

The Value of a Miracle

A One-Round Living City Tournament

by Robert Wiese

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The hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?"

I said, "O Sovereign Lord, you alone know."

Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.' "

So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them.

Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live.' " So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army.

Ezekiel 37:1-10

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 capsulize 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.

Raise dead and resurrection spells are not available during this adventure. In fact, no priest spell above 2nd level is available to anyone, PC or NPC, unless specifically noted.

DM Background

This adventure involves the quest for a long-lost army of dwarves to help the city in its time of need. As usual, there are complications.

The PCs are summoned to City Hall, ostensibly for a mission in the upcoming counter-offensive that Lord Blacktree is planning. When they arrive, they meet Sidon and discover that they are being sent on what could be a wild goose chase. Sidon claims to have a vision of a remnant of the Kingdom of the Bright Sword. If these dwarves can be helped, then they would aid the city in return. He claims the vision is from Lathander, and he trusts it implicitly.

The wrinkle is that Sidon is an avatar of Lathander, and the whole mission is a test. The gods, particularly Lathander and Kelemvor, are not happy with the continued use of miraculous powers frivolously, especially in the raising of the dead. Kelemvor, god of the dead, is unwilling to lose so many from his demesnes; everyone dies, and just about everyone should stay dead. That's the way things work. These two powers have convinced the other gods of Faerun to cooperate with a little test to show the mortals what divine power is really about.

All the gods (including demi-human ones) have stopped granting spells to priests or paladins in the Vast, so all priests can only cast up to 2nd level spells. They are blocking the efforts of the few foreign gods to grant spells, so this prohibition applies to all priests no matter who they worship. Only specific notes about allowed higher-level spells override this condition.

Lathander comes to the city and tells of the vision of the dwarves. Then he leads the adventurers to the

place where they are, deep in the Underdark. Along the way there is an encounter which foreshadows the sacrifice that will be required later on. Once at the place of the dwarves, the PCs discover that they are naught but dried bones. They must make choices and sacrifices, but they can bring the dead dwarves to life for a time, and lead them to where the counter-offensive is taking place. The final scene is a mass combat fought using the mass combat rules from *Player's Option: Combat and Tactics*. These rules are summarized and are pretty easy to use.

This adventure contains five major scenes and some connecting information. You will be required to improvise occasionally, so know the flow of the plot as best as you can before running the adventure.

Player Introduction

This is kind of long, but I want to summarize the recent activities and mood swings of the populace, so that the adventurers can get into the mood. Describe the major points or read the whole, whichever you prefer.

The long war may finally be coming to a turning point. Since the first surprise attack many months ago, the enemy has somehow held the upper hand. Traitors in the government have been uncovered, including possibly Deputy Mayor Belanor Fenmarel himself, and still the enemy has pressed the advantage. Divinations on the enemy leader, Warlord Myrkyssa Jelan, and her plans have come to naught for reasons still unexplained. The city has grown more desperate as the siege has continued.

Recently, however, the port has started to bustle with activity as ships have made it through the pirate blockade, assisted apparently by the pirate captain Miriel Smith of the Sea Vixen, who once raided the city and in fact is known to have led the first pirate raid on the city. There is no accounting for pirate loyalties, though. Supplies have brought with them hope and the possibility of success.

The sudden appearance of wild magic zones across the city has not helped, either. These zones seem to be forming completely at random, and Minister of Wild Magic Glora Varro believes that they are the result of using too much magic in the defense of the city, though the attackers get their share of blame too. The zones do not seem to be forming in the enemy camps, though. Just in the city.

The latest piece of good fortune came last tenday, when spies for the Field General recovered enemy plans for a devastating assault on the wall,

perhaps a final effort. With these plans in hand, Lord Blacktree has begun a counter-offensive effort. The exact plans are highly secret, but word has spread that we will strike back once again and this time destroy the threat of the enemy army. Hope has resurged, and many adventurers have found themselves with secret assignments for the counter-offensive.

You too have been called to the office of City Hall, to meet with Lord Blacktree. You look forward to the upcoming assignment, though whether with feelings of excitement, dread, or reluctance only you can know.

Most of the above is background for setting the mood. The wild magic zones will be dealt with in another module (*A Walk on the Wildside*).

If you have priest characters in your party (or paladins who can cast priest spells), take the players aside and inform them of the following:

- Their gods are not granting them spells, so they can only cast 1st and 2nd level spells until further notice;
- No gods are granting spells to any priest in the city;
- This has the priests very worried, but they are keeping the matter quiet so as not to panic the people;
- The PCs have the discretion to tell their compatriots or not of this calamity.

Once the PCs go to City Hall, move to Scene One.

Scene One: The Mad Prophet

In this first scene, the PCs are called to City Hall and asked to go on a strange and rather desperate quest. When they arrive at City Hall, they can either have come together or meet just outside the door, or meet when they all enter the Acting Mayor's office. It does not matter which. Present the following:

You arrive to find City Hall a beehive of activity. People pass to and fro through the halls, and you can almost perceive the excitement and good cheer as something palpable. Soldiers, officials, menials, adventurers, and more fill your vision as you make your way through the halls to the Acting Mayor's office. Some you recognize, but they appear too preoccupied with their tasks to give you more than a greeting. You finally reach the Mayor's office and confront a clerk.

This is as good a time to make sure everyone is assembled as any. Give the players a chance to describe their characters to the others, and then have them called into the office.

The clerk's name is Stanley, and he is a recent replacement. The usual clerk, Formash, is home sick, and without clerical magic he has to heal the normal way. Stanley is friendly but a little unsure of his job responsibilities. Arvin is trying to work with him, but he does not have the hallmarks of a brilliant civil servant about him.

Within, the PCs find the Acting Mayor, Arvin Kothonos, Field General Lord Charles Blacktree, and a third man. Arvin, a man of 40-odd, dresses in expensive clothes and carries a rather portly frame with dignity. He is about 5' 9", with graying brown hair. Arvin wears a medallion of ESP, so if he ever thinks the PCs are hiding something from him he will use it.

Lord Blacktree is slim and muscular, about 5' 11" with dark brown hair. He is 39 years old. He is not wearing his armor now, but he looks very attractive in his uniform. He has a decided air about him, and despite his minor part in this discussion he wears an expression of intense interest. He bears no resemblance to the lazy fop of old.

The third man in the room is Sidon, the prophet (actually an avatar of Lathander). He cannot be detected in any way as other than a normal and slightly irrational human male. He looks to be in his mid-forties, with dirty-blondish hair and a mustache. He has clear green eyes which carry the look of a man who has seen visions; he does not focus on anyone when he speaks to them, but seems to look through them. His thin frame is covered in a simple robe.

Sidon is the focus of this scene, the center around which everything should revolve. He is intelligent and not at all crazy, but he plays his role as if he were a little fanatical. His desire is to introduce a little doubt into the minds of the PCs, so that they have to choose to accompany him on faith.

When the PCs enter the room, continue with:

"Come in," calls Acting Mayor Arvin Kothonos. "Welcome. You know Lord Blacktree, I assume. And this man is Sidon," he says indicating a priestly-looking man. "It is because of Sidon that we have called you here."

