

# Ineffable Tome

A One-Round D&D Living City Adventure

by Greg Dreher

Skilled adventurers are needed immediately at the Temple of Mystra. An ally of the temple has stolen a powerful evil artifact, and it must be protected as it is taken to a place where no evil force can reach it. Expect trouble, as the evil foes from which the artifact was taken will stop at nothing to get it back. An adventure for Tiers 3-6.

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This is a RPGA Network adventure game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for playing the game (or this round of the game), but the actual playing time will be about three hours.

It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag 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 to keep track of who is playing which character.

**Scoring the game for RPGA points:** The RPGA has three ways to score this game. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use:

1. *No-vote scoring:* The players write their names and numbers on the scoring packet grid, you fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. *Partial scoring:* The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the convention coordinator wants information as to how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. *Voting:* Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the best amongst them, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes. Multi-round adventures usually required advancing a smaller number of players than played the first round, so voting is required for multi-round adventures.

When using Voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying.

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 ***bold italics***. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

## Tier Structure

To determine the tier, add the character levels of all the characters. In addition, add the levels of any henchmen or animals according to the values on their certificates. Compare the total to the chart below to find the tier.

	<u>4 players</u>	<u>5 players</u>	<u>6 players</u>	<u>7 players</u>	<u>Lvl Cap</u>
T3:	23-32	25-35	27-38	29-41	8 <sup>th</sup>
T4:	33-42	36-46	39-50	42-54	10 <sup>th</sup>
T5:	43-52	47-57	51-62	55-67	12 <sup>th</sup>
T6:	53-64	58-70	63-77	68-83	14 <sup>th</sup>

The level cap indicated the highest level of character allowed to play this adventure. Characters of levels higher than the highest level shown for the highest tier cannot be played.

## Adventure Summary and Background

If running this module cold, have **DM's Aid 1**, Timeline of the Enemies' Actions, in front of you as you read the DM's Background.

The quest for powerful magic items is not restricted to the good adventurers of Ravens Bluff. Whispers of the existence of a book of vile darkness have caught the attention of powerful evil priests throughout the Vast. This book is rumored to have been crafted by Bane himself, to grant insight to those priests who follow his evil ways. The book, cloaked in an ever-present illusion to make it blend in with other books (as does a vacuous grimoire), is rumored to be locatable only by one who accepts the endless evil and tyranny of Bane. But it is no rumor. The book exists, and was recently liberated out of a Banelich's tomb to the south of Ravens Bluff by mercenaries employed by the Zhentarim.

Another person was following the rumors of the ineffable tome, Tallon Jarvis, a bard and rogue in the service of Mystra. He tracks the location of all evil artifacts, seeking to recover them for the temple of Mystra, which neutralizes the items. The mercenaries celebrated a little too much, and while not paying attention, Tallon snuck in and absconded with the tome, encasing it in a leather sack to prevent its illusion power from activating. He proceeded to fly, then run back to the temple of Mystra in Ravens Bluff.

Harris Redfire, a cleric and wizard serving Mystra who makes his home in Dragon Falls, has created an interdimensional prison in which to store very powerful evil items, a prison unreachable by others' mortal magic. Here, the PCs enter. A group of skilled adventurers is needed to protect the item as it travels from the temple to the protection of the interdimensional prison. So important is neutralizing this tome that the PCs are to travel instantly via teleportation circle to the cleric's home. The enemy surely knows where the tome is, so the PCs should be prepared for immediate trouble.

A high level wizard, Maxim Winteredge, was leading the mercenaries who recovered the tome. An ally of the Zhentarim who want the tome, he teleported back to their base, near Dragon Falls, to inform the leader of the group about the theft. The leader, a cleric of Cyric by the name of Threll Whitebane, keeps track of his potential enemies, including Harris Redfire. Knowing the cleric of Mystra's focus, and suspecting that the tome may be brought to him for protection, he arranged for his goons to capture him, and another of his allies is impersonating the priest.

### Adventure Summary

The heroes are summoned to the temple of Mystra early in the morning, and told about an extremely dangerous mission. They must escort and protect a powerful evil item, a book of vile darkness, as they take it to the home of Harris Redfire. Redfire is a Mystran who has created an interdimensional prison capable of safely storing the ineffable tome and keeping it forever away from the evil priests who would covet it.

Knowing to expect trouble, the PCs may find it, in the form of two strike forces patrolling the city, looking for adventurers carrying the ineffable tome. Their only goal is to capture the tome, although they won't mind harming the PCs in the process. Clever PCs may find a way to avoid them, but it will be difficult.

If the PCs lose the ineffable tome in Ravens Bluff, all is not lost. The City Watch finds them, and reports the capture of the individual who stole the tome. While the tome disappeared with an unseen collaborator, a paper left at the scene serves as a clue to the location of the villains. First, they will probably have to talk to a long-winded expert to identify the location mentioned on the paper.

A distrustful archmage, with his annoying, yipping dog, casts a spell that takes the PCs to the home of Harris Redfire in Dragon Falls. If the PCs have lost the tome,

there is no one at the home, and a bit of evidence pointing to a recent struggle. If the PCs still have the tome, Harris Redfire meets them, but a few clues might inform them that the man is not who he claims to be. If the PCs are fooled, the ersatz Redfire disappears with the tome, and if they see through the deception, there will likely be combat.

Afterwards, the PCs can search Redfire's home, finding clues, and they can find the tracks of the people who kidnapped Redfire. As they do so, a group of militiamen from Dragon Falls talks to them, asking about the recent attack at Redfire's home. Ultimately, they will accept that the PCs were not responsible, and can give them some needed information.

If the PCs need more information, they can meet a wise old woman in town. She's old, crotchety, and not too pleasant a person to be around, but she knows the area better than anyone.

On the way to meeting the enemies, the PCs pass through Keldar's Shrine, a lush and beautiful grove. While there, a hawk tries to grab a nearby animal. This hawk, which can speak Common, can tell the PCs about problems it has noticed, problems caused by the villains.

Ultimately, the PCs must enter the cave that the villains are occupying, whether by the main entrance or by a secret entrance. After possibly defusing some traps and fighting a pitched battle, the PCs can defeat the foes, rescue Harris Redfire, and put the ineffable tome into its permanent prison.

## Introduction

The module begins about one half hour past dawn on a pleasant summer day (the 17<sup>th</sup>) in Flamerule. There's a full moon in the evening.

For most PCs:

*It's just after dawn, and already someone's at your door. When you finally open the door, you see a young girl of perhaps 10 summers, red-faced and trying to catch her breath. "I have been asked by the temple... (couple of quick breaths) the temple of Mystra to deliver this urgent message to (insert PC name). (As PC reads the note, or after she reads it to PC) I must hurry back and tell them if you will be there. Will you?"*

*Once you respond, the girl darts off, moving as fast as she can run.*

All powerful PCs, even those who have done something to anger the temple of Mystra or Chester D'Marke, will be summoned with this note. D'Marke realizes that just because a PC may have made a bad choice in the past, their skills will still be invaluable for this mission.

Only PCs of levels 1-4 will get a different introduction. While they shouldn't be playing this adventure, there's bound to be a few forced to play by circumstance, so here's a modified introduction for them:

*It's just after dawn, and already someone's at your door. When you finally open the door, you see a young girl of perhaps 10 summers, red-faced and trying to catch her breath. "I have been asked by the temple... (couple of quick breaths) the temple of Mystra to deliver this urgent message to (insert any high level PC name), but I can't find him/her. The temple really needs adventurers. Are you an adventurer? Can you help? (As PC reads the note, or after she reads it to PC) I must hurry back and tell them that I've found someone else, if you will be coming. Will you?"*

*Once you respond, the girl darts off, moving as fast as she can run.*

The note, of course, is addressed to the same PC as she named earlier, not the player's character.

## Scene 1: Ineffable Tome

*As you arrive at the Halls of Mystery, you are quickly escorted up the stairs, with a group of other adventurers, and into a large meeting room. Several chairs have been set up in a semicircle. Lord of Mystery Chester D'Marke is here, resplendent in royal blue robes, a dark blue cape and skullcap, and many pieces of jewelry set with sapphires. There is one other person here, a half-elven man in leather armor and dirty traveling clothes. He is sprawled, asleep, on a bench in the corner of the room, still wearing his muddy boots. Behind you, the acolytes close the door to this room.*

*"Thank you all for coming so quickly," D'Marke begins. "The reason you have been summoned here is... umm...." He walks over to the sleeping man, moves his cloak, and reaches under the bench, pulling out an iron lockbox, about 40 cm by 30 cm by 10 cm (16 in. by 12 in. by 4 in.). Still, the man doesn't stir.*

*"The reason you have been summoned here is this item," he says, holding out the lockbox. "Within this lockbox is a powerful evil magic item, a minor artifact of evil. It contains a book of vile darkness, a magic item possessing the power to increase the*

*prowess of any evil cleric reading its pages. No evil cleric should ever be able to benefit from this item.*

*"I need you to guard this item. There are countless enemies who would take this item off your hands, and none of them would be pleasant about it. You will need to take this item to Harris Redfire, a servant of Mystra who makes his home near Dragon Falls. He has developed a sort of interdimensional prison, where this item can be stored and rendered unreachable by mortal magic.*

*"I have called in a favor with a visiting wizard, who will conjure a teleportation circle to transport you directly to Redfire's home. So, when we are done here, hurry to the Wizards' Guild, and ask to meet Argonethestor."*

D'Marke will answer the following questions for the PCs, and will mention the following points regardless of whether or not the PCs ask:

- What is the payment for this mission? *"This mission could be very dangerous, so you will be recompensed appropriately. Once you arrive, Redfire will pay each of you with a ruby of 500 gold piece value."*
- Who is Redfire? Can he be trusted? *"Harris Redfire is a devout priest of Mystra and after working with him in the past, he is of unquestionable loyalty. He has worked all his life to create ways to store evil magic items, and keep the Realms safe from their evil magic."*
- How will he know us? *"Present this scroll. When it opens, a magic mouth will speak a phrase he will recognize."*
- How do we open the box? *"Redfire has been sent the key, although he will probably want to imprison the whole lockbox."*
- What does Redfire look like? *"He's a human man of average height; a bit overweight, which really shows in his face. He has brown eyes and dark brown hair, turning gray at the temples, with a bald spot on top."*
- Where is his house? *"Redfire lives in a comfortable home just outside Dragon Falls proper. You'll know you're there when you arrive. Every time I have been there, there have been countless books piled up in neat stacks."*
- Why can't we bring our mounts? *"You will be teleported directly into his living room. Your mounts won't fit. I think you can handle finding your way back from Dragon Falls, right?"*
- Okay, just who is that asleep in the corner? *"That's Tallon Jarvis. He's a collector of lore about evil magic items, and follows up leads related about the existence of such items of evil. Then, when the items are found, he has the skills to ... abscond*

*with the items, to be neutralized by this temple. He has trailed rumors about this particular ineffable tome for months. He ran here as fast as he could, so I don't blame him for being so tired."*

- What about Argonethestor? *"A visiting wizard from Cormyr, with whom I only have a brief acquaintance. It is hard to find a wizard of suitable power to cast such a spell on short notice. He was recommended to me by Sebastian Silverlocke, Dean of Abjuration and Knight of the Mystic Flame. I trust Sebastian completely."*

If the party wants to talk to Jarvis, D'Marke walks over and gently nudges him awake. Jarvis snaps up, alert and in a defensive position, very quickly.

Jarvis' story:

*"It all began in Tantras, with a comment mentioned by a local sage. Someone came in asking about the fate of the high priests of Bane, the ones reported to become Baneliches. Rarely is that something someone researches for good ends. After visiting a few of the local booksellers and speaking to contacts in ... other circles, I pieced together that a book containing powerful evil magic was rumored to be in the area, tied to the tomb of a Banelich.*

*"After enough research, I got a general idea of the group doing the searching, and tied them to the Zhentarim. I followed their trail to an area south of Ravens Bluff. I finally found them last night. The band was celebrating a victorious tomb-raiding mission, passing a horn of some strange and probably intoxicating beverage. I could see the tome through the flaps of one of the tents, could feel its evil power. Given their inebriation, I took a chance, and snuck into the camp.*

*"I think I got out unnoticed, but I'm sure it didn't take them long to find out that the book was missing. I used my last potion of fly to put as much distance as possible between them and myself, and when that expired, I ran as fast as I could. I got to the town gates just before dawn, and only had time to gather an iron lockbox in which to put the tome. If left with other books, it will alter its appearance to make it indistinguishable from other books."*

Some other questions the PCs might have:

- Why don't you store the tome here? *"For one, that would be too obvious a location. But more importantly, this interdimensional prison cannot be breached in any way known to mortal magic. This most secure protection is crucial for such an evil item."*
- What did the group from which you took the tome look like? *Jarvis responds. "A typical adventuring*

*party, with several warriors, two priests of Cyric, and a mage. They were all human men, as far as I could tell. All the men were very well-equipped and many of their items looked to be of suitable quality to possibly be enchanted. I only recognized one of the men, the mage. I think he is Jergen the Black, allied with the Zhentarim, a mage powerful enough to cast spells from the fifth circle of magic, at the very least."*

- Do you know who ultimately wants this book? *Jarvis responds. "I'm sorry, but I was unable to determine that. I sure didn't want to ask them! The Zhentarim are too well-dispersed to know for sure who is responsible."*
- Can you grant us any magic to aid us? *D'Marke steps forward. "I was not expecting this mission when I rose before dawn, but I do have a few spells that you would benefit from. Since this mission is so important, I will cast them on you."*

D'Marke has prepared one each of the following spells: *bull's strength, endurance, protection from elements: fire, greater magic weapon, status, true seeing.* He will not think about offering to cast the spells, but will do it if asked.

