack.

**Elite Threshers;** male human; Ftr3/Rog1; CR 4; Medium Humanoid (5' 6" tall); 3d10+3+1d6+1; hp 30; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+3 Dex, +4 Chain Shirt, +2 Large Steel Shield); Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, [Crit 18-20] [x2], scimitar); or +6 ranged (d6 [Crit 20] [x3] Composite Shortbow); Face/Reach 5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.; SA; None; SQ None; AL LN; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10.

*Skills and Feats:* Handle Animal +7, Languages: Baklunish, Common, Ride +10, Sense Motive +7; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Mounted Combat, Weapon Focus Scimitar.

*Possessions:* Chain Shirt, Large Steel Shield, Scimitar, Composite Shortbow, 40 arrows, Light Warhorse, Tack.

For Rakshasa, see APL 16 of Encounter Nine

### Encounter Seven: Ambush on the Riverbank

#### APL 10 (EL 13)

**Somb:** Male Human Ftr3; CR 3; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 3d10+6; hp 27; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 ([+1 Dex, +6 armor] Touch 11, Flat-footed 16); Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, Medium Scimitar) or +6 melee (1d8+2, Medium lance); Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+3, medium scimitar) or +6 melee (1d8+2, Medium lance); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills & Feats:* Climb +7, Ride +7; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (Lance).

*Equipment:* Medium Lance, Medium Scimitar, Banded Mail, Medium Light Mace, 2 medium daggers.

**Akmed:** Male Human Sor10; CR 10; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 10d4+20; hp 48; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 ([+2 Dex, +1 Deflection] Touch 13, Flat-footed 11); Base Atk +5; Grp +5; Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, Quarterstaff) or +7 ranged (1d4+1, Thrown Dagger); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, Quarterstaff) or +7 ranged (1d4+1, Thrown Dagger); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 18.

*Skills & Feats:* Bluff +8, Concentration +15, Knowledge (Arcana) +6, Spellcraft +10, Spot +4; Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (Evocation), Toughness, Spell Focus (Evocation), Improved Initiative.

*Spells Prepared (6/7/7/76/4; Base DC = 14 + Spell Level; Base DC = 16 + spell level for Evocation spells):* 0 – *acid splash, ray of frost, mending, touch of fatigue, light,*

*dancing light, daze, detect magic, read magic, 1<sup>st</sup> Level – mage armor, shield, grease, magic missile, enlarge person, 2<sup>nd</sup> – see invisibility, scorching ray, resist energy, glitterdust, 3<sup>rd</sup> – dispel magic, lightning bolt, deep slumber, 4<sup>th</sup> – greater invisibility, ice storm; 5<sup>th</sup> – cone of cold.*

*Equipment: ring of protection +1, scroll of eagle's splendor, wand of dispel magic 8<sup>th</sup> level caster*

☛ **Reoled Fairta:** Male Human Brd4; CR 4; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 4d6+4; hp 21; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 ([+2 Dex, +4 Armor] Touch 12, Flat-footed 14); Base Atk +3; Grp +4; Atk +4 melee (1d6+1, medium Scimitar) or +5 ranged (1d6, Shortbow); Full Atk +4 melee (1d6+1, medium Scimitar) or +5 ranged (1d6, Shortbow); SA Bardic music, bardic knowledge, countersong, fascinate, inspire courage +1, Inspire competence; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 16.

*Skills & Feats:* Bluff +10, Concentration +5, Gather Information +7, Hide +8, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Perform +10, Sense Motive +5, Tumble +7, Use Magic Device +9; Dodge, Combat Expertise, Improved Feint

*Spells Prepared* (3/3/1; Base DC = 13 Spell Level); 0 – *lullaby, dancing light, message, daze, detect magic, read magic, 1<sup>st</sup> – lesser confusion, Tasha's hideous laughter, silent image, 2<sup>nd</sup> – sound burst, rage.*

*Equipment:* chain shirt, medium scimitar, medium Shortbow, medium dagger

☛ **Somb Officer:** Male Human Ftr9; CR 9; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 9d10+27; hp 88; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 ([+1 Dex, +6 Armor] Touch 11, Flat-footed 16); Base Atk +9/+4; Grp +13; Atk +16 melee (1d8+7, Medium Lance +1) or +11 ranged (1d8, Light Crossbow) or +14 melee (1d6+4, medium MW scimitar, 16-20); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (1d8+7, medium lance +1) or +11/+6 ranged (1d8, Light Crossbow) or +14/+9 melee (1d6+4, medium MW scimitar, 16-20); AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 12.

*Skills & Feats:* Climb +16, Handle Animal +13, Intimidate +13, Ride +14; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (Lance), Weapon Specialization (Lance), Greater Weapon Focus (Lance), Improved Sunder, Improved Critical (Scimitar), Power Attack.

*Equipment:* Banded Mail, Heavy steel shield (when not using lance), *Medium Lance* +1, medium masterwork Scimitar, medium Dagger, medium light mace.

☛ **Axiomatic Warhorse:** CR 3; Large magical beast (augmented animal, extraplanar); HD 4D8+12; hp 30; Init +1; Spd 50 ft. (40 ft. barding); AC 21 (Touch 10, Flat-

footed 18)[-1 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural, +5 breastplate barding]; Base Atk +3; Grp +11; Atk +6 melee (1d6+4, hoof); Full Atk +6/+6 melee (1d6+4, hooves) and +1 melee (1d4+2 bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA: smite chaos; SQ Low-light vision, scent, darkvision (60 ft.), Fire, Electricity, Cold, Sonic Resistance 5, SR 8, Linked Minds; AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 13, Cha 6.

*Skills & Feats:* Listen +7, Spot +6; Endurance, Run.

*Equipment:* Breastplate barding, riding gear.

**Smite Chaos (Su):** Once per day the creature can make a normal attack to deal additional damage equal to its HD total (max +20) against a chaotic opponent.

**Linked Minds (Ex):** Axiomatic creatures of a particular type within 300 feet of one another are in constant communication. If one is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If one in the group is not lat-footed, none of them are. No axiomatic creature in the group is considered flanked unless they all are.

**Honor Pact:** This warhorse is a gift to its owner. It fights to the death to follow what it best believes to be its owner's wishes (even if the owner is killed). If the horse is subdued (such as with non-lethal damage) for the right price in the form of offerings, it can be made to swear allegiance to a new master. Part of this agreement is that the horse is to be very well kept (50gp per TU of adventuring).

**Limited Language:** This horse understands spoken and written (to the limits of Int 5) common, celestial and infernal, but has no ability to speak. It can manage animal noises to respond to simple questions.

☛ **Axiomatic Warhorse, Advanced (7HD):** CR 4; Large magical beast (augmented animal, extraplanar); HD 7D8+21; hp 59; Init +1; Spd 50 ft. (40 ft. barding); AC 22 (Touch 11, Flat-footed 18)[-1 size, +2 Dex, +4 natural, +5 breastplate barding]; Base Atk +5; Grp +13; Atk +8 melee (1d6+4, hoof); Full Atk +8/+8 melee (1d6+4, hooves) and +3 melee (1d4+2 bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA: smite chaos; SQ Low-light vision, scent, darkvision (60 ft.), Fire-Electricity-Cold-Sonic Resistance 5, SR8, Linked Minds; AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 13, Cha 6.

*Skills & Feats:* Listen +7, Spot +6; Endurance, Run, Track.

*Equipment:* Breastplate barding, riding gear.

**Smite Chaos (Su):** Once per day the creature can make a normal attack to deal additional damage equal to its HD total (max +20) against a chaotic opponent.

**Linked Minds (Ex):** Axiomatic creatures of a particular type within 300 feet of one another are in constant communication. If one is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If one in the group is not lat-footed,

none of them are. No axiomatic creature in the group is considered flanked unless they all are.

**Honor Pact:** This warhorse is a gift to its owner. It fights to the death to follow what it best believes to be its owner's wishes (even if the owner is killed). If the horse is subdued (such as with non-lethal damage) for the right price in the form of offerings, it can be made to swear allegiance to a new master. Part of this agreement is that the horse is to be very well kept (50gp per TU of adventuring).

**Limited Language:** This horse understands spoken and written (to the limits of Int 5) common, celestial and infernal, but has no ability to speak. It can manage animal noises to respond to simple questions.

### Axiomatic Creatures:

Axiomatic creatures dwell in lawful planes, the domains of order. Although they may resemble creatures from the Material Plane, they are more perfectly formed, their features sharper and more precise, their fur or plumage shinier, their appearance clearer and more heroic. That the axiomatic versions are the true and ideal first models; all other creatures of the same type are merely imitations.

#### APL 12 (EL 15)

♣**Somb:** Male Human Ftr6; CR 6; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 6d10+12; hp 55; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 ([+1 Dex, +6 Armor] Touch 11, Flat-footed 16); Base Atk +6/+1; Grp +9; Atk +11 melee (1d6+3, Medium Scimitar) or +11 melee (1d8+5, Medium lance); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+3, Medium Scimitar) or +11/+6 melee (1d8+5, Medium lance); AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

**Skills & Feats:** Climb +11, Handle Animal +4, Ride +10; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (Lance), Weapon Specialization (Lance), Iron Will, Weapon Focus (Scimitar)

**Equipment:** masterwork medium lance, masterwork medium scimitar, banded mail, medium dagger, medium light mace

♣**Akmed:** Male Human Sor10; CR 10; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 10d4+20; hp 48; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 ([+2 Dex, +1 Deflection] Touch 13, Flat-footed 11); Base Atk +5; Grp +5; Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, Quarterstaff) or +7 ranged (1d4+1, Thrown Dagger); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, Quarterstaff) or +7 ranged (1d4+1, Thrown Dagger); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 18.

**Skills & Feats:** Bluff +8, Concentration +15, Knowledge (Arcana) +6, Spellcraft +10, Spot +4 (+7 in shadows); Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (Evocation), Toughness, Spell Focus (Evocation),

Improved Initiative.