From here on, play out the interactions. Arvin will first ask Sidon to repeat his story, the gist of which is:

- Lathander has granted a vision to him which can help the city;

- He cannot describe the vision itself—there are no words for it;
- He saw in his vision a vast army of dwarves in a cavern, and as he watched they raised up a banner as if to signify that they were an army. (Note: the PCs may ask if the banner has been identified. If so, tell them that Caerln Rocksplitter, a dwarven sage, has identified it as belonging to a clan from the lost dwarven Kingdom of the Bright Sword.)
- These dwarves are being held captive in a foreign land and cannot free themselves. In exchange for help against their enemy, they will help the city against its enemy.
- The dwarves are imprisoned underground somewhere.
- The vision pulled back down a tunnel and Sidon saw a chamber with three statues carved into the wall. One was of a giant slug, one a female elf, and one a male elf. The poses seemed almost regal, but this is only an impression formed because of their facial expressions.

Sidon does not reveal that the dwarves are in the Underdark near the Kingdom of the Bright Sword unless the PCs cannot figure it out on their own. They have the clue of the banner.

Embellish according to your own style. Think televangelist, and increase in volume a little as you talk. Remember that Sidon's goal is to get them to come, not to scare them off.

Once Sidon has finished his plea, Arvin tells the PCs that the story sounds improbable but just could be true, and so it must be checked out. He has gathered information on various adventurers and has chosen this group for the job. Will they accept?

On the matter of payment, Arvin can offer 500 gp to find the site, and additional rewards (unspecified but large) if they succeed in bringing back the dwarven forces. Plus, he reminds them that on adventures sometimes treasures can be found by enterprising groups.

At this point (or when the topic comes up), Blacktree unrolls a map of the region with various markings showing troop placements, traps, and obstacles. He indicates a place on the map on the ride of a hill about 20 miles from the city. This is where the PCs should bring the dwarves. The counter-offensive will begin in seven days, so the PCs have until then to bring the dwarves to the indicated place. If they do not arrive a day early, the army will assume they are not coming and will take the field accordingly.

Now for the problem: Sidon does not know where the cave is. Well, he does, but he will claim not to, and there is no way to detect that he is lying (he's a god).

Depending on the tier, Arvin and Blacktree can provide some assistance:

Tier One

Arvin has made contact with Hathmar Blademark, a drow mercenary who has served the city before. Hathmar should know where the place is. The PCs can meet Hathmar at the inn of their choice as soon as it gets dark (about six hours, enough time to prepare for the journey). Go to Scene Two when they go to meet Hathmar.

Tier Two

Blacktree knows of an entrance to the Kingdom of the Bright Sword, but cannot offer any further help. He suggests that the PCs ask at the Dwarven temple in town or consult a sage on dwarven lore. There is one named Caerln Rocksplitter who could be helpful, and he has a home near the dwarven temple.

The Dwarven temple (make this up—it is really minor to the plot) or Caerln Rocksplitter can tell the PCs that there is a main passage through the Kingdom of the Bright Sword called the Trade Road, and that any dwarves would have fled along it for a while. There is a story of some dwarves fleeing further into the Underdark when Bright Sword fell, but no one has heard from them since. The “chamber of the three gods” must be a drow place; the priests here have never heard of it and there is no mention of it in the ancient annals.

Tyhe banner can be identified as that of a clan from the Kingdom of the Bright Sword, which fled the drow invasions and has not been heard from since.

The PCs may also wish to consult with a sage on the drow gods, for information on the place of the three gods that Sidon described. They can find one, Jorin, who is a human. He can identify the giant slug as Ghaunadaur, the male elf as Vhaeraun, and the female elf as Lolth. He does not know where the place of the statues is located, but he theorizes that it must be near the drow cities of the Underdark.

You can also bring in Hathmar at this time, if the PCs seem unable to get anything going. Go to Scene Two if they go to meet Hathmar, or to Scene Three if they go to the Underdark.

Tier Three

See the tier two information if the PCs cannot start anything on their own. At this level there should be some PCs who have been into the Kingdom of the

Bright Sword or the Underdark proper, and any entrance will eventually lead to the Trade Road. From there they have to guess.

Tier Four and Five

At this level Lathander/Sidon expects that they can find the place on their own, and so somehow only the information from the Dwarven temple is available if the PCs think to go there. The Mayor has not contacted Hathmar.

The PCs should be encouraged to think of possible solutions to their problem on their own. Here are some:

- They can think of asking Hathmar on their own. You can have him show up either before or after Scene Three, depending on if they are willing to leave the city without talking to him.
- Divinations: Some divination spells can point the PCs in the right direction once they get into the Underdark (anywhere will do). But they must be in the Underdark. They can get a single scroll for the necessary wizard spell from the Wizard's Guild if they don't have a wizard who can cast it, and of course priest spells are not available above 2nd level. The scroll is not part of the treasure of the module. Anyone attempting a divination gets the feeling that it might work if the caster were in the Underdark.
- Drow PCs: These characters know a way into the Underdark, and even past the Bright Sword parts to the drow parts. Of course they are not any more welcome among the drow than the other non-drow PCs are. They don't know where the chamber of the three gods is located, but might manage to find it if they can question some drow who live down there.

Any reasonable plan should work for getting them in the right direction once they get into the Underdark. If they speak to Hathmar and get the information from him before they descend, they are in better shape, but whenever the PCs get in trouble have Hathmar show up to provide a hint (for a cost). Hathmar shows up once for PCs tiers two-five, and can appear twice to help tier one PCs.

Once the PCs leave town, go to Scene Three. If they go to meet Hathmar before leaving town, go to Scene Two.

Scene Two: Hathmar Blademark

Note: Do not forget that Sidon/Lathander is traveling with the PCs. He is testing their characters, so he will occasionally ask them ethical and moral questions to liven up dull passages, but will not reveal himself for now. He is waiting until they reach the cave, where the real test begins.

This encounter involves the PCs' attempts to get the exact location of the chamber of the three gods from Hathmar, a mercenary drow who always seems to know the right piece of information at the right time, and always charges for it.

Hathmar Blademark, drow Swashbuckler
F(13)/W13: AL LN; AC -8; MV 18; hp 89; THAC0 3; #AT 5/2 with saber, he can use a second saber at no minuses if he is attacked or his opponent uses two weapons; Dmg 1d6+12; SA *Darkness* 3/d, *Faerie Fire* 3/d, spells; SD see contingency below; MR 76%; SZ M; ML 18.

Spells: 1st level—*color spray*, *charm person*, *detect magic*, *magic missile* x2, *phantasmal force*; 2nd level—*forget* x3, *invisibility*, *ESP*, *knock*; 3rd level—*fly*, *lightning bolt*, *fireball*, *haste*, *wraithform*, *clairvoyance*; 4th level—*fire shield*, *stoneskin* x2 (one precast for 11 attacks), *polymorph self*, *wall of fire*; 5th level—*cone of cold*, *feeblemind*, *passwall*, *teleport*, *wall of force*; 6th level—*contingency* (precast—teleports him and his equipment to safety if he loses more than 75% of his hit points), *geas*, *project image*.