The party is to meet Argonethestor at eight bells, which is about 45 minutes after the party arrived at the temple of Mystra, if they arrived on time.

## Scene 2a: Off to See the Wizards' Guild

*Departing the temple of Mystra, you glance about, and see no enemies waiting for you.*

Now, the party must decide how they will proceed to the Wizards' Guild. The Temple of Mystra is located in the northeast corner of the portion of town west of the Fire River (at the corner of Thavverdasz Way and Quevver Street) and the Wizards' Guild is located in the west-central part of town (near the intersection of O'Kane Court and Fireleap Way).

The logical way to walk to the Wizards' Guild is to take Thavverdasz Way south to Stonekeep Concourse, and take that west to Fireleap Way, and take that south. In taking Fireleap Way, or one of the other north-south streets, the party must take a bridge and cross DeVillars Creek.

An indirect way to reach the Wizards' Guild would be to travel south and cross Clearwater Harbor (any

reasonable way would work). The party would then travel west.

Of course, a high level party may take a magical route, such as a teleport spell or a fly spell.

Allow the party to decide which course to take. Allow any reasonable mundane or magical disguises they may want to make, but don't encourage them to do this. Get a marching order, and find out exactly what the party is doing with the lockbox.

- If the party takes a normal, direct route to the Wizards' Guild, **go to Scene 2b, Combat 1.**
- If the party takes a roundabout route to the Wizards' Guild, **go to Scene 2b, Combat 2.**
- If the party travels to the wizards' guild by teleporting, by flying, in disguise, or via some other means whereby the enemies would not reasonably find them, **go to Scene 3b.** (Review what skills the enemies possess at the party's tier to see if a disguise plan would work..)

## Scene 2b: The Strike Force Attacks!

After Maxim Winteredge informed the Zhentarim in Dragon Falls of the theft of the *book of vile darkness*, Yancey Garamor teleported to Ravens Bluff to oversee its recapture. He gathered what forces and resources (particularly a small amount of poison) he could and told them to be on the lookout for adventurers carrying a large tome or something that could hold a large tome.

### Combat 1

The leader of the strike force, Ulijaz Thenumbrin, is invisible and flying about 80 feet above DeVillars creek, scanning the passers-by. Any large group is scanned with *detect magic*. If the party is detected, he flies to alert his men, who set up the ambush.

### **Combat Setup**

Modify the location if the party is doing something unusual, like walking only through alleys.

The party is walking on a road that is 20 feet wide. The ambush happens at its intersection with an alley, 10 feet wide, on both sides of the road. At each corner of the intersection is a two-story flat-roofed building, 25 foot square and 20 feet high. Each building has a narrow staircase at its rear, (the opposite side from the street) which serves to allow access to the second floor, but

which also makes reaching the roof a trivial task (Climb, DC 8). The edges of the roofs of the buildings (facing the street) have large signs, giving a +5 circumstance bonus to Hide checks for people lying flat on the roof.

Two of the strike force fighters are in the alley to the PCs' left, one in the alley to the PCs' right. They are five feet in, and so can't yet be spotted. One of the strike force mages is on the roof of the building ahead and to the left, and two of the strike force mages are on the roof of the building ahead and to the right. They are hiding and invisible.

(See **DM's Aid 2** for a map of the attack.)

The enemies' general tactics are basically a hit and run. All they want is the book, and if they can incapacitate the PC carrying it, grab it, and run, they will. Killing any PC is just an added bonus. The enemies will run if the party is too much for them.

### **Tier 3:**

When the party is first spotted, the strike force fighters and strike force mages all cast *true strike*. (Note: *true strike* does not have a somatic component, and so does not provoke an arcane spell failure check.) The party can roll a Listen check (DC 20) to hear the soft, brief chanting. Those who succeed roll initiative, and can act in the ambush round. After the ambush round, the remaining PCs may roll initiative and act.

In the ambush round, the foes use rapid shot to fire two arrows; the first arrow is coated in a stunning poison. (At first, Fortitude save, DC 15, or be stunned for one round; two rounds later, Fortitude save, DC 15, or be stunned for one round.) If it is obvious who is carrying the lockbox, ALL shots will be targeted at that PC until he or she falls.

**Strike force fighters (3), Male Human Rog1/Wiz1/Ftr4:** Medium Humanoid; HD 1d6+1d4+4d10+12; hp 45; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+5 breastplate, +2 large steel shield, +2 Dex); Atks +8 melee (1d8+5 [crit 19-20], longsword) or +7 ranged (1d8+1 [crit x3], longbow); SA Sneak attack +1d6, 1 poisoned arrow; SQ Arcane spell failure 40%; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +3.

Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

*Skills:* Appraise +3, Bluff +4, Concentration +6, Decipher Script +3, Disguise +1, Escape Artist -2, Gather Information +1, Hide +0, Innuendo +1, Jump +1, Knowledge: Arcana +3, Listen +4, Move Silently

+0, Open Lock +2, Read Lips +6, Search +6, Sense Motive +4, Spellcraft +3, Spot +4, Tumble +0. *Feats*: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Rapid Shot, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Equipment: Breastplate, longsword, longbow, 20 arrows, large steel shield, 12 gp.

Arcane Spells (3/2): 0-level—*daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*expeditious retreat*, ~~*true strike*~~.

**Strike force wizards (3), Male Human Rog1/Wiz5:** Medium Humanoid; HD 1d6+5d4+12; hp 33; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+4 *mage armor*, +2 Dex); Atks +2 melee (1d6 [crit 19-20], shortsword) or +5 ranged (1d6+1 [crit x3], shortbow); SA Sneak attack +1d6, 1 poisoned arrow; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +4.

Str 10, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 10, Cha 8.

*Skills*: Balance +6, Climb +4, Concentration +10, Disguise +3, Escape Artist +6, Hide +6, Jump +4, Knowledge: Arcana +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Read Lips +8, Search +8, Sense Motive +4, Spellcraft +12, Spot +7, Tumble +6. *Feats*: Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Scribe Scroll.

Equipment: Shortsword, shortbow, 20 arrows, 12 gp.

Arcane Spells (4/4/3/2): 0-level—*daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *open/close*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*expeditious retreat*, ~~*mage armor*~~, *magic missile*, ~~*true strike*~~; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—~~*invisibility*~~ x2, *levitate*; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*lightning bolt*, empowered *magic missile*.

**Ulijaz Thenumbrin, Male Human Rog3/Wiz5:** Medium Humanoid; HD 3d6+5d4+16; hp 45; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+4 *mage armor*, +2 Dex); Atks +6 melee (1d6+2 [crit 15-20], *strength sapper*, +2 *rapier*) or +7 ranged (1d6+1 [crit x3], shortbow); SA Sneak attack +2d6, 1 poisoned arrow; SQ Raven familiar, evasion, uncanny dodge (does not lose Dex bonus to Armor Class); AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +5.

Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 10, Cha 8.

*Skills*: Balance +8, Climb +6, Concentration +10, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +8, Hide +8, Jump +6, Knowledge: Arcana +12, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Read Lips +11, Search +11, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +13, Spot +9, Tumble +8. *Feats*: Extend Spell, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Scribe Scroll.

Equipment: Shortbow, 20 arrows, *strength sapper*, +2 *rapier*, 56 gp.

Arcane Spells (4/5/3/2): 0-level—*daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *open/close*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*expeditious retreat*, ~~*mage armor*~~, *magic missile* x2, ~~*true strike*~~; 2<sup>nd</sup>

level—*knock*, *Melf's acid arrow* x2; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—~~*fly*~~, ~~*extended invisibility*~~.

#### Tier 4:

When the party is first spotted, the strike force fighters and strike force mages all cast *true strike*. (Note: *true strike* does not have a somatic component, and so does not provoke an arcane spell failure check.) The party can roll a Listen check (DC 20) to hear the soft, brief chanting. Those who succeed roll initiative, and can act in the ambush round. After the ambush round, the remaining PCs may roll initiative and act.

In the ambush round, the foes use rapid shot to fire two or three arrows; the first arrow is coated in a sleep poison. (At first, Fortitude save, DC 15, or fall asleep for 1d6 minutes; one minute later, Fortitude save, DC 15, or fall asleep for 1d6 minutes.) If it is obvious who is carrying the lockbox, ALL shots will be targeted at that PC until he or she falls.

**Strike force fighters (3), Male Human Rog3/Wiz1/Ftr4:** Medium Humanoid; HD 3d6+1d4+4d10+16; hp 57; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+5 breastplate, +2 large steel shield, +2 Dex); Atks +11/+6 melee (1d8+6 [crit 19-20], longsword) or +9/+4 ranged (1d8+1 [crit x3], longbow); SA Sneak attack +2d6, 1 poisoned arrow; SQ Arcane spell failure 40%, evasion, uncanny dodge (does not lose Dex bonus to Armor Class); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +4.

Str 18, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

*Skills*: Appraise +3, Balance +0, Bluff +6, Climb +4, Concentration +6, Decipher Script +3, Disguise +1, Escape Artist +0, Gather Information +1, Hide +2, Innuendo +1, Jump +4, Knowledge: Arcana +3, Listen +6, Move Silently +2, Open Lock +2, Read Lips +6, Search +8, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +3, Spot +6, Tumble +2. *Feats*: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Rapid Shot, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Equipment: Breastplate, longsword, longbow, 20 arrows, large steel shield, 24 gp.

Arcane Spells (3/2): 0-level—*daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*expeditious retreat*, ~~*true strike*~~.

**Strike force wizards (3), Male Human Rog3/Wiz5:** Medium Humanoid; HD 3d6+5d4+16; hp 45; Init +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+4 *mage armor*, +3 Dex); Atks +4 melee (1d6 [crit 19-20], shortsword) or +7 ranged (1d6+1 [crit x3], shortbow); SA Sneak attack +2d6, 1 poisoned arrow; SQ Evasion,

uncanny dodge (does not lose Dex bonus to Armor Class); AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +5.

Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 10, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Balance +9, Climb +6, Concentration +10, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +9, Hide +9, Jump +6, Knowledge: Arcana +11, Listen +9, Move Silently +9, Read Lips +10, Search +10, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +12, Spot +9, Tumble +9. *Feats:* Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Scribe Scroll.

Equipment: shortsword, shortbow, 20 arrows, 24 gp.

Arcane Spells (4/4/3/2): 0-level—*daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *open/close*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*expeditious retreat*, ~~*mage armor*~~, *magic missile*, ~~*true strike*~~; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—~~*invisibility*~~ x2, *levitate*; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*lightning bolt*, empowered *magic missile*.

**Ulijaz Thenumbrin, Male Human Rog3/Ftr1/Wiz7:** Medium Humanoid; HD 3d6+1d10+7d4+22; hp 63; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+4 *mage armor*, +2 Dex); Atks +9/+4 melee (1d6+2 (crit 15-20), *strength sapper*, +2 *rapier*) or +9/+4 ranged (1d6+1 [crit x3], shortbow); SA Sneak attack +2d6, 1 poisoned arrow; SQ Raven familiar, evasion, uncanny dodge (does not lose Dex bonus to Armor Class); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +6.

Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 10, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Balance +8, Climb +10, Concentration +14, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +8, Hide +8, Jump +10, Knowledge: Arcana +16, Knowledge: Religion +9, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Read Lips +11, Search +11, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +17, Spot +9, Tumble +8. *Feats:* Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (rapier).

Equipment: Shortbow, 20 arrows, *strength sapper*, +2 *rapier*, 112 gp.

Arcane Spells (4/6/4/3/2): 0-level—*daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *open/close*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*expeditious retreat*, ~~*mage armor*~~, *magic missile* x3, ~~*true strike*~~; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—~~*invisibility*~~, *knock*, *Melf's acid arrow* x2; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—~~*fly*~~, *keen edge*, empowered *magic missile*; 4<sup>th</sup> level—*confusion*, *phantasmal killer*.

### Tier 5:

When the party is first spotted, the strike force fighters and strike force mages all cast *true strike*. (Note: *true strike* does not have a somatic component, and so does not provoke an arcane spell failure check.) The party can roll a Listen check (DC 20) to hear the soft, brief chanting. Those who succeed roll initiative, and can act in the ambush round. After the ambush round, the remaining PCs may roll initiative and act.

In the ambush round, the foes use rapid shot to fire two or three arrows; the first arrow is coated in a sleep poison. (At first, Fortitude save, DC 17, or fall asleep for 1d6 minutes and suffer 1d10 points of damage; one minute later, Fortitude save, DC 17, or fall asleep for 1d6 minutes and suffer 1d10 points of damage.) If it is obvious who is carrying the lockbox, ALL shots will be targeted at that PC until he or she falls.

**Strike force fighters (3), Male Human Rog3/Wiz1/Ftr6:** Medium Humanoid; HD 3d6+1d4+6d10+20; hp 73; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+5 breastplate, +2 large steel shield, +2 Dex); Atks +13/+8 melee (1d8+6 (crit 17-20), longsword) or +11/+6 ranged (1d8+1 [crit x3], longbow); SA Sneak attack +2d6, 1 poisoned arrow; SQ Arcane spell failure 40%, evasion, uncanny dodge (does not lose Dex bonus to Armor Class); AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +5.

Str 18, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

*Skills:* Appraise +3, Balance +0, Bluff +6, Climb +9, Concentration +6, Decipher Script +3, Disguise +1, Escape Artist +0, Gather Information +1, Hide +2, Innuendo +1, Jump +9, Knowledge: Arcana +3, Listen +6, Move Silently +2, Open Lock +2, Read Lips +6, Search +8, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +3, Spot +6, Tumble +2. *Feats:* Dodge, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Rapid Shot, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Equipment: Breastplate, longsword, longbow, 20 arrows, large steel shield, 36 gp.

