

GRM5-07

Justice Be Done

A One-Round D&D® LIVING GREYHAWK™

Gran March Regional Adventure

Version 1.1

by M. Sean Molley

Based on an original idea by Josef C. Stauffer

Reviewer: John Richardson, Gran March Triad

Circle Reviewer: Steven Conforti

Playtesters: Brooks Banks, Taylor Davenport, Clint Fishback, Sean Flaherty, Mark Fricault, Alli Gonding, Mark Liberman, Joe Masdon, Sherrie Masdon, Eric Pelkey, Josh Pelkey, Nick Perch, and Ryan White

Each year, young men and women from across Gran March mark their 15th birthdays and await the arrival of Mustering Day with a mixture of anticipation and dread. Everyone, from the poorest commoner to the richest nobleman, understands the necessity of serving Commandant and Country. The idea that an entire village would refuse to send its children to the Army is simply unthinkable. And yet, that is exactly the situation that you are being asked to investigate. A Gran March regional adventure for APLs 2-8.

Note: This adventure counts towards Military Duty; it does not count towards Caravan Duty.

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

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If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on

running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in the *Appendices*.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Table Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum of step one. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

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

APL also affects the amount of experience and gold a PC can gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character receives only one-half of the experience points and gold for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Furthermore, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the adventure.

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

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in Gran March. Characters native to Gran March pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round.

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp per Time Unit. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this adventure.

A character who does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a Survival check (DC 20), the character will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The player is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the "Lifestyle and Upkeep" section of Chapter 3 of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Campaign Sourcebook*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The original proposal that eventually became this adventure was submitted by Chris Stauffer and approved by Michael D. Moore. Both of them contributed significantly to the eventual outline that I was given to work with when I agreed to write the final adventure. Although I have changed the details to the point where they are probably unrecognizable, I would nevertheless like to acknowledge that Chris and Michael provided the core concepts and the initial design of the adventure. In particular, the idea of wondering what would happen if an entire village failed to send anybody to Mustering Day is what got me interested in this adventure in the first place, and Chris deserves the credit for coming up with that.

John Richardson came up with the location and name of Tanner's Ferry and provided a number of additional suggestions to help smooth out the many plot holes that invariably occur in an adventure that relies on investigation and misdirection. John and Steven Conforti also put up with my usual extended delays in submitting the drafts of the adventure in a timely fashion and my usual insistence on rewriting and "gold-plating" right up until the last possible second. Thanks for putting up with me, guys – I hope that the end result is worth the wait.

As one might imagine, I drew heavily on the military metaorganization documents for Gran March when developing this adventure. Although a lot of the details of how the mustering process actually works aren't included, the level of detail of the information that is included was more than sufficient to let me fill in the blanks in what I hope is an appropriate fashion. Any errors of fact regarding campaign canon are strictly my own. Will Dover, Ed Podsiad, all of our Triad members past and present, and many others deserve the credit for fashioning the Gran March Army into the many-faceted and interesting organization that it is today. The armed forces are the single most defining characteristic of Gran March and I am very pleased to have the opportunity to explore that concept from a unique angle in this adventure.

Finally, I wish to thank the two playtest groups, who provided a ton of extremely valuable feedback. Many of the plot holes and continuity issues that you (hopefully) *won't* find in this adventure were pointed out by the playtesters. Any that remain, well, those are my fault.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

"Gran March is an exceptionally martial nation. At age fifteen, all fit males enter mandatory conscription for a period of up to seven years. Girls may join the rank and

file, as well, though this is something of a modern development, and their participation is not seen as mandatory (though several influential women in the military hierarchy believe it should be). It is a testament to the national pride of the nation's young people that many continue after their required service, and those who do not are generally members of local militias." (*Living Greyhawk Gazetteer*, page 50).

Mustering Day is perhaps the single most important holiday in the nation of Gran March. On this day, all those soldiers who have completed their mandatory term of service in the Army (or the work gangs for those who are not deemed fit for service in the Army) are mustered out, and a fresh batch of fifteen-year-old boys and girls are mustered in to begin the process by which they will become highly-trained soldiers in one of the most formidable armed forces the world of Greyhawk has ever known. It is, as one might imagine, both a day of great national pride and a day of great national sadness, as many hundreds of mothers (and fathers) watch their children leave home to enter a life of discipline, service, and danger.

During these troubled times in the Sheldomar Valley and the world at large, ensuring a steady supply of new recruits for the Army is more important than ever. Failure to report for service is considered treason, and is punishable by death. However, the nation's leaders have rarely had to resort to extreme measures to enforce the conscription of the nation's young men, if for no other reason that all of their fathers (and many of their mothers) are veterans. To try and prevent one's own child from serving Commandant and Country would be shameful. The Army knows that it can count on each community to police itself and ensure that all who are supposed to show up on Mustering Day, do so.