Hathmar is a mercenary in every sense of the word. He is handsome as dark elves go, and carries himself with the flair of a true swashbuckler. He has a French-Germanic accent, if you can image such. He is always polite, especially to ladies. He is 5'3" tall, well-built, with the usual white hair and black skin of drow.

Play Hathmar as someone who knows he is immeasurably superior to everyone he meets, which in truth he is. He exhibits no fear, and nothing can make him lose his grand manners. He is also very mysterious, appearing from nowhere and disappearing as easily (especially in the Underdark).

If the PCs are meeting Hathmar at an inn in the city, he will show up about five minutes after they do. When he makes his entrance, present this:

You have been waiting for a few moments when suddenly a man appears at the doorway. It looks as if he has just appeared from nowhere. He nods in your

direction and then takes a seat in the corner, facing the room.

A waiter/waitress immediately approaches him for his order. The PCs are invited to join him once they move over, and the discussion begins. Hathmar will buy them a round of drinks, and a second once the deal has been concluded.

If the PCs have concluded Scene Three and are on their way to the Underdark, Hathmar follows them until they get into the underground regions, and then approaches them at their first camp. Present this:

Your camp in this underground place is damp, but you have made it this far. If your luck holds, you may meet the mysterious Hathmar Blademark and find out where this chamber of the three gods is located. As you ponder this and go about your chores, you feel a disturbance in the air. Suddenly a man appears, a drow wearing fine clothes and two swords at his belt. He looks at you with a sardonic expression, doffs his hat, bows, and says, "Hathmar Blademark at your service, adventurers."

The Deal

No matter where the PCs meet Hathmar, the scene will eventually reach the point where the matter at hand is discussed.

Hathmar will acknowledge anyone who recognizes him personally. He knows many adventurers, and has some surprising relationships with some, so do not be surprised at what the players throw at you.

Hathmar does know where the chamber of the three gods is located, but he will be very curious why the PCs want to go there. He can tell them how to get there and that it is a sacred place of the drow who worship Lolth, and that they will face lots of opposition if they try to get there.

In return for this information, he requires payment of 100 gp times the Tier of the group squared:

<u>Tier</u>	<u>Cost</u>
1	100 gp
2	400 gp
3	900 gp
4	1,600 gp
5	2,500 gp

This cost may seem small for people who know Hathmar, but the information is of minor importance and it will likely get the PCs killed anyway.

Hathmar and Sidon will not get along too well, but Hathmar will not be overtly hostile in a social

situation. Instead, he will drop subtle comments about Sidon which are insulting. Sidon will try to keep his tongue, but will in the end not take so much abuse and will start grumbling about the “dark elf demon.” This is just an act on Sidon’s part, to maintain the believability of his charade.

Once the PCs have the information, they can either:

- Leave the city—go to Scene Three
- Continue through the Underdark—go to Scene Four

Scene Three: Feed the People

Note: Do not forget that Sidon/Lathander is traveling with the PCs. He is testing their characters, so he will occasionally ask them ethical and moral questions to liven up dull passages, but will not reveal himself for now. He is waiting until they reach the cave, where the real test begins.

The PCs encounter a village of war refugees who have no food, and thus are starving. If they feed them, the PCs become increasingly hungry. It is a test of balancing the cost with the benefit.

The PCs get out of Ravens Bluff via the south gate with no problems at all. In fact, it seems as if there is no enemy army anywhere around the city. The guard at the gate can inform them that no enemy patrols have been seen south of the city by scouts in more than a tenday. They might realize that something is going on, which indeed it is. The enemy is preparing for the big attack mentioned earlier, and since it is to be a final effort all other troop activities have been suspended.

It takes about a day and a half to get to any Underdark entrance, no matter which route (unless they teleport or fly, in which case skip this encounter). When they camp, make sure that they set watches and such. During the night (random time), a single goblin sneaks down from the foothills and spies on their camp from behind a bush. It makes a sound which one of the PCs on watch should hear, and then flees. It is gone by the time the PCs react unless they charge the bush. The PCs can find tracks which show the goblin’s approach and flight.

Once the PCs have almost reached the foothills, they come upon a tent village.

The quietness of the plains is almost unnerving. There is no sign at all of enemy patrols, and you make the best time that you have since before the war began. As you reach the foothills, you turn towards the entrance to the abandoned Kingdom of Bright Sword. As you near where you know the entrance to be, you come upon a cluster of tents on the plain.

The tents are obviously those of refugees or poor people, not soldiers. This is a refugee village, which was established by fighters from Procampur when they broke through the mountains three tendays ago. The refugees are from mountain villages such as Sarbreenar and High Haspur.

There are 14 people in this camp. They have barely enough clothing to cover their bodies, and the barest of personal effects. The tents are not set up properly, but the people are making do.

If the PCs do not attack the camp immediately, the refugees will greet them when they approach. The refugees stay clumped together and do not separate that much from each other. They can inform the PCs of the following:

- They are refugees from the mountains, brought to this spot by Procampuran soldiers about three tendays ago.
- The soldiers stayed with them for a couple of days, but have since gone to scout and secure the area. They have not been back in more than a tenday.
- The soldiers left them barely enough food for three days, and said that they intended to return, so the people wonder if something could have happened to them.

In fact, these soldiers encountered a large patrol of ogres and wizards, and most perished. The rest fled into the mountains, and have made it back to Procampur. The Procampuran army is moving in this direction, and will arrive in two days with heavy siege engines and supplies and so forth.

- The refugees are starving, and would appreciate any help that the PCs could provide.

This is a good opportunity for some goodwill from the PCs, including such things as donating food, casting *create water*, hunting for the refugees, etc.

There is a price for helping these villagers. The more food the PCs give or provide for them, the hungrier the PCs will get (as a group). This works according to the following chart:

#Persons Fed	Hunger Rating
1-3	1
4-7	2
8-11	3
12-14	4

Multiply the Hunger Rating by the number of days of food left for the number of people fed. Tier is irrelevant for this test. The result is the number of Constitution points lost each day for the rest of the adventure. Divide the loss equally by the hours in a day, so if the Hunger Rating is 8 (12 people fed for 2 days) then a Constitution point is lost every three hours. Begin the clock immediately, so the group with Rating 8 would lose one point of Constitution three hours after leaving the village.

As the PCs give food to the refugees, describe how they begin to slowly feel hungry, then very hungry. Make them notice the increasing hunger, which gets worse with each lost Constitution point.

When Constitution reaches 0, the PC is so hungry that he or she can barely walk, and cannot continue the adventure without some aid. To alleviate the hunger, the PCs must eat twice the normal amount of food for beings of their size. Eating less does not affect the rate of Constitution at all. Eating the right amount results in no loss of Constitution for that day.

Note: Priests of Lathander have an advantage. Because Lathander is with the group, they can alleviate their own hunger by eating the normal amount of food, instead of twice the normal amount.

This group was stranded because Lathander wanted them here to test the PCs and to show them what would be required of them later on.

Refugees (14): Int Average; AL LG; AC 10; MV 9 (weak from hunger); HD 1; hp 3 (currently 1); THACO n/a (too hungry); Dmg nil; SA nil; SD nil; SW extreme hunger; MR nil; SZ M; ML 8.