Arcane Spells (3/2): 0-level—*daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*expeditious retreat*, ~~*true strike*~~.

**Strike force wizards (3), Male Human Rog3/Wiz7:** Medium Humanoid; HD 3d6+7d4+20; hp 55; Init +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+4 *mage armor*, +3 Dex); Atks +5 melee (1d6 [crit 19-20], shortsword) or +8 ranged (1d6+1 [crit x3], shortbow); SA Sneak attack +2d6, 1 poisoned arrow; SQ Evasion, uncanny dodge (does not lose Dex bonus to Armor Class); AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +6.

Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 10, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Balance +9, Climb +6, Concentration +14, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +9, Hide +9, Jump +6, Knowledge: Arcana +15, Knowledge: Religion +8, Listen +9, Move Silently +9, Read Lips +10, Search +10, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +16, Spot +9, Tumble +9. *Feats:* Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Scribe Scroll.

Equipment: shortsword, shortbow, 20 arrows, 36 gp.

Arcane Spells (4/5/4/3/2): 0-level—*daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *open/close*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*expeditious retreat*, ~~*mage armor*~~, *magic missile*, *shield*, ~~*true strike*~~; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*bull's strength*, *endurance*, ~~*invisibility*~~, *levitate*; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*greater magic weapon*, *lightning bolt*, empowered *magic missile*; 4<sup>th</sup> level—enlarged *lightning bolt*, *polymorph other*.

**Ulijaz Thenumbrin, Male Human Rog3/Ftr2/Wiz9:** Medium Humanoid; HD 3d6+2d10+9d4+28; hp 81; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+4 *mage armor*, +2 Dex); Atks +12/+7 melee (1d6+2 (crit 15-20), *strength sapper*, +2 *rapier*) or +9/+4 ranged (1d6+1 [crit x3], shortbow); SA Sneak attack +2d6, 1 poisoned arrow; SQ Raven familiar, evasion, uncanny dodge (does not lose Dex bonus to Armor Class); AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +9.

Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 21, Wis 10, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Balance +8, Climb +14, Concentration +18, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +8, Hide +8, Jump +14, Knowledge: Arcana +20, Knowledge: Religion +13, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Read Lips +11, Search +11, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +21, Spot +9, Tumble +8. *Feats:* Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Finesse (rapier), Weapon Focus (rapier).

Equipment: Shortbow, 20 arrows, *strength sapper*, +2 *rapier*, 168 gp.

Arcane Spells (4/6/5/4/3/2): 0-level—*daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *open/close*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*expeditious retreat*, ~~*mage armor*~~, *magic missile* x3, ~~*true strike*~~; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—~~*invisibility*~~, *knock*, *Melf's acid arrow* x2, *web*; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—~~*fly*~~, *hold person*, *keen edge*, empowered *magic missile*; 4<sup>th</sup> level—*confusion*, *enervation*, *phantasmal killer*; 5<sup>th</sup> level—*dominate person*, *teleport*.

### Tier 6:

When the party is first spotted, the strike force fighters and strike force mages all cast *true strike*. (Note: *true strike* does not have a somatic component, and so does not provoke an arcane spell failure check.) The party can roll a Listen check (DC 20) to hear the soft, brief chanting. Those who succeed roll initiative, and can act in the ambush round. After the ambush round, the remaining PCs may roll initiative and act.

In the ambush round, the foes use rapid shot to fire three or four arrows; the first arrow is coated in a sleep poison. (At first, Fortitude save, DC 19, or fall asleep for 1d6 minutes, suffer 1d3 points of temporary Strength damage, and suffer 1d10 points of damage; one minute later, Fortitude save, DC 19, or fall asleep for 1d6 minutes, suffer 1d3 points of temporary Strength damage, and suffer 1d10 points of damage.) If

it is obvious who is carrying the lockbox, ALL shots will be targeted at that PC until he or she falls.

**Strike force fighters (3), Male Human Rog3/Wiz1/Ftr8:** Medium Humanoid; HD 3d6+1d4+8d10+24; hp 89; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+5 breastplate, +2 large steel shield, +2 Dex); Atks +15/+10 melee (1d8+6 (crit 17-20), longsword) or +13/+8 ranged (1d8+1 [crit x3], longbow); SA Sneak attack +2d6, 1 poisoned arrow; SQ Arcane spell failure 40%, evasion, uncanny dodge (does not lose Dex bonus to Armor Class); AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +7.

Str 18, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

*Skills:* Appraise +3, Balance +0, Bluff +6, Climb +9, Concentration +6, Decipher Script +3, Disguise +1, Escape Artist +0, Gather Information +1, Hide +4, Innuendo +1, Jump +9, Knowledge: Arcana +3, Listen +6, Move Silently +3, Open Lock +2, Read Lips +6, Search +8, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +3, Spot +6, Tumble +4. *Feats:* Dodge, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Rapid Shot, Scribe Scroll, Sunder, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Equipment: Breastplate, longsword, longbow, 20 arrows, large steel shield, 48 gp.

Arcane Spells (3/2): 0-level—*daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*expeditious retreat*, ~~*true strike*~~.

**Strike force wizards (3), Male Human Rog6/Wiz7:** Medium Humanoid; HD 3d6+7d4+20; hp 55; Init +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+4 *mage armor*, +3 Dex); Atks +10/+5 melee (1d6 [crit 19-20], shortsword) or +10/+5 ranged (1d6+1 [crit x3], shortbow); SA Sneak attack +3d6, 1 poisoned arrow; SQ Evasion, uncanny dodge (does not lose Dex bonus to Armor Class, cannot be flanked); AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +7.

Str 10, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 10, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Balance +12, Climb +9, Concentration +14, Disguise +8, Escape Artist +12, Hide +12, Jump +9, Knowledge: Arcana +15, Knowledge: Religion +8, Listen +12, Move Silently +12, Read Lips +13, Search +13, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +16, Spot +12, Tumble +12. *Feats:* Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Finesse (shortsword).

Equipment: shortsword, shortbow, 20 arrows, 48 gp.

Arcane Spells (4/5/4/3/2): 0-level—*daze*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *open/close*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*expeditious retreat*, ~~*mage armor*~~, *magic missile*, *shield*, ~~*true strike*~~; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*bull's strength*, *endurance*, ~~*invisibility*~~,

*levitate*; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*greater magic weapon, lightning bolt*, empowered *magic missile*; 4<sup>th</sup> level—*enlarged lightning bolt, polymorph other*.

**Ulijaz Thenumbrin, Male Human Rog3/Ftr4/Wiz11:** Medium Humanoid; HD 3d6+4d10+11d4+36; hp 107; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+4 *mage armor*, +2 Dex); Atks +14/+9/+4 melee (1d6+4 (crit 12-20), *strength sapper*, +2 *rapier*) or +12/+7/+2 ranged (1d6+1 [crit x3], shortbow); SA Sneak attack +2d6, 1 poisoned arrow; SQ Raven familiar, evasion, uncanny dodge (does not lose Dex bonus to Armor Class); AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +11.

Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 22, Wis 10, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Alchemy +12, Balance +8, Climb +16, Concentration +18, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +8, Hide +8, Jump +16, Knowledge: Arcana +25, Knowledge: Religion +13, Listen +12, Move Silently +8, Read Lips +12, Search +12, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +26, Spot +12, Tumble +8. *Feats:* Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Extend Spell, Improved Critical (rapier), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Finesse (rapier), Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialization (rapier).

Equipment: Shortbow, 20 arrows, *strength sapper*, +2 *rapier*, 224 gp.

Arcane Spells (4/6/6/5/4/3/2): 0-level—*daze, detect magic, mage hand, open/close*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*expeditious retreat, ~~mage armor~~, magic missile x3, true strike*; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*invisibility, knock, Melf's acid arrow x2, Tasha's hideous laughter, web*; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*dispel magic, fly, hold person, keen edge*, empowered *magic missile*; 4<sup>th</sup> level—*confusion, enervation, extended haste, phantasmal killer*; 5<sup>th</sup> level—*dominate person, feeblemind, teleport*; 6<sup>th</sup> level—*disintegrate, mass haste*.

## Combat 2

The PCs chose to take a less obvious route. The leader of the strike force is not present; however, his raven familiar is flying overhead. If the party is obviously a band of adventurers, he will alert the strike force, and they will prepare. If the party goes in disguise, they may avoid combat. Note that the raven cannot see invisible creatures or use detect magic to examine unusual groups, so any disguise or invisibility that the party has set up is much more likely to work.

If the party gets involved in combat, they are ambushed in a setting almost identical to Combat 1 (similar building layout and positioning of foes). The combatants are identical to Combat 1, except that Ulijaz Thenumbrin is not present.

## Wrap-up

If the party survives, but the foes have absconded with the ineffable tome, **go to Scene 2c**.

If the party is all knocked out, held, killed, or otherwise incapacitated, **go to Scene 2d**.

If the party defeats or drives off the foes, keeping the ineffable tome, the City Watch will arrive. They will want to speak to the party, but if the PCs explain the urgency of their mission, the Watch will accept abbreviated reports and the PCs' promise to return later to file full reports. **Go to Scene 3a**.

## Scene 2c: The City Watch Does Something Right

Now, the party has lost the ineffable tome. It is possible that they will go immediately to the Wizards' Guild and proceed on to Dragon Falls. If that is the case, **go to Scene 3a**.

More likely, however, the party will want to inform someone of what happened, such as the City Watch or the Temple of Mystra. As they are doing this, they are interrupted by someone appropriate to the scene, and asked if they are the adventurers involved in a recent scuffle and theft. When they respond affirmatively, read on:

*He takes you to the front room, where a small contingent of City Watchmen is waiting. One rises and speaks, "I am Private Johnson of the Watch, and I think I have news of interest to you.*

*"I was on my morning patrol when I saw a suspicious man running (or flying) down the street. I asked, and then ordered him to stop, but he kept moving. I pursued, while calling out to another watchman to get backup. I chased this man right into a local boarding house, into a room. As I entered, I saw the man I was chasing, but also got just the glimpse of someone disappearing. I heard a popping sound.*

*"The man I chased showed no intention of surrendering, so I had to subdue him with my trusty billy club. All the while, I was hoping the other watchmen would be able to find me, because I knew this man was more skilled in battle than me. But, I swung a clean blow and connected solidly with the man's temple, and he slumped to the ground!"*

Private Johnson and the other watchmen will take the party to a watch station, where the man is being held in the cell. The party will recognize it as the attacker who got away.

A number of belongings are sitting on a table. They consist of whatever equipment the captured man was carrying (weapons, armor, coins, etc.) plus a note. The note reads, ***“Recover the tome at any cost. You must get it to Keldar’s shrine.”***

The note came from Varken Hallos, and was found in the apartment. It fell out of his backpack as he moved things around to put the lockbox inside of it. The remaining items came from the captured man.

If the captured man is Ulijaz Thenumbrin, he will be unwilling to talk. Under magical compulsion or if his thoughts are read, the following information can be learned:

- He was met late last night by Varken Hallos, a mage he knows to be tied with the Zhentarim
- He was offered (200/400/600/800) gold pieces up front, and thousands of coins later, to recruit skilled mercenaries to waylay a group of adventurers in the morning and recover a specific evil tome.
- He was to return the tome to an apartment rented by Varken Hallos.
- If the book was what Varken’s unnamed employer wanted, he would be greatly rewarded.

If the captured man is one of the thugs, he will be much more willing to talk, but he knows much less.

- He was met late last night by Ulijaz Thenumbrin.
- He and his friends were offered (12/24/36/48) gold pieces up front, and hundreds of coins later, to waylay a group of adventurers in the morning and recover a specific evil tome.
- Anyone who could get the tome was to return the tome to an apartment rented by a man he only knows by description (Varken Hallos).
- There were a total of 12 people recruited by Thenumbrin.

Keldar’s Shrine is not readily identifiable by the typical resident of Ravens Bluff. To identify it with Knowledge: History or Geography of the Vast would be a check against DC 25. Identifying it with Knowledge: History or Geography of Dragon Falls (specifically) would be a check against DC 15. It’s a reference to a shrine near Dragon Falls maintained by Keldar of the Forest, a cleric of Silvanus. He was among the original adventurers to slay the red dragon formerly inhabiting Dragon Falls.

If the party cannot figure out where Keldar’s Shrine is located (very likely), asking around, someone (at the temple of Mystra, the Wizards’ Guild, or elsewhere) will suggest seeing Percival Wellstone, a sage and historian of the Vast. **Go to Scene 2e.**

## Scene 2d: The City Watch Does Two Things Right

Now, the party has been knocked unconscious, killed, or otherwise subdued by the strike force. They are revived by a contingent of City Watchmen four rounds later. Party members who are dying have four chances to stabilize, and if still alive, will be tended to by the watchmen, who include a cleric of Tyr with several curing spells, and two others with Healing skill at +8.

After being revived, the watchmen will confirm that they were in the fight with the six or seven men. When they respond affirmatively, read on:

***He takes you to a city watch station, where two other City Watchmen are waiting. One rises and speaks, “I am Private Johnson of the Watch, and I think I have news of interest to you.***

***“I was on my morning patrol not far from the site of your battle when I saw a suspicious man running (or flying) down the street. I asked, and then ordered him to stop, but he kept moving. I pursued, while calling out to another watchman to get backup. I chased this man right into a local boarding house, into a room. As I entered, I saw the man I was chasing, but also got just the glimpse of someone disappearing. I heard a popping sound.***

***“The man I chased showed no intention of surrendering, so I had to subdue him with my trusty billy club. All the while, I was hoping the other watchmen would be able to find me, because I knew this man was more skilled in battle than me. But, I swung a clean blow and connected solidly with the man’s temple, and he slumped to the ground!”***

Private Johnson and the other watchmen will take the party to the back room of the station, where the captured man is in a cell. The party will recognize it as the attacker who got away, or as one of the attackers if they were all unconscious at the time.

