

# **The Scarlet Picaros**

**A One-Round Living City Adventure**

**by Ann Marie Paulukonis**

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This is a standard RPGA Network tournament. A four-hour time block has been set aside for this event. 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.

The actual playing time will be about three hours. Make sure you use the last 20 to 30 minutes of the event time block to have the players capsule their characters for each other and vote. The standard RPGA Network voting procedures will be used. Complete the Judge's Summary before you collect the players' scoring sheets. This way you will not be influenced by their ratings and comments.

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

A note about the text: Some of the text in this module 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.

## Adventure Background

During this adventure, the player characters will have to unravel the circumstances of five deaths. The people were all murdered by a former adventuring compatriot who finds out about the PCs' investigation. Roleplaying encounters are particularly important in this adventure; as the GM, it is essential you make full use of them. Nearly three-quarters of the experience points are for seeking out clues through roleplaying and searching, and then figuring out how the murders happened. The PCs will also have two combats with the murderer's minions. Before or during the fights, feel free to increase or decrease monsters' stats (hp, THAC0, number appearing, etc.) if your party seems over- or under-whelmed. Remember that this is supposed to be fun for the players! The PCs do not need to go through every encounter. It is written so that there are a number of avenues to the final encounter. If the PCs **ROLEPLAY**, which is the most significant part of this adventure, they should not have time for every encounter. They

should get to the final encounter with Juliand in any case.

### Encounter 1:

There have been too many deaths in the city recently. The Watch simply has not had time to investigate every one. The PCs are hired by Adrian Karma to investigate four of them.

The next seven encounters may occur in almost any order. These are the investigations of each death, a visit to the home of a witness, investigation of the rings, and a trip to the next victim's home. It may take the PCs a while to figure out that the deaths are connected. The most important piece is an ornate gold and silver ring found on each victim, as well as on the murderer. The PCs can learn that all the involved parties were members of an adventuring group until about three years ago. On the golden part of the ring, ≈∫ ∫∂≈ is engraved; this was the adventuring company's symbol. There are additional clues that connect each victim to one or two of the others.

### Encounter 2:

Mist Carpley is the daughter of a wealthy family. The PCs talk with Argon Nillom, a new member of the City Watch, about her demise. There was a witness to her death, but there is something fishy about his story. His name is Gamihn Brount, living at the Harbour Watch Inn. Argon so much desires to be of help that he rushes off soon after the PCs leave to deliver a message to Gamihn at the Inn.

### Encounter 3:

Someone died just this morning at the circus. Filhin claimed to be the shortest human (not demi-human) in the known world. It looks as if he stabbed himself to death. While the PCs are at his tent, they hear screams from the big top. They arrive to discover another performer has just died. Nadjin, a tightrope walker, fell to his death.

### Encounter 4:

Jydwebb was accidentally shot by his hunting partner. Or was he? The PCs can examine his body at Guard Post 154. Although the clerk at this post is very unhelpful, she will read his partner's statement. If the PCs listen carefully, they will realize that the hunting partner probably shot Dwebb. The witness claims to be Pell Hardwinter, address given as the Harbour View Inn. A horrible monster lurking the nearby woods is mentioned in the statement. If the PCs decide to forgo their hired

duties and hunt it down, they have Encounter 4.5. They meet up with a band of citizens who have defeated the monster.

#### **Encounter 5:**

Hilkana was a priest of Deneir working as an accountant for Kiopli's Floors, a rug shop. Three days ago, she sent a note saying she was needed for a day or two at her temple. Oddly enough, although a Glyphscribe, she misspelled four words in this neatly written note. Kiopli is terrified of fire; beware the PCs who use anything brightly lit at his shop. If no fire is present, Kiopli will allow the PCs to have the note, as well as examine Hilkana's desk. A search of her desk may reveal a hidden compartment.

#### **Encounter 6:**

If the PCs decide to pay a visit to the Harbour View Inn, they meet the landlady, Mrs. Handy. She is an average citizen, a little wary of adventurers and of bribery. She does not know anyone by the names the PCs give but does have a resident matching the description, Juliand Frutlay. She will take the PCs up to his room if they have proof they are with the City Guard (and have not tried to bribe her for information). Because of Argon, Juliand knows that the PCs may be on his trail. He left a little message for them in his room. It is preceded by a few summoned monsters. Mrs. Handy insists on walking into the room first. When two PCs have followed her, the spell goes off. Since she is in the room, the monsters will attempt to attack her. The PCs have a chance to save her life, earning her deep gratefulness. If none of the PCs give her immediate aid as the fight begins, she dies in the first round.

#### **Encounter 7:**

At some point during the day the PCs may become interested in learning more about the rings. Encounter 7, which may occur at any point after Encounter 2, provides a few avenues for this. 7.1 is a visit to the sage Cyleria, who can identify the maker of the rings. 7.2 is a visit with Morius Hans, a dwarven jeweler. He can find the contract for the rings and tell the PCs that they belong to an adventuring company named the Scarlet Picaros. In 7.3, the PCs can go to an Adventurer's Guild. The record keeper, Peter, can provide them a list of the group's members. He also tells them the Picaros' sad history. A young boy working at the Guild can give directions to one of the possibly-surviving members, Regart Wolfhand.

#### **Encounter 8:**

If they follow leads to Regart Wolfhand's, the PCs must break the news of her friends' deaths. Regart will employ the PCs to guard her. She can also provide the PCs with information about the Picaros and the strange Juliand Frutlay.

#### **Encounter 9:**

Juliand has gathered (paid) people to his cause and is on his way to burn down Regart's house. The PCs run into him and his minions either (A) on the street or (B) while guarding Regart.

#### **Encounter 10:**

The PCs take Juliand and their information back to Adrian.

## Tier Structure

<u>Tier</u>	<u>Total Party Levels</u>
Tier 1:	4-13 total levels
Tier 2:	14-25 total levels
Tier 3:	26-37 total levels
Tier 4:	38-56 total levels
Tier 5:	57+ total levels

## Player Introduction

*With the lull in the fighting, you wonder if life is starting to get back to normal. You realize it is when there's a knock at the door, a note is quickly thrust into your hands, and the grubby messenger quickly runs off without waiting to answer any questions. Life is back to usual for the Raven's Bluff adventurer.*

*As you break the seal, you note it of Raven's Bluff's city government. You read:*

*"Adventurer, There have been a number of deaths in the city of late (unrelated to the war, that is) that have the best of our Watch scratching their heads. If you have no pressing business over the next few days, could you join a few others in attempting to figure out what has happened? Please come to my office at 10 bells if you are willing. You, shall, of course, receive pay. At least one family has offered a reward in addition. [signed] Adrian Karma." At the bottom are directions to a city guard post.*

Allow the players to decide how to finish preparing for the day, if they were up early enough!

## Encounter 1—Call to Action

*You arrive at Adrian Karma's office at the same time as a few others who have an air of adventuring. A clerk points you to Adrian's office. Upon entering, a young man greets you. "Thank you for coming. I don't believe I know all of you.. Won't you please introduce yourselves?"*

**Adrian Karma, human male W10.** Stats unnecessary.

Spells 1<sup>st</sup>—*color spray*; 2<sup>nd</sup>—*ESP (x2)*; 4<sup>th</sup>—*stoneskin* (precast 8 skins); 5<sup>th</sup>—*teleportation*. If attacked, he will teleport to the Guard station next door and come back with a large patrol.

He is 6'6", tall and wiry, wearing Mystra-blue pants and a forest green shirt. He is a sergeant in the Watch.

After the PCs introduce themselves, Adrian speaks again,

*"As I said in the note, there have been some deaths lately. Of course, that in itself is not unusual in a city of this size. It's just that ten deaths in one day on top of everything else...we can't investigate everything. We had word that you might be able to help us figure out what happened to each of these souls. Here is a list of the persons. Well, this isn't everyone who died yesterday. There were some we were able to take care of right away."*

He hands the PCs **Player Handout 1: Unusual deaths of the past few days**. If questioned, he can tell them the following about each incident:

1. Mist Carpley—Adrian really thinks she just died a normal death, but her family has put a bit of pressure on the Guard to find out what happened. She used to be an adventurer like the PCs, and they wonder if her past came back to haunt her. Her body is being held at Post 34 next door.

2. Circus—Someone died just this morning. The body has not been touched, much at least. The PCs will be the first sent to the scene. *"As you know,*

*Mr. Mooney's circus came back when the hostilities ended to give some respite to our weary soldiers and citizens. I hope some of you have taken a needed break out there. It's a shame Mr. Mooney has lost a member of his circus family so soon after their return from Procampur."*

3. Jydwebbdy—He was accidentally shot by his hunting partner. The body is at Guard Post 154; the family has not been found and notified yet. A clerk there has a statement from the partner. The PCs are also given directions to the Post.

4. Hilkana—Kiopli's is a rug store in the merchant district. Adrian does not have directions.

If the PCs inquire into payment:

*"Yes, I did say you would be paid. What's the daily rate for the city guard again? Oh, well, I suppose from the looks of you you'd command a bit more than their price. Well, how about 15 gp per? No, just kidding! We can spare 100 gp each from the coffers. IF you find out what happened to each. And I will want some proof. No coming back after an hour and saying they were all accidents or something. But, you all look trustworthy anyway. And that fish lady, Carpley. Her family is offering a reward as well. I have a note from them here somewhere. If you find any suspects, there's no need to kill anyone. We would prefer a live being to send to Judge Hangman. No, not prefer—we require."*

He cannot find the note, but there really is a reward. Perhaps some of the other families will offer something as well. The note about the "best of the Watch" was stretching things a bit. He will admit this reluctantly if pressed. In fact, no one has investigated any of the deaths yet. He needed some extra help and wanted them to think that it might be exciting and adventurous. Honestly, it might not be. He will give the PCs a writ saying they are working for the City Watch on a temporary basis.

If the PCs wonder why Adrian is not investigating these deaths, he will say that he has been assigned to work on some of the investigations into Belanor and all his appointees. There were enough of them that this can continue for quite some time.

After the PCs have asked questions about the deaths, Adrian says,

*"I'd suggest you go to the circus first. We haven't sent anyone yet since we knew you were coming to help out with the other deaths. After you stop next door, of course, since that's so close. Do you have any questions? I do thank you. I hope to see you this afternoon with some information." And he dismisses you from the room.*

If the PCs do have other questions, he does not have the answers. The Watch has been rather behind in its investigations lately and he is a bit embarrassed at having to hire out.

GM NOTE: The PCs may go through the next seven encounters in almost any order. They are arranged here in the same order as the PC handout: City Watch Post 34, Circus, Guard Post 154, and Kiopli's Rugs, plus the rooming house, ring investigation, and the surviving member's home. The last three require gathering clues at murder scenes first.

## Encounter 2—City Watch Post 34

*Before you are inside the front door of the guardhouse next to Adrian's office, a young man greets you. "Hello there! How can I help you? Was a crime committed? A fire need to be put out? Damsel in distress? Let me help! In fact, I've just been promoted to Private. Admittedly, I'm fairly new but I'm a very capable person. There's been a lot of hiring lately what with the war and all. Oh, my name is Argon Nillom."*

He is brand new due to so many Watch being in the Army and heavy losses in the war.

**Argon Nillom human male, F1 (Swashbuckler);** Int low; AL LG; AC 8 (leather); MV 12; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT 3/2 (specialization rapier); Dmg 1d6+1; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 6, Cha 17, Com 14; SZ M; ML 17.