Here are the people in the camp, and their significant personality traits. This encounter could get bogged down in role-playing, so handle it with care. The module is not long, but getting at least to Encounter Four is the goal.

These people have had a horrible experience during the past days. Make up whatever seems reasonable. The details are not important and have no impact on this story.

Sirac, hm: Prying, Ponderous

Jocham, hm: Hot-tempered, Sarcastic

Elisha, hf: Fatalistic, Charitable

Erin, hf: Lusty, Narrow-minded

Orcham, hm (child): Heroic, Keen

Ballus, hm: Foolhardy, Boorish

Catherine, hf (child): Articulate, Happy

Norman, hm: Secretive, Paranoid

Belis, hf: Cautious, Insensitive

Kara, hf: Elitist, Thrifty

Soren, hm (child): Mischievous, Shy

Malin, hm: Proud, Soft-spoken

Kaera, hf: Compulsive, Reverent (Tyr)

Tinkar, hm: Brooding, Immoral

Interlude: Travel in the Underdark

It takes the PCs about two hours to travel from the refugee camp to the entrance to the Underdark they are seeking (whichever it is). Once the PCs reach the entrance, they have no trouble getting inside. This could be through the directions that Hathmar gave or through the old entrance to the Kingdom of the Bright Sword (from *Ghosts of the Past* or *Renegades*). No matter how they enter, they soon find themselves drawn to the large Trade Road that ran through the Kingdom.

Travel in the Underdark is dangerous, but this adventure does not concentrate on the dangerous aspect. Therefore, the PCs should feel haunted by unknown potential enemies just out of their vision, who never approach. Some options are:

- Have them see a flicker of light which disappears when they seek its source
- Have them hear footfalls far in the distance, which approach or recede according to their actions (the footfall makers never confront the PCs)
- Have them disturb a nest of rats or large centipedes, which flee (they could attack if the adventure needs a little combat to liven it up -- get stats from the *MONSTROUS MANUAL*TM).
- If the PCs have not encountered Hathmar, he finds them after they stop for a rest (go to Scene Two).

Use your imagination to keep them on their toes, but one or two instances, separated by some intra-party role-playing and descriptions of long travel through caverns, is sufficient to set the mood.

Light is a concern down here. Anyone without infravision is blind down here. Light will be noticeable to any Underdark dwellers (who won't attack anyway), so the PCs have to choose. Player text from here on assumes they have some light.

While they travel, Sidon will engage the PCs in ethical discussions. He is testing to see how they would react to difficult situations. Here are a couple you can use:

- The conflict between Justice and Mercy. For example, if a man commits robbery and murder, but is not the ringleader of the gang and did not plan to kill anyone, should he be tried for murder? It is important to know that the man has an otherwise clean reputation and has never committed a crime. He knew that he was committing a crime in advance, but not murder. Society and law and justice say that he should pay for his crime of killing, but one could argue that his is a special case. This is what Sidon wants to get at.
- A man catches another man stealing from their employer. The thief does not know he has been seen. What is the right course of action for the witness? The obvious answer, telling the employer, may not be the right one depending on the thief's circumstances, which the witness does not know. If the PCs leap to the obvious choice, Sidon will point out that the man is well-respected and known for honesty in the firm, and try to lead the PCs into considering the complexity of the situation. In reality, the employer is secretly a thief and the thief in our story has discovered it, so he is doing a Robin-Hood thing to help the people whom the employer is oppressing. Without asking, the witness never finds this out. This boils down to, "do the ends justify the means?"

If the PCs have talked to Hathmar before coming down here, they spend one full day getting to the Chamber of the Three Gods, from which Sidon/Lathander can direct them to the Place of Dried Bones (Scene Four).

If they encounter Hathmar after camping in the Underdark, they take a day and four hours plus any rest time in camp; they traveled two hours in the wrong direction somehow and must retrace their steps.

Scene Four: The Place of Dried Bones

The PCs have finally arrived at the Chamber of the Three Gods, and so the real test begins.

After many hours of walking, you finally emerge into a strange chamber. It is roughly hexagonal, with three entrances and three statues alternating. The statues are part of the cave walls from which they emerge. Immediately to your right, you see a forty-foot tall statue of an elven woman, her beauty in sharp contrast to the cave and the other statues. Beyond her, you see a statue of a young male elf with bulging muscles and eyes that flash in your light. He is a little shorter than the woman. Opposite them, you see a hideous statue of a giant slug, which seems to have a reddish hue though carved of black and brown rock. It is emerging from the wall, so its head and neck are visible. The chamber is empty.

This is the Chamber of the Three Gods, a place which was once used for drow worship. Now it is used by one of the houses of the drow as a staging and storage area.

The statues are: Lolth, Vhaeraun (drow god of thieves and of furthering drow aims on the surface), and Ghaunadaur (the elder elemental god). If you have a copy of *Drow of the Underdark* you can present more information, but this is not necessary.

As soon as the PCs arrive here, Sidon/Lathander gets very excited. "This is the place! It's near!" he shouts. Then he starts looking down the other exit tunnels to get his bearings. He looks at both a couple of times, then charges down the one between Vhaeraun and Lolth. He expects that the PCs will follow.

There are some treasures here, left by the drow in case of need. They are located within the statues of Lolth and Vhaeraun. Secret doors open at the base of each statue, on the right leg, and reveal a small chamber in each statue. The secret doors are trapped as follows:

- **Lolth:** Door mechanism treated with drow sleep poison. Additionally, the 20' area in front of the statue is sprayed with a contact form of the poison. Saves vs poison are appropriate. Failure indicates that the victim sleeps for a number of hours equal to their effective level.
- **Vhaeraun:** The door mechanism is clear, but there is a pressure plate in front of it which sprays a caustic acid in the 20' area in front of the door. The acid does 2d4 per Tier, so Tier Five PCs take 10d4 points of damage.

If a trap is sprung, the associated door either does not open (Vhaeraun) or swings shut again (Lolth).

Sidon/Lathander will stabilize any PCs brought below 0 hit points, but will not help them any further. They chose greed over the good of others, and they will suffer for their choice.

Remember that PCs may be losing Constitution points from the encounter with the refugees, and sleeping PCs still lose Constitution. PCs whose Constitution drops to 0 while sleeping do not awaken, but they do not die for another five days (they are starving to death).

Within the statues are the following treasures:

- **Lolth:** Four drow long swords, non-magical. Three drow *potions of healing*, which only work for 24 hours once removed from this hiding place (no certificates provided—they must be used during the adventure)
- **Vhaeraun:** *Cloak of the bat, pipes of sounding*

Once the PCs follow after Sidon/Lathander, they travel down a tunnel for another hour and then emerge into a huge cavern.

Your quest seems to have ended, in more ways than one. You emerge into a huge cavern, easily large enough to house a thousand or more comfortably. You hear echoes of your passage from the far wall, and estimate it to be more than a half mile across. You have no idea how wide it is.

You stand upon a ledge, looking down into the chamber. Beside you, Sidon is leaping with joy. “We’ve found them!” he shouts in your ears. You look, and see that the whole cave seems to be filled with bones. Dry bones. They must have been here for centuries.