A number of belongings are sitting on a table. They consist of whatever equipment the captured man was carrying (weapons, armor, coins, etc.) plus a note. The

note reads, *“Recover the tome at any cost. You must get it to Keldar’s shrine.”*

The note came from Varken Hallos, and was found in the apartment. It fell out of his backpack as he moved things around to put the lockbox inside of it. The remaining items came from the captured man.

If the captured man is Ulijaz Thenumbrin, he will be unwilling to talk. Under magical compulsion or if his thoughts are read, the following information can be learned:

- He was met late last night by Varken Hallos, a mage he knows to be tied with the Zhentarim
- He was offered (200/400/600/800) gold pieces up front, and thousands of coins later, to recruit skilled mercenaries to waylay a group of adventurers in the morning and recover a specific evil tome.
- He was to return the tome to an apartment rented by Varken Hallos.
- If the book was what Varken’s unnamed employer wanted, he would be greatly rewarded.

If the captured man is one of the thugs, he will be much more willing to talk, but he knows much less.

- He was met late last night by Ulijaz Thenumbrin.
- He and his friends were offered (12/24/36/48) gold pieces up front, and hundreds of coins later, to waylay a group of adventurers in the morning and recover a specific evil tome.
- Anyone who could get the tome was to return the tome to an apartment rented by a man he only knows by description (Varken Hallos).
- There were a total of 12 people recruited by Thenumbrin.

Keldar’s Shrine is not readily identifiable by the typical resident of Ravens Bluff. To identify it with Knowledge: History or Geography of the Vast would be a check against DC 25. Identifying it with Knowledge: History or Geography of Dragon Falls (specifically) would be a check against DC 15. It’s a reference to a shrine near Dragon Falls maintained by Keldar of the Forest, a cleric of Silvanus. He was among the original adventurers to slay the red dragon formerly inhabiting Dragon Falls.

If the party cannot figure out where Keldar’s Shrine is located (very likely), asking around, someone (at the temple of Mystra, the Wizards’ Guild, or elsewhere) will suggest seeing Percival Wellstone, a sage and historian of the Vast. **Go to Scene 2e.**

## Scene 2e: History Lesson

*Following the suggestion, you head to a small one-story home near the Temple District. Knocking, a well-dressed, bespectacled man opens the door. “Yes? How can I help you?”*

**Percival Wellstone, Male Human Exp5:** Percival is a very knowledgeable historian who has lived all his 47 years in the Vast. He speaks in a boring monotone, and will get off track and ramble on if the party doesn’t keep him focused.

When asked about the reference to Keldar’s Shrine, Wellstone will engage in a long discussion. When the party asks him to get to the point, he will look at the PCs like they don’t properly value scholarship and academic thoroughness, but will give them the information they seek.

*“Yes, Keldar, that is a name I recognize, a name intertwined with several other adventurers of note, adventurers now retired but responsible for a great deed that indelibly shaped the Vast. For what else could you call it to slay a dragon where a village now stands? If the dragon had not been slain, the village could not have been founded, well, founded by anyone with the slightest bit of sense. And then any map you look at would be different. Well, a map that covers this portion of the Vast.*

*“Oh, yes, Keldar, a good cleric of Silvanus he was, part of a powerful adventuring band. After all, they were powerful enough to defeat a dragon, as I have mentioned. This was a powerful red dragon, said to have chosen his lair to watch a dwarven mine said to be very successful. That was one impressive dragon, and I’m sure you’ve heard tales of the battle told by the bards of the city.*

*“So they did defeat the dragon, and on the site, founded an inn, called the Inn of the Dragon. Quite an appropriate name, you might agree. It’s a good inn, a fortified inn, solidly built of fir wood and stone. Definitely a good inn; it really dominates the village. Well, they don’t own the inn any more, and they’ve moved on, but Keldar still lives in the area of the village.*

*“The shrine is at the head of the falls, and Keldar still officially tends the shrine, but he’s not often there. Oh, the falls, yes, that’s Dragon Falls. So your note mentioning Keldar’s Shrine is referring to a place near the village of Dragon Falls, at the base of the falls.”*

Percival will not charge anything for this information, but he would certainly appreciate a few coins or an exchange of knowledge.

Now that the party knows that the villains are somewhere near Dragon Falls, they will probably seek to travel by teleportation circle, as originally planned.  
**Go to Scene 3c.**

If for some reason the party travels to Dragon Falls by conventional means, the Zhentarim agents are long gone. They can rescue Harris Redfire, but that's it. The ineffable tome is long gone, and Threll Whitebane is reveling in the power it provides him.

## Scene 3a: The Wizards' Guild: Just In Time

It is recommended that you now have every player roll a d20. Record the result, and what result that makes for a Spot check. However, don't tell the players that it is a Spot check.

The party arrives at the Wizards' Guild after winning a battle with the strike force. They still have the ineffable tome, and are ready to take it to Harris Redfire and have it neutralized.

*The morning is still as you arrive at the Wizards' Guild. After entering, the young mage at the desk asks, "And your business is...?"*

*After stating your business, he says, "Good, you're here. Argonethstor should just be finishing his preparations to cast the spell. I can't believe it, a visiting archmage is casting a spell for you! Of course, most of the deans are deeply involved in their own research..."*

*You are led up the stairs to a small antechamber, with a door on the other side of the room. A tall, thin mage, well into his late years, is sitting upon a leather sofa. On his lap is a tiny white dog resembling a dust rag with eyes. The dog growls at (PC with the box) and starts yipping.*

**Argonethstor, Male Human Wiz17 (Transmuter):** A student of Vangerdahast himself, he has long put his adventuring days behind him and is concentrating on his studies. He studies magic, but is even more interested in studying brewing. The primary reason for him to come to Ravens Bluff is to learn all he can about the brewing techniques of the dwarven kingdoms. He is distrustful of people in general, but in particular people who Fluff doesn't like.

**Fluff, Female Dog Annoyance:** She is just one of those irritating dogs that foolishly growls, yips, and barks at creatures big enough to squash her. She growls in particular at anyone carrying a magic item that radiates evil, and the *book of vile darkness* is really setting her off!

*"Are you the group? Well, I doubt the wizards here would have brought you to me if you weren't in need of this teleportation, so I guess I can trust you. I am Argonethstor. Fluff, stop growling at him!"*

*He rubs his throat. "This spell will take a while to cast. Do any of you have a good brew with which I can soothe my throat?"*

Given a particularly good brew, he will start to discuss the particulars of the brew, especially with a dwarf PC. However, the party will probably encourage him to start the spell.

*Argonethstor leads you through the other door, which opens into a circular room. For ten minutes, Argonethstor delicately spreads amber dust in an ever-increasing circle while chanting rhythmic tones. His chanting is not loud enough to drown out the barking of his dog, though.*

*Finally, he looks up. "It is done. The spell will take you, without chance of error, to the location Lord of Mystery D'Marke desires. Please, step through, and be careful. It can be a disorienting experience."*

*As (PC with the box) steps through, Fluff suddenly jumps at him/her! Fortunately, Argonethstor casts a spell, catching Fluff in midair and preventing her from joining your adventure.*

Go to Scene 4a.

## Scene 3b: The Wizards' Guild: A Little Early

It is recommended that you now have every player roll a d20. Record the result, and what result that makes for a Spot check. However, don't tell the players that it is a Spot check.

The party arrives at the Wizards' Guild without incident. Perhaps they teleported here, which would make them very early. Perhaps they traveled in disguise, or maybe they flew. In any case, they have not faced battle in the streets of Ravens Bluff. They may be feeling nervous now....

*The morning is still as you teleport/arrive at the Wizards' Guild. Eight bells is still some time off. After entering, the young mage at the desk asks, "And your business is...?"*

*After stating your business, he says, "Oh, you're here early. Argonethesor is still finishing his preparations to cast the spell. I can't believe it, a visiting archmage is casting a spell for you! Of course, most of the deans are deeply involved in their own research..."*

If the party is feeling paranoid, expecting a fight, let them make preparations. Ask for their positions in a 40 foot by 30 foot room filled with chairs. However, no one is stupid enough to attack the Wizards' Guild.

*After waiting until eight bells, you are led up the stairs to a small antechamber, with a door on the other side of the room. A tall, thin mage, well into his late years, is sitting upon a leather sofa. On his lap is a tiny white dog resembling a dust rag with eyes. The dog growls at (PC with the box) and starts yipping.*

**Argonethesor, Male Human Wiz17 (Transmuter):** A student of Vangerdahast himself, he has long put his adventuring days behind him and is concentrating on his studies. He studies magic, but is even more interested in studying brewing. The primary reason for him to come to Ravens Bluff is to learn all he can about the brewing techniques of the dwarven kingdoms. He is distrustful of people in general, but in particular people who Fluff doesn't like.

**Fluff, Female Dog Annoyance:** She is just one of those irritating dogs that foolishly growls, yips, and barks at creatures big enough to squash her. She growls in particular at anyone carrying a magic item that radiates evil, and the *book of vile darkness* is really setting her off!

*"Are you the group? Well, I doubt the wizards here would have brought you to me if you weren't in need of this teleportation, so I guess I can trust you. I am Argonethesor. Fluff, stop growling at him!"*

*He rubs his throat. "This spell will take a while to cast. Do any of you have a good brew with which I can soothe my throat?"*

Given a particularly good brew, he will start to discuss the particulars of the brew, especially with a dwarf PC. However, the party will probably encourage him to start the spell.

*Argonethesor leads you through the other door, which opens into a circular room. For ten minutes,*

*Argonethesor delicately spreads amber dust in an ever-increasing circle while chanting rhythmic tones. His chanting is not loud enough to drown out the barking of his dog, though.*

*Finally, he looks up. "It is done. The spell will take you, without chance of error, to the location Lord of Mystery D'Marke desires. Please, step through, and be careful. It can be a disorienting experience."*

*As (PC with the box) steps through, Fluff suddenly jumps at him/her! Fortunately, Argonethesor casts a spell, catching Fluff in midair and preventing her from joining your adventure.*

Go to Scene 4a.

## Scene 3c: The Wizards' Guild: A Little Late

The party has lost the ineffable tome in the battle with the strike force. Following leads that place the likely culprits in Dragon Falls, they are traveling to Harris Redfire's home anyway. Based on the amount of time it took to deal with the City Watch and get the information out of Percival Wellstone, the party may be a little late, or more than half an hour past eight bells.

*The morning is still as you arrive at the Wizards' Guild. Eight bells has already past. After entering, the young mage at the desk asks, "And your business is...?"*

*After stating your business, he says, "Oh, you're finally here! Argonethesor is bound to be finished with his preparations to cast the spell. I can't believe it, a visiting archmage is casting a spell for you, and you show up late! Well, I'm sure you have a good reason, and there's no time to bring it up here...."*

*You are quickly led up the stairs to a small antechamber, with a door on the other side of the room. A tall, thin mage, well into his late years, is sitting upon a leather sofa. On his lap is a tiny white dog resembling a dust rag with eyes. (The dog growls at (PC with an evil item) and starts yipping.)*

**Argonethesor, Male Human Wiz17 (Transmuter):** A student of Vangerdahast himself, he has long put his adventuring days behind him and is concentrating on his studies. He studies magic, but is even more interested in studying brewing. The primary reason for him to come to Ravens Bluff is to learn all he can about the brewing techniques of the dwarven kingdoms. He is distrustful of people in general, but in particular people who Fluff doesn't like.

**Fluff, Female Dog Annoyance:** She is just one of those irritating dogs that foolishly growls, yips, and barks at creatures big enough to squash her. She growls in particular at anyone carrying a magic item that radiates evil.

*“Are you the group? Well, I doubt the wizards here would have brought you to me if you weren’t in need of this teleportation, so I guess I can trust you. But where were you? I’m busy with my own research, you know. I am Argonethesor. (Fluff, stop growling at him!)”*

*He rubs his throat. “This spell will take a while to cast, and I should have been done with the casting by now. Do any of you have a good brew with which I can soothe my throat?”*

Given a particularly good brew, he will start to discuss the particulars of the brew, especially with a dwarf PC. However, the party will probably encourage him to start the spell.

*Argonethesor leads you through the other door, which opens into a circular room. For ten minutes, Argonethesor delicately spreads amber dust in an ever-increasing circle while chanting rhythmic tones. His chanting is not loud enough to drown out the barking of his dog, though.*

*Finally, he looks up. “It is done. The spell will take you, without chance of error, to the location Lord of Mystery D’Marke desires. Please, step through, and be careful. It can be a disorienting experience.”*

*(As (PC with an evil item) steps through, Fluff suddenly jumps at him/her! Fortunately, Argonethesor casts a spell, catching Fluff in midair and preventing her from joining your adventure.)*

Go to Scene 4b.

## Scene 4a: The Exchange (?)

*As you come out of the teleport, into a large living room filled with books, you see a middle-aged human standing, reading one of the books. Startled, he drops the book, almost knocking over one of the stacks of books. Fortunately, that stack doesn’t join the several others spilled onto the floor.*

*The man straightens his midnight-blue robes as he approaches you. “You must be the folks I was expecting. Ummm... you have something for me, don’t you?”*

Allow the party to hand over the scroll.

*As the man opens the scroll, a mouth takes shape, only long enough to speak the phrase “By the Lady of Mysteries.” The man smiles and extends his hand. “I am Harris Redfire of Mystra. I am very glad you made it here safely. I hope the... package is safe, too.”*

At this point, take any clerics of Mystra aside and inform them that Harris is not wearing a skullcap or any type of headgear. All clerics of Mystra wear headgear as a required part of their priestly garb.