Age 19, hair red, eyes blue, 5'11", 160#. He is particularly attentive to human and Elven females in the party. He is not terribly bright, but is eager to help.

When Argon hears that the PCs are investigating the death of Mist Carpley, he says,

*"Yes, yes. They said someone might be coming around to investigate that death. That was a sad one. She just died there of shock. How horrible! I wouldn't want to have been the poor man who gave her that shock. Oh, here it is. This is the statement he gave us about what happened. I was supposed to write it down just as he said it. Makes you not want to eat chicken now doesn't it? Her family came in not too long ago. Very distressed of course. And very rich I should say from the clothes they were wearing. Offered a reward, they have. Let's see if I can remember what it was. They wrote it down for the scribes to copy over and post. Where is it now?"*

He continues to babble as the PCs peruse the statement, **Player Handout 2: Statement given by Gamihn Brount on the death of Mist Carpley.**

The statement reads: *"I was sitting on this bench next to the deceased. Well, she wasn't deceased then of course. Minding my own business. A couple of men from the butchers were standing nearby. I guess they were on break. They were talking about the fresh chickens that had come in. The lady next to me, she looked real tired and nodded off. She was dreaming that she was a chicken on a farm. She dreamt that the farmer caught her and put her neck on the chopping block. Just then, she was about to lose hold of her belongings, so I thought I should wake her up. I touched her neck; she had slumped over a bit, you now, with her head down. The shock must have been so great that she died instantly thinking she really was having her head chopped off. Its just awful. I just didn't want her to drop all of her belongings. There are plenty of thieves around here you know. [signed] Gamihn Brount"*

Argon can tell the PCs the following information:

- The witness is Gamihn Brount. His address is a rooming house near the wharf, The Harbour Watch Inn.
- Argon took the statement this morning. If asked if this is truly what he was told, he will say it is as far as he remembers.
- Description of Gamihn: Human male, 6', 200#, black unkempt hair, black eyes. Wearing a bright red shirt, or was it orange? There was something strange about the man. Argon

cannot quite put his finger on it, but the guy just did not seem completely happy with life. If any of the PCs claims to live at the Harbour View Inn, they can make a **local history check** (or intelligence at half). If successful, they recall seeing a couple people matching this description at that Inn. They do not recall the name Gamihn Brount. (The inn is really the Harbour View, not the Harbour Watch.)

- He can offer up opinions on the other deaths but does not know any details at all about them in actuality.
- The body has been claimed by the family and taken home. The family has requested they not be disturbed today. Argon will not divulge their address.
- Mist's personal effects at the time of death are at the post. They include:
  - ◇ morning shopping (fresh vegetables, fruit, meat). The meat is spoiling, but Argon has not removed it.
  - ◇ clothing: flowered dress, sandals, a gold necklace, a gold ring, a gold-and-silver ring, a glass bead bracelet, scarlet scarf. (Her clothing is not here; the other items are.)
  - ◇ a holy symbol of Denier. Argon says its a symbol of Helm. A cleric PC or a PC with religion recognizes it as Denier.
  - ◇ a small flute and a sheet of what looks like a musical work-in-progress

The Carpleys indicated these all belonged to Mist. Nothing appeared unusual. The PCs may NOT take any of these items with them. They are being held at the post pending the investigation. The PCs may examine them closely if desired.

GM NOTE: The gold-and-silver ring is the special ring found on each body. If this is the first one the PCs have seen, please just give a general description of it if asked for further descriptions of the jewelry. It is made of two intertwined bands of gold and silver and looks somewhat worn.

If this is the second ring the PCs have seen, a successful **observation roll** (or Intelligence -5) will help a PC note that this ring seems to be just like the other one found. At this time, hand the PCs **Player Handout 3: Ring Description**. A successful **read languages check** or spell on the engraving will not indicate anything. You as the GM should roll without telling the PCs the result! A failed check leads the PCs to believe the symbols

to be the marks of a Thayvian red wizard. If the PCs have already received the handout, they immediately recognize the ring.

If asked where the witness is now, the Argon says,

*"Well, gee, I'm not real sure. I took his name and the statement and let him go. I didn't think he'd want to stick around here. Grief and all. Probably didn't want to meet the family either. I could go see if he's at the address he left if you want to talk with him. Oh, wait, I'm on duty here at the post. Let's see, in a couple hours when Ingar comes in, I could run over there and let him know that some folks want to talk with him."*

GM NOTE: No matter what the PCs say in response to this offer, Argon does indeed go to the rooming house about 15 minutes later (or sometime before the PCs go to the house) when he is given a break. He leaves a message with Mrs. Handly, the landlady. Juliand Frutlay overhears the conversation and is thus alerted to the PCs' investigation.

**THE TRUTH:** If Mist Carpley was sleeping, no one would know she was dreaming. The "witness" actually killed her.

## Encounter 3—At the Circus

The circus, which has come back from Procampur, is not in its usual location. Instead it has been located within the coliseum, and the wounded from there finally dispersed to various temples and healers. The city believes the circus can raise morale among the people. If the city wins, it will be relocated to its usual grounds. If the city loses, ... Mooney has plans to fly away as soon as he can if that happens.

The circus members will refuse any attempt to raise their dead comrades. They will protest against *speak with dead* as well. They are simple people who believe that when your time has come, it has come.

### **A. Shortest man on Faerun**

*You can tell where the circus is long before you get to the front gate. The smell of sawdust and caramel apples, the roars of the tigers and the trumpet of an elephant, the cries of the*

*sideshow hawkers ... ahhhh ... the circus is back in town! If only your visit was for a more pleasant time. As you walk through the gates, you are assaulted by even more sounds, sights and smells. Brightly striped tents abound. A child is screaming for candy. Fresh, buttered popcorn overwhelms your nose. To one side you see a ticket-seller, on the other side is a sign pointing the way to the sideshows. Up ahead, you see a sign indicating that the big top show began at the last bells.*

It is now about half past the last bell. The PCs can see a number of citizens out for a day at the circus as well as a number of circus employees. They can speak with the ticket seller, a lion trainer, a couple children, and an acrobat. Roleplay these encounters with the PCs. The lion trainer and the children will be surprised at the news that someone died. Either the acrobat or the ticket seller will call over an older child named James.

*"James, show these watch members to Filhin's tent, now, won't you?" A teenage boy comes over and motions you to follow him. A quick walk takes you to the performers' living area. James lifts the flap of a small tent that looks as if it might have been gaily colored once upon a time but is now a reddish gray. "He's in there." Near the center lies a very short man dead of apparently self-inflicted stab wounds. A bloodied dagger can be seen gripped in his left hand. In one corner of the tent is a small cot. An empty ale bottle and a candle lie on a table next to the bed. Another corner is filled with boxes. James, human male, F0. The son of two circus workers, this 15-year-old has lived with circuses all his life.*

A search of the tent (no rolls necessary) reveals a half dozen small circular wooden disks under the cot, the man's personal effects (including a set of lockpicks and an arrow), and a few books. The boxes contain other mundane personal effects.

A search of the body will reveal a ring clenched in Filhin's right hand. This is the gold-and-silver ring found on each body. If this is the first one the PCs have seen, please just give a general description of it if asked. It is made of two intertwined bands of gold and silver and looks somewhat worn. If this is the second ring the PCs have seen, a successful **observation roll** (or Intelligence -5) will help a PC note that this ring

seems to be just like the other one found. At this time, hand the PCs **Player Handout 3: Ring Description**. A successful **read languages check** or spell on the engraving will not indicate anything. You as the GM should roll without telling the PCs the result. A failed check leads the PCs to believe the symbols to be the marks of a Thayvian red wizard. If the PCs have already received the handout, they immediately recognize the ring.

James can tell the PCs:

- Filhin was illiterate, like most circus employees. The books are a puzzlement to James.
- Filhin claimed to be the shortest human in the world. He is a human, not a demi-human. Filhin is less than three feet tall.
- Filhin had a pronounced limp. In fact, he walked with a cane. James does not think this is of any importance and probably will not mention it unless pressed for minute details, which the PCs should do since there are not many clues here. The cane is not in the tent and cannot be found.
- Filhin used to be an adventurer. Before the war, some of his old buddies would come out about once a month to visit him. He liked to go off to the woods, probably hunting, with one of them. James thinks it was an elf he went with, but he has no idea of his name.
- Filhin has been employed by Mr. Mooney for about three or four years.

As soon as this information has been shared, the PCs suddenly hear screams from the direction of the Big Top. If the PCs choose to investigate, move to the second half of this encounter (B).

**THE TRUTH:** Someone has been cutting pieces off Filhin's cane and he thought he was starting to grow taller. This would mean the end of his career in the circus and his notoriety. He committed suicide, but someone was behind it.

If the PCs attempt a *Speak with Dead* spell: Filhin was a 10<sup>th</sup> level thief (not that he would tell the PCs this) and NG alignment; if he gets and makes his saving throw (11 or higher), he will answer but one question. His spirit will answer their questions yes or no as indicated by the above truth. He threw his cane away the day before since it was no longer of use to him.

## **B. Blindfolded tightrope walker**

*You arrive at the main circus tent to find a mad house. People are screaming and crying. Crew members are running from all directions towards the tent. James runs along with you and grabs another performer. "What happened???" His voice cracks; there's always excitement at the circus, but never this much in one day.*

*"Nadjin was doing his usual stunt— blindfolded. He fell. He's never fallen. Never. I've been here as long as he has. Longer. Never... He was almost to the end of the rope and.... He's never fallen before."*

*"Is he...?" The other performer nods in answer to the unfinished question. James turns to you and explains, "Nadjin is our best tightrope walker. What are we going to do? Two people dead in less than a day? What will Mr. Mooney do???"*

If the PCs try to push through the crowd to the ring, it will take a few minutes. By the time they get there, Nadjin's body has already been removed anyway. James will help them find another tightrope walker. Salina is an extremely distraught 50-year-old half-elf. She thinks the world of Nadjin. He taught her the ropes, so to speak, of circus life. In response to the PCs she will say:

*"We always perform to music. That's what helps tell us when we are at the end of the tightrope when we're doing a stunt blindfolded. The moment before N.. N.. Na.. Nadjin plunged to his death, the music paused. I, I thought it was just to add a dramatic moment, something new he ... he was doing. Instead, he took another step t... t... to... to his death."*

While the PCs are talking with Salina, another rope walker approaches. He is somewhat more composed than she. Salina slips away while the PCs are talking to him.

**Dranon Kuth (human male, F0)** will reply to the PCs inquiries. He is a friend of Nadjin and had nothing to do with the death.

- Walking without music would make it rather boring to the audience. Music is used for dramatic moments, as well as indicating to the performer where they are on the rope.
- Nadjin frequently changes his program.

- Nadjin has been in this circus for somewhat over two years. Dranon does not know what he did before coming here. Probably he worked for another circus with the skills he had.
- Dranon heard about Filhin's death. He does not know any details or have any information that might help.