The cave is really full of dry dwarven bones, and nothing else (that can be seen anyway). There is no life here, and it looks like there has not been for ages. Sidon continues to act excitedly and to prompt the PCs into some action associated with helping the dwarves here. He will do so until someone makes a statement like, “*But they’re all dead.*”

At this point, the test begins. Sidon immediately responds with, “*Ahh, but can these bones live?*” The answer to this question is, according to what the PCs know, “No.” The PCs have no way of making even one dead dwarf live, because any restoration magic they may have cannot affect beings this old. However, Sidon will tell them that the bones can live, if others will take their place in the kingdom of the dead.

This means that PCs have to choose to give up their lives. to take the place of the dead dwarves when

the dead dwarves come back to life. In response to questions, Sidon can tell them (Sidon’s sudden knowledge should in itself be a clue that there is more here than meets the eye):

- Anyone who goes to the kingdom of the dead will restore a number of dwarves, but the exact number he will not reveal.
- The dwarves will fight for the city, once they are raised.
- Sidon does not tell them whether they can be raised from the dead if they make this sacrifice.

In reality, the test works like this. Each PC who chooses to die raises one combat unit (150) of dwarves (stats in next scene), and his or her consciousness becomes mixed with the gestalt of dwarven consciousness in the unit. This means that the PC will control the dwarves personally during the next scene.

When the battle is over, the dwarves all return to the land of the dead, and the PC returns to life. However, there is no way to get this information before making the choice. They have to decide for themselves.

Probably, no one will choose to die. In this case, Sidon makes the sacrifice, and his body falls seemingly lifeless to the ground. One unit of dwarves come to life, which will fight with the PCs in the next scene.

All PCs must make irrevocable choices before any dwarves are brought back to life, and must state them verbally. Sidon always makes the sacrifice. When the first dwarves come to life, present this:

As the lifeless body falls to the ground among the dwarves, a great rattling sound begins, as if the bones have been disturbed. Slowly they begin to move, separating into individual dwarves and reforming skeletons. Then, flesh grows onto the skeletons and they fill out. Soon the bodies of the dwarves are restored. With a lurch, they climb to their feet and stand before you, a huge army of the long-dead.

The dwarves are really alive, and move as if alive. They are not undead. They cannot speak, but they can communicate intentions by empathy with all PCs. As soon as everyone has made their choice and the right number of dwarves are raised, read the following to any players who sacrificed their PCs:

Though you see your lifeless body below, amid the bones of the dwarves who have not risen, you think that you are among the dwarves. Specifically, you feel as if you are the dwarves, or a number of them anyway. You can feel the presence of many dwarven minds intruding on your mind, but it feels natural in a way. When the dwarves in your “group”

move, you move with them, and you find that you can direct their movement. You have the impression that you and they are one.

At this point, the dwarves communicate that they are ready to fight. They arm themselves from among the bodies in the cavern, and every dwarf finds a suit of armor, a hefty ax, and a crossbow and seven bolts. When they are completely ready, the turn to face any PCs still alive, waiting for leadership.

The PCs who are dead and in the gestalt cannot communicate with the living PCs except by actions, so having the unit all do something that the character is known for could be a way of showing the living PCs that the dead one is with them.

At this point, living PCs who are priests suddenly feel a connection with their deity and are instantly granted a full complement of spells. Have the players select spells now.

When everyone is ready, it is time to march back to the battle at the rendezvous site (as given by Blacktree back in the Scene One). This takes a day and a half at full march (with no sleep), and the PCs arrive just as the counter-assault against the enemy has begun

Scene Five: The Counter-Offensive

In this last scene, the PCs and any dwarven units engage the enemy forces in battle for the fate of the city. Warlord Jelan is tired of the siege and has gathered her whole army for this last strike.

- If she succeeds, then she takes the city.
- If she fails, then the routed troops will plague the city for a few months but as brigands and raiders instead of as an organized army. Warlord Jelan falls upon her Plan B.

The battle takes place on a hilly plain east of Ravens Bluff, about an hour's walk from the city wall. This is easily in sight of the city, and many people will be watching from the wall to see the results. No one from the city can participate, and all of Blacktree's units are given below.

The good news is that only the first three or so rounds of the battle need to be run to determine how it will go. Provided the PCs bring enough dwarven units, and they deploy against the ogres first, they should win.

To resolve this battle, deploy the troops and let the PCs decide where they will fight. A chart has been provided in an appendix with the attack rolls of each

group for the first four rounds, and the results against each enemy unit type. Further, the appendix gives the HD of each unit and their stats for easy use during the combat. Once the units are deployed, only the PCs need to roll to hit, and you can just read the results off the chart for everyone else. This allows the deployment to change with different groups and still allows the battle resolution to go quickly. The use of some representative for each unit is recommended, so that everyone knows who is attacking whom, but this is not necessary.

Alternately, if you and your players really enjoy this kind of battle, and have sufficient time, you can fight out the whole thing with rolls and all.

How to Run the Battle

This battle will be fought with the mass combat rules from *PLAYER'S OPTION™: Combat & Tactics*, which are attached, with the modification that attacks do the damage listed rather than the amount stated in the rules. In all other cases, rules in his module supersede those in the *PLAYER'S OPTION* set.

The philosophy of this system is to treat a whole unit as one creature, so the stats give total HD and damage for the unit. To work out how many creatures died, divide the damage done by the HD of each group member, and take the appropriate number out. The number dead is just for atmosphere, though; the unit has its stats as given no matter how many creatures are left in it.

Spellcasting in mass combat is not covered in the rules, so here is how it will work.

- Each mass damage spell will do one Hit Die of damage per die of damage normally done, no matter the spell. For example, a fireball from a 6th level wizard will inflict 6 HD of damage on a unit.
- Spells with areas of effect can affect a unit of the area covered is at least 30' x 30' (about half the space a unit takes up). Reduce the unit's HD by half or all depending on the effect and how much of the unit can be affected. For example, the *confusion* spell can affect a cube 60' on a side, so it can affect one unit.
- Spells affect individual living PCs as normal.
- Healing spells have no effect on units.
- All other spells cannot affect a unit, so they do not affect anyone in a unit.

Individual PCs in the melee can engage units, but there are lots of beings in each unit, and the unit is doing HD (or level) damage while the PC is doing Hit Points of damage. For example, a PC engages an orc unit. The orc unit does 4 HD damage to the PC, which

acts like a level drain of 4 levels for hit points lost (only, no other skills are lost). Meanwhile, the PC does 24 hit points of damage to the unit, which is 3 HD. Further, since there are so many creatures in the unit, it automatically does 1 HD of damage each round whether it hits or not (a few strays got lucky). PCs will be greatly outclassed by a unit, but if one should win it would be quite a story.

Individual PCs can engage enemy spellcasters, if they can find them. It is hard to get to a particular person in a battlefield. Be reasonable in allowing PCs to get to enemy spellcasters, but keep in mind that a whole unit is like a wall and the PC must go around, which takes a whole round and gives the unit a free extra attack on the PC.