**Spells Prepared** (6/7/7/7/6/4; Base DC = 14 + Spell Level; Base DC = 16 + spell level for Evocation spells): 0 – *acid splash, ray of frost, mending, touch of fatigue, light, dancing light, daze, detect magic, read magic*; 1<sup>st</sup> Level – *mage armor, shield, grease, magic missile, enlarge person*; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *see invisibility, scorching ray, resist energy, touch of idiocy*; 3<sup>rd</sup> – *dispel magic, lightning bolt, fireball*; 4<sup>th</sup> – *greater invisibility, ice storm*; 5<sup>th</sup> – *cone of cold*.

**Equipment:** ring of protection +1, scroll of eagle's splendor, wand of dispel magic 8<sup>th</sup> level caster

♣**Sebass:** Owl Familiar; CR 1/4; Medium magical animal; HD 10D4; hp 24; Init +3; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft.; AC 22 (Touch 15, Flat-footed 19); Base Atk +5; Atk +8 melee (1D4-3, Talon) or +8 touch; Full Atk +8 melee (1D4-3, Talon) or +8 touch; SA Alertness, improved evasion, share spells, empathic link, deliver touch spells, speak with master, speak with animals of its kind; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 4, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 4.

**Skills & Feats:** Listen +14, Move Silently +17, Spot +6; Weapon Finesse.

♣**Reoled Fairta:** Male Human Brd8; CR 8; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 8d6+8; hp 42; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 ([+2 Dex, +4 Armor] Touch 12, Flat-footed 14); Base Atk +6/+1; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1, medium Scimitar) or +8 ranged (1d6, Shortbow); Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6+1, medium Scimitar) or +8/+3 ranged (1d6, Shortbow); SA Bardic music, bardic knowledge, countersong, fascinate, inspire courage +2, Inspire competence, *Suggestion*; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 17.

**Skills & Feats:** Bluff +10, Concentration +7, Gather Information +7, Hide +10, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Perform +14, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +9, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +14; Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Point Blank Shot, Subsonics\*

**Spells Prepared** (3/4/4/2; Base DC = 13 Spell Level); 0 – *lullaby, dancing light, message, daze, detect magic, read magic*; 1<sup>st</sup> – *lesser confusion, Tasha's hideous laughter, silent image, sleep*; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *sound burst, cure moderate wounds, heroism, bears endurance*; 3<sup>rd</sup> – *haste, invisibility sphere, crushing despair*.

**Equipment:** chain shirt, medium scimitar, medium Shortbow, *pearl of power* 2<sup>nd</sup> level.

\* See Appendix 3: New Rules

♣**Somb Officer:** Male Human Ftr11; CR 11; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 11d10+33; hp 107; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 ([+1 Dex, +6 Armor] Touch 11, Flat-footed 16); Base Atk +11/+6/+1; Grp +15; Atk +18 melee (1d8+7, Medium Lance +1, 19-20) or +13 ranged (1d8, Light

Crossbow) or +16 melee (1D6+5, medium scimitar +1, 16-20); Full Atk +18/+13/+8 melee (1d8+7, medium lance +1, 19-20) or +13/+8/+3 ranged (1d8, Light Crossbow) or +16/+11/+5 melee (1D6+5, medium scimitar +1, 16-20); AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 12

**Skills & Feats:** Climb +18, Handle Animal +15, Intimidate +15, Ride +16; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (Lance), Weapon Specialization (Lance), Greater Weapon Focus (Lance), Improved Sunder, Improved Critical (Scimitar), Power Attack, Improved Critical (Lance).

**Equipment:** Banded Mail, Heavy steel shield (when not using lance), *medium lance +1*, *medium scimitar +1*, *potion of shield of faith +3*.

☛ **Axiomatic Warhorse, Advanced (7HD):** CR 4; Large magical beast (augmented animal, extraplanar); HD 7D8+21; hp 59; Init +1; Spd 50 ft. (40 ft. barding); AC 22 (Touch 11, Flat-footed 18)[-1 size, +2 Dex, +4 natural, +5 breastplate barding]; Base Atk +5; Grp +13; Atk +8 melee (1D6+4, hoof); Full Atk +8/+8 melee (1D6+4, hooves) and +3 melee (1d4+2 bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA: smite chaos; SQ Low-light vision, scent, darkvision (60 ft.), Fire-Electricity-Cold-Sonic Resistance 5, SR8, Linked Minds; AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 13, Cha 6.

**Skills & Feats:** Listen +7, Spot +6; Endurance, Run, Track.

**Equipment:** Breastplate barding, riding gear.

**Smite Chaos (Su):** Once per day the creature can make a normal attack to deal additional damage equal to its HD total (max +20) against a chaotic opponent.

**Linked Minds (Ex):** Axiomatic creatures of a particular type within 300 feet of one another are in constant communication. If one is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If one in the group is not flat-footed, none of them are. No axiomatic creature in the group is considered flanked unless they all are.

**Honor Pact:** This warhorse is a gift to its owner. It fights to the death to follow what it best believes to be its owner's wishes (even if the owner is killed). If the horse is subdued (such as with non-lethal damage) for the right price in the form of offerings, it can be made to swear allegiance to a new master. Part of this agreement is that the horse is to be very well kept (50gp per TU of adventuring).

**Limited Language:** This horse understands spoken and written (to the limits of Int 5) common, celestial and infernal, but has no ability to speak. It can manage animal noises to respond to simple questions.

## Axiomatic Creatures:

Axiomatic creatures dwell in lawful planes, the domains of order. Although they may resemble creatures from the Material Plane, they are more perfectly formed, their features sharper and more precise, their fur or plumage shinier, their appearance clearer and more heroic. They are often called "perfect" creatures, and some say that the axiomatic versions are the true and ideal first models; all other creatures of the same type are merely imitations.

### APL 14 (EL 17)

☛ **Somb:** Male Human Ftr6; CR 6; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 6d10+12; hp 55; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 ([+1 Dex, +6 Armor] Touch 11, Flat-footed 16); Base Atk +6/+1; Grp +9; Atk +11 melee (1d6+3, Medium Scimitar) or +11 melee (1d8+5, Medium lance); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+3, Medium Scimitar) or +11/+6 melee (1d8+5, Medium lance); AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

**Skills & Feats:** Climb +11, Handle Animal +4, Ride +10; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (Lance), Weapon Specialization (Lance), Iron Will, Weapon Focus (Scimitar)

**Equipment:** masterwork medium lance, masterwork medium scimitar, banded mail, medium dagger, medium light mace

☛ **Akmed:** Male Human Sor10; CR 10; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 10d4+20; hp 48; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 ([+2 Dex, +1 Deflection] Touch 13, Flat-footed 11); Base Atk +5; Grp +5; Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, Quarterstaff) or +7 ranged (1d4+1, Thrown Dagger); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, Quarterstaff) or +7 ranged (1d4+1, Thrown Dagger); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 18.

**Skills & Feats:** Bluff +8, Concentration +15, Knowledge (Arcana) +6, Spellcraft +10, Spot +4 (+7 in shadows); Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (Evocation), Toughness, Spell Focus (Evocation), Improved Initiative.

**Spells Prepared** (6/7/7/7/6/4; Base DC = 14 + Spell Level; Base DC = 16 + spell level for Evocation spells): 0 – *acid splash*, *ray of frost*, *mending*, *touch of fatigue*, *light*, *dancing light*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *read magic*; 1<sup>st</sup> Level – *mage armor*, *shield*, *grease*, *magic missile*, *enlarge person*; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *see invisibility*, *scorching ray*, *resist energy*, *touch of idiocy*; 3<sup>rd</sup> – *dispel magic*, *lightning bolt*, *fireball*; 4<sup>th</sup> – *greater invisibility*, *ice storm*; 5<sup>th</sup> – *cone of cold*.

**Equipment:** *ring of protection +1*, *scroll of eagle's splendor*, *wand of dispel magic 8<sup>th</sup> level caster*

☛ **Sebass:** Owl Familiar; CR 1/4; Medium magical animal; HD 10D4; hp 24; Init +3; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft.; AC 22 (Touch 15, Flat-footed 19); Base Atk +5; Atk +8 melee

(1D4-3, Talon) or +8 touch; Full Atk +8 melee (1D4-3, Talon) or +8 touch; SA Alertness, improved evasion, share spells, empathic link, deliver touch spells, speak with master, speak with animals of its kind; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 4, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 4.

**Skills & Feats:** Listen +14, Move Silently +17, Spot +6; Weapon Finesse.

☛ **Reoled Fairta:** Male Human Brd8; CR 8; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 8d6+8; hp 42; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 ([+2 Dex, +4 Armor] Touch 12, Flat-footed 14); Base Atk +6/+1; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1, medium Scimitar) or +8 ranged (1d6, Shortbow); Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6+1, medium Scimitar) or +8/+3 ranged (1d6, Shortbow); SA Bardic music, bardic knowledge, countersong, fascinate, inspire courage +2, Inspire competence, *Suggestion*; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 17.

**Skills & Feats:** Bluff +10, Concentration +7, Gather Information +7, Hide +10, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Perform +14, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +9, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +14; Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Point Blank Shot, Subsonics\*

**Spells Prepared** (3/4/4/2; Base DC = 13 Spell Level): 0 – *lullaby*, *dancing light*, *message*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *read magic*, 1<sup>st</sup> – *lesser confusion*, *Tasha's hideous laughter*, *silent image*, *sleep*, 2<sup>nd</sup> – *sound burst*, *cure moderate wounds*, *heroism*, *bears endurance*, 3<sup>rd</sup> – *haste*, *invisibility sphere*, *crushing despair*.

**Equipment:** chain shirt, medium scimitar, medium Shortbow, *pearl of power* 2<sup>nd</sup> level.

\* See Appendix 3: New Rules

☛ **Somb Officer:** Male Human Ftr11; CR 11; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 11d10+33; hp 107; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 ([+1 Dex, +6 Armor] Touch 11, Flat-footed 16); Base Atk +11/+6/+1; Grp +15; Atk +18 melee (1d8+7, Medium Lance +1, 19-20) or +13 ranged (1d8, Light Crossbow) or +16 melee (1d6+5, medium scimitar +1, 16-20); Full Atk +18/+13/+8 melee (1d8+7, medium lance +1, 19-20) or +13/+8/+3 ranged (1d8, Light Crossbow) or +16/+11/+5 melee (1d6+5, medium scimitar +1, 16-20); AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 12

**Skills & Feats:** Climb +18, Handle Animal +15, Intimidate +15, Ride +16; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (Lance), Weapon Specialization (Lance), Greater Weapon Focus (Lance), Improved Sunder, Improved Critical (Scimitar), Power Attack, Improved Critical (Lance).