If the exchange continues, read on:

*He shudders briefly as he takes the package. “The Realms will be much safer with this foul book out of anyone’s reach. Now, as for your payment...” He takes a small black velvet pouch out of his pocket and hands it to you. “Your payment, as promised.”*

He gives them the entire contents of the pouch, which holds nine rubies. This payment is not the agreed-upon payment of one ruby per PC. If questioned about it, he will say *“Well... ummm... you can have them. They... ahh... don’t meet my needs as spell components.”*

If the exchange continues, read on:

*“Now, I must perform the rituals to conceal this tome. It is a delicate procedure, and I cannot be disturbed. Now, if you will excuse me, I need to go into my casting chamber.”*

### What happens now?

There are a lot of different things that can happen in this scene.

- The party trusts Redfire. They let him go into the chamber, shut the door, and start casting. Seconds later, they hear an audible “pop” as he teleports away with the tome.
- The party wants to watch Redfire perform the ritual. He will object to it, but if the party seems concerned about his safety (expecting an attack, for example) he won’t mind too much. He will begin casting. Seconds later, he vanishes with an audible “pop.” The party can’t interrupt his spell by attacking him (he wouldn’t cast with a party member pointing a ready weapon at him). However, if one of the spellcasters states an intention to observe his spellcasting, allow a normal Spellcraft check as per the counterspell rules. If that spellcaster makes the check and has the teleport spell prepared or able to be cast, he can counterspell the teleport. The next step would likely be combat.

- The party starts to fan out, staking out strategic positions in the event the house is attacked. That's fine; nothing like that will happen. However, they may spot something out of place: a broken arrow and arrowhead coated in sleep poison. The DC to Spot this item is raised to 25 if they're looking for signs of a coming attack instead of a past attack.
- The party is distrustful of Redfire and doesn't give him the lockbox. He will do his best to convince the party, but if pressed, combat will ensue.

The following clues will give observant parties a hint that Harris Redfire is not who he says he is:

- He is not wearing any headgear, a requirement of the garb of clerics of Mystra
- He pays the party nine rubies, instead of the agreed-upon one ruby per person.
- A sizable number of books are spilled over the floor; D'Marke mentioned that the books were always neatly stacked.
- If the party looks into the casting chamber, they may notice a portrait showing Redfire, D'Marke, and other clerics of Mystra. This may be used as the basis for a contested check of the PC's Spot skill versus Darahanis' disguise skill. There is a -4 circumstance penalty to the Spot check because comparing against the portrait is not as accurate as seeing the man in person.
- Use of the Sense Motive skill might allow a PC to determine that he is acting unusual. There will be a contested check against Darahanis' Bluff skill.
- Any of a number of spells would reveal either his disguise or lead the party to suspect he is disguised. These include, but are not limited to, *detect magic* (transmutation and conjuration magic on him), *discern lies*, *zone of truth*, *true seeing*, *detect thoughts*, and *detect evil*. He will question any obvious spellcasting with a mixture of surprise and disgust.

### Combat

If it comes to combat, and if the iron lockbox containing the ineffable tome is visible, "Harris Redfire" (Allamon Darahanis) will begin by throwing a rust-colored gem to the ground, summoning a rust monster. This rust monster is under the complete control of the user of the gem, Darahanis, and he has the rust monster attack the iron lockbox first. Afterwards, the creature attacks the armor of any tough-looking fighter.

Darahanis attempts to do damage to the party, but once he looks overwhelmed, he will try to teleport back to the lair.

### All Tiers:

**Rust Monster:** Medium Aberration; HD 5d8+5; hp 27; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 18 (+3 Dex, +5 natural); Atks +3 melee (rust, antennae) and -2 melee (1d3, bite); SA Rust; SQ Scent; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5.

Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Listen +9, Spot +9. *Feats:* Alertness.

*SA: Rust*—A rust monster that makes a successful touch attack with its antennae causes the target metal to corrode, falling to pieces and becoming useless immediately. The size of the object is immaterial. Enchanted metal items must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 20) or be dissolved.

*SQ: Scent*—Can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

### Tiers 3-4:

**Allamon Darahanis, Male Human Clr1 (Cyric)/Wiz9:** Medium Humanoid; HD 1d8+9d4+3; hp 38; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 *mage armor*); Atks +3 melee (1d4-1 [crit 19-20], dagger); AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +10.

Str 8, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 14.

*Skills:* Alchemy +10, Bluff +8, Concentration +9, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +8, Heal +6, Knowledge: Arcana +10, Knowledge: Religion +14, Listen +6, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +14, Spot +6. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Toughness.

*Equipment:* Dagger, unholy symbol of Cyric, 21 gp, topaz of 100 gp value (former spell-storing gem), bag of 9 rubies of 500 gp value, blue robes and holy symbol of Mystra ("borrowed" from Harris Redfire).

*Domains:* Death, Evil (Domain spells in bold.)

*Divine Spells (3/2):* 0-level—*cure minor wounds* x2, *detect magic*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*bane*, *protection from good*, *shield of faith*.

*Arcane Spells (4/6/5/4/3/2):* 0-level—*daze*, *detect magic*, *flare*, *open/close*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*mage armor*, *magic missile* x3, *reduce*, *shield*; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*alter self*, *knock*, *Melf's acid arrow* x2, *Tasha's hideous laughter*; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*dispel magic*, *hold person*, *invisibility sphere* x2; 4<sup>th</sup> level—*Evard's black tentacles*, *extended haste*, *polymorph other*; 5<sup>th</sup> level—*passwall*, *teleport*.

### Tiers 5-6:

**Allamon Darahanis, Male Human Clr1 (Cyric)/Wiz11:** Medium Humanoid; HD 1d8+11d4+6; hp 47; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 *mage armor*); Atks +4 melee (1d4-1 [crit 19-20],

dagger); SA nil; SQ nil; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +11.

Str 8, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 21, Wis 14, Cha 14.

*Skills:* Alchemy +10, Bluff +10, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +10, Heal +6, Knowledge: Arcana +10, Knowledge: Religion +14, Listen +6, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +18, Spot +6. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Toughness x2.

*Equipment:* Dagger, unholy symbol of Cyric, 42 gp, topaz of 100 gp value (former spell-storing gem), bag of 9 rubies of 500 gp value, blue robes and holy symbol of Mystra (“borrowed” from Harris Redfire).

*Domains:* Death, Evil (Domain spells in bold.)

*Divine Spells (3/2):* 0-level—*cure minor wounds* x2, *detect magic*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*bane*, *protection from good*, *shield of faith*.

*Arcane Spells (4/6/5/5/4/3/1):* 0-level—*daze*, *detect magic*, *flare*, *open/close*; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*mage armor*, *magic missile* x3, *reduce*, *shield*; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*alter self*, *knock*, *Melf’s acid arrow* x2, *Tasha’s hideous laughter*; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*dispel magic*, *dispel magic*, *hold person*, *invisibility sphere* x2; 4<sup>th</sup> level—*Evard’s black tentacles*, *extended haste*, *empowered Melf’s acid arrow*, *polymorph other*; 5<sup>th</sup> level—*quicken magic missile*, *passwall*, *teleport*; 6<sup>th</sup> level—*Otiluke’s freezing sphere*.

### Where’d That Ineffable Tome Go?

A unique problem occurs if the rust monster was successfully summoned, and it dissolved the iron lockbox holding the ineffable tome. The *book of vile darkness* drops to the ground, and with books all around in every room of Redfire’s home, it magically blends in with all the other books. Its location also shifts within the room. There are 199 books in the living room, and 29 books in each other room.

After the combat, the party will have to find a way to identify which book is the ineffable tome. It won’t be obvious by looking. Detect spells reveal a uniform amount of magic or evil over all books in the room. A pair of fireplace tongs will work if the PCs don’t want to touch any book.

Ways that can work to find the ineffable tome:

- The hard way. “Touch... touch... touch... touch—OUCH!!!” Touching a *book of vile darkness* does 5d6 points of damage to good PCs, 5d4 points of damage to neutral PCs (plus neutral PCs make a Fortitude save, DC 13, or become evil). PCs with Use Magical Device may attempt to emulate an evil alignment (DC 30) to avoid this effect.

- Move books to separate locations, and see which one still radiates magic and evil (a very palpable aura of evil).
- Powerful divination magic like *true seeing* will see through the illusion effect.

### Questioning Darahanis

Darahanis will be unwilling to talk if he is captured alive. He is very afraid of the wrath of Threll Whitebane. Standard interrogation with mind-reading techniques will get images of a cave, a lush green grove, but no words or other quick and easy identifiers. They may also see scenes of six other men.

### Searching the House

After the battle, or after Darahanis absconds with the ineffable tome, the Redfire home will again be still. At this point, the PCs will likely search the place, looking for clues as to what happened. The PCs can find the following items with a successful Search check:

- DC 5: A small slate on the corner of the desk in the bedroom. Chalked onto the slate are the words “8 bells,” “Get scroll,” “Pay w/ rubies,” and “RB Temple.” The writing matches Redfire’s handwriting; the slate served as a reminder for Redfire of events for the next day.
- DC 15: A broken arrow and arrowhead coated in sleep poison (DC 20 to identify).
- DC 20: A small fired clay tablet under the pillow on Redfire’s bed in his bedroom. The tablet illustrates the face of a cliff or other rocky surface, with a black ink smudge near the base of the cliff. (This item was sculpted by one of the warriors, who didn’t have much to do for some time. It is the cliff face viewed from Keldar’s Shrine, and the ink smudge was a reminder to him as to the location of the secret entrance. Displaced from his pack as he went rummaging for manacles, he set it under the pillow and forgot about it.)
- DC 30: A parchment recently glued into one of the books in Redfire’s casting chamber (to hide it). This is a message magically transported to Redfire’s home from the temple of Mystra, and matches D’Marke’s handwriting. **Pass out Players’ Handout 2.**

After the party has done some searching, they will likely try to find a trail. When they do so, or if they dawdle too long in the house, the militia arrives from Dragon Falls.

If the PCs captured or killed Darahanis, **go to Scene 5a**. If the PCs let Darahanis escape, **go to Scene 5b**.

## Scene 4b: All Quiet in Redfire's Home

*You come out of the teleport, into a large living room filled with books. Stacks of books are everywhere, and several others are spilled onto the floor.*

*The house is quiet. Now, where is Harris Redfire?*

### Searching the House

At this point, the PCs will likely search the house, looking for clues as to what happened. The PCs can find the following items with a successful Search check:

- DC 5: A small slate on the corner of the desk in the bedroom. Chalked onto the slate are the words “8 bells,” “Get scroll,” “Pay w/ rubies,” and “RB Temple.” The writing matches Redfire’s handwriting; the slate served as a reminder for Redfire of events for the next day.
- DC 15: A broken arrow and arrowhead coated in sleep poison (DC 20 to identify).
- DC 20: A small fired clay tablet under the pillow on Redfire’s bed in his bedroom. The tablet illustrates the face of a cliff or other rocky surface, with a black ink smudge near the base of the cliff. (This item was sculpted by one of the warriors, who didn’t have much to do for some time. It is the cliff face viewed from Keldar’s Shrine, and the ink smudge was a reminder to him as to the location of the secret entrance. Displaced from his pack as he went rummaging for manacles, he set it under the pillow and forgot about it.)
- DC 30: A parchment recently glued into one of the books in Redfire’s casting chamber (to hide it). This is a message magically transported to Redfire’s home from the temple of Mystra, and matches D’Marke’s handwriting. **Pass out Players’ Handout 2.**

After the party has done some searching, they will likely try to find a trail. When they do so, or if they dawdle too long in the house, the militia arrives from Dragon Falls. If they were seriously delayed while in Ravens Bluff, the militia arrives during their search. **Go to Scene 5b.**

## Scene 5a: Militia Time (Friendly)

The PCs have captured or killed Darahanis and now seek to trace him to his lair.

*You come out of the cleric’s home, and spot a band of six armed warriors approaching slowly. Each bears a tabard with the same insignia. As they approach, they eye you carefully.*

**Warriors (6), Male Human Ftr5:** Stats should be unimportant, but if necessary, use the stats for the Tier 3 fighters in Scene 8.

The insignia is the symbol of Dragon Falls. The warriors are part of the force that protects Dragon Falls, and have gathered to investigate the brief sound of battle heard at Redfire’s home. They approach in a defensive manner, and IN NO WAY do they appear to be itching to attack the party.

*“Hold there, strangers,” the lead warrior demands. “When did you get here, and why are you here?”*

The men are trying to determine what the PCs had to do with the struggle of about 30 minutes earlier (and possibly the one just moments earlier, if there was a battle between Darahanis and the party). Once they reveal the existence of the impostor, the militia men will become noticeably friendlier.

*“Ah, I just knew in my gut that you were good folk. Name’s Johann. I’m leader of this group, and we’re here to figure out why we heard the sounds of a loud boom and a struggle. So what does this man have to do with it?”*

The course of the conversation will of course depend on many details, such as whether or not Darahanis’ *alter self* spell has ended. Johann and his men know Redfire fairly well, and will be able to recognize that something just isn’t right with the impostor Darahanis.

Information they can relate:

- About half an hour ago, we heard a sudden noise, like an explosion, coming from Redfire’s home. There were a couple of other sounds, and a flash of light, but then nothing.
- It was Tel here who heard the noise. He couldn’t see anything else from where he stood, just outside town.
- We had to take some time to gather men and equip ourselves. We thought trouble could be waiting for us.
- Harris Redfire is a good man. He keeps mostly to himself, and comes to town mostly when he needs something for his experiments. He’s helped us out when a villager has needed curing or healing.
- We don’t think he has any enemies.

- We're not sure what he's researching. It's really not our business.
- We can't say there have been any unusual visitors, or strange happenings recently.
- That clay tablet? Not sure what it is. Looks like the picture of a cliff or something. Kala might be able to identify it better.
- Kala? Oh, she's lived here forever. She knows all the local landmarks, the natives, the roads, the local herbs, everything. But she's not very friendly....