If the PCs ask if anything looked unusual during Nadjin's final performance, Dranon will say:

*"Well, now that I think about it... At the end, when he made that last fatal step, it looked like he was stepping onto the platform, not the rope. But, ummm, he wasn't at the platform."*

If the PCs seek out the conductor they are introduced to **Kaali (male Elf, B12)**. With the circus for a number of years, he plays for all the shows. He knows Nadjin pretty well. Kaali speaks thoughtfully, as remembering just what was in the note, which he threw away. He can tell the PCs the following in response to questions:

- "Music is important to tightrope walkers. It gets the crowd excited, but also gets them to be absolutely silent conjuring up the daringness of the feats."
- "Shortly before the show began, I received a note apparently from Nadjin asking me to build the music up to a frenzy, as usual, as he neared the end of the blindfolded walk. But I was to stop the music a bit short of the platform instead of at the platform. I assumed Nadjin was going to pretend to be extremely tired and look like he was going to fall or maybe do some daring feat. The sudden music stop would, of course, focus attention on him."
- "Obviously something went wrong because falling isn't usually part of the plan."
- "Nadjin often makes requests just before the show when he's thought of something a bit different. Wants to please the crowd, and it's often the same people coming back again and again."
- Kaali does not remember who gave him the note. Someone's child; there are plenty of them around doing errands all the time.
- Kaali heard that someone else in the circus had died this morning, but does not know who, how, or when. He knew Filhin, but not very well; they did not get along.

Upon request and proof of being with the City Guard, the PCs can look at Nadjin's body. Nadjin is 45-year-old human male. A search reveals a gold-and-silver ring on the right index finger and a slim gold ring on the left ring finger. The latter ring is his wedding ring; if *detect magic* is cast, it glows magical (Illusion/Phantasm school). If the PCs ask for it, James will tell them Nadjin's wife will want it. He refuses to let the PCs take it if they ask to. If they do take it (with or without asking), see note in Encounter 10 (Adrian's Office). The ring has *Nystul's magical aura* cast upon it, but do not tell the PCs the actual spell unless they have a specific way of identifying it. The gold-and-silver ring is the special ring found on each body.

If this is the first one the PCs have seen, please just give a general description of it if asked for further descriptions. It is made of two intertwined bands of gold and silver and looks somewhat worn. If this is the second ring the PCs have seen, a successful **observation roll** (or Intelligence -5) will help a PC note that this ring seems to be just like the other one found. At this time, hand the PCs **Player Handout 3: Ring Description**. A successful **read languages check** or spell on the engraving will not indicate anything. You as the GM should roll without telling the PCs the result. A failed check leads the PCs to believe the symbols to be the marks of a Thayvian red wizard. If the PCs have already received the handout, they immediately recognize the ring.

Nadjin's wife is too distraught to speak with the PCs.

Just as the party decides to leave, James remembers something that might be important:

*"I just realized this! In the shock I had forgotten. Filhin and Nadjin—they didn't get together all the time, but they were good friends. I had the feeling they knew each other before this circus."*

**THE TRUTH:** Someone other than Nadjin requested the music be stopped before the end of the rope. He thought that meant he was at the end of the rope and stepped to the platform, which was not there. If the PCs attempt a *Speak with Dead*, it will be with the vehement protestations of the assembled circus workers. If they do it anyway: Kaali was a 15<sup>th</sup> level bard, of CG alignment. He will answer the PCs questions without trying a saving throw. However, as indicated in the spell,

the spirit will be evasive, give brief answers, be cryptic and take questions literally. Nadjin did not know he was not at the end of the rope. It did feel a bit shorter today, but he trusts Kaali utterly.

## Encounter 4—Jydwebbdy at Post 154

*Following Adrian's directions, you quite easily find Post 154. Entering, you see the usual station—a couple desks, a guard near the doors, a guard heading out on patrol, a couple working on various post tasks. All but one look as you enter.*

The PCs can approach anyone. The one who does not look up is Delona, described below. The other guards will tell the PCs to speak with her about the death.

**Delona, hf, F2.** Very solemn and talks little. She usually uses very short sentences of at most five words. She will not allow the PCs to read the statement as it is still in shorthand; she will read it verbatim to them. She thinks it is a straightforward accident and really does not want to be bothered by these adventurers who just stir up trouble. It takes a few tries by the PCs before she finally looks up from her work.

The statement:

*"We was goin' after that belabra which killed that child. Last week that happened. The second day, we found the tracks. Didn't find him that night so I got up early the next day. We didn't sleep much, maybe a few hours. I was walkin' ahead of Dwebb when we sets out. We was heading east when I saw that monster. The sun was up already by now. It was shining right in our eyes, so I could only see the outline, the... the... the silhouette. But I followed that thing. Darn went and lost me going through a stream. I knew it might have figured out I was following it so I hide behind a rock and squint into the sun. I had my bow at ready waitin' for it. Suddenly, a shadow comes up behind me. Panicked and sure it was that beast, I whirled around and shot without a thought. I should've thought, but if it had been that thing, I'd a been dead as well now. Anyway, well, yeah, as you know, it wasn't the beast but Dwebb. And what a great shot if it hadn't a been him. Straight through the heart."*

*He was dead right away. I couldn't do nothing. We've been hunting partners for nigh on four years now. I'm gonna miss him."*

The statement was given by Pell Hardwinter, address is The Harbour View Inn. Delona does not know where the Inn is. Another guard will comment that he thinks it's near Crow's End. Someone else suggests the harbor district. Delona's description of Hardwinter is very vague—tall, dark, human. After reading the statement, she is rather dismissive of the PCs. If any of the PCs claim to live at the Inn, they can make a **local history check** (or intelligence at half). If successful, they recall seeing a few people matching that description at the Inn. She has no idea what a belabra is, but has heard some of her neighbors mentioning it during the past week.

If the PCs have not heard about the belabra, another guard will pipe up.

*"The belabra? You all haven't heard about it? My brothers went out to try to find it too. We knew that little girl. I've been told that it looks like a squid, only it lives in a forest. And on the end of each tentacle it has these barbs. But when it's waiting for something to eat, it curls up and it just looks like a rock sitting there. Then it jumps out at you and holds you tight till it kills ya. And if you try to kill it, it's blood will kill you."*

If the PCs wish to spend some time hunting down the belabra, use Encounter 4.5. The guard will tell them where the child was found dead. If they discuss this in front of Delona, she will look at them sternly and suggest that they do the job they were hired for first. She does not think her situation is a murder, but who knows about the others? She will point out that others are out hunting the beast.

The PCs can examine the body. It's been a warm spring, so anyone who examines it closely must make a **con check at -4** or be sickened by the stench. Jydwebb appears to be a male elf (he is actually a half-elf) of about 45 (human) years. A search uncovers:

- The broken end of an arrow shaft sticking out of his chest.
- A silver pin in the shape of a fish. A ranger or sailor can identify it as a carp.
- Several small bags in his pockets. The contents of the bags can be identified by a ranger with a

successful **wisdom check** or a spellcaster with a successful **spellcraft check**. One bag contains powdered animal hoofs (the spellcaster may identify this as a component for *solid fog* if they can cast 5<sup>th</sup> level spells). One contains licorice root (component of *haste*, 3<sup>rd</sup>). The third contains 3 snake stomachs (component of *Melf's acid arrow*, 2<sup>nd</sup>). The last three bags contain sand colored red, yellow, and blue (components of *color spray*, 1<sup>st</sup>).

- An engraved ring on his right index finger. This is the special ring found on each body. If this is the first one the PCs have seen, please just give a general description of it if asked for further descriptions. It is made of two intertwined bands of gold and silver and looks somewhat worn. If this is the second ring the PCs have seen, a successful **observation roll** (or Intelligence -5) will help a PC note that this ring seems to be just like the other one found. At this time, hand the PCs **Player Handout 3: Ring Description**. A successful **read languages check** or spell on the engraving will not indicate anything. You as the GM should roll without telling the PCs the result. A failed check leads the PCs to believe the symbols to be the marks of a Thayvian red wizard. If the PCs have already received the handout, they immediately recognize the ring.

**THE TRUTH:** If Pell was heading east squinting into the sun, he would not have seen a shadow coming over him from behind. If the PCs attempt a *speak with dead*: Dwebb was a 10<sup>th</sup> level ranger, NG alignment. His spirit will acknowledge hunting with Juliand. He does not know that Juliand killed him. He does not recognize the name Pell. As indicated in the spell, the spirit will be evasive, give brief answers, be cryptic, and take questions literally.

## Encounter 4.5—The Belabra (Optional)

If the PCs decide at some point during the day to take a side trip to the forests, they have the following encounter on their way out of town.

*Having decided to track down this monster, you head off following the guard's directions. Before you reach the city gate, you hear*

*something very familiar—the sounds of successful adventurers. Around the next corner, you meet a group of about ten commoners. Three are carrying a large black object. One calls out to your party: "Well met! See what we have here? It's that belabra. It won't be killing our children anymore!"*

*Another boasts, "You wouldn't believe the trouble we went through to get this! We were fighting most of the day!"*

Others join in, describing the fearsome fight. The people are rather disheveled, most have wounds of some sort; one has a broken arm, another a head injury. The belabra looks much as the guard described, only dead.

## Encounter 5—Kiopli's Floors

GM NOTE: This shop is very flammable. Kiopli is utterly terrified of fire and only slightly less of bright lights (such as items with continual light). Any bright lights will be met with instant insistence of their extinguishing. A very dim *Nchaser's glowing globe* held by a PC will be tolerated when searching Hilkana's desk or to examine a rug closely. If any sort of flame or fire, even illusionary, is seen, Kiopli will immediately order the PCs out of the shop and refuse to speak with them. At any further threat of fire or a refusal to dim a light, the clerk will disappear on a magic carpet. Within two minutes, 20 City Guard will appear. (Kiopli pays high taxes in support of the local guard post. He often throws parties as well. He keeps the guards on his side without quite breaking any laws against bribery.)

**City Guard (20), assorted races/genders, F 1-6.** Seven have *wands of flame extinguishing* to be used if needed. If the PCs try to fight, 50 more guards show up. If they do not surrender, guards will keep showing up until they do surrender or have been subdued.

Both the clerk and Kiopli are lawful good and will answer truthfully to all the PCs' inquiries. They will not accept bribes. They will ignore a first attempt at bribery. If the PCs attempt to give them money a second time, they will politely but firmly refuse it. If the PCs attempt a third time, they will refuse again and will tell the PCs nothing further.

*Your feet head towards the merchant district. A passerby directs you to the shop you seek. Entering, you see a room overflowing with rugs and carpets of every imaginable color, scene, and size. At least, you imagine they are of every color. The room is not well-lit. In fact, you don't even see the female gnome at the back counter until she speaks. She greets you with forced cheerfulness. "Good day. How may I help you?"*

**Glorina Jhan (female gnome, B1).** The clerk assumes the PCs are there to buy a rug. Custom orders can be made. Lowest prices for one- or two-color, in-stock rugs are:

- ◆ small rug (3' x 3' max) 4 gp per square foot
- ◆ large rug (up to 10' x 10') 3 gp per square foot
- ◆ carpets (over 10') 7 gp per square foot
- ◆ designs: +2 to +20 gp per square foot depending on intricacy

Glorina has a 75% chance of finding any combination of colors and designs the PCs request, unless exceptionally unusual (25% chance). In this case, she offers to take a special order at twice the regular price. The items are all worth her asking prices.

The clerk is not terribly cheery, but tries to put on a pleasant face. When the PCs ask after Hilkana, she becomes quite sad. She can tell them the following,

- Hilkana worked as an accountant and scribe.
- She is a priest of Denier. Glorina thinks Denier is the god of writing. They have the best scribes at that temple anyway. Kiopli hired her through the temple.
- Hilkana has worked here for almost exactly three years.