**Equipment:** banded mail, heavy steel shield (when not using lance), *medium lance* +1, *medium scimitar* +1, *potion of shield of faith* +3.

☛ **Advanced Nightwing:** Huge Undead; CR 15; Undead (Extraplanar); HD 21D12; hp 189; Init +8; Spd 20 ft., fly 60 ft.; AC 30 ([+2 size, +4 Dex, +18 natural] Touch 12, flat-footed 26); Base Atk +9; Grp +30; Attack +20 melee (3D6+18 [19-20], bite plus magic drain); Full Attack +20 melee (3D6+18 [19-20], bite plus magic drain); space/reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Desecrating aura, magic drain, spell-like abilities, summon undead; SQ Aversion to daylight, DR 15/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity cold, SR 28, telepathy 100 ft., undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +13, Will +18; Str 32, Dex 18, Con -, Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 18.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +25, Diplomacy +6, Hide +18, Listen +26, Move Silently +25, Search +25, Sense Motive +25, Spellcraft +25, Survival +7; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Lightning Reflexes

☛ **Axiomatic Warhorse, Advanced (7HD):** CR 4; Large magical beast (augmented animal, extraplanar); HD 7D8+21; hp 59; Init +1; Spd 50 ft. (40 ft. barding); AC 22 (Touch 11, Flat-footed 18)[-1 size, +2 Dex, +4 natural, +5 breastplate barding]; Base Atk +5; Grp +13; Atk +8 melee (1D6+4, hoof); Full Atk +8/+8 melee (1D6+4, hooves) and +3 melee (1d4+2 bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA: smite chaos; SQ Low-light vision, scent, darkvision (60 ft.), Fire-Electricity-Cold-Sonic Resistance 5, SR8, Linked Minds; AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 13, Cha 6.

**Skills & Feats:** Listen +7, Spot +6; Endurance, Run, Track.

**Equipment:** Breastplate barding, riding gear.

**Smite Chaos (Su):** Once per day the creature can make a normal attack to deal additional damage equal to its HD total (max +20) against a chaotic opponent.

**Linked Minds (Ex):** Axiomatic creatures of a particular type within 300 feet of one another are in constant communication. If one is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If one in the group is not flat-footed, none of them are. No axiomatic creature in the group is considered flanked unless they all are.

**Honor Pact:** This warhorse is a gift to its owner. It fights to the death to follow what it best believes to be its owner's wishes (even if the owner is killed). If the horse is subdued (such as with non-lethal damage) for the right price in the form of offerings, it can be made to swear allegiance to a new master. Part of this agreement is that the horse is to be very well kept (50gp per TU of adventuring).

**Limited Language:** This horse understands spoken and written (to the limits of Int 5) common, celestial and

infernal, but has no ability to speak. It can manage animal noises to respond to simple questions.

### Axiomatic Creatures:

Axiomatic creatures dwell in lawful planes, the domains of order. Although they may resemble creatures from the Material Plane, they are more perfectly formed, their features sharper and more precise, their fur or plumage shinier, their appearance clearer and more heroic. They are often called "perfect" creatures, and some say that the axiomatic versions are the true and ideal first models; all other creatures of the same type are merely imitations.

### APL 16 (EL 19)

☛ **Somb:** Male Human Ftr6; CR 6; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 6d10+12; hp 55; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 ([+1 Dex, +6 Armor] Touch 11, Flat-footed 16); Base Atk +6/+1; Grp +9; Atk +11 melee (1d6+3, Medium Scimitar) or +11 melee (1d8+5, Medium lance); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+3, Medium Scimitar) or +11/+6 melee (1d8+5, Medium lance); AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills & Feats:* Climb +11, Handle Animal +4, Ride +10; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (Lance), Weapon Specialization (Lance), Iron Will, Weapon Focus (Scimitar)

*Equipment:* masterwork medium lance, masterwork medium scimitar, banded mail, medium dagger, medium light mace

☛ **Akmed:** Male Human Sor10; CR 10; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 10d4+20; hp 48; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 ([+2 Dex, +1 Deflection] Touch 13, Flat-footed 11); Base Atk +5; Grp +5; Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, Quarterstaff) or +7 ranged (1d4+1, Thrown Dagger); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, Quarterstaff) or +7 ranged (1d4+1, Thrown Dagger); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 18.

*Skills & Feats:* Bluff +8, Concentration +15, Knowledge (Arcana) +6, Spellcraft +10, Spot +4 (+7 in shadows); Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (Evocation), Toughness, Spell Focus (Evocation), Improved Initiative.

*Spells Prepared* (6/7/7/76/4; Base DC = 14 + Spell Level; Base DC = 16 + spell level for Evocation spells): 0 – *acid splash, ray of frost, mending, touch of fatigue, light, dancing light, daze, detect magic, read magic*; 1<sup>st</sup> Level – *mage armor, shield, grease, magic missile, enlarge person*; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *see invisibility, scorching ray, resist energy, touch of idiocy*; 3<sup>rd</sup> – *dispel magic, lightning bolt, fireball*; 4<sup>th</sup> – *greater invisibility, ice storm*; 5<sup>th</sup> – *cone of cold*.

*Equipment:* wand of *dispel magic* 8<sup>th</sup> level caster, ring of protection +1, scroll of eagle's splendor, staff of evocation

☛ **Sebass:** Owl Familiar; CR 1/4; Medium magical animal; HD 10D4; hp 24; Init +3; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft.; AC 22 (Touch 15, Flat-footed 19); Base Atk +5; Atk +8 melee (1D4-3, Talon) or +8 touch; Full Atk +8 melee (1D4-3, Talon) or +8 touch; SA Alertness, improved evasion, share spells, empathic link, deliver touch spells, speak with master, speak with animals of its kind; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 4, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 4.

*Skills & Feats:* Listen +14, Move Silently +17, Spot +6; Weapon Finesse.

☛ **Reoled Fairta:** Male Human Brd8; CR 8; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 8d6+8; hp 42; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 ([+2 Dex, +4 Armor] Touch 12, Flat-footed 14); Base Atk +6/+1; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1, medium Scimitar) or +8 ranged (1d6, Shortbow); Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6+1, medium Scimitar) or +8/+3 ranged (1d6, Shortbow); SA Bardic music, bardic knowledge, countersong, fascinate, inspire courage +2, Inspire competence, *Suggestion*; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 17.

*Skills & Feats:* Bluff +10, Concentration +7, Gather Information +7, Hide +10, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Perform +14, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +9, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +14; Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Point Blank Shot, Subsonics\*

*Spells Prepared* (3/4/4/2; Base DC = 13 Spell Level); 0 – *lullaby, dancing light, message, daze, detect magic, read magic*; 1<sup>st</sup> – *lesser confusion, Tasha's hideous laughter, silent image, sleep*; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *sound burst, cure moderate wounds, heroism, bears endurance*; 3<sup>rd</sup> – *haste, invisibility sphere, crushing despair*

*Equipment:* chain shirt, medium scimitar, medium Shortbow, *pearl of power* 2<sup>nd</sup> level.

\* See Appendix 3: New Rules

☛ **Somb Officer:** Male Human Ftr11; CR 11; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 11d10+33; hp 107; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 ([+1 Dex, +6 Armor] Touch 11, Flat-footed 16); Base Atk +11/+6/+1; Grp +15; Atk +18 melee (1d8+7, Medium Lance +1, 19-20) or +13 ranged (1d8, Light Crossbow) or +16 melee (1D6+5, medium scimitar +1, 16-20); Full Atk +18/+13/+8 melee (1d8+7, medium lance +1, 19-20) or +13/+8/+3 ranged (1d8, Light Crossbow) or +16/+11/+5 melee (1D6+5, medium scimitar +1, 16-20); AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 12

*Skills & Feats:* Climb +18, Handle Animal +15, Intimidate +15, Ride +16; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (Lance), Weapon Specialization (Lance), Greater Weapon Focus



(Lance), Improved Sunder, Improved Critical (Scimitar), Power Attack, Improved Critical (Lance).

*Equipment:* banded mail, heavy steel shield (when not using lance), *medium lance* +1, *medium scimitar* +1, *potion of shield of faith* +3

✶**Advanced Nightwing:** Huge Undead; CR 15; Undead (Extraplanar); HD 21D12; hp 189; Init +8; Spd 20 ft., fly 60 ft.; AC 30 ([-2 size, +4 Dex, +18 natural] Touch 12, flat-footed 26); Base Atk +9; Grp +30; Attack +20 melee (3D6+18 [19-20], bite plus magic drain); Full Attack +20 melee (3D6+18 [19-20], bite plus magic drain); space/reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Desecrating aura, magic drain, spell-like abilities, summon undead; SQ Aversion to daylight, DR 15/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity cold, SR 28, telepathy 100 ft., undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +13, Will +18; Str 32, Dex 18, Con -, Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 18.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +25, Diplomacy +6, Hide +18, Listen +26, Move Silently +25, Search +25, Sense Motive +25, Spellcraft +25, Survival +7; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Lightning Reflexes

✶**Advanced Nightwing:** Huge Undead; CR 16; Undead (Extraplanar); HD 25D12; hp 225; Init +8; Spd 20 ft., fly 60 ft.; AC 30 ([-2 size, +4 Dex, +18 natural] Touch 12, flat-footed 26); Base Atk +11; Grp +31; Attack +22 melee (3D6+18 [19-20], bite plus magic drain); Full Attack +22 melee (3D6+18 [19-20], bite plus magic drain); space/reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Desecrating aura, magic drain, spell-like abilities, summon undead; SQ Aversion to daylight, DR 15/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity cold, SR 29, telepathy 100 ft., undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +14, Will +19; Str 31, Dex 18, Con -, Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 19.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +26, Diplomacy +6, Hide +20, Listen +26, Move Silently +26, Search +26, Sense Motive +26, Spellcraft +26, Survival +8; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (bite)

✶**Axiomatic Warhorse, Advanced (7HD):** CR 4; Large magical beast (augmented animal, extraplanar); HD 7D8+21; hp 59; Init +1; Spd 50 ft. (40 ft. barding); AC 22 (Touch 11, Flat-footed 18)[-1 size, +2 Dex, +4 natural, +5 breastplate barding]; Base Atk +5; Grp +13; Atk +8 melee (1D6+4, hoof); Full Atk +8/+8 melee (1D6+4, hooves) and +3 melee (1d4+2 bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA: smite chaos; SQ Low-light vision, scent, darkvision (60 ft.), Fire-Electricity-Cold-Sonic Resistance 5, SR8, Linked Minds;

AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 13, Cha 6.