The militia men will be happy to deal with Darahanis.

If the party wants to ask Kala about the clay tablet, **go to Scene 6**. If the party wants to follow the trail left by the kidnapers (Track skill, DC 13), **go to Scene 7**.

## Scene 5b: Militia Time (Cautious)

The PCs have arrived at Harris Redfire's home just after he was kidnapped. Needless to say, that doesn't look good....

*You come out of the cleric's home, and spot a band of six armed warriors approaching slowly. Each bears a tabard with the same insignia. As they approach, they eye you carefully.*

**Warriors (6), Male Human Ftr5:** Stats should be unimportant, but if necessary, use the stats for the Tier 3 fighters in Scene 8.

The insignia is the symbol of Dragon Falls. The warriors are part of the force that protects Dragon Falls, and have gathered to investigate the brief sound of battle heard at Redfire's home. They approach in a defensive manner, and IN NO WAY do they appear to be itching to attack the party.

*"Hold there, strangers," the lead warrior demands. "When did you get here, and why are you here?"*

The men are trying to determine what the PCs had to do with the struggle of about 30 minutes earlier. Unfortunately, he's gone, and the PCs look like a band powerful enough to harm him.

The warriors will grill the PCs as to their names, affiliations, and reasons for being here. They are suspicious, but not stupid. For example, a cleric of a lawful good god who role-plays his beliefs well is likely

to be believed. Try to create a tense role-playing exchange without making the players feel like they're talking to a wall. Johann trusts his instincts, and feels in his gut that the PCs are good people, unless they completely screw up and make themselves look guilty. (If they do, they will ask the PCs to turn themselves in to their custody while a local priest capable of casting *discern lies* is brought in, which will take a day.)

*"Ah, I just knew in my gut that you were good folk. Name's Johann. I'm leader of this group, and we're here to figure out why we heard the sounds of a loud boom and a struggle. So how did you get involved with Harris Redfire?"*

Information they can relate:

- About half an hour ago, we heard a sudden noise, like an explosion, coming from Redfire's home. There were a couple of other sounds, and a flash of light, but then nothing.
- It was Tel here who heard the noise. He couldn't see anything else from where he stood, just outside town.
- We had to take some time to gather men and equip ourselves. We thought trouble could be waiting for us.
- Harris Redfire is a good man. He keeps mostly to himself, and comes to town mostly when he needs something for his experiments. He's helped us out when a villager has needed curing or healing.
- We don't think he has any enemies.
- We're not sure what he's researching. It's really not our business.
- We can't say there have been any unusual visitors, or strange happenings recently.
- Keldar's shrine? You know, Keldar, one of the slayers of the dragon? He tends a small shrine near the falls. Well, not really tends. He's not around much. But it still bears his name.
- That clay tablet? Not sure what it is. Looks like the picture of a cliff or something. Kala might be able to identify it better.
- Kala? Oh, she's lived here forever. She knows all the local landmarks, the natives, the roads, the local herbs, everything. But she's not very friendly....

If the party wants to ask Kala about the clay tablet or Keldar's Shrine, **go to Scene 6**. If the party wants to follow the trail left by the kidnapers (Track skill, DC 13) or go directly to Keldar's Shrine (Johann can point the party in the right direction), **go to Scene 7**.

## Scene 6: Wise Old One

The PCs have decided to ask Kala, a local wise woman, for assistance. They don't know just how eccentric and crotchety she is.

*A tall fence surrounds a small stone-and-wood home at one corner of Dragon Falls. The yard beyond is overgrown with weeds and dandelions. The shutters on the home are shut tight.*

*When you knock on the door, the first thing you hear is "GO AWAY!" After a little more knocking, you hear the sound of a cat howling in pain, and shuffling footsteps. The door is finally opened by a thin old human woman wearing a knitted afghan and patched dress. Your senses are assaulted by the smell of lavender. She looks derisively in your direction. "What do you want?"*

After the PCs introduce themselves and ask for some assistance, Kala grudgingly accepts.

*"Fine, come in," she says unenthusiastically, sighing heavily. "Now don't you disturb my knitting!" she warns you. The problem is, two couches and three chairs are covered with finished and half-finished knitting projects. The only available chair is the one into which she eases herself.*

**Kala, Female Human Exp4:** She is crotchety as all heck, not personable, withdrawn, thinks ill of most people. Her voice is scratchy and irritating.

The party had better not expect hospitality. In fact, Kala will expect hospitality from the PCs in exchange for helping them. Some of her demands include:

- It's hot in here. You boy, come here and fan me. (And no, she won't take off her afghan.)
- You, come here and rub my poor, tired feet.
- You there, come here and fluff my pillow. I'm not comfortable. I don't want to talk until I'm comfortable.
- My throat is dry. Lousy heat. You, go fetch me a mug of cider from the cellar. (The person who fetches it has to make a decision: did she mean the barrel of apple cider or the jug of hard cider? She wants apple cider.)

Eventually, she will give the PCs the information they need. She doesn't know anything about the plot itself, just the environs of Dragon Falls.

The clay tablet:

*"Bring that closer. I can't see that well, you know. Oh, that. Don't you recognize the contours of the*

*rock. Youngsters these days, not paying any attention.... That's the cliff to the left of the falls. That's your left when you're facing the falls, mind you! That smudge? Long ago, when some of you were still whining babies, there used to be a cave there. Well, not exactly there, but near there. Maybe someone closed it up. I don't know for sure. With these old bones, I don't get out as much as I used to...."*

Keldar's Shrine:

*"Yes, of course I know where that is. Everyone here knows that place, but I know what it looked like before Keldar even showed up. Yeah, back then, before the dragon and the town and everything, it was a nice grove of trees. Good fertile land, you know. Well, Keldar took good care of it for a while, and like a typical irresponsible adventurer, let it go. I haven't been there in a while. With these old bones, I don't get out as much as I used to...."*

Who is Keldar?

*"Keldar and some other adventurers killed a dragon. What, where did you think Dragon Falls got its name? Why, I was here when it was just a few farmers near the river, no town at all!*

*"Keldar is a cleric of Silvanus, and he and a bunch of other adventurers dispatched that foul red dragon. I swear that dragon stole old Bessie, my prize milk cow! Anyway, that was a long time ago. Old Bessie wouldn't be around any more anyway...."*

Once the party gets the information from Kala and tires of her behavior, they will probably want to be on the way to the falls. **Go to Scene 7.**

## Scene 7: Watched like a Hawk

### Traveling

The party is on its way to meet the villains. How they are traveling will be important in the combat to come. Get an idea of how fast the party is traveling. Are they walking? Hustling? Get a marching order, just to make them nervous.

The distance to the enemies' lair is approximately one mile. Unencumbered humans (30 feet movement rate) can walk this distance in about twenty minutes. See p. 143 in the *Player's Handbook* to see how long parties will take to reach the lair. If the party is tracking, they move at half speed.

The time at which the party reaches the foes is important, as it determines whether or not the *invisibility sphere* is still in effect.

*After walking about a mile (1.6 km), you find yourself in a pleasant grove of trees. Plants of many varieties grow lush and green here. Insects buzz around you, and occasionally you spy a small animal dart into the underbrush as you approach. The air is a bit moist, perhaps because of the nearby falls, whose roar is clearly audible from here. Life thrives here.*

### The Attacker

Select a target for the hawk to attack. First choice is a familiar, second choice is any small animal companion of a PC, especially a chicken. If no PC has a suitable animal companion, the hawk attacks a rabbit nearby.

The Spot check to notice the hawk's attack is DC 25, DC 15 if a PC is specifically watching the skies as they travel.

*All of the sudden, a bird swoops down at (target)! (Target) lunges out of the way of its claws. As the bird, a hawk, banks and rises in the air, you could swear it said "Noooo!" as it missed!*

Assuming the party doesn't attack the hawk, it will circle around, and then settle in the branch of a nearby tree. If the party is friendly (particularly, if they offer the hawk meat, which it will call "Food"), they can interact with him.

Hawk (his name for himself) has hunted in this grove all its life, and doesn't know life outside the grove. Recently, he has been hungry, but he looks healthier than most hawks.

Information Hawk can tell the party:

- I live here.
- I hunt here.
- There was always food, much food, with each warm time.
- Not this warm time.
- Now, there are bad sounds from the rocks.
- Much food has left here.
- Not as much food to eat.
- The water tastes bad.
- I have seen predators who look like you.
- I have seen many predators.
- They come out of the rock to hunt.
- This light, they came out after light, then went back in.
- Many left, many went back in.

If a PC is interested in befriending Hawk, and can promise him food and good hunting, he will follow that PC. He will not go in the cave right now.

**Hawk:** Tiny Animal; HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 10 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); AC 17 (+2 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural); Atks +5 melee (1d4-2, claws); AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +2.

Str 6, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 6.

*Skills:* Listen +6, Spot +6 (+14 in daylight). *Feats:* Weapon Finesse (claws).

This animal, a male red-tailed hawk who calls himself Hawk, has somehow gained unusual intelligence and the ability to speak Common. Perhaps it was the byproduct of a magical experiment or the intervention of an agent of a divine power; Hawk does not know and has no reason to care. He speaks in short and simple phrases, having the mindset of a hunter concerned only with his own survival.

## Scene 8: Into the Cave

Keep track of how much time the PCs spend searching and investigating.

*Finally, you see the falls through the trees. It's a beautiful sight, but unfortunately, you're not hear to go sightseeing. Walking a bit to the left of the falls, you see a large boulder, separated from the cliff face and pushed aside. A cave beckons beyond the rock.*

(See DM's Aid 2 for a map of the lair.)

The party may enter through the cave. If they have the clay tablet and compare it closely to the cliff face, they will see the ink stain is not really where the cave entrance is, but a bit up and to the right. There is a secret entrance about twenty feet up into the cliff. The secret door is well concealed, and hard to discover (Search check, DC 20). It can be reached with a reasonably difficult climb (Climb check, DC 15). Practically speaking, a PC would have to be flying or levitating to search for the door.

### The Door

*Cautiously, you enter the cave, which opens into a natural passage. The passage is silent, except for the echoing of your own footsteps. The passage isn't dusty, and shows signs of recent passage. Finally, it ends in a clearly manmade stone wall and wooden door.*

This door and frame was *fabricated* by Yancey Garamor.

The door's hinges are on the outside, on the left. The door handle is on the right, of course. There are two traps associated with the door, which is locked and shut. One is a poisoned needle in the lock, which can be set off by trying the door handle or fidgeting with the lock (and failing a Disable Device check). The second is a poisoned crossbow bolt. At the base of the door, at right, there is a thin wire. If pulled (as if by opening the door), a crossbow to the PCs' left fires, targeting the square in front of the door. A PC who opens the door and hides behind it as it is opened is a prime target for the crossbow bolt that is fired.

There is a third trick to the door. A string leading from the door (near the lock) to the frame looks like a trap, but isn't. It is set up to look like it will pull and trigger something if the door is opened. However, it triggers nothing. The string is comparatively easy to find (Search check, DC 15) and can be disabled with any roll. (Roll the check in secret.)

### Tier 3:

**Poisoned needle trap:** +8 ranged (1/x2 crit) + poison (Fort save to resist (DC 16); 1d2 Con/1d2 Con); Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 22).

**Poisoned crossbow bolt trap:** +8 ranged (1d6/19-20 crit) + poison (Fort save to resist (DC 16); 1d2 Dex and 1d2 Str/1d2 Dex and 1d2 Str); Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 22).

### Tier 4:

**Poisoned needle trap:** +10 ranged (1/x2 crit) + poison (Fort save to resist (DC 18); 1d3 Con/1d3 Con); Search (DC 24); Disable Device (DC 24).

**Poisoned crossbow bolt trap:** +10 ranged (1d6/19-20 crit) + poison (Fort save to resist (DC 18); 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Str/1d3 Dex and 1d3 Str); Search (DC 24); Disable Device (DC 24).

### Tier 5:

**Poisoned needle trap:** +12 ranged (1/x2 crit) + poison (Fort save to resist (DC 20); 1d4 Con/1d4 Con); Search (DC 26); Disable Device (DC 26).

**Poisoned crossbow bolt trap:** +12 ranged (1d6/19-20 crit) + poison (Fort save to resist (DC 20); 1d4 Dex and 1d4 Str/1d4 Dex and 1d4 Str); Search (DC 26); Disable Device (DC 26).

### Tier 6:

**Poisoned needle trap:** +14 ranged (1/x2 crit) + poison (Fort save to resist (DC 22); 1d6 Con/1d6 Con); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

**Poisoned crossbow bolt trap:** +14 ranged (1d6/19-20 crit) + poison (Fort save to resist (DC 22); 1d6 Dex and 1d6 Str/1d6 Dex and 1d6 Str); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

### The Secret Passage

*After some searching, you find a crack in the rocks that does not look natural. You are able to trace a rough outline of a door. If only you could get it open....*

*Got it! A portion of the cliff face swings out as you put pressure on a small protrusion in the rock. A passage is revealed, its floor thick with dust.*

*Cautiously, you enter the passage. The passage is silent, except for the echoing of your own footsteps. After a few moments, you think you hear the faint sound of voices ahead.*

### Tiers 5-6 Only:

At this tier, the cavern is protected by *forbiddance* (two castings set to protect strategic areas of the cavern). The *forbiddance* is set to Chaotic Evil and password-locked, and only those speaking the password ("Whitebane") may enter. PCs who do not speak the word suffer 3d6 damage if chaotic, 6d6 damage otherwise. There is no saving throw, but spell resistance applies. The spell can only be dispelled by a *dispel magic* cast by a caster whose level is at least as high as the priest's level (12 in Tier 5, 14 in Tier 6).