PCs can use the optional parrying rules (PHB black edition, p. 133) against units as written. The PC cannot avoid all damage this way; to avoid all damage the PC must stay away from the unit.

When a unit loses more than half its HD, make a morale check for the unit. Success means it can either keep fighting or join with a like unit (two orc units can join, but the orc unit cannot join an ogre unit). Failure indicates that the unit flees unless it can join with a like unit. A unit which has lost more than 3/4 of its HD and fails a morale check will surrender if offered the opportunity.

Dwarven Gestalt (# units = 1 plus any for PCs): #app 150 dwarves; Int as PC; AL LN; AC 6; MV 6; HD 30; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 HD (worn battle axes) or 1d4 HD (crossbows, 7 total attacks of this type); SA combat sense—+1 to attack included; SD +4 AC bonus vs ogres due to size; MR nil; SZ M; ML special.

Save vs wands: 13, save vs spells 14.

City Defenders (6 units): #app 120 soldiers; Int Average; AL LG; AC 5; MV 9; HD 24; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 HD (short swords); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 14.

Enemy Human Mercenaries (2 units): #app 130 mercenaries; Int Average; AL LE; AC 7; MV 9; HD 26; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 HD (short swords); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12.

Enemy Ogre unit (2): #app 100 ogres; Int Low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 42; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6 HD (huge clubs); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ L (9+); ML 11.

Enemy Orc units (4 units): #app 120 orcs; Int Average; AL LE; AC 6; MV 9; HD 18; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 HD (long swords); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 11.

Enemy Spellcasters: There is one enemy spellcaster for every PC spellcaster, of comparable level and power. For example, if there are two 4th level wizards in the party, there are also two 4th level wizards among the enemy. They have stats (but not items) equivalent to the counterpart PC, and they carry spells which can affect whole units, since they are here to weaken the city's defenders. They move throughout the battle and attack PCs only if the PCs attack them. Choose spells as needed.

To save effort on your part, you might give Blacktree's units into the charge of the PCs who did not sacrifice, or into those that did if all did. Divide them evenly, but give extra units to knights and squires. This leaves you free to plan the strategy of the enemy, which is basically to overwhelm the defending soldiers and bring battering rams and magic to bear on the gates.

Note that this whole battle is a micro-representation of the entire assault, which involves thousands of fighters spread across miles of terrain. The effects of this portion are reflected throughout.

When the battle is over, go to the conclusion as appropriate.

Conclusion—Victory

With the retreat of the last few enemy stragglers, the Ravens Bluff forces raise a cry of victory. The enemy has been crippled, and the city's future looks bright. As you look around, you see the dwarves from Bright Sword collapse into dust and bones, returning to their final rest.

At this point, the bodies of any PCs who sacrificed themselves are restored to life (unless the player really wants the character to stay dead). If they were left behind in the Cavern of Dried Bones, those PCs suddenly appear on the battlefield with the other PCs. Anyone who died in the big battle is still dead.

Once that happens, a golden light fills the area of the battlefield, and a voice speaks from within. This is Lathander. He congratulates the city on its victory and the PCs who sacrificed on their worthiness. To the PCs who did not sacrifice, he merely states that sometimes the greater good is more important than the personal

good of the individual, and the PCs who refrained from sacrifice should think on this principle.

All priest spellcasting restrictions are gone, and the hunger effect from Scene Three suddenly vanishes as well.

The city pays the 500 gp promised, plus an additional 500 gp of any dwarves were brought back and a potion of extra healing if more than one unit of dwarves were brought back.

The city also offers any knights Honors from the list included in the Treasure Summary. Any PCs who sacrificed themselves receive the Order of the Raven, a city honor (no certificate provided). There is no monetary reward, but the PCs can scavenge the dead dwarves for what they carried. Among the bodies they find a ring (*ring of the ram*, 10 charges) and a pair of boots (*boots of striding and springing*) which are magical.

Conclusion—Defeat

As you flee the battle, you see a last few Ravens Bluff defenders slain by the hordes of enemy soldiers. The host of enemy sweeps down upon the walls, you know that the city could be doomed.

Suddenly everything stops. A great golden light fills the battlefield, and the enemy forces retreat from before it.

At this point, the dwarves from Bright Sword crumble to dust and bone, and the bodies of any PCs who sacrificed themselves are restored to life (unless the player wants the character to stay dead). If they were left behind in the Cavern of Dried Bones, those PCs suddenly appear on the battlefield with the other PCs. Anyone who died in the big battle is still dead.

Once that happens, a golden light fills the area of the battlefield, and a voice speaks from within. This is Lathander. He congratulates the PCs who sacrificed themselves for their worthiness, even though the battle went against them. To the PCs who did not sacrifice, he merely states that sometimes the greater good is more important than the personal good of the individual, and the PCs who refrained from sacrifice should think on this principle.

All priest spellcasting restrictions are gone, and the hunger effect from Scene Three suddenly vanishes as well.

Once Lathander's presence leaves, the enemy renew their attack, so the PCs had better get into the city if they want to live. If they stay out, have all remaining enemy forces attack them. There is no

payment for failure beyond the 500 gp promised if the PCs found the dwarves.

The End

Experience Point Summary

The experience from this module is not tired as in other Living City events, because the various situations in the module are not tiered.

Scene One: The Mad Prophet

Knowing or figuring a way to the Underdark without suggestions	100 xp
Investigating the banner	100 xp

Scene Two: Hathmar Blademar

Negotiating with Hathmar	100 xp
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Scene Three: Feed the People

Giving food	100 xp
OR	
Giving food for more than two days	300 xp

Scene Four: The Place of Dried Bones

Sacrificing life for city	600 xp
This is an individual award only	

Scene Five: The Counter-Offensive

Winning the battle	600 xp
Or	
Losing the battle	200 xp

Role-playing Experience:	0-1,000 xp
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This should be awarded for good character portrayal throughout the module, not merely on social interactions. The crux of this module is a moral dilemma, and how the PCs respond to this dilemma and the minor ones should help determine how much role-playing xp to award.

Total Possible Experience:	2,800 xp
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Treasure Summary

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

From the Chamber of the Three Gods

- Four non-magical long swords of drow manufacture
- *Pipes of sounding*
- *Cloak of the bat*

From the Dead Dwarves

- *ring of the ram*, 10 charges
- *boots of striding and springing*

Payment from the City

- 500 gp each for finding the site
- 500 gp for bringing any dwarves
- One *potion of extra healing* each for bringing back more than one unit of dwarves (someone has to sacrifice for the group to get this award)

Fame Award

1 Point in City Government if the battle is won, nothing if the battle is lost

Knightly Honors and Recognition

Non-Knights receive the *Order of the Raven*, a prestigious military honor, presented by Lord Blacktree himself.

Available to All Knights and Squires

The Laurel Crown -- For leading a military unit or adventuring party to victory against a very powerful opponent in time of war.

Knights of the Hawk

Hawk Ring (Gold) -- For action above and beyond the call of duty. In this case, the knight receives the honor for making the sacrifice of life to bring a unit of dwarves to the battlefield.

Raven Knights

The Marshal's Rod -- Given to an army commander who decisively defeats an enemy field army. To earn this, the PC must be a Raven Knight and the city must decisively defeat the enemy, and the PC must have assumed command of at least two units of defenders. Given as part of a major city festival on the border areas.