*Skills & Feats:* Listen +7, Spot +6; Endurance, Run, Track.

*Equipment:* Breastplate barding, riding gear.

**Smite Chaos (Su):** Once per day the creature can make a normal attack to deal additional damage equal to its HD total (max +20) against a chaotic opponent.

**Linked Minds (Ex):** Axiomatic creatures of a particular type within 300 feet of one another are in constant communication. If one is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If one in the group is not lat-footed, none of them are. No axiomatic creature in the group is considered flanked unless they all are.

**Honor Pact:** This warhorse is a gift to its owner. It fights to the death to follow what it best believes to be its owner's wishes (even if the owner is killed). If the horse is subdued (such as with non-lethal damage) for the right price in the form of offerings, it can be made to swear allegiance to a new master. Part of this agreement is that the horse is to be very well kept (50gp per TU of adventuring).

**Limited Language:** This horse understands spoken and written (to the limits of Int 5) common, celestial and infernal, but has no ability to speak. It can manage animal noises to respond to simple questions.

### Axiomatic Creatures:

Axiomatic creatures dwell in lawful planes, the domains of order. Although they may resemble creatures from the Material Plane, they are more perfectly formed, their features sharper and more precise, their fur or plumage shinier, their appearance clearer and more heroic. They are often called "perfect" creatures, and some say that the axiomatic versions are the true and ideal first models; all other creatures of the same type are merely imitations.

## Encounter Nine: The Upper Level of the Manor

### APL 10 (EL 13)

✶**Greater barghests (3):** Large Outsider Ftr2; CR 6; Large Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful, Shapechanger); HD 9D8+27 plus 2d10+6; hp 94; Init +6; Spd 40 ft.; AC 24 ([+4 armor, +2 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size] Touch 12, Flat-footed 22); Base Atk +11; Grp +20; Atk +17 melee (1d10+7, MW medium glaive, 19-20) or +10 melee (1d8+5, bite); Full Atk +17/+12 melee (1d10+7, MW medium glaive, 19-20) and +10 melee (1d8+5, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. SA Spell-like abilities, feed; SQ Change shape, DR 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., scent; AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +8, Will +10; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 18.

*Skills & Feats:* Bluff +16, Climb +17, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +5 (+7 acting), Hide +14, Intimidate +18, Jump +21, Listen +16, Move Silently +15, Sense Motive +16, Spot +16 Survival +16 (+18 following tracks), Tumble +16; Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Track, Weapon Focus (Glaive), Improved Critical (Glaive)

*Equipment:* chain shirt, helmet, boots, masterwork medium glaive (10 ft. reach), heavy crossbow, hobgoblin disguise.

✱**Greater barghests (3):** Large Outsider Rgr2; CR 7; Large Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful, Shapechanger); HD 9D8+27 plus 2d8+6; hp 91; Init +6; Spd 40 ft.; AC 24 ([+4 armor, +2 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size] Touch 11, Flat-footed 22); Base Atk +11; Grp +20; Atk +17 melee (1d10+7, MW medium heavy flail) or +10 melee (1d8+5, bite); Full Atk +17/+12 melee (1d10+7, MW medium heavy flail) and +10 melee (1d8+5, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. SA Spell-like abilities, feed, favored enemy (Elves); SQ Change shape, DR 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., scent, wild empathy, combat style (melee); AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +11, Will +10; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 18.

*Skills & Feats:* Bluff +16, Climb +17, Concentration +17, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +4 (+6 acting), Hide +16, Intimidate +18, Jump +21, Listen +18, Move Silently +18, Sense Motive +16, Spot +18 Survival +20 (+18 following tracks), Tumble +16; Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Track, Weapon Focus (heavy flail), Two-Weapon Fighting.

*Equipment:* masterwork medium heavy flail, chain shirt, heavy crossbow, hobgoblin disguise.

#### **APL 12 (EL 15)**

✱**Greater barghests (3):** Large Outsider Ftr2; CR 6; Large Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful, Shapechanger); HD 9D8+27 plus 2d10+6; hp 94; Init +6; Spd 40 ft.; AC 24 ([+4 armor, +2 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size] Touch 12, Flat-footed 22); Base Atk +11; Grp +20; Atk +17 melee (1d10+7, MW medium glaive, 19-20) or +10 melee (1d8+5, bite); Full Atk +17/+12 melee (1d10+7, MW medium glaive, 19-20) and +10 melee (1d8+5, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. SA Spell-like abilities, feed; SQ Change shape, DR 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., scent; AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +8, Will +10; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 18.

*Skills & Feats:* Bluff +16, Climb +17, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +5 (+7 acting), Hide +14, Intimidate +18, Jump +21, Listen +16, Move Silently +15, Sense Motive +16, Spot +16 Survival +16 (+18 following tracks), Tumble +16; Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Track, Weapon Focus (Glaive),

Improved Critical (Glaive)

*Equipment:* chain shirt, helmet, boots, masterwork glaive (10 ft. reach), heavy crossbow, hobgoblin disguise.

✱**Greater barghests (3):** Large Outsider Rgr2; CR 7; Large Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful, Shapechanger); HD 9D8+27 plus 2d8+6; hp 91; Init +6; Spd 40 ft.; AC 24 ([+4 armor, +2 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size] Touch 11, Flat-footed 22); Base Atk +11; Grp +20; Atk +17 melee (1d10+7, MW medium heavy flail) or +10 melee (1d8+5, bite); Full Atk ++17 melee (1d10+7, MW medium heavy flail) and +10 melee (1d8+5, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. SA Spell-like abilities, feed, favored enemy (Elves); SQ Change shape, DR 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., scent, wild empathy, combat style (melee); AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +11, Will +10; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 18.

*Skills & Feats:* Bluff +16, Climb +17, Concentration +17, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +4 (+6 acting), Hide +16, Intimidate +18, Jump +21, Listen +18, Move Silently +18, Sense Motive +16, Spot +18 Survival +20 (+18 following tracks), Tumble +16; Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Track, Weapon Focus (heavy flail), Two-Weapon Fighting.

*Equipment:* masterwork medium heavy flail, chain shirt, heavy crossbow, hobgoblin disguise.

✱**Rakshasa:** Male Outsider Sor4; CR 14; Medium Outsider (Native); HD 7D8+28 plus 4d4+16; hp 87; Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; AC 23 ([+4 Dex, +9 natural] Touch 14, Flat-footed 19); Base Atk +9; Grp +9; Atk +9 melee (1d4, 2 claws); Full Atk +9 melee (1d4, 2 claws) and +3 melee (1D6, bite) or +13 ranged (ray); SA Detect thoughts, spells; SQ Change shape, DR 15/good and piercing, darkvision 60 ft., spell resistance 31; AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 22.

*Skills & Feats:* Bluff +22\*, Concentration +18, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +20 (+22 acting)\*, Intimidate +8, Listen +14, Move Silently +15, Perform (oratory) +16, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +16, Spot +12; Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (Enchantment)

*Spells Prepared* (6/8/8/7/7/5; Base DC = 16 + Spell Level; Base DC = 18 + spell level for Enchantment spells): 0—*detect magic, light, mage hand, message, read magic, resistance, touch of fatigue, acid splash, ray of frost*; 1st—*charm person, mage armor, magic missile, shield, silent image*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, invisibility, Melf's acid arrow, Tasha's Hideous Laughter, see invisibility*; 3rd—*fly, suggestion, dispel magic, nondetection*; 4<sup>th</sup>—*phantasmal killer, enervation, greater invisibility*; 5<sup>th</sup>—*dominate person, cone of cold*

*Equipment:* lesser extend rod, cloak of resistance +1, Escape Key

#### **APL 14 (EL 17)**

✳️**Greater barghests (4):** Large Outsider Ftr8; CR 12; Large Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful, Shapechanger); HD 9D8+27 plus 8d10+24; hp 153; Init +7; Spd 40 ft.; AC 25 ([+4 armor, +3 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size] Touch 12, Flat-footed 22); Base Atk +17; Grp +26; Atk +24 melee (1d10+9, MW medium glaive, 19-20) or +17 melee (1d8+5, bite); Full Atk +24 melee (1d10+9, MW medium glaive, 19-20) and +17 melee (1d8+5, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. SA Spell-like abilities, feed; SQ Change shape, DR 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., scent; AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 21, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 18.

*Skills & Feats:* Bluff +18, Climb +17, Concentration +17, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +5 (+7 acting), Escape Artist +8, Hide +16, Intimidate +20, Jump +21, Listen +18, Move Silently +17, Sense Motive +18, Spot +18 Survival +18 (+20 following tracks), Swim +16, Tumble +18; Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Track, Weapon Focus (Bite), Improved Critical (Glaive), Weapon Focus (Glaive), Weapon Specialization (Glaive), Greater Weapon Focus (Glaive), Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack.

*Equipment:* chain shirt, helmet, boots, masterwork glaive (10 ft.reach), heavy crossbow, hobgoblin disguise.