PCs may detect this, but if they don't:

*You step forward and are violently repulsed!*

### The Combat

In all likelihood, the PCs arrived here fairly quickly, and the *invisibility sphere* on the 4 warriors is still active (duration of the spell: 90 minutes at Tiers 3 and 4, 110 minutes at Tiers 5 and 6).

Note the following adjustments to the enemies here, based on the PCs' actions throughout the module:

- If the PCs lost the ineffable tome in Ravens Bluff, Allamon Darahanis is the third person visible. He has the same stats as in Scene 4a, but has used up his *teleport* spell. Yancey Garamor has used up his *whispering wind* spell.

- If the PCs took the ineffable tome to Dragon Falls, but Darahanis got it and teleported away, he is the third person visible He has used up his *teleport* spell and any other spells he may have used.
- If the PCs fought Darahanis and he teleported away, he is the third person visible He has used up his *teleport* spell and any other spells he may have used.
- If the PCs killed Darahanis, there are only two people visible.
- If the PCs dawdled long enough, the *invisibility sphere* has worn off and the 4 warriors are visible.

### Secret Passage Approach:

*The passage opens into a large chamber. Along the edges of the chamber are two (three) individuals. One wears ornamented black plate armor and bears the unholy symbol of Cyric upon his shield. The second man is dressed in elegant robes of gray and black, and holds a rod in one hand. (The third man is dressed in blue robes, and also bears the unholy symbol of Cyric.) (You recognize those robes; they're from the man you faced in Harris Redfire's home!)*

*(In the far corner, guarding a door, are four warriors, wearing breastplates and wielding longswords. They look ready to fight right now!)*

### Door Approach:

*Beyond the door is a large chamber. In the rear of the chamber are two (three) individuals. One wears ornamented black plate armor and bears the unholy symbol of Cyric upon his shield. The second man is dressed in elegant robes of gray and black, and holds a rod in one hand. (The third man is dressed in blue robes, and also bears the unholy symbol of Cyric.) (You recognize those robes; they're from the man you faced in Harris Redfire's home!)*

*(But before you can face them, you will have to deal with four warriors, wearing breastplates and wielding longswords. They look ready to strike you right now!)*

### (Tiers 5-6 Only) Advancing Into the Chamber:

At this tier, the cavern is protected by *forbiddance* (two castings set to protect strategic areas of the cavern). The *forbiddance* is set to Chaotic Evil and password-locked, and only those speaking the password (“Whitebane”) may enter. PCs who do not speak the word suffer 3d6 damage if chaotic, 6d6 damage otherwise. There is no saving throw, but spell resistance applies. The spell can only be dispelled by a *dispel magic* cast by a caster whose level is at least as high as the priest’s level (12 in Tier 5, 14 in Tier 6).

PCs may detect this, but if they don’t:

***You step forward and are violently repulsed!***

They will likely detect the spell when they try to move forward and engage the spellcasters. When the fighters advance into the warded area, they shout “Whitebane!” as if trying to attract the attention of the cleric of Cyric.

### Tier 3:

**Threll Whitebane, Male Human Clr9 (Cyric):** Medium Humanoid; HD 9d8+18; hp 66; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 21 (+8 full plate, +2 large shield, +1 Dex); Atks +7/+2 melee (1d8+1, morningstar); SA rebuke undead; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +10.

Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 19, Cha 8.

Skills: Concentration +15, Diplomacy +3, Heal +8, Knowledge: Arcana +5, Knowledge: Religion +5, Listen +6, Scry +5, Spellcraft +8, Spot +6. Feats: Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Spellcasting Prodigy.

Equipment: Morningstar, unholy symbol of Cyric, 26 gp, black full plate armor, large steel shield with the unholy symbol of Cyric.

Domains: Evil, Trickery (Domain spells in bold.)

Divine Spells (6/5/5/4/3/1): 0-level—*cure minor wounds* x2, *detect magic* x2, *resistance* x2; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*bane*, *cure light wounds* x2, *entropic shield*, *magic weapon*, ***protection from good***; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*bull’s strength* x4, *hold person*, ***invisibility***; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*bestow curse*, *invisibility purge*, ***nondetection***, *prayer*, *searing light*; 4<sup>th</sup> level—*cure critical wounds*, *divine power*, *freedom of movement*, ***unholy blight***; 5<sup>th</sup> level—***dispel good***, quickened *shield of faith*.

**Yancey Garamor, Male Human Wiz9 (Conjurer):** Medium Humanoid; HD 9d4+18; hp 46; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+5 bracers of armor, +1 Dex); Atks +4 melee (1d4 [crit 19-20], dagger); SA nil; SQ +5 to DC for conjuration spells; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +7.

Str 10, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Alchemy +11, Concentration +14, Heal +4, Gather Intelligence +3, Knowledge: Arcana +13, Knowledge: Religion +13, Listen +5, Scry +11, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +13, Spot +5. Feats: Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Greater Spell Focus (conjuration), Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spellcasting Prodigy, Spell Focus (conjuration).

Equipment: Dagger; unholy symbol of Cyric; 26 gp; +5 bracers of armor, special design; rod of spell penetration with sapphire of conjuration.

Conjurer opposition schools: Illusion, enchantment. Conjuration spells in **bold**.

Arcane Spells (5/7/6/5/4/3): 0-level—*detect magic*, *flare*, *open/close*, **ray of frost** x2; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*enlarge*, **grease**, *magic missile* x3, *reduce*, **unseen servant**; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*cat's grace*, **glitterdust**, **Melf's acid arrow** x2, **web**, *whispering wind*; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*dispel magic*, *fireball*, **flame arrow** x2, **stinking cloud**; 4<sup>th</sup> level—**Evard's black tentacles**, extended *haste*, empowered **Melf's acid arrow**, **solid fog**; 5<sup>th</sup> level—empowered *lightning bolt*, *teleport*, **wall of stone**.

**Fighters (4), Male Human Ftr5:** Medium Humanoid; HD 5d10+10; hp 44; Init +5 (Dex, Thug); Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+5 breastplate, +2 large steel shield, +3 Dex); Atks +9 melee (1d8+5 [crit 19-20], longsword); AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +2.

Str 17, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

*Skills:* Climb +1, Craft: Sculpting +2, Intimidate +3, Jump +1, Knowledge: Religion +2, Ride +7, Swim -4. *Feats:* Combat Reflexes, Luck of Heroes, Power Attack, Thug, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Equipment: Breastplate, longsword, large steel shield, 12 gp.

#### Tier 4:

**Threll Whitebane, Male Human Clr10 (Cyric):** Medium Humanoid; HD 10d8+20; hp 73; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 21 (+8 full plate, +2 large shield, +1 Dex); Atks +8/+3 melee (1d8+1, morningstar); SA rebuke undead; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +11.

Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 19, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Concentration +16, Diplomacy +3, Heal +9, Knowledge: Arcana +5, Knowledge: Religion +6, Listen +6, Scry +5, Spellcraft +9, Spot +6. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Spellcasting Prodigy.

Equipment: Morningstar, unholy symbol of Cyric, 52 gp, black full plate armor, large steel shield with the unholy symbol of Cyric.

Domains: Evil, Trickery (Domain spells in bold.)

Divine Spells (6/5/5/4/3/1): 0-level—*cure minor wounds* x2, *detect magic* x2, *resistance* x2; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*bane*, *cure light wounds* x2, *entropic shield*, *magic weapon*, **protection from good**; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*bull's strength* x4, *hold person*, **invisibility**; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*bestow curse*, *invisibility purge*, **nondetection**, *prayer*, *searing light*; 4<sup>th</sup> level—*cure critical wounds*, *divine power*, *freedom of movement*, *greater magic weapon*, **unholy blight**; 5<sup>th</sup> level—**dispel good**, *quicken shield of faith*, *spell resistance*.

**Yancey Garamor, Male Human Wiz10 (Conjurer):** Medium Humanoid; HD 10d4+20; hp 51; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+5 bracers of armor, +1 Dex); Atks

+5 melee (1d4 [crit 19-20], dagger); SA nil; SQ +5 to DC for conjuration spells; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +8.

Str 10, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Alchemy +11, Concentration +15, Heal +4, Gather Intelligence +3, Knowledge: Arcana +14, Knowledge: Religion +13, Listen +5, Scry +11, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +17, Spot +5. *Feats:* Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Greater Spell Focus (conjuration), Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spellcasting Prodigy, Spell Focus (conjuration), Twin Spell.

Equipment: Dagger; unholy symbol of Cyric; 52 gp; +5 bracers of armor, special design; rod of spell penetration with sapphire of conjuration.

Conjurer opposition schools: Illusion, enchantment. Conjuration spells in bold.

Arcane Spells (5/7/6/5/5/4): 0-level—*detect magic*, *flare*, *open/close*, **ray of frost** x2; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*enlarge*, **grease**, *magic missile* x3, *reduce*, **unseen servant**; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*cat's grace*, **glitterdust**, **Melf's acid arrow** x2, **web**, *whispering wind*; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*dispel magic*, *fireball*, **flame arrow** x2, **stinking cloud**; 4<sup>th</sup> level—**Evard's black tentacles**, extended *haste*, empowered **Melf's acid arrow**, **solid fog**, *stoneskin*; 5<sup>th</sup> level—empowered **flame arrow**, empowered *lightning bolt*, *teleport*, **wall of stone**.

**Fighters (4), Male Human Ftr7:** Medium Humanoid; HD 7d10+14; hp 60; Init +9 (Dex, Improved Initiative, Thug); Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+5 breastplate, +2 large steel shield, +3 Dex); Atks +11/+6 melee (1d8+5 [crit 19-20], longsword); AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3.

Str 17, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

*Skills:* Climb +2, Craft: Sculpting +2, Intimidate +3, Jump +2, Knowledge: Religion +3, Ride +8, Swim -3. *Feats:* Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Luck of Heroes, Power Attack, Thug, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Equipment: Breastplate, longsword, large steel shield, 24 gp.

#### Tier 5:

**Threll Whitebane, Male Human Clr12 (Cyric):** Medium Humanoid; HD 12d8+24; hp 87; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 21 (+8 full plate, +2 large shield, +1 Dex); Atks +10/+5 melee (1d8+1, morningstar); SA rebuke undead; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +13.

Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 20, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Concentration +18, Diplomacy +3, Heal +11, Knowledge: Arcana +5, Knowledge: Religion +6, Listen +8, Scry +5, Spellcraft +10, Spot +8. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Spellcasting Prodigy, Twin Spell.

Equipment: Morningstar, unholy symbol of Cyric, 78 gp, black full plate armor, large steel shield with the unholy symbol of Cyric.

Domains: Evil, Trickery (Domain spells in bold.)

Divine Spells (6/7/5/5/4/4/2): 0-level—*cure minor wounds* x2, *detect magic* x2, *resistance* x2; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*bane*, *command*, *cure light wounds* x2, *endure elements*, *entropic shield*, *magic weapon*, **protection from good**; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*bull's strength* x4, *hold person*, **invisibility**; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*bestow curse*, *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, **nondetection**, *prayer*, *searing light*; 4<sup>th</sup> level—*cure critical wounds*, *divine power*, *freedom of movement*, *greater magic weapon*, **unholy blight**; 5<sup>th</sup> level— **dispel good**, *empowered searing light*, *quicken shield of faith*, *spell resistance*, *true seeing*; 6<sup>th</sup> level—**create undead**, *heal*, *twinned sound burst*.

**Yancey Garamor, Male Human Wiz12 (Conjurer):** Medium Humanoid; HD 12d4+24; hp 61; Init +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+5 *bracers of armor*, +1 Dex); Atks +6/+1 melee (1d4 [crit 19-20], dagger); SQ +5 to DC for conjuration spells; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +9.

Str 10, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 21, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Alchemy +11, Concentration +17, Heal +4, Gather Intelligence +3, Knowledge: Arcana +17, Knowledge: Religion +13, Listen +6, Scry +11, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +20, Spot +6. *Feats:* Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Greater Spell Focus (conjuration), Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spellcasting Prodigy, Spell Focus (conjuration), Twin Spell.

Equipment: Dagger; unholy symbol of Cyric; 78 gp; +5 *bracers of armor*, *special design*; *rod of spell penetration* with *sapphire of conjuration*.

Conjurer opposition schools: Illusion, enchantment. Conjuration spells in bold.

Arcane Spells (5/7/6/6/5/5/3): 0-level—*detect magic*, *flare*, *open/close*, **ray of frost** x2; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*enlarge*, **grease**, *magic missile* x3, *reduce*, **unseen servant**; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*cat's grace*, **glitterdust**, **Melf's acid arrow** x2, *web*, *whispering wind*; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*dispel magic*, *fireball*, **flame arrow** x3, **stinking cloud**; 4<sup>th</sup> level—*Evard's black tentacles*, *extended haste*, *empowered Melf's acid arrow*, **solid fog**, *stoneskin*; 5<sup>th</sup> level—*empowered flame arrow*, *empowered lightning bolt*, *twinned magic missile*, ~~*teleport*~~, **wall of stone**; 6<sup>th</sup> level—**acid fog**, *mass haste*, *twinned Melf's acid arrow*.

**Fighters (4), Male Human Ftr9:** Medium Humanoid; HD 9d10+18; hp 76; Init +9 (Dex, Improved Initiative, Thug); Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+5 breastplate, +2 large steel shield, +3 Dex); Atks +14/+9 melee (1d8+6 (crit 17-

20), longsword); SA nil; SQ nil; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +4.

Str 18, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

*Skills:* Climb +4, Craft: Sculpting +2, Intimidate +4, Jump +4, Knowledge: Religion +3, Ride +9, Swim -1. *Feats:* Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Luck of Heroes, Mobility, Power Attack, Thug, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Equipment: Breastplate, longsword, large steel shield, 36 gp.