After the PCs talk with the clerk for a few minutes, continue with:

*While you talk with the clerk, an ancient gnome walks out of a back room. You get the feeling this is Kiopli. He is more in control of himself than the clerk, but is still upset by the recent events. "You are here to find out what happened to our dear Hilkana?"*

**Kiopli (male gnome, T1):** Int average; AL LG; AC 8 (leather apron); hp 4; MV 6; THAC0 20; ML 19.

Kiopli can tell the PCs:

- Hilkana is a specialty priest of Deneir.
- She died three days ago, but was not found until yesterday.
- He had not been worried at first because he received a note from her three days back saying the temple needed her for a couple days. But yesterday another priest came looking for her. She was found in her rooms (which are not at the temple).
- It appeared that she startled a burglar who knifed her.
- He will give the PCs the note if they ask for it. It is written very neatly. He assumed it is in Hilkana's handwriting; he never really paid attention. He has it in an apron pocket as it is the last thing he has from her. **Player Handout 4: Hilkana's Note** reads: *"Dear Kiopli, The temple has immediate need of me today and tomorrow. I'm terribly sorry for the inconvenience my absence will cause. Please be assured that I will work extra the following days to get the accounts to date. [signed] Hilkana"*

The PCs can get information about Deneir in three ways. Only one is needed.

1. A cleric will know that Deneir is the god of glyphs. His specialty priests, Glyphscribes, are fluent in reading, writing, and speaking 16 or more languages.
2. A successful **religion proficiency check** will provide this information for other PCs.
3. An acolyte of Deneir stops by while they are at the shop to inquire whether Kiopli is looking for another scribe. She did not know Hilkana but can provide the above information if asked about their god.

Do not tell the PCs that the words are misspelled. This is the clue that this was not just a burglary! Glyphscribes would not misspell words. If the PCs think of this possibility and ask the person who made the check or the acolyte, that person will know that it is very highly unlikely that any priest of Deneir would misspell anything, especially in Common.

Kiopli will let the PCs look through Hilkana's desk. A search of the desk reveals little: an accounting book, a novel entitled *Firestarter, Or The Long Lost Spells of the Efreeti*, and a few circus tickets. If a PC opens the book, the name "Regart Wolfhand" is inscribed on the inside front cover. The accounts are printed while the note is in

cursive writing. A priest of Deneir could tell the handwriting is not from the same person. A successful **forgery check at -3** will also indicate this. A search by an elf or a thief will detect a spring that opens a small door on the left side of the desk. A small hand can reach in and pull out a ring.

This is the special ring found on each body (or in this case, in the desk). If this is the first one the PCs have seen, please just give a general description of it if asked for further descriptions. It is made of two intertwined bands of gold and silver and looks somewhat worn. If this is the second ring the PCs have seen, a successful **observation roll** (or Intelligence -5) will help a PC note that this ring seems to be just like the other one found. At this time, hand the PCs **Player Handout 3: Ring Description**. A successful **read languages check** or spell on the engraving will not indicate anything. You as the GM should roll without telling the PCs the result. A failed check leads the PCs to believe the symbols to be the marks of a Thayvian red wizard. If the PCs have already received the handout, they immediately recognize the ring.

If the PCs mention any suspicions of foul play to Kiopli, he will offer one of his special carpets to the party if they track down her killer. He does not mention it is magical, because it isn't.

The PCs may wish to visit the Temple of Deneir. The priests there do not know anything more than does Kiopli. Hilkana, already decomposing, was cremated yesterday afternoon (it was her wish to be cremated rather than buried). The priests cast a *speak with dead*. She was surprised in her room by an unknown assailant. She did not wish to be raised, resurrected, etc. The priests may mention that they tried to contact her friend Regart Wolfhand, a fire elemental, to perform the ritual, but were unable to get a message to her.

**THE TRUTH:** Hilkana did not write the note. Someone surprised her in her rooms, killed her, then sent the note so that no one would look into her absence.

## Encounter 6—Harbour View Inn

If none of the PCs have heard of the Harbour View Inn, read the following:

*As you near the harbor, an old sea dog asks if he can help you find anything. Upon hearing*

*that you seek the Harbour View Inn, he points the way. "A lot of land-lubber adventurers like yourselves live there. I'm surprised ye haven't heard of it. But, then, on the decks of a ship—that's the place to live!"*

In any case, as the PCs approach the rooming house they see:

*The Harbour View Inn is a cozy-looking but large building near the waterfront. One corner of the roof looks much newer than the rest of the building. Perhaps it was caught in the fires that destroyed many waterfront buildings at the beginning of the war. The rest of the building looks as if it has withstood the ravages of war. From the way the front porch looks, perhaps even an old sea dog could be comfortable here. A ship's wheel, a hammock, fishing nets, barrels—the porch almost looks like it belongs on the high seas! And the front door could have come straight from the captain's quarters. A breeze drifts through bringing the smell of the sea with it.*

When the PCs walk in, they are greeted by **Mrs. Handly, the Landlady (human female, F0)**; Int: average; AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; hp 4; THAC0 20 (fists); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 13. Ht 5' 4"; Wt 200#; 51 years old.

Do a **fame check in merchant or religion** for each PC. Any 3<sup>rd</sup> level or higher clerics or paladins of Torm are recognized immediately and greeted warmly (no fame check necessary). If she recognizes any of the other PCs, she is very cautious. She knows that danger follows these adventurers around. She will repeatedly insist such things as, "Now, I run a very clean place here. Everyone is checked out. No criminals. I don't want any fights or sheets of ice appearing from nowhere either. I know adventurers like yourselves live here but they don't get in much trouble. I've heard about you folks." If any PCs live at the Inn, Mrs. Handly recognizes them immediately but may still be cautious of the other party members.

Mrs. Handly will not accept bribes. If any money or items are offered to her, she refuses to say anything further at all. She will tell them she will make a report at the nearest guard post if they so desire (late in the afternoon when her husband gets off work and can watch the Inn). She believes that someone truly with the City Watch would not

go around bribing the average citizen and she will say so. She certainly will not let the PCs see the room in this case. If they try to force their way around her or sneak in later, she will send a servant for the city watch. When the watch arrives, the PCs will be escorted to the post and charged with trespassing as well as breaking and entering if they attempted to enter the room without permission. No more than two PCs will get into the room before the watch appears. The contingency spell will not go off. (If the PCs start breaking the law, they lose this encounter!)

The PCs may go to Adrian and present the information they have received so far. If they have gotten leads from both guard posts to this address, Adrian will have a search warrant written up for them. Otherwise, he will say that there is not enough evidence to search this man's apartment. If they go to Adrian after attempting to break into the room, he will send other guards to search the room and will reprimand the PCs for not going through proper channels. With stern warnings, he will send them off to finish checking the other victims. (The guards will defeat the summoned monsters.)

**GM NOTE:** If the PCs came here directly after Post 154 (Encounter 2), Argon did not come yet. There will be nothing in the room except normal items—no notes, no monsters, no unusual clothing. If they return later, Argon will have come by and Juliand will have had time to set the room up for the PCs.

If Mrs. Handly talks with the PCs:

- No one by either name they give lives here. However, someone matching the description does; his name is Juliand Frutlay. He has lived here less than a year.
- Oddly enough, someone else came looking for Gamihn Brount earlier today. She does not recall a name, but he was from the City Watch and insisted on leaving a message for the man. If the PCs ask to look at the message, she cannot find it—it has disappeared. Mrs. Handly is quite bothered by this. ("Someone" was Argon from Encounter 2. Mrs. Handly is unaware that Juliand paid a small child to steal the message while two other children distracted her.)
- She does not have a clue why Juliand Frutlay might be using a different name.
- He left early this morning and has not come back yet (as far as she knows).

- His room is number 23. If shown a City Watch writ or badge, she will let them into the room.

As she takes them up, she does the usual landlady chatter: "He's such a nice fellow. Pays me on time. Keeps a neat place. Quiet, but not unfriendly." Etc. She goes into the room first. She will not let a PC enter before her—this is her property and she will not let people she does not know go poking into her residents' belongings without her to keep an eye on things. The room is about 12 square feet, with one large window and a small porthole on the side opposite the door. There is a bed in one corner, desk and chair in another, a chest in the middle of the room, and a small table and another chair near the window. There is plenty of open space for the following fight. By the time the second PC enters the room, she has walked to the far window, saying, "***This is one of the nicest rooms. The largest, certainly. And it has such a lovely view of the harbor.***"

When the second PC enters the room, monsters suddenly appear. This is a monster summoning spell set off after three people enter the room. They are summoned via a spell on a small metal disk hidden under the bed completely out of view. The block is consumed when the spell goes off. Any checks (*find traps, detect magic*) from outside the room or from the doorway will not reveal anything. Depending on size, 1-3 of the monsters appear in the room; the remainder appear in the hallway behind or amidst the party.

One (and only one) of the first attacks will be directed at Mrs. Handy. Do not tell the PCs that she is a target. However, do ask for actions before the initiative roll. If any PC declares her or his action as protecting the landlady, the monster will not hit the landlady, regardless of who wins initiative. Even the last PC into the room, or a PC in the hallway, can try to take such an action. The PCs may not change their actions after the GM says that a monster attacks her. However, more than one PC may offer her protection.

Protection can take the following forms: offering a protective magic item such as a cloak; casting a protective spell on her alone such as *stoneskin* or *sanctuary* (i.e. not a party-wide spell such as *bless*; she will willingly fail her save); or trying to get near Mrs. Handy in order to directly block any attacks. The intention to protect brings Torm's aid to Mrs. Handy and to the PC(s) involved. The PC(s) will be protected from all harm (i.e., automatic saves, monsters automatically miss)

for two rounds, including this first round. Once protection has been given her, the monsters will turn their full attention to the rest of the party as Torm provides Mrs. Handy *sanctuary*. If the protection was a spell, the PC(s) will notice a couple rounds later that the spell has not left their memory.

If no PC protects the landlady, she is killed by the attack (if the damage roll is less than 4 she dies of fright and shock). The PCs earn one infamy point. They earn an additional one if they do not offer to raise her from the dead. If they attempt to do so, they must pay regular *raise dead* prices (magic and money) or use a spell before continuing the adventure. The raise will work, but she will be highly upset with the PCs and her boarder.

### **Tier 1 (4-13 total levels)**

**Gnolls (4).** Int Low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 2; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4 (broadsword); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ L (7' 6"); ML 11.

Equipment: broadswords.

### **Tier 2 (14-25 total levels)**

**Bugbears (6).** Int Low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 3 + 1; hp 25 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4 (fists); SA +2 damage; SD nil; MR nil; SZ L (7'); ML 12.

### **Tier 3 (26-37 total levels)**

**Grell, Philosopher (1).** Int Exceptional; AL NE; AC 5; MV Fl 12 (D); HD 7; hp 56; THAC0 15; #AT 11; Dmg 1d4 (x8 tentacles), 1d6 (beak), 3d6 (one lightning lance, save for half), 2d6 (one tip-spear); SA magic items, spells; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M (4' diameter); ML 16. (Please see attached sheet for further descriptions.)

Spells memorized (casts as 2<sup>nd</sup> level wizard using one tentacle per spell): 1<sup>st</sup> level: *charm person, magic missile*.

**Bugbears (2).** Int Low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 3 + 1; hp 20 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4 (fists); SA +2 damage; SD nil; MR nil; SZ L (7'); ML 12.