✳️**Greater barghests (3):** Large Outsider Rgr8; CR 13; Large Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful, Shapechanger); HD 9D8+27 plus 8d8+24; hp 140; Init +7; Spd 40 ft.; AC 25 ([+4 armor, +3 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size] Touch 12, Flat-footed 18); Base Atk +17; Grp +26; Atk +21 melee (1d10+7, medium heavy flail) or +16 melee (1d8+5, bite) or +23 ranged (1D8+6, +1 mighty composite longbow [+4]); Full Atk +21 melee (1d10+7, medium heavy flail) and +16 melee (1d8+5, bite) or +23/+18 ranged (1D8+6, +1 mighty composite longbow [+5]) or +21/+21/+16 ranged (1D8+6, +1 mighty composite longbow [+4]); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. SA Spell-like abilities, feed, favored enemy (1<sup>st</sup> – Elves, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Human); SQ Change shape, DR 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., scent, wild empathy, combat style (archery), animal companion, improved combat style, woodland stride, swift tracker; AL LE; SV Fort +15, Ref +15, Will +12; Str 20, Dex 18, Con 17, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 16.

*Skills & Feats:* Bluff +15, Climb +17, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +3 (+6 acting), Knowledge (geography) +14, Hide +21, Intimidate +17, Jump +21, Listen +20, Move Silently +21, Sense Motive +20, Spot +20, Search +14, Swim +15, Survival +22 (+24 following tracks), Tumble +20; Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes,

Improved Initiative, Track, Weapon Focus (Longbow), Rapid Shot, Endurance, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Manyshot.

*Spells Prepared* (2/1; Base DC = 14 + Spell Level): 1<sup>st</sup> – Resist Energy, Magic Fang; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Bear's Endurance.

*Equipment:* medium heavy flail, chain shirt, +1 mighty composite longbow[+4]

✳️**Rakshasa:** Male Outsider Sor4; CR 14; Medium Outsider (Native); HD 7D8+28 plus 4d4+16; hp 87; Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; AC 23 ([+4 Dex, +9 natural] Touch 14, Flat-footed 19); Base Atk +9; Grp +9; Atk +9 melee (1d4, 2 claws); Full Atk +9 melee (1d4, 2 claws) and +3 melee (1D6, bite) or +13 ranged (ray); SA Detect thoughts, spells; SQ Change shape, DR 15/good and piercing, darkvision 60 ft., spell resistance 31; AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 22.

*Skills & Feats:* Bluff +22\*, Concentration +18, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +20 (+22 acting)\*, Intimidate +8, Listen +14, Move Silently +15, Perform (oratory) +16, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +16, Spot +12; Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (Enchantment)

*Spells Prepared* (6/8/8/7/7/5; Base DC = 16 + Spell Level; Base DC = 18 + spell level for Enchantment spells): 0— *detect magic, light, mage hand, message, read magic, resistance, touch of fatigue, acid splash, ray of frost*; 1<sup>st</sup>— *charm person, mage armor, magic missile, shield, silent image*; 2<sup>nd</sup>— *bear's endurance, invisibility, Melf's acid arrow, Tasha's hideous laughter, see invisibility*; 3<sup>rd</sup>— *fly, suggestion, dispel magic, nondetection*; 4<sup>th</sup>— *phantasmal killer, enervation, greater invisibility*; 5<sup>th</sup>— *dominate person, cone of cold*

*Equipment:* lesser extend rod, cloak of resistance +1, Escape Key

#### **APL 16 (EL 19)**

✳️**Rakshasa:** Male Outsider Sor8; CR 18; Medium Outsider (Native); HD 7D8+28 plus 8d4+32; hp 111; Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; AC 23 ([+4 Dex, +9 natural] Touch 14, Flat-footed 19); Base Atk +9; Grp +9; Atk +9 melee (1d4, 2 claws); Full Atk +9 melee (1d4, 2 claws) and +3 melee (1D6, bite) or +13 ranged (ray); SA Detect thoughts, spells; SQ Change shape, DR 15/good and piercing, darkvision 60 ft., spell resistance 35; AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 23.

*Skills & Feats:* Bluff +22\*, Concentration +22, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +20 (+22 acting)\*, Intimidate +8, Listen +15, Move Silently +15, Perform (oratory) +16, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +20, Spot +13; Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus

(Enchantment)

*Spells Prepared* (6/8/8/7/7/7/4; Base DC = 16 + Spell Level; Base DC = 18 + spell level for Enchantment spells): 0—*detect magic, light, mage hand, message, read magic, resistance, touch of fatigue, acid splash, ray of frost*; 1st—*charm person, mage armor, magic missile, shield, silent image*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, invisibility, Melf's acid arrow, Tasha's hideous laughter, see invisibility*; 3rd—*fly, suggestion, dispel magic, nondetection*; 4<sup>th</sup>—*phantasmal Killer, enervation, confusion, greater invisibility*; 5<sup>th</sup>—*feeblemind, cone of cold, telekinesis, waves of fatigue*; 6<sup>th</sup>—*true seeing, mass suggestion, circle of death*; 7<sup>th</sup>—*Mordenkainen's sword, power word blind*.

*Equipment*: lesser extend rod, cloak of resistance +1, Escape Key

➤ **Greater barghests (3)**: Large Outsider Ftr8; CR 12; Large Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful, Shapechanger); HD 9D8+27 plus 8d10+24; hp 153; Init +7; Spd 40 ft.; AC 25 ([+4 armor, +3 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size] Touch 12, Flat-footed 22); Base Atk +17; Grp +26; Atk +24 melee (1d10+9, MW medium glaive, 19-20) or +17 melee (1d8+5, bite); Full Atk +24 melee (1d10+9, MW medium glaive, 19-20) and +17 melee (1d8+5, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. SA Spell-like abilities, feed; SQ Change shape, DR 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., scent; AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 21, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 18.

*Skills & Feats*: Bluff +18, Climb +17, Concentration +17, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +5 (+7 acting), Escape Artist +8, Hide +16, Intimidate +20, Jump +21, Listen +18, Move Silently +17, Sense Motive +18, Spot +18 Survival +18 (+20 following tracks), Swim +16, Tumble +18; Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Track, Weapon Focus (Bite), Improved Critical (Glaive), Weapon Focus (Glaive), Weapon Specialization (Glaive), Greater Weapon Focus (Glaive), Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack.

*Equipment*: chain shirt, helmet, boots, masterwork medium glaive (10 ft.reach), heavy crossbow, hobgoblin disguise.

➤ **Greater barghests (3)**: Large Outsider Rgr8; CR 13; Large Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful, Shapechanger); HD 9D8+27 plus 8d8+24; hp 140; Init +7; Spd 40 ft.; AC 25 ([+4 armor, +3 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size] Touch 12, Flat-footed 18); Base Atk +17; Grp +26; Atk +21 melee (1d10+7, medium heavy flail) or +16 melee (1d8+5, bite) or +23 ranged (1D8+6, +1 mighty composite longbow [+4]); Full Atk +21 melee (1d10+7, medium heavy flail) and +16 melee (1d8+5, bite) or +23/+18 ranged (1D8+6, +1 mighty composite longbow [+5]) or +21/+21/+16 ranged (1D8+6, +1 mighty composite longbow [+4]); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. SA Spell-like abilities, feed,

avored enemy (1<sup>st</sup> – Elves, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Human); SQ Change shape, DR 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., scent, wild empathy, combat style (archery), animal companion, improved combat style, woodland stride, swift tracker; AL LE; SV Fort +15, Ref +15, Will +12; Str 20, Dex 18, Con 17, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 16.

*Skills & Feats*: Bluff +15, Climb +17, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +3 (+6 acting), Knowledge (geography) +14, Hide +21, Intimidate +17, Jump +21, Listen +20, Move Silently +21, Sense Motive +20, Spot +20, Search +14, Swim +15, Survival +22 (+24 following tracks), Tumble +20; Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Track, Weapon Focus (Longbow), Rapid Shot, Endurance, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Manyshot.

*Spells Prepared* (2/1; Base DC = 14 + Spell Level): 1<sup>st</sup> – *Resist Energy, Magic Fang*; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *Bear's Endurance*.

*Equipment*: medium heavy flail, chain shirt, +1 mighty composite longbow[+4]

## Encounter Ten: The Lower Level of the Manor

### APL 10 (EL 12)

➤ **Half-fiend dark naga**: Half-Fiend Dark Naga; CR 10; Large Outsider; HD 9D8+27; hp 74; Init +4; Spd 40 ft. fly 40 ft.; AC 17 ([+4 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size] Touch 13, Flat-footed 13); Base Atk +6; Grp +14; Atk +9 melee (2d4+4, Sting plus poison); Full Atk +9 melee (2d4+4, Sting plus poison) and +4 melee (1d8+4, bite); SA Poison, spells, spell-like abilities, smite good; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., detect thoughts, guarded thoughts, immunity to poison, resistance to charm, immune to poison, acid, cold, fire, electricity resistance 10, DR 5/magic, SR 19; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +8; Str 18, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 20, Wis 15, Cha 19.

*Skills & Feats*: Bluff +10, Concentration +14, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +6, Intimidate +6, Listen +11, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +14, Spot +11; Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Lightning Reflexes

*Spells Prepared* (6/7/7/5; Base DC = 14 + Spell Level): 0—*daze, detect magic, light, mage hand, open/close, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*expeditious retreat, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield, silent image*; 2nd—*cat's grace, invisibility, scorching ray*; 3rd—*displacement, lightning bolt*.

*Spell-like abilities*: 3/day – *darkness, poison*; 1/day – *desecrate, unholy blight, contagion*.

### APL 12 (EL 14)

➤ **Half-fiend dark naga**: Half-Fiend Dark Naga Sor1; CR 12; Large Outsider; HD 9D8+27 plus 1d4+3; hp 81; Init

+4; Spd 40 ft., fly 40 ft.; AC 17 ([+4 Dex, +3 natural] Touch 14, Flat-footed 13); Base Atk +6; Grp +14; Atk +9 melee (2d4+4, Sting plus poison); Full Atk +9 melee (2d4+4, Sting plus poison) and +4 melee (1d8+4, bite); SA Poison, spells, spell-like abilities, smite good; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., detect thoughts, guarded thoughts, immunity to poison, resistance to charm, immune to poison, acid, cold, fire, electricity resistance 10, DR 5/magic, SR 20; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 18, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 19.