### Tier 6:

**Threll Whitebane, Male Human Clr14 (Cyric):** Medium Humanoid; HD 14d8+28; hp 101; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 21 (+8 full plate, +2 large shield, +1 Dex); Atks +11/+6 melee (1d8+1, morningstar); SA rebuke undead; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +14.

Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 20, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Concentration +19, Diplomacy +3, Heal +11, Knowledge: Arcana +5, Knowledge: Religion +7, Listen +9, Scry +5, Spellcraft +10, Spot +9. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Spellcasting Prodigy, Twin Spell.

Equipment: Morningstar, unholy symbol of Cyric, 104 gp, black full plate armor, large steel shield with the unholy symbol of Cyric.

Domains: Evil, Trickery (Domain spells in bold.)

Divine Spells (6/7/6/5/5/4/3/2): 0-level—*cure minor wounds* x2, *detect magic* x2, *resistance* x2; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*bane*, *command*, *cure light wounds* x2, *endure elements*, *entropic shield*, *magic weapon*, **protection from good**; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*bull's strength* x4, *hold person*, **invisibility**, *silence*; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*bestow curse*, *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, **nondetection**, *prayer*, *searing light*; 4<sup>th</sup> level—*cure critical wounds*, *divine power*, *freedom of movement*, *greater magic weapon*, *poison*, **unholy blight**; 5<sup>th</sup> level— **dispel good**, *empowered searing light*, *quicken shield of faith*, *spell resistance*, *true seeing*; 6<sup>th</sup> level—*blade barrier*, **create undead**, *heal*, *twinned sound burst*; 7<sup>th</sup> level—*blasphemy*, *quicken dispel magic*, *twinned searing light*.

**Yancey Garamor, Male Human Wiz14 (Conjurer):** Medium Humanoid; HD 14d4+28; hp 71; Init +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+5 *bracers of armor*, +1 Dex); Atks +7/+2 melee (1d4 [crit 19-20], dagger); SQ +5 to DC for conjuration spells; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +10.

Str 10, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 21, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Alchemy +12, Concentration +19, Heal +5, Gather Intelligence +4, Knowledge: Arcana +19, Knowledge: Religion +14, Listen +6, Scry +11, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +22, Spot +7. *Feats:* Empower

Spell, Extend Spell, Greater Spell Focus (conjunction), Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spellcasting Prodigy, Spell Focus (conjunction), Twin Spell.

Equipment: Dagger; unholy symbol of Cyric; 104 gp; +5 *bracers of armor, special design*; *rod of spell penetration with sapphire of conjuration*.

Conjurer opposition schools: Illusion, enchantment. Conjunction spells in bold.

Arcane Spells (5/7/6/6/6/5/4/3): 0-level—*detect magic, flare, open/close, ray of frost* x2; 1<sup>st</sup> level—*enlarge, grease, magic missile* x3, *reduce, unseen servant*; 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*cat's grace, glitterdust, Melf's acid arrow* x2, *web, whispering wind*; 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*dispel magic, fireball, flame arrow* x3, *stinking cloud*; 4<sup>th</sup> level—*Evard's black tentacles* x2, *extended haste*, *empowered Melf's acid arrow, solid fog, stonewalk*; 5<sup>th</sup> level—*empowered flame arrow, empowered lightning bolt, twinned magic missile, teleport, wall of stone*; 6<sup>th</sup> level—*acid fog, extended cloudkill, mass haste, twinned Melf's acid arrow*; 7<sup>th</sup> level—*finger of death, quickened flame arrow, power word, stun*.

**Fighters (4), Male Human Ftr11:** Medium Humanoid; HD 11d10+22; hp 92; Init +9 (Dex, Improved Initiative, Thug); Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+5 breastplate, +2 large steel shield, +3 Dex); Atks +16/+11/+6 melee (1d8+6 (crit 17-20), longsword); SA nil; SQ nil; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +4.

Str 18, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

*Skills:* Climb +5, Craft: Sculpting +2, Intimidate +5, Jump +5, Knowledge: Religion +3, Ride +10, Swim +0. *Feats:* Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Luck of Heroes, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Thug, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Equipment: Breastplate, longsword, large steel shield, 48 gp.

### The back rooms

*The battle concluded, you search the cavern. The left rear chamber is occupied by bedrolls, tools, and other mundane supplies. By each of two bedrolls, you find spellbooks.*

*In the right rear chamber, you find the unconscious form of Harris Redfire. After some prodding, he awakens, sluggish but able to communicate.*

**Harris Redfire, Male Human Wiz3/Clr11 (Mystra):** He's unconscious now, and in far too bad shape to help the party here.

Redfire will thank the PCs and relate the story of his capture. Now, he just wants to get home, quickly, and deal with the ineffable tome.

## Scene 9: Imprisonment

*When you arrive at Harris Redfire's home, he heads for his bedroom. Rummaging through his closet, he pulls a vial out of a pocket of one of his other robes. Quaffing the potion within, his appearance improves considerably. "That was refreshing! Now, let's imprison that ineffable tome where no one can ever reach it again."*

*Heading into his casting room, Redfire first places the lockbox at the center of a magic circle. Tracing the circle with platinum dust, he begins a long incantation. Nearly an hour passes as he weaves his incredibly powerful spell. Finally, it appears as if the boundaries between this plane and some other plane twist and flow, merging into reddish tendrils. The tendrils encase the lockbox, solidifying into an ellipsoid of shimmering reds and oranges. The shape begins to fade as the scene returns to normal. When the air is again still, the lockbox is nowhere to be seen.*

*"It is done," Redfire says, breathing deeply.*

As thanks for saving his life, Redfire offers the party two items he created, a *potion of cure serious wounds* and a *scroll of healing circle*.

## Conclusion

*The trip back to Ravens Bluff is quite enjoyable. The temperature dropped to a more comfortable level, and the sky is totally clear. Best of all, no threats face you on this journey. It is a welcome change from the brief, intense struggle of that one morning. Maybe you should have stayed in bed....*

*After a few days, you are back in Ravens Bluff, enjoying a good meal at a favorite tavern. The doors open, and a young lad enters, bearing a sealed note. Today, however, he walks over to a different table. Maybe it's for the better....*

**The End**

## Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the discretionary roleplaying experience award. The roleplaying award should be given for consistent

character portrayal and contribution to the fun of the game. You can award different roleplaying amounts to different characters.

Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Asking good questions of D'Marke:	20 xp
Coming up with a good plan to avoid attack:	20 xp
Defeating OR avoiding strike force:	150 xp
Discovering "Redfire's" duplicity:	20 xp
Defeating Darahanis:	50 xp
Finding clues at Redfire's home:	20 xp
Getting information from Hawk:	20 xp
Defeat or avoid crossbow bolt trap:	20 xp
Defeat or avoid poison needle trap:	20 xp
Defeat villains in the cave:	300 xp
Honestly return rubies to Redfire:	10 xp
Never lose control of the ineffable tome:	50 xp
Total experience for objectives	700 xp
Discretionary roleplaying award	0-100 xp
<b>Total possible experience</b>	<b>800 xp</b>

## Treasure Summary

Player characters may keep items from the scenario that are listed on the treasure list below or which meet the following conditions:

1. The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.
2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.
3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items worth more than 100 gp that are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and all magical items, will be discovered in the possession of the character by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief, such as Infamy. For other stolen items which meet the criteria in #1 above,

use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

Any item retained according to these rules, which does not have a certificate, will not ever have a certificate issued for it.

The campaign staff reserves the right to take away any item or gold acquired for things it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

- One ruby of 500 gp value per PC. A total of nine rubies may be given out if the party does not return the extras to Redfire. As they saved his life, he does not make an issue of it.
- Equipment and coins from the strike force. The total number of gold pieces carried by the members of the strike force is 100, 200, 300, or 400, based on the tier.
- Equipment and coins from the main villains. The total number of gold pieces carried by the villains is 100, 200, 300, or 400, based on the tier.
- *Potion of cure serious wounds* (Tiny, Value 750 gp): The person imbibing this potion is affected by a *cure serious wounds* spell, as if cast by an 11<sup>th</sup> level caster (heals 3d8+11 points of damage).
- Scroll of *healing circle* (Tiny, Value 1,125 gp): This scroll contains the spell *healing circle*, scribed by an 11<sup>th</sup> level caster.

(If Darahanis did not use this item)

- *Rusty Gem* (Tiny, Value 1,125 gp): This rust-colored gem, when tossed to the ground, will summon a single rust monster (standard per Monster Manual p. 157, with average hit points). The rust monster is under the complete control of the user of this gem. The rust monster disappears after 9 rounds, or when slain. Once used, the gem crumbles to dust.
- *+5 bracers of armor, special design* (Value 25,000 gp): Near the elbow, the edge of each bracer snaps up, revealing a narrow groove, 6 in. long, 2 in. wide, and 0.8 in. deep. This groove can secretly store very small items like gems, coins, or lockpicks.
- *Strength sapper, +2 rapier* (Medium, Unusual, Value 32,320 gp): On a critical hit, *Strength Sapper* inflicts 1d4 negative points of Strength

damage instead of the extra critical damage.  
Strength sapped by this rapier returns at the rate of  
1 point every hour.

*17 Flamerule*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

*You have received this message because you are known to me or to one of my priests or followers as a resourceful and skilled adventurer. I am in urgent need of several skilled adventurers to protect a package as it is being taken to another Duwamorkeeper. I cannot reveal the contents of the package, but it is an item that practically any evil organization or any follower of a vile god would kill to possess. Come fully prepared for danger and ready for a tenday of travel. You will travel initially by magical means, so please do not plan on bringing a mount.*

*Please inform the messenger if you will be coming to the temple, and arrive at the temple no more than 45 minutes after receiving this note.*

*Sincerely,*

*Chester D'Marke, Lord of Mystery*

## Players' Handout 2

### *16 Flamerule*

*Dear Harris Redfire, Servant of Mystery*

*I hope this message finds you in good health. I thank you for our previous correspondence: I was quite interested in your success in fashioning an interdimensional prison, and have shared this knowledge of magic with others of the faith. But now, I must ask you to put your research to use to meet an urgent need. This evening, but moments ago, a loyal follower of the Lady of Mysteries arrived bearing a stolen item of great evil, a book of vile darkness. According to this follower, the foes from which he recovered this ineffable tome should know it is gone, and will stop at nothing to get it back. Please, I ask of you, place this foul magic item in your prison, so that no one may harness its magic for evil.*

*In the morning, at about 8 bells, a group of adventurers from Ravens Bluff, chosen by my temple, will teleport in, arriving with the ineffable tome, encased in an iron lockbox. They will present to you a scroll, and when the scroll is opened, you will hear a familiar phrase. Enclosed with this message is the key to the box, as well as a pouch with nine rubies. Give one to each adventurer as payment, and keep the rest to aid your future studies and research.*

*I wish you well. Do not assume that you are safe from the forces that want the ineffable tome. Be prepared for danger.*

*Sincerely,*

*Chester D'Marke, Lord of Mystery*

## DM's Aid 1: Timeline of the Enemies' Actions

(Times are given in modern equivalents for convenience of presentation)

16<sup>th</sup> Flamerule (previous night)

- 10:01 PM: Tallon Jarvis steals the ineffable tome, emulating alignment to prevent the book from harming him.
- 10:12 PM: The mercenary force notices the tome is missing.
- 10:13 PM: Maxim Winteredge teleports to his employer's base outside of Dragon Falls.
- 10:48 PM: After a heated discussion Threll Whitebane dispatches Varken Hallos to Ravens Bluff to seek out mercenaries to capture the tome. Winteredge departs, the terms of his contract finished.
- 11:32 PM: After thinking about the implications of the theft, Whitebane reaches the conclusion that the temple of Mystra might be seeking to imprison "his" tome.

17<sup>th</sup> Flamerule (current day)

- 1:04 AM: After doing some research in his own notes and correspondence, Whitebane discovers that Harris Redfire, a cleric of Mystra in Dragon Falls, is reported to be fashioning a powerful magic prison.
- 7:28 AM: After resting, Whitebane's allies prepare a "visit" to Redfire. Wizard Allamon Darahanis makes himself and the four warriors invisible with the *invisibility sphere* spell.
- 7:49 AM: Wizard Allamon Darahanis casts *passwall* upon the rear wall of the house, and the four warriors storm into Redfire's bedroom, totally surprising him.
- 7:51 AM: After a bit of struggle in the bedroom and living room of his house, the warriors succeed in rendering Redfire unconscious with their poisoned weapons. During the struggle, effects of the spells *sound burst* and *flare* are used.
- 7:52 AM: Darahanis casts *alter self* to imitate Redfire's appearance. Darahanis casts another *invisibility sphere*, upon one of the warriors. The warriors drag off Redfire, and Darahanis casts *dispel magic* to end the *passwall*.

About fifteen minutes later, the party arrives....

Back in Ravens Bluff, if the party is attacked and one of the enemies steals the ineffable tome, they run as quickly as possible to a small apartment, where Varken Hallos waits. If possible, it is Ulijaz Thenumbrin who steals the tome. He will *fly* to Hallos' apartment, or at higher tiers, *teleport* to his own apartment and then *fly* to Hallos' apartment (he doesn't know it well enough to risk teleporting directly there). The City Watch pursues the suspicious thief, and arrives just in time to see Hallos *teleport* back to the lair in Dragon Falls. They apprehend the thief after a brief scuffle and a lucky blow from Private Johnson.

If Hallos returns with the ineffable tome, he sends a whispering wind to Darahanis, who drops his disguise and teleports back to the lair.

All these *teleports* are assumed to arrive on target.

## DM's Aid 2: Map of the Combats

(1 square = 5 ft. by 5 ft.)