### **Tier 4 (38-56 total levels)**

**Shambling Mound (2).** Int Low; AL N; AC 0; MV 6; HD 10; hp 70 each; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 2d8, 2d8; SA suffocation; SD see description; MR nil; SZ L (7'); ML 18. (Please see attached sheet for further descriptions.)

**Bugbears (3).** Int Low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 3 + 1; hp 25 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4 (fists); SA +2 damage; SD nil; MR nil; SZ L (7'); ML 12.

### **Tier 5 (57+ total levels)**

**Gauth (beholder-kin) (1).** Int Exceptional; AL NE; AC 0 (body), 2 (eyestalks), 7 (central eye); MV Fl 9 (B); HD 9 + 9; hp 81; THAC0 11; #AT 1 (mouth), 1-6 (eyestalks); Dmg 2d4 (mouth); special (eyestalks); SA magic; SD regeneration; MR nil; SZ L (5' diameter); ML 18. (Please see attached sheet for further descriptions.)

**Shambling Mound (2).** Int Low; AL N; AC 0; MV 6; HD 10; hp 70 each; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 2d8, 2d8; SA suffocation; SD see description; MR nil; SZ L (7'); ML 18. (Please see attached sheet for further descriptions.)

As each monster is defeated, it vanishes in a puff of smoke since it was summoned. No items magic or otherwise remain.

If the PCs protected Mrs. Handly, she thanks them profusely. In gratefulness, she unties a silver ribbon from her sleeve. She offers it to the person who offered her assistance. If more than one PC took their first action as protecting her, she will give it to the one who A) was the kindest person during this entire encounter with her, OR B) is a paladin, or C) is the lowest level, or D) has the fewest magic items (in that order; i.e., if "kindest" cannot be determined, she would give it to a paladin who helped; no paladin—to the lowest level who helped her, etc.). It can be tied or pinned on. She says,

*"Wear this always as a memory of me. Protect others as you protected me and Torm shall be watching over you."*

After catching their breath from the fight, the PCs can look around the room. They see six pieces of furniture: a bed, a desk, 2 chairs, a table, and a chest.

A careful search reveals (along with typical mundane items of the average commoner):

Bed: A rather wet spot in the middle.

Chairs: A note stuck to the bottom of one seat: *"Knew you'd look!"*

Chest: A selection of clothing, including a fuchsia shirt, glaring green stockings, blue silk pants

embroidered with stars; a whip; bag of copper pieces. As the PC's look here, Mrs. Handly says, *"Must you look through everything? Even his private clothes?—Oh, my, I don't remember him ever wearing those. And what ever did he use that whip for?"*

Desk: a note that reads *"That delightful young man at the guard post is ever so helpful. He was kind enough to let me know that you were coming over to talk to me today. That little trick beyond the door? It was just a test to see if you are worthy. Since you are reading this, obviously you are. Join me and never worry again. Continue on your quest, and suffer the consequences. [signed] J. F. (P.S. I do hope that my dear Mrs. Handly wasn't hurt.)"*

There is nothing else of interest in the room. No hidden doors, no traps.

## Encounter 7—≈S ≈

At some point, the PCs may become interested in learning more about the victims' rings. Perhaps they will want to visit a sage (7.1), or a jewelry shop (7.2), or the Adventurer's Guild (7.3). Or some combination of these.

### **7.1: The Wise One**

If the adventurers know a sage, they can go there and find similar information to the below. Otherwise, whoever they ask for ideas sends them to Cyleria, near Oghma's temple.

*As you near Cyleria's, you wonder how such terrible things could happen on this sunny day, turning it so ugly. But perhaps this Cyleria can help brighten your day. Although there is no sign above the building, a small sign on the door hints this may be the right place: "All who seek knowledge must show gratitude." You enter a brightly decorated room—the far wall is brilliant orange, the left wall sky blue, the opposite one emerald green. A huge window fills the wall near the door. The lit-up room is full of books on tables, chairs, the floor, everywhere. In the midst of the papers, you can easily pick out Cyleria. She is dressed in flowing robes of even more colors of the spectrum. She rises from the floor and greets you. "You seek knowledge?"*

**Cyleria, female human, C9, specialty priest of Oghma.** She will not cast spells or accompany the adventurers, etc.

When the adventurers show or describe the rings to her, she dives into a pile of books.

*"I think I can find something in one of these books. They look like the work of that jeweler...what is his name? A-ha! Right where I thought it would be. See?" She proffers the book to the party. "Right here. This script looks a lot like this. These were made by Morius Hans. Of course. I'm sure you want to find him now. Let me think for a moment. Hans' Glittering Gemstones...where is it located?"*

After a few moments thought (actually, a prayer to Oghma), she writes directions to Hans' store.

Cyleria does not respond to any inquiries about the sign on the door or offerings of money directly to her. A PC who is looking for a way to make a donation in exchange for this information will notice a gold bowl near the doorway. Any PC who does not offer a donation will suffer a -1 penalty to her/his primary skills for the remainder of the adventure.

## **7.2: Hans' Glittering Gemstones**

*Following Cyleria's directions, you find yourselves barely in the fringes of the merchant district. You don't see a gem or jewelry store anywhere. You retrace the last few directions a couple times to be sure you have followed the directions exactly. You still end up at the same two-story stone building. It is not a store.*

If the PCs decide to knock anyway, a few minutes later an elderly dwarf slowly opens the door. If the PCs ask if he knows Hans of Hans' Glittering Gemstones, he nods. He is Hans. This used to be his store, but he retired a few years ago and decided to keep the place as a home. He likes that it's stone.

**Morius Hans, male dwarf, F2.** Hans' memory is very deteriorated. When asked about the rings, he invites the adventurers in. If they have a ring or drawing to show him:

*Hans squints closely at the ring/drawing. "Hmmm...this looks familiar. I probably did it.*

*How did you know anyway? Let's see if I can find a note of it somewhere. You people will be glad I have always kept good notes on all my work." He pulls out a large chest filled with papers, books, and assorted items, and starts shuffling through them. Papers fly through the air, books thump to the floor.*

Roleplay this encounter! Hans might say things like, "Nope, not that job." "Say, look at the fine engraving I did on this bracelet" (while showing a diagram to a PC). Some of these could launch into longer stories. "To get the gems for this ring, what an adventure that was. Course that was many years ago. Let me tell you about it." "That reminds me of the time we kids raided an orcish hideout...." "Here are my notes on Lady DeVillars' ruby necklace. Know how much she paid for that? Well, she didn't pay; someone else paid." "Here it is! No, that's a T and a D. Not what they want." Etc. It takes at least an hour for Hans to find the right papers. He has over 50 years worth of papers, notes, and books in the chest.

He finally finds a diagram of the engraving. He squints at the paper, compares it to the ring, back and forth. Finally, he pronounces that he has it. Attached to the paper is a contract. It states that the sum of 2000 gold pieces will be paid for 10 copies of the attached ring, plus 100 gold pieces for the design. 10 various sized circles cover the rest of the page. At the bottom of the page are two signatures, Hans' and an illegible name, followed by "On behalf of the Scarlet Picaros."

If they don't have a drawing or an actual ring, Hans really can't help them, but tries to anyway. A verbal description just won't be good enough for him to connect in his memory. He spends the time as above, pulling out the trunk. He will go on and on until the PCs shut him up and leave. He will try to get them to stay (he's rather lonely), by saying that he's almost found it, he's sure it's the next piece of paper. But he does not find the information.

## **7.3 Adventurers' Guild**

*Although the door is open, the Adventurer's Guild appears deserted. Shortly, however, a young boy wearing an apron and carrying a broom comes out from a back room. When he notices you, he runs over to the group. "Hi! Have you been fighting? In the war? It's been so quiet around here since it started. It's not very exciting at all. I bet you guys are giving those*

*bad guys a fight for their lives. We're going to win aren't we? Can anyone tell me a story about it? I bet it's so exciting. Are you adventurers? Have you seen any dragons? Azoth once told me about an ancient blue dragon he fought! It was a great story. Someday I want to be just like him. But Daddy says I have to wait until I'm older. That'll be pretty soon. I'm almost eight now."*

Upon request (and after a story or two), Senth will take the group to the guild records' room. There they meet Peter, an elderly human. "Scarlet Picaros" rings a bell, but it will take him some time to find the right record book. While searching his books, he remembers why he recognizes the name.

*"I know why the name is familiar. They weren't from around here. Not the whole group anyway I think. They registered here though, I'm sure of it. I don't recall who was in that group, but they had a real strange story of ending the group. Made a few other groups paranoid for a while. Seems one of the men...don't recall his name...maybe when I find that list. Where is it? Anyway, the group was just great together. Everyone seemed to be good at something different. And they all got along pretty well. But a ways back, oh not long ago, maybe four, five years, one of 'em got a craving for a few more treasures than was his share. The group was okay with that for a bit because he was a pretty decent fighter and killed a good number of trolls and giants in their way. Then it was he wanted all the magic items they got. Even the musical stuff, or the scrolls, or an Elven sword that belongs in the hands of an Elf! Of course the others wouldn't stand to give him everything. So, he thought the rest was plotting to kill him. Got a little paranoid, you see. Thought they were going to steal off with all the treasure and leave none for him. He was none too quiet about what he thought they were going to do. The others, well, they weren't gonna do no such thing, but they couldn't convince him. So anyways, it just got rather intolerable and ended up breaking up the group. Everyone kinda lost their spirit I guess. So they all just went their ways. Ah, yes, here they are. The Scarlet Picaros. Oh, yes, dear Mist Carpley was in that group. And, Regart Wolfhand, and Dwebb. I didn't realize they were all in a group together. They never talk about it when they stop by here. Say, why are you folks interested in this old group anyways?"*

He shows a page in a book to the group, **Player Handout 5: The Scarlet Picaros**. Listed members include: ~~Gareth Elvenstone~~, Mist Carpley, Regart Wolfhand, Nadjin Lampin, hhhhhhh (something completely crossed out), Hilkana, ~~James Nodoor~~, Fenk Wabi, Jydwebb Jykartanth, Filhin Moork, and Drhin Vosque. The last three names are in a different handwriting. The completely crossed out name is Juliand Frutlay, but of course, the PCs don't know this. On the opposite page is a drawing and description of the rings. Peter does not know what happened to Gareth Elvenstone and James Nodoor. He does not know where any of them live, even those he knows. James will be very saddened to hear of Mist's death.

The PCs will not be able to find anyone in Raven's Bluff who knows Drhin Vosque or Fenk Wabi. Senth, however, knows Regart Wolfhand (she tells him stories) and will give the PCs directions to her house.

## Encounter 8—Firestarter

If the PCs did not go to the Adventurers' Guild, but pursue Regart Wolfhand from the book on Hilkana's desk, they eventually get directions to her house. In mage circles, she's fairly well-known. Any fire elementalist knows where she lives.