**Skills & Feats:** Bluff +10, Concentration +16, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +6, Intimidate +6, Listen +11, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +18, Spot +11; Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Lightning Reflexes, Great Fortitude

**Spells Prepared** (6/7/7/6/4; Base DC = 14 + Spell Level): 0—*acid splash, daze, detect magic, light, mage hand, open/close, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*expeditious retreat, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield, silent image*; 2nd—*cat's grace, invisibility, scorching ray*; 3rd—*displacement, lightning bolt*; 4<sup>th</sup>—*enervation*

**Spell-like abilities:** 3/day – *darkness, poison*; 1/day – *desecrate, unholy blight, contagion*.

#### **APL 14 EL 16**

☛ **Half-fiend dark naga:** Half-Fiend Dark Naga Sor4; CR 15; Large Outsider; HD 9D8+27 plus 4d4+12; hp 95; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., fly 40 ft.; AC 17 ([+4 Dex, +3 natural] Touch 14, Flat-footed 13); Base Atk +8; Grp +16; Atk +11 melee (2d4+4, Sting plus poison); Full Atk +11 melee (2d4+4, Sting plus poison) and +6 melee (1d8+4, bite); SA Poison, spells, spell-like abilities, smite good; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., detect thoughts, guarded thoughts, immunity to poison, resistance to charm, immune to poison, acid, cold, fire, electricity resistance 10, DR 10/magic, SR 23; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +12; Str 18, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 20.

**Skills & Feats:** Bluff +11, Concentration +20, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +6, Intimidate +6, Listen +13, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +20, Spot +13; Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Lightning Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Spell Penetration

**Spells Prepared** (6/7/7/7/5; Base DC = 15 + Spell Level): 0—*acid splash (2), daze, detect magic, light, mage hand, open/close, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*expeditious retreat, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield, silent image*; 2nd—*cat's grace, invisibility, scorching ray, see invisibility, false life*; 3rd—*displacement, lightning bolt, displacement, suggestion*; 4<sup>th</sup>—*enervation, stonkskin, lesser globe of invulnerability*; 5<sup>th</sup>—*cone of cold, baleful polymorph*.

**Spell-like abilities:** 3/day – *darkness, poison, unholy*

*aura*, 1/day – *desecrate, unholy blight, contagion, blasphemy, unhallow*.

#### **APL 16 EL 18**

☛ **Half-fiend dark naga:** Half-Fiend Dark Naga Sor6; CR 17; Large Outsider; HD 9D8+27 plus 6d4+18; hp 106; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., fly 40 ft.; AC 17 (+4 Dex, +3 natural] Touch 14, Flat-footed 13); Base Atk +9; Grp +17; Atk +12 melee (2d4+4, Sting plus poison); Full Atk +12 melee (2d4+4, Sting plus poison) and +7 melee (1d8+4, bite); SA Poison, spells, spell-like abilities, smite good; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., detect thoughts, guarded thoughts, immunity to poison, resistance to charm, immune to poison, acid, cold, fire, electricity resistance 10, DR 10/magic, SR 25; AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +13; Str 18, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 20.

**Skills & Feats:** Bluff +11, Concentration +21, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +6, Intimidate +6, Listen +13, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +22, Spot +14, Tumble +4; Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Lightning Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Spell Penetration, Spell Focus (Necromancy)

**Spells Prepared** (6/7/7/7/7/4; Base DC = 15 + Spell Level; DC = 16 + Spell level for Necromancy): 0—*acid splash (2), daze, detect magic, light, mage hand, open/close, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*expeditious retreat, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield, silent image*; 2nd—*cat's grace, invisibility, scorching ray, see invisibility, false life*; 3rd—*displacement, lightning bolt, displacement, suggestion*; 4<sup>th</sup>—*enervation, stonkskin, Lesser globe of invulnerability, phantasmal killer*; 5<sup>th</sup>—*cone of cold, baleful polymorph, wall of force*; 6<sup>th</sup>—*antimagic field, circle of death*.

**Spell-like abilities:** 3/day – *darkness, poison, unholy aura*, 1/day – *desecrate, unholy blight, contagion, blasphemy, unhallow, horrid wilting*.

## **Encounter Ten: The Lower Level of the Manor (Area C)**

#### **APL 10 (EL 12)**

☛ **Globulous:** Barbed devil (Hamatula) Ftr1; CR 12; Medium Outsider (Baatezu, Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 12D8+72 plus 1D10+3; hp 136; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 29 ([+6 Dex, +13 natural] Touch 16, Flat-footed 23); Base Atk +13; Grp +23; Atk +20 melee (2d8+6, Claw plus fear); Full Atk +20 melee (2d8+6, 2 Claws plus fear); SA Fear, Improved grab, impale 3D8+9, summon baatezu; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., barbed defense, immunity to fire and poison, acid and cold resistance 10, DR 10/good, SR 24, see in darkness, spell-like abilities, telepathy 100 ft.; AL LE; SV Fort +16, Ref +14, Will +12; Str 23, Dex 23, Con 23, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 18.

*Skills & Feats:* Concentration +21, Diplomacy +6, Hide +21, Intimidate +20, Listen +19, Knowledge (Arcana) +16, Sense Motive +17, Spot +19, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks); Alertness, Cleave, Improved Grapple, Iron Will Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Claw)

*Spell-like abilities:* At will – *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *hold person* (DC 16), *major image* (DC 17), *scorching ray* (2 rays only). 1/day – *order's wrath* (DC 18), *unholy blight* (DC 18). Caster Level 12<sup>th</sup>.

#### **APL 12 (EL 14)**

☛**Globulous:** Barbed devil (Hamatula) Ftr3; CR 14; Medium Outsider (Baatezu, Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 12D8+72 plus 3D10+9; hp 155; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 29 ([+6 Dex, +13 natural] Touch 16, Flat-footed 23); Base Atk +15; Grp +25; Atk +22 melee (2d8+6, Claw plus fear); Full Atk +22 melee (2d8+6, 2 Claws plus fear); SA Fear, Improved grab, impale 3D8+9, summon baatezu; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., barbed defense, immunity to fire and poison, acid and cold resistance 10, DR 10/good, SR 26, see in darkness, spell-like abilities, telepathy 100 ft.; AL LE; SV Fort +17, Ref +17, Will +13; Str 23, Dex 23, Con 23, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 18.

*Skills & Feats:* Concentration +21, Diplomacy +6, Hide +21, Intimidate +20, Listen +19, Knowledge (Arcana) +16, Jump +12, Sense Motive +17, Spot +19, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks); Alertness, Cleave, Improved Grapple, Iron Will Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Claw), Great Cleave, Lightning Reflexes

*Spell-like abilities:* At will – *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *hold person* (DC 16), *major image* (DC 17), *scorching ray* (2 rays only). 1/day – *order's wrath* (DC 18), *unholy blight* (DC 18). Caster Level 12<sup>th</sup>.

#### **APL 14 (EL 16)**

☛**Globulous:** Barbed devil (Hamatula) Ftr5; CR 16; Medium Outsider (Baatezu, Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 12D8+72 plus 5D10+15; hp 174; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 29 ([+6 Dex, +13 natural] Touch 16, Flat-footed 23); Base Atk +17; Grp +27; Atk +25 melee (2d8+9, Claw plus fear); Full Atk +25 melee (2d8+9, 2 Claws plus fear); SA Fear, Improved grab, impale 3D8+9, summon baatezu; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., barbed defense, immunity to fire and poison, acid and cold resistance 10, DR 10/good, SR 28, see in darkness, spell-like abilities, telepathy 100 ft.; AL LE; SV Fort +18, Ref +17, Will +13; Str 24, Dex 23, Con 23, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 18.

*Skills & Feats:* Concentration +21, Diplomacy +6, Hide +21, Intimidate +20, Listen +19, Knowledge (Arcana) +16, Jump +19, Sense Motive +17, Spot +19, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks); Alertness, Cleave,

Improved Grapple, Iron Will Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Claw), Great Cleave, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Specialization (Claw)

*Spell-like abilities:* At will – *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *hold person* (DC 16), *major image* (DC 17), *scorching ray* (2 rays only). 1/day – *order's wrath* (DC 18), *unholy blight* (DC 18). Caster Level 12<sup>th</sup>.

#### **APL 16 (EL 18)**

☛**Advanced Cornugon:** Horned devil (Cornugon); CR 18; Large Outsider (Baatezu, Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 20D8+125; hp 214; Init +7; Spd 20 ft., fly 50 ft.; AC 36 ([-1 size, +7 Dex, +20 natural] Touch 16, flat-footed 28); Base Atk +17; Grp +31; Atk +27 melee (2D6+15, spiked chain plus stun) or +26 melee (2D6+10, claw) or +26 melee (2D6+10, tail plus infernal wound); Full Atk +27/+22/+17 melee (2D6+15, spiked chain plus stun) and +24 melee (2D8+5, bite) and +24 melee (2D6+5, tail plus infernal wound) or +26 melee (2D6+10, 2 claws) and +24 melee (2D8+5, bite) and +24 melee (2D6+10, tail plus infernal wound); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. (20 ft. with spiked chain); SA Fear aura, infernal wounds, spell-like abilities, stun, summon baatezu; SQ DR 10/good and silver, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to fire and poison, acid and cold resistance 10, regeneration 5, see in darkness, SR 28, telepathy 100 ft.; AL LE; SV Fort +17, Ref +16, Will +15; Str 31, Dex 25, Con 26, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 22.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +24, Climb +28, Concentration +31, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +6, Hide +23, Intimidate +26, Listen +24, Move Silently +23, Search +22, Sense Motive +26, Spot +30, Survival +11; Cleave, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (spiked chain), Improved Natural Armor.