But what would happen if an entire community decided to defy the law and withhold its children from military service? In this adventure, the PCs are charged with investigating what seems to be that very situation. The truth, of course, is rather more complicated...

Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbör (pronounced Kell-eh-BRIM-boar) of the village of Tanner's Ferry has a secret. Nathaniel always had aspirations that went far beyond his family's comparatively meager holdings. When his father, Isgrimnor, died and Nathaniel gained his inheritance, he quickly began spending money in furtherance of his political ambitions. He spent a great deal of time in Shibolet and Hookhill, seeking to advance his standing among the nobles of Gran March.

Unfortunately, Nathaniel simply did not have the wealth, intelligence, charisma, political savvy, or ruthlessness to achieve his goals. Instead, he accomplished little more than to embarrass himself politically and waste most of his inheritance. The turning point came in 594 CY during the election for Commandant. Nathaniel suffered from the delusion that he would be a viable candidate, but he couldn't find a

single other Elector who was even remotely interested in supporting him. Door after door was slammed (however politely) in his face, and when the field narrowed to two (Vrianian and Housemann), Nathaniel finally had to admit that he was finished.

That was when he met a man named Nolar Thotec, who promised him power beyond his wildest imaginings in exchange for service. Bereft of both funds and dignity, Nathaniel eagerly embraced Nolar's Hextorite teachings, eventually becoming a cleric of Hextor himself. Nathaniel never realized that Nolar Thotec had sought him out for a reason.

In the area where Celebrimbör is Elector, between the edge of the Oytwood and the Rushmoors, not far from the Javan River, there once stood a temple dedicated to the evil god Hextor. This temple was not particularly large, nor was it especially noteworthy. No terrible champions of evil used it as a base of operations, no horrifying plagues of restless undead or legions of marauding devils were unleashed from within its chambers, and no earth-shattering rituals of purest destruction were enacted atop its spires. Instead, this temple's utter lack of attention-grabbing, noteworthy accomplishments in the service of Hextor made it the ideal hiding place for a particular relic of the Herald of Hell. When a powerful priest of Hextor found himself on the run from the newly-formed Knights of the Watch in the early 300s CY, he concealed the relic within the temple's altar, masked the location with ancient Ur-Flan spells that would block divination magic – and then sent all of the local priests and other followers of the Scourge of Battle to their deaths in a fight some miles distant. He then sunk the temple into the earth with powerful magic, thereby ensuring that its location would be forgotten and the relic would not fall into the hands of the worshippers of Heironeous.

The plan was a success, and the relic (which is actually one of a set of similar items) has lain undiscovered for nearly three hundred years. Now, however, Nolar Thotec has learned of its location, and he has enlisted his new convert Nathaniel Celebrimbör to recover the relic for him. The temple has to be excavated in order for this to occur. To help with the manpower problem, Nolar Thotec provided Nathaniel with some contacts in an organization known as the Red Arrows, which is dedicated to the downfall of Gran March (and Commandant Vrianian in particular). To ensure that the Red Arrows could operate with impunity as Nathaniel's henchmen, Nolar Thotec arranged for the Elector's own file to be transferred, their replacements murdered and replaced by Red Arrows posing as Gran March soldiers.

In order to avoid arousing the attention of the Gran March Army, which would surely hear rumors of a large armed force traveling through the region, Nathaniel knew that he would need to draw most of his laborers from the local area. Fortunately, there were plenty of suitable candidates for the task. In addition to the eight

Red Arrows themselves, Nathaniel hoped that he would be able to kidnap some of the Flan barbarians from the nearby Rushmoors and use them as slaves. The Elector sent his “file” out with orders to bring back some appropriate laborers. However, the Red Arrows chose to take the path of least resistance. After all, kidnapping Flan barbarians would be risky, since the swamp-dwellers have proven to be more than capable of defending themselves. As the thugs were debating their best course of action (while Nathaniel waited impatiently back in Tanner’s Ferry for their return), a solution to the problem presented itself.

Heading north towards Orlane were six young men and women from Tanner’s Ferry, accompanied by several of their collective fathers and brothers. These young people represented the village’s annual contribution to the Gran March Army, and they were on their way to Orlane for Mustering Day. It was a simple matter for the Red Arrows to persuade them to share a camp with some of their “fellow soldiers;” indeed, the villagers considered it an honor. After drugging these unfortunates and taking them captive, Nathaniel’s men proceeded to return to Tanner’s Ferry, where the captives were put to work digging out the ancient Hextorite temple.