*You approach Regart Wolfhand's house via a narrow path in what seems like a small forest. You're still in town, yet it feels like the woods. Or at least, what you remember of the woods before the war began. Hasn't been much time for strolling beneath the trees this past year. The trees end abruptly at the door of a 2-story stone and wood house. Before anyone can even start to raise a hand to knock, the door flies open. A female elf dressed in the brightest scarlet you have ever seen dashes out. "Hello! Hello! Anna didn't say she was going to send an entire army detachment just to pick this up. But here it is." She thrusts a package at [insert PC's name here] and flies back into the house. A moment later, she returns, realizing you haven't moved. "I'm sorry. You did come for Anna's package didn't you? Oh, maybe not. How can I help you? Come in, come in. Just let me move a few books off the chairs."*

**Regart Wolfhand**, female Elf, W15, fire elementalist, does not know that some of her

friends died recently. When the PCs tell her about the deaths, she gets very upset and begins to cry. She can tell the PCs the following about herself, the Scarlet Picaros, and Juliand:

- She and the others who died were members of the Scarlet Picaros, an adventuring group. They must have gotten started 15 or 20 years ago. Members of the group were Gareth "The Truest" Elvenstone, Mist Carpley, Nadjin Lampin, Juliand Frutlay, Hilkana (she doesn't have a last name), James Nodoor, Fenk "The Geek" Wabi, Jydwebbdy "Dwebb" Jykartanth, Filhin "Shorty" Moork, and Drhin Vosque. Gareth and James died during different missions. She has not heard from Drhin, Juliand or Fenk since the group split up. The others are/were in and around Raven's Bluff.
- Most of their adventures were mundane—clearing out orcs and trolls for various towns, for instance. They did visit a few dungeons over the years. Once, after Gareth died, they traveled to Myth Drannor, the ancient Elven city.
- About 4 years ago, Juliand became paranoid. At first, he just wanted a larger share of the magical treasure. He always wanted the magical items the party found, whether they were meant for fighters or not. Gradually, he began insisting that everyone else was stealing treasure before they divided it up. Nothing any of them could say would convince him otherwise. He seemed to be jealous of some of the others' feats, even though he was certainly their best fighter.
- Then he started saying the others were trying to kill him to get his magical items. This, of course, made the rest of the adventurers fairly upset. The arguments the group got into were getting more and more frequent. A few decided they were tired of the wandering life, and the group decided to disband.
- Mist and Regart came back to Raven's Bluff together. They deleted Juliand's name from the Adventurers' Guild's records.
- Over the last couple years, some other members of their group showed up in Raven's Bluff. All of them have been getting together now and again. They just went to the circus together the other day. Regart loaned Hilkana a book that day, *Firestarter, Or the Lost Spells of the Efreeti*.

Dwebb had promised to stop by later today with some spell components he had hunted up for her.

- Regart did not know that Juliand was in Raven's Bluff as well. She is greatly surprised at how twisted his jealousy has become, if this is indeed his work. Perhaps it's someone else from their past, however. You know how many evil people a good group of adventurers can alienate.
- The group had the rings made about three years after they began as a group. All of them always wore the rings. They tried to get Juliand's back when the group broke up, but he insisted he had lost it anyway. The rest of them, however, continued to wear their rings always. She is wearing hers and will show it to the PCs. It is identical to the other rings.
- She's been working on one of the spells from *Firestarter*. So far, she has not gotten it to work. She will not under any circumstances be able to teach any of the spells in this book to any PC. She has been studying the book for years and has only just begun any attempts at replicating the spells.
- She will gladly accept if the PCs volunteer to guard her (give the PCs a chance to volunteer!). Otherwise, she will suggest hiring the PCs to guard her at the house until Juliand is caught. After hearing the PCs stories of the other deaths, she is quite worried about her fate. Juliand—or whomever—is surely coming after her next. She is exceedingly thankful that the PCs found her first. All she can offer for this is to teach spellcasting PCs a spell or two (see treasure summary for details).

If the PCs accept Regart's offer of employment, Encounter 9 Option B happens around dusk.

## Encounter 9—The Final Battle

### **Option A: If the PCs have not gone to Regart's or declined to guard her.**

After the PCs leave the final site, give them time to decide what to do next—file a report, go back to the rooming house, recheck a site, etc. If they missed something at a site and have time to return, allow them to do so then continue with this encounter. Otherwise, describe them heading where ever they are going. Along the street...

*Suddenly, you find an imposing group of people in front of you. As you wonder if this is the obligatory thug attack, one man steps towards you. He's tall, dark, and menacing, with a brilliant red cloak swirling around him. Could this be the "witness" from the Harbour View Inn? "So, you couldn't leave well enough alone, could you?" he thunders out. "I gave you one opportunity to join but you refused. Maybe you were on your way to join us in the last death? Yes? Then I shall offer again. Join us or...die!"*

No matter what the PCs say in reply, Juliand's minions begin fighting. When half the minions have gone down, the rest make a morale check. Those who fail surrender to the PCs. He hired the mage and the cleric because he was worried about running into the PCs. He also knew that Regart might be a little more formidable than his other victims. The others had mostly given up their adventuring skills, but Regart is still throwing fireballs.

**Option B: If the PCs are guarding Regart:**

Juliand and his minions arrive at Regart's house as evening approaches. His plan is to burn down the house, hoping that it will appear as though the fire elemental was caught in a misfired spell. Regart does not join the fight. To get her mind off her friends' deaths, she has immersed herself in her laboratory working on that spell. She is oblivious to the outside world. Determine where each PC is around the house at this time. Juliand's group approaches the house from the street. They will get as close to the house as they can. If they get to the house without the PCs challenging them, the fighters begin pouring oil around and on the house.

In response to whatever challenge is offered...

*One stands out from the rest. He's tall, dark, and menacing, with a brilliant red cloak swirling around him. "So, you couldn't leave well enough alone, could you?" he thunders out. "I gave you one opportunity to join but you refused. You can still help us in this last death. I shall offer again. Join us or. . .die!"*

No matter what the PCs say in reply, Juliand's minions begin fighting. When half the minions have gone down, the rest make a morale check. Those who fail surrender to the PCs. He hired the mage and the cleric because he was worried about

running into the PCs. He also knew that Regart might be a little more formidable than his other victims. The others had mostly given up their adventuring skills, but Regart is still throwing fireballs.

**Juliand Frutlay, human male F14:** Int Average (but insane at the moment); AL CE; AC 6 (Dex only, no armor); MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 4; #AT 5/2; Dmg 1d10 +6 (2-handed sword +2); SA hasted; SD 10 stonelines (He paid a 13<sup>th</sup>-level wizard to cast this earlier in the day.); MR nil; Dex 18; Str 18/39; SZ M; ML 20.

6', 200#, black unkempt hair, black eyes, black clothes, a scarlet cloak. His intent really is not to kill the PCs; he only wanted to kill the rest of his adventuring group.

Equipment: 2-handed sword +2. Ring of *Quickness* (if used, Juliand will be hasted for 5 rounds; he will also appear striped a bright yellow and red).

**Tier 1 (4-13 total levels)**

Juliand sends his minions to fight. If they are defeated, he surrenders. If someone attacks him, the guards will intercede and try to protect Juliand, keeping the PCs from Juliand if possible. If someone manages to get past the others (e.g., invisible, flying from behind, etc.), Juliand stands there looking invincible until his stonelines are gone, then attacks, or surrenders if he is the only one left. He will not use the ring.

**Juliand's Guards, human F1 (5).** AL CE; AC 5 (chain); MV 12; hp 9; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +1 flail; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12.

Equipment: Flail, chain mail.

**Bolingarth, Priest of Bane, hm P3.** AL CE; AC 5 (chain); MV 12; hp 17; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +1 flail; SA spells; SD spells; MR nil; SZ M; ML 15.

Spells: 1<sup>st</sup> level—*sanctuary*, *cause light wounds*. 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*heat metal*.

Equipment: Flail, chain mail.

**Tier 2 (14-25 total levels)**

Juliand sends his minions to fight. If they are defeated, he surrenders. If someone attacks him, the guards will intercede and try to protect Juliand, keeping the PCs from Juliand if possible. If someone manages to get past the others (e.g.,

invisible, flying from behind, etc.), Juliand stands there looking invincible until his stonemarks are gone, then attacks, or surrenders if he is the only one left. He will not use the ring.

**Juliand's Guards, human F3 (5).** AL CE; AC 5 (chain); MV 12; hp 23; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +1 flail; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12.

Equipment: Flail, chain.

**Bolingarth, Priest of Bane, hm P4.** AL CE; AC 5 (chain); MV 12; hp 23; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +1 flail; SA spells; SD spells; MR nil; SZ M; ML 15.

Spells: 1<sup>st</sup> level—*sanctuary, cause light wounds (x2)*. 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*heat metal, hold person*.

Equipment: Flail, chain mail.

**Jacin, hf W3.** AL CE; AC 2 (armor and dex); MV 12; hp 9; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 staff; SA spells; SD spells; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12.

Spells: 1<sup>st</sup> level—*armor (precast), color spray*. 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter*.

Equipment: Staff.

### **Tier 3 (26-37 total levels)**

Juliand enters the fight in the third round of combat unless his stonemarks are removed before then.

**Juliand Frutlay, hm F14:** Int Average (but insane at the moment); AL CE; AC 6 (Dex only, no armor); MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 4 (with 2-handed sword +2); #AT 5/2; Dmg 1d10 +6 (2-handed sword +2); SA hasted; SD 10 stonemarks; MR nil; Dex 18; Str 18/39; SZ M; ML 20.

Will surrender if under 25 hit points or when rest of party has been defeated.

Equipment: *two-handed sword +2. Ring of quickness* (if used, Juliand will be *hasted* for 5 rounds; he will also appear striped a bright yellow and red).

**Juliand's Guards, human F3 (4).** AL CE; AC 5 (chain); MV 12; hp 23; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +1 flail; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12.

Equipment: Flail, chain mail.

**Bolingarth, Priest of Bane, hm P4.** AL CE; AC 5 (chain); MV 12; hp 23; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg

1d6 +1 flail; SA spells; SD spells; MR nil; SZ M; ML 15.

Spells: 1<sup>st</sup> level—*sanctuary, cause light wounds (x2)*. 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*heat metal, hold person*.

Equipment: Flail, chain mail.

**Jacin, hf W3.** AL CE; AC 2 (armor and dex); MV 12; hp 9; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 staff; SA spells; SD spells; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12.

Spells: 1<sup>st</sup> level—*armor (precast), color spray*. 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter*.

Equipment: Staff.

### **Tier 4 (38-56 total levels)**

**Juliand Frutlay, hm F14:** Int Average (but insane at the moment); AL CE; AC 6 (Dex only, no armor); MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 4; #AT 5/2; Dmg 1d10 +6 (2-handed sword +2); SA hasted; SD 10 stonemarks; MR nil; Dex 18; Str 18/39; SZ M; ML 20.

Will surrender when rest of party defeated.

Equipment: *two-handed sword +2. Ring of quickness* (if used, Juliand will be *hasted* for 5 rounds; he will also appear striped a bright yellow and red).

**Juliand's Guards, human F4 (5).** AL CE; AC 5 (chain); MV 12; hp 28; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +1 flail; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12.

Equipment: Flail, chain mail.

**Bolingarth, Priest of Bane, hm P5.** AL CE; AC 5 (chain); MV 12; hp 25; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +1 flail; SA spells; SD spells; MR nil; SZ M; ML 15.

Spells: 1<sup>st</sup> level—*sanctuary, cause light wounds (x2)*. 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*heat metal, hold person (x2)*. 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*dispel magic*.

Equipment: Flail, chain mail.

**Jacin, hf W5.** AL CE; AC 2 (armor and dex); MV 12; hp 14; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (staff); SA spells; SD spells; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12.