*Spell-like abilities:* At will – *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *hold person* (DC 16), *major image* (DC 17), *scorching ray* (2 rays only). 1/day – *order's wrath* (DC 18), *unholy blight* (DC 18). Caster Level 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **Encounter Thirteen: The Day the Ziggurat stood still**

#### **APL 10 (EL 13)**

☛**Gelzifa:** CR 13; Huge Dragon (air); HD 20D12+100; hp 255; Init +0; Spd 40 ft. swim 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor); AC 27 ([19 natural, -2 size] Touch 8, Flat-footed 27); Base Atk +20; Grp +36; Atk +26 melee (3d8+8, bite); Full Atk +26 melee (3d8+8, bite), +21 melee (3D6+4, 2 claws), +21 melee (1D8+4, 2 wings), +21 melee (2D6+12, tail slap); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft. (Bite 15 ft.); SA Breath weapon, crush, frightful presence, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ Darkvision 120 ft., DR 5/magic, immunity to

acid, sleep, and paralysis, SR 21, water breathing; AL LE; SV Fort +17, Ref +12, Will +15; Str 27, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 16.

**Skills & Feats:** Bluff +20, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +13, Hide +0, Intimidate +25, Listen +25, Knowledge (Arcana) +18, Knowledge (nature) +18, Move Silently +20, Search +23, Sense Motive +11, Spot +25, Spellcraft +25, Swim +16; Alertness, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Power Attack, Improved Natural Attack (Claw).

**Breath Weapon** (Su): 50 ft. cone, damage 12D6 acid, Reflex DC 23 half.

**Crush** (ex): Area 15 ft. by 15 ft.; Small or smaller opponents take 2D8+12 points of bludgeoning damage, and must succeed on a DC 23 Reflex save or be pinned; grapple bonus +36.

**Frightful Presence** (Ex): 180 ft. radius, HD 19 or less, Will DC 23 negates.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 3/day – suggestion. Caster Level 6<sup>th</sup>; save DC 13 + spell level.

**Spells:** As 5<sup>th</sup> level sorcerer. Spells known (6/7/5; save DC 13 + Spell level): 0 – *arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound, read magic, resistance*, 1<sup>st</sup> – *mage armor, Nystul's undetectable aura, shield, true strike*, 2<sup>nd</sup> – *invisibility, detect thoughts*.

#### **APL 12 (EL 15)**

☛**Gelzifa:** CR 13; Huge Dragon (air); HD 20D12+100; hp 255; Init +0; Spd 40 ft. swim 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor); AC 27 ([19 natural, -2 size] Touch 8, Flat-footed 27); Base Atk +20; Grp +36; Atk +26 melee (3d8+8, bite); Full Atk +26 melee (3d8+8, bite), +21 melee (3D6+4, 2 claws), +21 melee (1D8+4, 2 wings), +21 melee (2D6+12, tail slap); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft. (Bite 15 ft.); SA Breath weapon, crush, frightful presence, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ Darkvision 120 ft., DR 5/magic, immunity to acid, sleep, and paralysis, SR 21, water breathing; AL LE; SV Fort +17, Ref +12, Will +15; Str 27, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 16.

**Skills & Feats:** Bluff +20, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +13, Hide +0, Intimidate +25, Listen +25, Knowledge (Arcana) +18, Knowledge (nature) +18, Move Silently +20, Search +23, Sense Motive +11, Spot +25, Spellcraft +25, Swim +16; Alertness, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Power Attack, Improved Natural Attack (Claw).

**Breath Weapon** (Su): 50 ft. cone, damage 12D6 acid, Reflex DC 23 half.

**Crush** (ex): Area 15 ft. by 15 ft.; Small or smaller opponents take 2D8+12 points of bludgeoning damage, and must succeed on a DC 23 Reflex save or be pinned; grapple bonus +36.

**Frightful Presence** (Ex): 180 ft. radius, HD 19 or

less, Will DC 23 negates.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 3/day – suggestion. Caster Level 6<sup>th</sup>; save DC 13 + spell level.

**Spells:** As 5<sup>th</sup> level sorcerer. Spells known (6/7/5; save DC 13 + Spell level): 0 – *arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound, read magic, resistance*, 1<sup>st</sup> – *mage armor, Nystul's undetectable aura, shield, true strike*, 2<sup>nd</sup> – *invisibility, detect thoughts*.

#### **APL 14 (EL 17)**

☛**Gelzifa:** CR 16; Huge Dragon (air); HD 23D12+115; hp 293; Init +0; Spd 40 ft. swim 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor); AC 30 ([22 natural, -2 size] Touch 8, Flat-footed 30); Base Atk +23; Grp +40; Atk +30 melee (3d8+9, bite); Full Atk +30 melee (3d8+9, bite), +25 melee (3D6+5, 2 claws), +25 melee (1D8+5, 2 wings), +25 melee (2D6+13, tail slap); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft. (Bite 15 ft.); SA Breath weapon, crush, frightful presence, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ Darkvision 120 ft., DR 10/magic, SR 22, water breathing; AL LE; SV Fort +18, Ref +13, Will +16; Str 29, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 16.

**Skills & Feats:** Bluff +20, Concentration +17, Diplomacy +13, Hide +0, Intimidate +25, Listen +27, Knowledge (Arcana) +18, Knowledge (nature) +18, Move Silently +20, Search +25, Sense Motive +12, Spot +27, Spellcraft +25, Swim +16; Alertness, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Power Attack, Improved Natural Attack (Claw), Snatch

**Breath Weapon** (Su): 50 ft. cone, damage 14D6 acid, Reflex DC 24 half.

**Crush** (ex): Area 15 ft. by 15 ft.; Small or smaller opponents take 2D8+13 points of bludgeoning damage, and must succeed on a DC 24 Reflex save or be pinned; grapple bonus +40.

**Frightful Presence** (Ex): 210 ft. radius, HD 22 or less, Will DC 24 negates.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 3/day – suggestion. Caster Level 7<sup>th</sup>; save DC 13 + spell level

**Spells:** As 7<sup>th</sup> level sorcerer. Spells known (6/7/7/5; save DC 13 + Spell level): 0 – *arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound, read magic, acid splash, resistance*, 1<sup>st</sup> – *mage armor, Nystul's undetectable aura, shield, true strike, magic missile*, 2<sup>nd</sup> – *invisibility, detect thoughts, cat's grace*, 3<sup>rd</sup> – *dispel magic, ray of exhaustion*.

#### **APL 16 (EL 19)**

☛**Gelzifa:** CR 19; Huge Dragon (air); HD 29D12+174; hp 390; Init +4; Spd 40 ft. swim 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor); AC 36 ([28 natural, -2 size] Touch 8, Flat-footed 36); Base Atk +29; Grp +48; Atk +38 melee (3d8+11, bite); Full Atk +38 melee (3d8+11, bite), +32 melee (3D6+7, 2 claws), +31 melee (1D8+7, 2 wings), +31 melee (2D6+15, tail slap); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft. (Bite 15 ft.); SA Breath

weapon, crush, frightful presence, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ Darkvision 120 ft., DR 15/magic, SR 25, water breathing; AL LE; SV Fort +22, Ref +16, Will +20; Str 33, Dex 10, Con 23, Int 18, Wis 19, Cha 18.

**Skills & Feats:** Bluff +20, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +13, Hide +0, Intimidate +25, Listen +31, Knowledge (Arcana) +18, Knowledge (nature) +18, Move Silently +20, Search +29, Sense Motive +14, Spot +31, Spellcraft +27, Swim +16; Alertness, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Power Attack, Improved Natural Attack (Claw), Snatch, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (Claw)

**Breath Weapon** (Su): 50 ft. cone, damage 18D6 acid, Reflex DC 30 half.

**Crush** (ex): Area 15 ft. by 15 ft.; Small or smaller opponents take 2D8+15 points of bludgeoning damage, and must succeed on a DC 30 Reflex save or be pinned; grapple bonus +48.

**Frightful Presence** (Ex): 270 ft. radius, HD 28 or less, Will DC 28 negates.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 3/day – *suggestion*; 1/day – *plant growth*. Caster Level 11<sup>th</sup>; save DC 13 + spell level

**Spells:** As 11<sup>th</sup> level sorcerer. Spells known (6/7/7/7/7/4; save DC 14 + Spell level): 0 – *arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound, read magic, acid splash* (2), *ray of frost, resistance*; 1<sup>st</sup> – *mage armor, Nystul's undetectable aura, shield, true strike, magic missile*; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *blur, detect thoughts, cat's grace, invisibility, bear's endurance*; 3<sup>rd</sup> – *lightning bolt, ray of exhaustion, dispel magic, wind walk*; 4<sup>th</sup> – *mass reduce person, fire shield, lesser globe of invulnerability*; 5<sup>th</sup> – *mind fog, hold monster*



## Appendix Two: Player Handouts

### Player Handout #1

*Friends of the Road;*

*I had wished to pass this information on to you personally, but pressing matters disrupted my schedule and called me away. I leave this letter in the safe keeping of Walker Otilmat with instructions that it is to be passed on to you and only you.*

*Though we were both in Ekbir at the same time, I was unable to seek you out. As you may have learned also, something odd is happening with certain caravans of the trade route. The name Koosha bey'Rees has come up. It seems he was once a minor bureaucrat within the Ket government, but after a rich inheritance from his father's death, he purchased cheaply the ownership of a caravan company that has regional ties to the Iron Rings. The Rees Caravan Company's headquarters can be found inside Lopolla, capital of Ket. Be careful while you are there and try to keep your mouth shut. A wagging tongue will attract more than just our enemies. Do not underestimate the power that the locals can bring down on those who vex them.*

*I shall seek you out after the snows have melted. Be safe and stingy with your trust. Though our enemies need to hide in the shadows, they are still immensely powerful. I fear their ultimate goal would be the end of us all.*

*Walker Salidius*

## Player Handout #2

*Dear Friends;*

*I have been using my contacts to investigate the matter of the mystery on the western trade route. I wished I had more conclusive news, but it seems after your visit here in Mitrik, the smugglers have been tying up loose ends and making the tracking of their activities difficult.*

*But I write you to tell you that I have found one tidbit of information you may find useful perhaps if put into context.*

*Over the last few years, I suspect no more than three years, there has been a noticeable influx of rare treasures and arcane items flowing out of the western Bramblewood, and even more curious, smuggling of exotic materials into the Bramblewood.*