Appendix -- Combat Stats and Summary for Scene Five: The Counteroffensive

Dwarven Gestalt (# units = 1 plus any for PCs): #app 150 dwarves; Int as PC; AL LN; AC 6; MV 6; HD 30; THACO 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 HD (worn battle axes) or 1d4 HD (crossbows, 7 total attacks of this type); SA combat sense—+1 to attack included; SD +4 AC bonus vs ogres due to size; MR nil; SZ M; ML special.

Save vs wands: 13, save vs spells 14.

City Defenders (6 units): #app 120 soldiers; Int Average; AL LG; AC 5; MV 9; HD 24; THACO 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 HD (short swords); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 14.

Enemy Human Mercenaries (2 units): #app 130 mercenaries; Int Average; AL LE; AC 7; MV 9; HD 26; THACO 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 HD (short swords); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12.

Enemy Ogre unit (2): #app 100 ogres; Int Low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 42; THACO 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6 HD (huge clubs); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ L (9+); ML 11.

Enemy Orc units (4 units): #app 120 orcs; Int Average; AL LE; AC 6; MV 9; HD 18; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 HD (long swords); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; ML 11.

<u>Defender 1</u>	<u>Defender 2</u>	<u>Defender 3</u>	<u>Defender 4</u>	<u>Defender 5</u>	<u>Defender 6</u>
24	24	24	24	24	24

<u>E-Human 1</u>	<u>E-Human 2</u>	<u>E-Ogre 1</u>	<u>E-Ogre 2</u>	<u>E-Orc 1</u>	<u>E-Orc 2</u>	<u>E-Orc 3</u>	<u>E-Orc 4</u>
26	26	42	42	18	18	18	18

Unit	Rd	Roll to Hit (effect vs)	Dwarves	Defenders	E-Humans	E-Ogres	E-Orcs
Defender #1	1	4	--	--	miss	miss	miss
Defender #2	1	18	--	--	3 HD	3 HD	3HD
Defender #3	1	18	--	--	2 HD	2 HD	2 HD
Defender #4	1	9	--	--	miss	miss	miss
Defender #5	1	9	--	--	miss	miss	miss
Defender #6	1	17	--	--	2 HD	2 HD	2 HD
E-Humans #1	1	2	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Humans #2	1	10	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Ogres #1	1	17	7 HD	7 HD	--	--	--
E-Ogres #2	1	9	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Orcs #1	1	19	8 HD	8 HD	--	--	--
E-Orcs #2	1	8	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Orcs #3	1	8	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Orcs #4	1	14	1 HD	1 HD	--	--	--
Defender #1	2	16	--	--	6 HD	6 HD	6 HD
Defender #2	2	17	--	--	5 HD	5 HD	5 HD
Defender #3	2	17	--	--	1 HD	1 HD	1 HD
Defender #4	2	5	--	--	miss	miss	miss
Defender #5	2	11	--	--	3 HD	miss	miss
Defender #6	2	14	--	--	1 HD	1 HD	1 HD
E-Humans #1	2	13	3 HD	3 HD	--	--	--
E-Humans #2	2	4	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Ogres #1	2	16	10 HD	10 HD	--	--	--
E-Ogres #2	2	9	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Orcs #1	2	1	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Orcs #2	2	4	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Orcs #3	2	14	4 HD	4 HD	--	--	--
E-Orcs #4	2	14	2 HD	2 HD	--	--	--
Defender #1	3	9	--	--	miss	miss	miss
Defender #2	3	11	--	--	6 HD	miss	miss
Defender #3	3	17	--	--	5 HD	5 HD	5 HD
Defender #4	3	6	--	--	miss	miss	miss
Defender #5	3	12	--	--	1 HD	miss	1 HD
Defender #6	3	7	--	--	miss	miss	miss
E-Humans #1	3	6	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Humans #2	3	8	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Ogres #1	3	13	11 HD	11 HD	--	--	--
E-Ogres #2	3	14	11 HD	11 HD	--	--	--
E-Orcs #1	3	19	6 HD	6 HD	--	--	--
E-Orcs #2	3	9	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Orcs #3	3	14	8 HD	8 HD	--	--	--
E-Orcs #4	3	12	miss	miss	--	--	--
Defender #1	4	8	--	--	miss	miss	miss
Defender #2	4	3	--	--	miss	miss	miss
Defender #3	4	3	--	--	miss	miss	miss
Defender #4	4	19	--	--	6 HD	6 HD	6 HD
Defender #5	4	5	--	--	miss	miss	miss
Defender #6	4	13	--	--	6 HD	6 HD	6 HD
E-Humans #1	4	20	5 HD	5 HD	--	--	--
E-Humans #2	4	11	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Ogres #1	4	13	14 HD	14 HD	--	--	--
E-Ogres #2	4	4	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Orcs #1	4	11	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Orcs #2	4	9	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Orcs #3	4	9	miss	miss	--	--	--
E-Orcs #4	4	16	1 HD	1 HD	--	--	--

Siege Warfare

Investment

Another and generally more reliable method for capturing a castle or fort is to simply surround it and wait for the garrison to starve (assuming that the castle does not have resident priests who can keep the troops fed). The DM must decide in advance how much food is stored inside the castle. Generally, castles have no more than a year's worth of supplies on hand, and they usually have much less, perhaps several weeks' to a few months' worth.

A garrison's morale rating drops by 1 when it runs out of food. Each week thereafter, roll 1d4 for every 10 creatures in the garrison; on a roll of 4, single-Hit-Die creatures in the group expire and other creatures lose 25% of their hit points. Do not roll for player characters and important NPCs; instead, they are allowed a saving throw vs. wands with a -5 penalty to avoid the hit point loss.

The garrison also checks morale each week without food. Failure indicates that the troops open the gates to the attackers. If prevented from opening the gates, the troops attempt to leave the castle any way they can. If the morale check succeeds, the garrison holds out another week. Repeat the procedure until all the defenders starve, their morale breaks, or relief arrives.

Most castles have adequate sources of water, usually a well inside the walls. If a garrison is deprived of water, use the procedure given above for food but check for casualties, hit point losses, and morale every three days.

Mass Combat Occasionally, battles will arise that are just too large to play out with the PLAYER'S OPTION combat system. For example, it can take a long time to resolve a battle when 40 goblins attack the PCs as they negotiate with a dwarven lord and his 15 bodyguards.

You can use the mass combat rules whenever you feel they are necessary. Generally, if there are more creatures in the battle than will fit on your map, it's a good time to use the mass combat rules. It's usually best to leave PCs and important NPCs in place on the map and use the normal combat system to resolve their actions. Use the mass combat rules to determine the outcome of the larger battle raging around the PCs.

Mass Combat Procedures

Keep paper and pencil handy to keep track of the troops on both sides.

Start by dividing the opposing forces into groups of a

convenient size; groups of 5, 10, or 20 usually work the best. If there is an odd number of troops, make one group shorthanded. For example, a group of 35 creatures could be divided into three groups of 10 and one group of five or seven groups of five. It is best to keep groups of similar creatures together.