Spells: 1<sup>st</sup> level—*armor (precast), color spray, magic missile (x2)*. 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter, stinking cloud*. 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*lightning bolt*.

Equipment: Staff.

## **Tier 5 (57+ total levels)**

**Juliand Frutlay, hm F14:** Int Average (but insane at the moment); AL CE; AC 6 (Dex only, no armor); MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 4; #AT 5/2; Dmg 1d10 +6 (2-handed sword +2); SA hasted; SD 10 stonemarks; MR nil; Dex 18; Str 18/39; SZ M; ML 20.

Will surrender if everyone else is dead/defeated in his party.

Equipment: *two-handed sword* +2. *Ring of quickness* (if used, Juliand will be *hasted* for 5 rounds; he will also appear striped a bright yellow and red).

**Juliand's Guards, human F6 (6).** AL CE; AC 5 (chain); MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 13; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6 +5 flail—specialized; SA hasted; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12. Str 18.

Equipment: Flail, chain mail.

**Bolingarth, Priest of Bane, hm P7.** AL CE; AC 5 (chain); MV 12; hp 29; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +1 flail; SA spells; SD spells, Pro from Fire—84 pts; MR nil; SZ M; ML 15.

Spells: 1<sup>st</sup> level—*sanctuary, cause light wounds* (x2). 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*heat Metal, hold person* (x2). 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*dispel magic, protection from fire* (precast). 4<sup>th</sup> level—*free action*.

Equipment: Flail, chain mail.

**Jacin, human female W7.** AL CE; AC 2 (armor and dex); MV 12; hp 14; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (staff); SA spells; SD spells, Minor Globe; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12.

Spells: 1<sup>st</sup> level—*armor* (precast), *color spray, magic missile* (x2). 2<sup>nd</sup> level—*Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter, stinking cloud*. 3<sup>rd</sup> level—*lightning bolt, slow*. 4<sup>th</sup> level—*minor globe of invulnerability* (precast).

Equipment: Staff.

The PCs can recover 100gp per tier and the equipment the minions carried. None of it is magical.

If, after capturing Juliand, any PC looks at his hands specifically for another ring, one is found on his right hand. Juliand will protest vehemently if the PCs attempt to take it from him. If they do, he will make note of this at Adrian's office. It would not be unusual for the PCs to take it from him on the way back to the office, as long as they turn it in as evidence.

## **Encounter 10—Adrian's Office**

**Adrian Karma, human male W10.** Stats unnecessary.

Spells 1<sup>st</sup>—*color spray*; 2<sup>nd</sup>—*ESP* (x2); 4<sup>th</sup>—*stoneskin* (precast 8 skins); 5<sup>th</sup>—*teleportation*. If attacked, he will teleport to the Guard station next door and come back with a large patrol.

When the PCs arrive back at Adrian's office, he asks for a full report of the day's activities. If the PCs took the engraved rings, Juliand's sword, and anything else as evidence, Adrian will ask for them. They will be returned to each person's family unless needed as evidence in the trial against Juliand. Regart will want the spell components.

If the PCs took Nadjin's wedding ring, James told his wife and she reported it to the City Guard. Adrian will bluntly ask for the ring. Adrian can use his *ESP* spell, or if the PC thief has a *ring of mind shielding* or a mind protection spell up, Adrian can call in a high level mage to help with the interrogation. Neither will hesitate to cast *dispel magic* upon the group (requiring saving throws for potions perhaps). The ring is not magical; it has *Nystul's magic aura* cast upon it. Nadjin told his wife that it was magical and would help protect him from evil. The point is that this is his wedding ring, not something the PCs should have taken.

Juliand will tell Adrian if his ring has been taken (he would say stolen) and Adrian will sternly ask for it back. If the PCs pretend innocence or refuse to turn it over, Adrian will find a way to detect who has it (as above). Then the ring will be taken and will not be given back to the PCs as treasure. Instead, the families decide to give it to Regart.

If the PCs refuse to give the rings back, they will be arrested. Guards will escort the party to Judge Hangman, whose powers provide him with the truth. Any uninvolved PC will not be punished. According to Raven's Bluff laws, the PCs involved will be sentenced to 1 year hard labor.

PLEASE NOTE: If the PCs broke other laws, such as prohibitions against harmful magic, those laws may be brought up. However, if these actions occurred during the fights, they would be acquitted since it was in defense of the city and/or citizens.

If Juliand is dead, Adrian will ask the PCs to contribute enough money and magic to have him

raised. If they choose not to help, all the items donated as rewards will go towards this instead of towards the party. They were warned in the beginning to bring any suspects in alive and were expressly given orders to not kill.

## Conclusion: The Rewards

*A few days later, you receive a message from the City. It is a letter from Adrian thanking you again for your help.*

*"A number of items have turned up as rewards for your efforts. Mr. Mooney sent over something on behalf of the family and friends of Filhin and Nadjin. The Carpley family sent over an unusual item Mist picked up during her adventuring days. Kiopli sent a beautiful rug from his shop. Juliand's ring and sword were confiscated upon the guilty verdict and given to the families as reparation. Of course, they can never cover the anguish these families are now suffering. They requested we donate the sword to the Temple of Denier, because of Hilkana."*

GM NOTE: Skip the next sentence if the PCs stole Juliand's ring and did not return it when asked.

*"And they decided to offer you his ring, which is magical."*

*"Regart Wolfhand, is also terribly thankful for she was next in line. As a wizard of some power, she has offered to teach any spellcasters two spells. Jydwebbdy apparently had no family but he did have two cats and a dog. My friend Selphiras has been taking care of them and looking for a new owner. She says they are very friendly albeit rather spoiled. If any of you would like a new pet ..."*

*"[if they did not investigate the rings] By the way, the engraving on the ring stood for their adventuring group, the Scarlet Picaros."*

*"I hope to see you in my office soon. [signed] Adrian Karma"*

If the PCs met neither Peter nor Regart, Adrian can relate the complete story of the Scarlet Picaros for any interested parties. Regart and Juliand would have provided the necessary information.

When the PCs go to Adrian's office, they also learn that a priest of Denier has offered to copy

anyone's traveling spellbook. The PC may ask at the temple for The One of Many Names. The Carpley reward also includes a mask worth 2,500 gp. Adrian warns anyone interested in the two cats and the dog that these are pets, not adventurers or fighters.

## The End

### Experience Point Summary

Experience is now being calculated as follows for Living City events.

1. Sum the experience listed below for objectives.
2. Assign discretionary role-playing experience (0-500 points). These should reward accurate character portrayal throughout the adventure, not just how well the PC interacted socially.
3. Finally, multiply the total by the tier according to this chart:

Levels 6-13	Tier 1
Levels 14-25	Tier 2
Levels 26-37	Tier 3
Levels 38-56	Tier 4
Levels 57+	Tier 5

PCs should get the experience points of the tier for which they qualify, regardless of which tier is actually played. For example, if you have a Tier 3 group and you have to bump the combats by one tier to challenge them, they still get the experience points for a Tier 3 group, not for a Tier 4 group.

#### Encounter 1—Call to Action

Asking for information on all four deaths 50

#### Encounter 2—City Watch Post 34

Getting information from Argon 25  
Examining Mist's effects 25  
Figuring out "the truth" 50

#### Encounter 3—At the Circus

Searching Filhin's tent 25  
Figuring out "the truth" (Filhin) 50  
Figuring out "the truth" (Nadjin) 50

#### Encounter 4—Jydwebbdy at Post 154

Examining Dwebb's body 25  
Figuring out "the truth" 50

#### Encounter 5—Kiopli's Floors

Searching Hilkana's desk 25

Figuring out "the truth" 50

### Encounter 6—Harbour View Inn

Protecting Mrs. Handy during the fight 100  
Defeating the summoned monsters 100  
Searching the room 25

### Encounter 9—The Final Battle

Defeating Juliand's minions 75  
Capturing Juliand alive 50

### Encounter 10—Adrian's Office

Turning over **all** evidence 50  
(rings, notes, circus tickets, whatever the PCs  
picked up during the adventure)  
If there was not enough time to roleplay the final  
encounter, assume the PCs would share  
information and inform Adrian of the acrobat's  
death. However, be sure they turn over **ALL**  
evidence.

### Other

Realizing victims were connected by more than the  
rings 100

Total Experience for Objectives: 925 xp  
Roleplaying Experience: 0-500 xp

**Total Possible Experience: 1,425 xp**

For Tier 2: 2,850 xp  
For Tier 3: 4,275 xp  
For Tier 4: 5,700 xp  
For Tier 5: 7,125 xp

## Legal Penalties

If the PCs were arrested during the adventure mete  
out the following consequences. Note that priests of  
civic religions cannot be prosecuted in the regular  
court system but rather are dealt with in the  
Clerical Circle. The Circle will impose similar  
fines.

### Encounter 5—Kiopli's Floors

Arson: if a fire was started by a PC, there will be a  
2000 gp fine. If the fire was magically produced,  
there will be an additional 1,000 gp fine for using  
harmful magic within the city.

### Encounter 6—Harbour View Inn

Trespassing: the PCs will have to pay a fine of  
1,000 gp each for anyone who entered the Harbour  
View Inn after Mrs. Handy asked them to leave.

Breaking and entering: the PCs will have to pay a  
fine of 1,000 gp each for anyone who entered  
Juliand's room after Mrs. Handy asked them to  
leave.

### Encounter 8—Adrian's Office

Larceny: if any items were not given to Adrian  
when he requested them, the PCs who have the  
items will be sentenced to one year's hard labor.  
Their characters may not play again for one  
calendar year from this date.

## Treasure Summary

If it's not on this list, the PCs cannot keep it

### Services and non-magical rewards

- City Guard payment: 100 gp per PC, plus 5 gp  
per party member per minion brought in alive.
- 100 gp per tier and equipment carried by  
Juliand's minions (flails, staff, mail).
- Regart Wolfhand will teach all spellcasting  
party members any two spells of their choice  
from *The Player's Handbook*, *Tome of Magic*,  
or *The Forgotten Realms Adventure Book*. The  
spells must be of a level the party member can  
cast. If the player goes up a spell-casting level  
as a result of this adventure, the spells learned  
may be of this new level. Alternatively, Regart  
will inscribe one spell of a higher level than the  
player can cast (from the above books) into the  
caster's spell book and offer to help the caster  
learn it in the future. Regart cannot teach spells  
of the water element.
- The Temple of Denier will copy traveling  
spellbooks (one per adventurer).
- The two cats and the dog are pets, not  
adventurers or fighters.
- Carpley reward: A carved Maztican mask  
worth 2,500 gp. The mask is a brightly painted  
and elaborately carved Acanthurus  
leucosternon fish (commonly called a powder  
blue tang). It is non-magical.
- Kiopli's reward: A black raven forms the  
centerpiece of this 12' x 15' blue rug.

### Magical items

- Mrs. Handy's ribbon: *Silver Ribbon of Torm* (given to specific adventurer as described in encounter 7)
- Carpley reward: *Musical Menagerie from Merty's Marvelous Marketplace* (Mist was a bard)
- Mr. Mooney's reward: *Eldath's Origami Peace Crane*
- Juliand Frutlay's ring: *Quirky Ring of Quickness*

### **Fame Award**

1 Point in City Watch

Allowing Mrs. Handy to be killed by the summoned monsters results in 1 infamy point (2 if she is not raised).