*I don't know if these two flows are connected or not, but unknown Ketites using a Ziefian front have been selling off cheap ancient valuables, such as coins, gems and art. I suspect a its long hidden loot being sold off for less traceable coinage. That's about as much as I could trace on that.*

*As for the influx of exotic materials, it seems that several tribes of elves within the Bramblewoods have been making secret overtures to several different merchants and suppliers. Many seem to have rejected the offers of the elves, but some agreed to do business. Though the shipments seemed to have stopped a few months ago, exotic and expensive materials such as obsidian and adamantine have been smuggled in (mostly through the Tusman Hills). It seems that several different elf tribes are behind this. I'm perplexed as to why this would be. But what is curious, is that a contact of mine mentioned what was used for payment and it seems its very similar coinage and treasure to what was being sold off by the Ziefian front men out of the western Bramblewoods.*

*If I have more news, I'll be sure to send it along via the ZWC outposts.*

*Hurvin of Mitrik.*

*May you always profit*

### Player Handout #3

*...and He of Eternal Darkness was sealed away.*

*In darkness he did say to his left hand, "bring forth the story of my return, keep it hidden only for the faithful. Bring about my will as only you have the power to do. Free yourself from imprisonment to come, to free me from imprisonment that is.*

*Send servants to seek out the four eyes of my elemental disguise for they have been sundered and lost. Scattered they are, but collected they will bring about your freedom.*

*The tears of my eyes shall wash away the bonds that hold you. Be wary, for my eyes are windows to the realms of powers that can be used against you, as much as for you. Trust not the gatekeepers that are motes in my eyes.*

## Player Handout #4

### Ket laws FAQ

Of all the lands to be in, I'm stuck with Ket. I think it's cool, but some of my players don't always agree because of the strict laws (specifically, you can't deliberately kill someone and get away with it without going to prison). Can you explain it a little better so that, as a Judge, I can give my players a better experience?

Well, to addendum that;

You can't unintentionally kill someone and get away with it either.

Well, accept for just not ever being caught.

An example:

Karl the Thug attacks Joey in a back alley. Karl is trying to kill Joey and is doing real damage with his board with a nail in it. Karl is now guilty of assault and probably attempted murder. Joey pulls out his sword and proceeds to defend himself, doing real damage back. Joey is now guilty of assault.

Had Joey used Subdual damage instead of real damage in this situation, the Jurats (judges) would have excused him for his actions, by deeming them legitimate for self defense. Karl would be convicted for assault, and for attempted murder.

Joey is back to using real damage, and he is getting the upper hand on Karl. Perhaps its just one too many blows, or a Crit at the wrong time, but Karl the Thug is killed. Joey is now guilty of Manslaughter, regardless that Karl the Thug initiated the action, and was clearly trying to murder Joey. Karl the Thug's corpse is treated like the body of a criminal (a process I'll get into at another time). Depending on the Trial Outcome, Joey will probably receive many TU's worth of Slave Mine punishment for Manslaughter, but eventually released. Had the trial outcome decided that Joey deliberately finished Karl off (went back for a killing blow, etc), then Karl would find himself convicted of Second Degree Murder.

So even unintentionally killing someone or just hurting them for real damage, can land you in hot water, should the Threshers and Jurats get their hands on you.

Had Karl the Thug killed Joey and been caught, he would have been sent to the mines for life for Murder (First Degree).

There are some unofficial exceptions to this. Should people like certain hated cultists (such as Vecna, Tharizdun, etc) be killed while the PC's are actively foiling some sort of plot, the Jurats and Powers that Be, will tend to throw a blind'ish eye, to let the PCs off with a strong warning.

These exceptions/cases are usually specifically mentioned in the Scenario itself and require

some proof. No killing someone, then just dropping a holy symbol of Vecna on to the body. Its always a gamble. Before you go swinging your sword and taking heads off, you better make sure the odds are in your favor that your victims are 'exceptions'.

Killing monsters doesn't count as murder. Killing the Hostile Elves of the Bramblewood doesn't either, but be careful of killing Non-Bramblewood elves. They still have some \*slight\* legal protection. You could find yourself charged with Disturbing the Peace or Destruction of Property, etc.

Killing Hobgoblins, and sometimes even gnolls, can be legally dangerous, for if they turn out to be actively serving as Ket Military units, or under some other granted status, well, that's not a good idea.

**In regards to Ket's justice system: Ket's laws regarding murder are fairly rigid, if you've been found guilty of killing, you have to spend TU's for "doing time". However, there are some noted exceptions to this (Bramblewood Elves, Monsters, etc) where the authorities might turn a blind eye.**

**If a character is accused of murder of a bandit (or similar NPC) and molestation of the corpse, and role-plays the justification for his actions particularly well, is there any leniency a Judge can provide in sentencing? Or are the laws strict enough to be enforced, no matter what.**

Well, Mullah's tend to be real partial to Straight Talk. Fancy Lawyering tends to get people into more trouble sometimes when it backfires. But yes, eventually there will be a Write-Up (to be found in the new Ket Gazetteer) for a system where a PC can use Diplomacy or Profession: Lawyer to ease his criminal burden once he has been convicted. But it also has a chance to increase the sentence. TU amounts for Crimes need to be written up and publicly posted as well. This material is currently under construction.

For now though, you can play it loose. If the person is convicted of the crime of murder (lets call it 'Manslaughter') by \*accidentally\* killing someone who was trying to kill them, assign them 20 TU's in the Slave Mines. If they can win an opposed diplomacy check against the Jurat (if level not given, assume 7th level, and Diplomacy of +10) then allow them to cut the time in half. If they fail, increase it by 25%. Those who are found guilty of First Degree Murder, can not use this. Note: When I say first and second degree, don't confuse it for our real world Canadian definitions of those laws, the Ket laws are not the exact same. All this will be explained in more details in the new Ket Gazetteer.

Some rough definitions;

First Degree Murder: Planning with foresight to end the life of (Person, Citizen, small puppy, wording to be defined) Example; The man who lays in wait for the Baker to open up shop, then slits his throat and robs the shop.

Second Degree Murder: Killing someone with intent during the heat of the moment. Example: A man's son is killed in front of him, and he then proceeds to attack and kill the person responsible; An assassin attacks a man, and the man defeats the assassin, but then

finishes the assassin off with a Killing Blow; Killing a man who has been apprehended and tied up (with out lawful justification); striking a man to death after he has fallen.

Manslaughter: The accidental termination of a life. Example: The man who fires a crossbow bolt at a known felon, causing the felon to fall to his death from a bridge; While defending ones self, scoring a critical and killing your attacker.

If your PC's commits more minor crimes, like public nuisance, petty theft, disrespecting an authority figure, etc, just give them a one or two TU's worth of Stock time. This takes place in Threshers Square, located in the centre of all well established Kettite Settlements (some of the smaller Ex-Bissel lands don't have these set up yet).

Again, these guidelines will do till a more complete set of guidelines and examples can be drafted.

Dear

Beygraf;

I have some questions concerning the use/possession of 'Assassin's Weapons' in Ket.

-Killy McGee

(Q) I want to acquire an 'Assassin's Weapon' because I think they're phat loot. Are there any restrictions on this type of weapon in Ket? I asked my fellow adventurers, but they just started pretending they didn't know me whenever the authorities passed by.

(A) Well Killy, your adventuring companions have the right idea. It is indeed a bad idea to have in your possession an item that is considered a tool of the assassin. Since the being of Ket, there has been a problem with assassins, both foreign and domestic. Roughly 100 years ago, strict laws were put into place to limit the trafficking in of these types of items. If the Threshers catch you with such an item, you may find yourself with a death sentence.

(Q) Is there an exact list of what weapons are considered an assassin's weapon? Perhaps I can just call it something different and get around the technicality of the law.

(A) I'm afraid not. Typically, any weapon or item that's sole intent is to take a life quickly might be considered an assassin's weapon. As well, any item that makes it very difficult or impossible to return a mortal man to life, is also an assassin's weapon. Most of these items are usually magical in nature. For instance, an item that made it so a dead man needed True Resurrection instead of Raise or Resurrection, is an assassins weapon. In a world where the dead can be brought back to life, anything that makes it >much more difficult is very dangerous to certain parts of society.

(Q) Say I have one of these nifty items. If the authorities catch me, can't I just say that I'm just holding it for a friend?

(A) I don't think that's going to fly. You might be able to bluff a Lower Watchmen, but his Captain, or a typical Thresher, will usually be able to spot the item for what it is. These items usually have a look to them. A lot of times, the dripping venom gives it away. When in doubt, the item will be confiscated and identified by the specialist allied to the authorities. During your trial, if it came out that the item was indeed yours, then death for you. If you were truly just holding it for someone, by giving up the person, you'd probably get away with some stock time.

**(Q) But these types of items are not only legal in other lands, they're encouraged! Why am I being restricted from my phat loot? If I can pay good Plat for it, I should be able to use it no matter what!**

(A) The government begs to differ. What foreign lands do with their laws and people is their business. But within the nation of Ket, the Threshers will enforce the laws of the land. I'd suggest you stash the weapon somewhere else before crossing Ket's border. Unless of course, you feel yourself to be good/lucky enough to get away with it, and perhaps join the ranks of the dark and secret groupings of assassins within Ket.

## Appendix Three: New Rules

### **Subsonics [General] as presented in *Song and Silence***

Your music can affect even those who do not consciously hear it.

Prerequisite: Bardic music ability, 10+ ranks in Perform

Benefit: You can play so softly that opponents do not notice it, yet your allies still gain all the usual benefits from your bardic music. Similarly, you can affect opponents within range with your music, and unless they can see you performing or have some other means of discovering it, they cannot determine the source of the effect

### **Axiomatic Creatures (Manual of the Planes):**

Axiomatic creatures dwell in lawful planes, the domains of order. Although they may resemble creatures from the Material Plane, they are more perfectly formed, their features sharper and more precise, their fur or plumage shinier, their appearance clearer and more heroic. They are often called "perfect" creatures, and some say that the axiomatic versions are the true and ideal first models; all other creatures of the same type are merely imitations.