Assign each group an Armor Class based on the most prevalent AC in the group. For example, if a group of 20 halflings included three leaders in chain mail and 17 archers in leather armor, the group has an Armor Class of 8. If there is a tie for the most prevalent armor type, use the worst one. Assign each group a THACO based on the most prevalent THACO in the group, as above.

Once you have assigned an Armor Class and THACO to each group, you are ready to begin. You may choose to roll for surprise, allowing one group to attack unopposed, but after this combat is considered simultaneous. Assign one side of the combat to be the attackers, and one side to defend. Line up attacking groups against defending groups on a one-to-one basis. Each defending group must be attacked once before any defending group can be attacked twice. For example, a force of 60 orcs divided into six groups of 10 are attacking 40 dwarves divided into four groups of 10. Two groups of dwarves are attacked once, and two groups are attacked twice. The orcs can't attack one group six times. Note that in some cases only part of an attacking force can get into a battle. A force of 20 dwarves guarding a cave mouth might hold out against hundreds of orcs because only 20 of them can attack at a time.

The attacking group makes a normal attack roll. If the roll succeeds, they will inflict one Hit Die on the defenders for each creature in the attacking group, ignoring critical hits; however, do not remove any casualties yet.

Now, reverse the process, having the defenders return the attack, using the same procedure. When both sides have made all of their attack rolls, mark off enough casualties in wounded groups to account for all the Hit Dice inflicted, leaving only one wounded defender. For example, if a group of 10 orcs successfully attacks 10 3rd-level dwarves, three dwarves are killed and one loses a single Hit Die.

Repeat this procedure until one side is killed or breaks morale. Apply subsequent hits to wounded creatures first.

To save time toward the end of a combat, you can reorganize survivors into new groups.

Creatures "killed" in a mass combat are allowed a saving throw vs. death if they receive some form of

Chapter Eight

healing immediately after the battle. These figures are assumed to be hovering at death's door (see Chapter One) and can be saved. If there are a lot of casualties, roll the saving throws in groups of 5, 10, or 20.

An Example of Mass Combat

The dwarven leader and bodyguards from the example at the beginning of this section are talking to a group of six PCs when 40 goblins attack. The 15 bodyguards are 4th-level fighters with battle axe specialization (adjusted THACO 16), wearing *chain mail +1* and carrying shields (AC 3). The goblins have a THACO of 20 and an Armor Class of 6. They are armed with short swords and short bows.

The DM decides to divide the combatants into groups of five, so there are eight groups of goblins and three groups of dwarves. The DM also decides that all the bodyguards will join the mass combat, leaving the PCs and two groups of goblins to fight a normal PLAYER'S OPTION combat system battle. The goblins gain surprise, and loose arrows. The ten goblins fighting the PCs attack individually. The remaining six groups attack the bodyguards, two groups of goblins against each group of dwarves.

The goblins fire two volleys of arrows from 10 yards away. They are at short range and receive a +1 to their attack rolls because of surprise. Each group of dwarves receives four volleys of arrows (two groups of goblins each firing two volleys). Against the first group, the attack rolls are: 3, 17, 18, and 18; three hits. The first group of dwarves suffers 15 dice of damage; three dwarves are killed and one suffers three dice of damage. The attack rolls against the second group are 6, 17, 13, and 20; two hits. The second group suffers 10 dice of damage, killing two dwarves and inflicting two dice of damage on a third. The attack rolls against the third group are 3, 19, 4, and 14; one hit. One dwarf is killed and a second dwarf suffers one die of damage. There are no return attacks from the PCs and dwarves, because they were surprised.

The next round, the PCs and the dwarven leader fight a normal battle against their 10 foes. They make short work of the goblins, killing seven of them.

In the mass combat, the dwarves are now in the thick of the fight, charging at the goblins. The dwarves have a +2 bonus for the charge and an additional +1 because they are dwarves attacking goblins. The goblins are still firing their bows, and loose a volley of arrows as the dwarves charge. They receive a +1 bonus to their attack rolls because their opponents are charging.

The dwarves complete their charge. Each group of dwarves attacks one group of goblins, while the remaining three groups are not attacked. Their attack rolls are 16, 14, and 13; three hits. The first group contains two dwarves who inflict two dice of damage and kill two goblins. The second group contains three dwarves, and they kill three goblins. The final group contains four dwarves, who kill four goblins.

Each group of dwarves is attacked twice. The attacks against the first group are 3 and 18; one hit. The first group suffers 5 dice of damage; the wounded dwarf (who had already suffered three dice of damage) is killed and another dwarf is killed as well, wiping the group out. The rolls against the second group are 5 and 11; both misses. The rolls against the third group are 20 and 14; one hit. The wounded dwarf is killed and a second dwarf suffers two dice of damage.

The goblins wisely decide to withhold their second volley of arrows, and the dwarves get no attacks opportunity.

Because there are only six dwarves left, the DM decides a morale check is in order, and the dwarves pass it. The DM also decides to re-combine the survivors into a single group of six. The goblin casualties result in 21 goblins remaining, which the DM divides into three groups of five and one group of six. The DM also decides that the group of six goblins leaves the mass combat to attack the PCs and dwarven leader, leaving three groups of goblins in the mass combat. (There are now nine goblins in the normal combat.)

During the next round, the PCs continue to do well, slaying seven more goblins. The two survivors fail a morale check and flee the field.

In the mass combat, the dwarves get two attacks this round, since they are specialists. The dwarves first attack roll is a 17, and six HD worth of goblins would be killed. This is enough to wipe out an entire group of goblins, but the sixth Hit Die will be wasted. The second attack is made against a second group of five goblins, and the roll is a 10; still good enough to hit the goblins' Armor Class of 6. Five more goblins will die, and the last Hit Die goes to waste.

The three groups of goblins attack, rolling 20, 12, and 4; one hit. The attack kills two wounded dwarves (who each were two HD down) and wounds another for one die of damage.

There are now five goblins facing the six PCs, the dwarven leader, and the four surviving guards. Finding themselves outnumbered, the goblins check morale and pass, not wanting to flee from their hated dwarven enemies.

Siege Warfare

The DM decides that the remainder of the battle can be handled using the normal rules, and the mass combat ends. The PCs and dwarves win handily. The 11 fallen dwarves receive magical healing and first aid as soon as the battle ends. Each rolls a saving throw vs. death to see if they can be revived. The rolls are incredibly bad, and only four dwarves survive. The PCs also revive one goblin for interrogation.

Proficiencies

The following proficiencies are applicable to warfare and the operation of war equipment. They are acquired the same way standard *PHB* proficiencies are.

Artillerist (1 Slot)
Group: Warrior

Charisma/Leadership

A character with this proficiency can direct the siting and operation of a bombardment engine. The maximum number of engines the character can control is equal to $\frac{1}{3}$ of the character's Charisma/Leadership score, provided that the engines are no farther apart than the character can sprint in a single round.

Vehicle Handling (1 Slot)
Group: Warrior

Dexterity/Dodge

This proficiency allows the character to control a wagon or chariot under difficult circumstances. The character can roll against this proficiency when a driving check is normally required.