### **Quirky Ring of Quickness**

Once per adventure, the wearer of this ring can move and attack at double normal rates for five rounds. The effect is identical to the wizard spell *haste*, but this effect can be produced by command, not by spellcasting. Unlike *haste*, the user ages two years with every use. The ring also ages, even faster than the user. It will crumble to dust by the start of the GEN CON® 1999 Game Fair. While using the ring, the wearer's clothing and skin becomes striped bright yellow and red. The ring is formed by two intertwined strands, one of gold and one of silver. Engraved on the gold, in a repeated pattern, is ≈ $\mathfrak{J}$  ≈, for the *Scarlet Picaros*, a disbanded adventuring company.

### **Musical Menagerie from Merty's Marvelous Marketplace**

Buried inside this magical, five-pound leather bag are all the instruments any bard could ever want! By simply reaching inside, you can produce any of the following (roll 1d10):

- 1) lute
- 2) harp
- 3) falcon (hp 8, THAC0 19, dmg 1-4)
- 4) harmonica
- 5) horn
- 6) coiled python (hp 6, THAC0 20, dmg 1-6)
- 7) tuba
- 8) bagpipes
- 9) fiddle

10) an angry giant rat (4hp, THAC0 20, dmg 1-4).

The three animals attack the nearest creature.

While none of the instruments are specially powered, the menagerie allows the minstrel to have the proper sound for every occasion. (Items magically reappear in bag after use or death. If an instrument is broken, it is not replaced.)

### **Eldath's Origami Peace Crane**

Once per adventure, the owner may open this white paper figure by gently pulling down the wings. Instantly, a visible white aura covers a 60' radius. All within must save vs. spells at or be overcome with feelings of peacefulness. All in combat will lay down their weapons (including spell components and holy symbols). All who save will notice their comrades and opponents who have withdrawn and may choose to also draw back. The protection of Eldath will give anyone who withdraws +4 to AC and saves. If attacked, one who has withdrawn may choose to attack back on the next round but will only fight to subdue. Peacefulness radiates the area as the conflict is resolved peacefully and truthfully. When all have withdrawn, those affected will automatically agree to settle the dispute at a trial in a court of law in the nearest city. Less intelligent creatures will submit to being turned over to the Watch (or similar entity). Undead are not affected by the aura.

The peace crane can be used only by those who believe in peace before fighting. That is, it may not be used by fighters, followers of Tempus, or others who "live by the sword." When possessed by a follower of Eldath, the figure is immune to fire.

### **Silver Ribbon of Torm**

Gives the wearer +1 protection while immediately guarding or otherwise protecting an innocent NPC. The NPC must be present. This ribbon may not be given or traded away.

## **Player Handout 1**

### **Unusual deaths of the past few days**

1. Mist Carpley—next door, at this watch post
2. Unknown—employee at Mooney's Circus
3. Jydwebbdy—hunting accident, Guard Post 154
4. Hilkana—Kiopli's Floors (a rug shop in the merchant district)

## **Player Handout 2**

### **Statement given by Gamihn Brount on the death of Mist Carpley**

"I was sitting on this bench next to the deceased. Well, she wasn't deceased then of course. Minding my own business. A couple of men from the butchers were standing nearby. I guess they were on break. They were talking about the fresh chickens that had come in. The lady next to me, she looked real tired and nodded off. She was dreaming that she was a chicken on a farm. She dreamt that the farmer caught her and put her neck on the chopping block. Just then, she was about to lose hold of her belongings, so I thought I should wake her up. I touched her neck; she had slumped over a bit, you now, with her head down. The shock must have been so great that she died instantly thinking she really was having her head chopped off. It's just awful. I just didn't want her to drop all of her belongings. There are plenty of thieves around here you know."

*Gamihn Brount*

### Player Handout 3

#### **Ring Description**

The ring you are looking at is formed by two intertwined strands, one of gold and one of silver. Engraved on the gold, in a repeated pattern, you see:



The silver section is not engraved.

**Player Handout 4**

**Hilkana's note**

***Dear Kiopli,  
The temple has immediate need of me today and tomorrow. I'm terribly sorry for the inconvenience my absence will cause. Please be assured that I will work extra the following days to get the accounts to date.***

***Hilkana***

## **Player Handout 5**

### **The Scarlet Picaros**

Group Name: *The Scarlet Picaros*

City: *none*

Patron: *none*

Members:

~~*Gareth Elvenstone*~~

*Mist Carpley*

*Regart Wolfhand*

~~*James Nodoor*~~

*Nadjin Lampin*

hhhhhhhhhhhhhh

*Hilkana*

Fenk Wabi

Jydwebbdy Jykartanth

Filhin Moork

Drhin Vosque

## **DM Handout 1: Monsters for Encounter 6**

(taken from *The Monstrous Manual*)

### **Grell Philosopher**

The grell is a fearsome carnivore that looks like a giant brain with a vicious beak and 10 dangling tentacles, each 6 feet long. Some grell are rogues, while others live in family units. The "civilized" grell is a hive or colony creature, much like an ant or a bee, but far more intelligent, arrogant, and dangerous.

Grell have a weird language composed of bird-like squawks and chirps, combined with tentacular motion and a limited telepathy with other grell. Other creatures cannot learn the grell language, and they would not deign to learn the language of "lesser beings" (a synonym for "food" in their language).

The grell's most common strategy is to use its natural levitation ability to hide in the upper reaches of large chambers. It can then drop silently on a victim, who suffers a -3 penalty to surprise rolls when attacked in this way.

Any hit against a tentacle (AC 4) renders it unusable, but subtracts no hit points from the grell's total. Grell regenerate lost or damaged tentacles in 1-2 days, and are immune to electrical attacks.

Grell use strategy and tactics in their battles, and can attack more than one opponent each round. They are intelligent enough to allocate their tentacle attacks in an advantageous way. They use their beaks only against paralyzed prey.

### **Shambling Mound**

Like other breeds of dangerous plants, these are not at all defenseless. Some are the unnatural results of arcane influences, while others may have evolved naturally.

Shambling mounds, or shamblers, appear to be heaps of rotting vegetation. They are actually an intelligent form of plant life, with a roughly humanoid shape, and a brain-like control center in its "chest" area. A shambler has a 6-foot girth on its lower half, tapering to about 2 feet at its "head."

Shambling mounds are found only in regions of dense rainfall and vegetation. Dismal swamps, marshes, and rain forests are their favorite living areas, but some wet, subterranean places also serve as shambler lairs. They are solitary beasts, rarely living in the same area with other shamblers -- usually only in areas where the food source is constant, near famous ruins, or abandoned gold mines.

Shamblers are almost totally silent and invisible in their natural surroundings; opponents suffer a -3 penalty to surprise rolls. A shambler often lies in a shallow bog, waiting for some creature to walk onto it, then it attacks. The creatures are excellent swimmers as well, and they have been known to sneak into the camps of unsuspecting travelers at night.

A shambling mound attacks with huge, arm-like appendages; a victim hit by both arms in the same round is entangled in the creature's slimy vines and rotting vegetable matter. Entangled creatures suffocate in the slime in 2d4 rounds unless the shambler is killed, or the victim breaks free with a successful bend bars/lift gates roll.

Because of the vegetation which covers its critical inner body, the shambling mound is immune to blunt weapons, and takes only half damage from piercing and slashing weapons. The creature is immune to fire, and takes half or no damage from cold, depending on whether it makes its saving throw. Lightning actually causes a shambler to grow, adding 1-foot to its height, as well as 1 HD and appropriate hit points, for each lightning-based attack used against it.

Because of the location of its brain, the shambler cannot be killed by lopping off its head or limbs. The remaining vines along the torso join together to form a new extremity within one round. Only when enough of the shambling mound has been hacked away, will it finally die. A wounded shambler need only rest in a damp clump of foliage to heal; it rises again in 12 hours, fully healed, and probably angry.

Since shamblers gain power from electrical attacks, there are rumors of shambling mounds with 20 or more Hit Dice. Since they often live in the same areas as will-o'-wisps, there may be truth to such rumors, and giant shamblers may inhabit deep, dark swamps and jungles.

### **Gauth Beholder-kin**

The Gauth is a relative of the beholder that feeds on magic. Its spherical body is 5 feet in diameter and brown in color, mottled with purple and gray. Located in the center of the gauth's forward hemisphere is a

large central eye surrounded by a ring of smaller eyes that are protected by ridges of tough flesh. These secondary body eyes provide the creature with normal vision in lighted areas and infravision to 90 feet. On the underside is the beast's fearsome mouth with its accompanying cluster of four feeding tendrils, while the top is adorned with a crown of six eye stalks. Attacks on the creature hit as follows:

<u>Roll</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>AC</u>	<u>Hit Points</u>
01-85	Body	0	As listed
86-90	Central Eye	7	Part of Body
91-00	Eyestalk/Tendrils	2	6 hit points

While the gauth is similar to the beholder, its ability to feed on the energy of magical objects makes it even more dangerous in some ways.

When a gauth moves into combat, it begins to glow, much as if it were the object of a faerie fire spell, to attract the attention of its foes. A creature that meets the gaze of the central eye must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell, with a -2 penalty, or be affected as if the victim of a feeblemind spell.

If a gauth chooses to bite with its great maw, the sharp fangs inflict 3d4 points of damage. The four tendrils around the mouth can grab and hold victims as if they had a Strength of 18, but they can inflict no damage.

A gauth in combat can also employ its six eye stalks. These eyes have the following powers:

1. *Cause serious wounds* (as spell, 30-foot range).
2. *Repulsion* (as spell, 10-foot wide path, 40-foot range)
3. *Cone of cold* (as spell, inflicts 3d4 points of damage and has an area of effect 5 feet wide at the start, 50 feet long, and 20 feet wide at the base; this eye can be used only three times per day)
4. *Lightning bolt* (as spell, inflicts 4d4 damage with 80' range; this power can be used up to four times per day)
5. *Paralyzation* (as wand, 40-foot range, single target; only a dispel magic or the beholder's death can free the victim)
6. *Dweomer drain* (see below)

Perhaps the most feared of the gauth's powers, its dweomer drain, permits the gauth to drain charges from magical items. It has a 40-foot range and can be targeted on one individual per round. In addition to preventing one object from functioning for the duration of that round, this power drains one charge from one charged object. Permanent objects, such as magical swords, are rendered powerless for one round by this ability. Artifacts are not affected by the dweomer drain. The eye has no effect on spells that have been memorized (but not yet cast) and it will not break the concentration of a wizard. It does neutralize any spell cast by its target that round, however.

A dispel magic spell cast on any of the gauth's eye stalks prevents its use for 1d4 rounds. The central eye, any fully retracted eye stalks, the body's ability to glow, and the gauth's natural levitation are not subject to injury by such a spell.

If a gauth is slain, its magical energy dissipates. Usually, this is a harmless event, but there is a 2% chance that it is catastrophic, inflicting 4d4 points of damage to all creatures within 10 feet (no saving throw). Gauth are immune to their own powers and to those of other gauth. They have an unusual physiology that enables them to regenerate 1 hit point every two turns.

A gauth can survive by eating meat but it greatly prefers to devour magical objects. In some unknown manner, the creature is able to absorb magical energy and feed on it. Each turn that an object spends in the gauth's stomach causes it to lose one charge. A permanent object is rendered inoperative after one day (artifacts are not affected, nor do they provide sustenance). Magical objects that cannot be entirely digested by a gauth are spat out after they have been drained of all their power.