Upon learning that the Red Arrows had kidnapped some of his own villagers, Nathaniel was furious – not because he is particularly concerned about the well-being of his own people, but because he knew that the missing recruits would be noticed by the Army sooner or later. However, it was too late to change what had occurred; the villagers couldn’t simply be freed, so Nathaniel resigned himself to the idea of using “local labor” and simply planned to finish the excavation as quickly as possible. The village is in an out-of-the-way location, receiving few visitors, and the excavation site is several miles outside of town, just inside the edge of the Oytwood. The ruse wouldn’t last forever, of course, but Nathaniel figured that he only needed enough time to complete the excavation and retrieve the relic, whereupon he could throw off his guise of Elector altogether and go to join his Hextorite master, who would richly reward him for his efforts.

Just to be on the safe side, Nathaniel made contact with his mentor Nolar Thotec and reported what had happened. Nolar told Nathaniel not to worry, that he would take care of covering up the disappearance by using his many contacts within the military. Nolar did, in fact, assemble a phony report stating that the recruits from Tanner’s Ferry had mistakenly reported to Shiboeth instead of Orlane, but in a bit of supreme irony, the phony report got lost in the vast military bureaucracy and never reached the Captain in Orlane who is responsible for accounting for all of the new recruits in his part of the country.

Thus, the project proceeded, with the ancient temple being excavated by a combination of Red Arrows and kidnapped villagers (mostly the villagers, with the Red

Arrows acting as “supervisors”). However, despite Nathaniel’s efforts and beliefs, the operation is not a complete secret. Two groups have realized that something is not right with the delegation from Tanner’s Ferry.

The first is a small number of refugees from Geoff who have been hiding out in Gran March. They are afraid of the Gran March Army, having seen what they consider wartime atrocities committed by both sides in the battle. They also believe that if they try to settle in any of the country’s towns or villages, they will immediately be conscripted and sent back to be slaughtered by the giants in their homeland. (They’re not entirely incorrect; Gran March does have a policy of conscription of able-bodied males who reside in the region for more than a year and a day.) Thus, they have simply been hiding out, trapping and hunting for their food in the Oytwood and trying to avoid contact with Gran March citizens. By pure coincidence they happened to be camping nearby on the night that the Red Arrows took the villagers captive.

When these men, who are all good at heart and very much in favor of the cause of freedom, saw the teenagers and other commoners being led in shackles through the woods as prisoners of Gran March soldiers, they became suspicious and followed the group back to Tanner’s Ferry, where they discovered the excavation and enslavement. They are afraid to go to the other villagers, thinking that their story will not be given credence, and they are afraid to go to the authorities, because obviously the Army is already in on the kidnappings and furthermore they are in the country illegally. Thus, they have taken to doing what they can to harass the Hextorites. Their most successful attack was made against a supply wagon that Nolar Thotec had sent with additional digging supplies. The Gyri have also engaged in several skirmishes with the Red Arrows disguised as Gran March soldiers. Nathaniel thinks that they are nothing more than common brigands and has posted information in Tanner’s Ferry warning the villagers about them, thus making it even less likely that the Gyri would be able to convince anyone of the truth of the situation.

The second group that has taken notice of the missing recruits is, of course, the Army itself, and this is what brings the PCs into the adventure. The Red Arrows’ kidnapping of the villagers occurred about ten days before the 1st of Richfest, better known as Mustering Day. The group that was taken was expected in Orlane, as the Army knew Tanner’s Ferry would be sending at least four young men who had come of age and were due to report for duty. Since they were waylaid on their way to Orlane, they did not report as scheduled, and as a result, Tanner’s Ferry went on the list of villages that the military reviews each year to ensure that there are no seditious activities among the general populace.

Although the country does not have a detailed census of every citizen, records from past years of the number of enlistees from each village along with

information about the locations and sizes of families of active-duty soldiers help the Army to do a surprisingly good job of estimating how many new recruits it will receive each year and from where they will come. Every Elector is also responsible for sending in a list each year of all those children who will reach their fifteenth birthday in the coming year. Whenever there is a significant deviation from the expectations, the Army dispatches a patrol to investigate. There are a handful of such incidents during a typical year. Usually this just involves someone who was delayed in travel or whose mother needs a bit of extra persuading to give up her “baby” to the military, but occasionally there have been issues of a more serious nature, and the Army does not take any possibility of treason lightly. If there were any indications that Gran March did not require 100% compliance with the mandatory conscription law, then the entire stability of the nation would be called into question, and no one in power has any intention of ever letting that happen.

Because Tanner’s Ferry is not really a strategically important village and because the number of missing recruits is small (five or six at most), the Army does not see the need to dispatch a large force of soldiers to investigate the situation. There have been no recent reports of unusual activity along the Javan or in the Oytwood, and every active-duty soldier is urgently needed due to the many deployments the Army is currently supporting around the Sheldomar Valley. Instead, a small team will be assembled and sent to the village with orders to find out what’s going on and bring any and all children of the appropriate age back to Orlane to begin their tour of duty. The members of that team of investigators will be the player characters.

Of course, what the PCs will discover is that the situation is not at all what they might have expected, and they must figure out the truth of what is really going on and free the villagers from their enslavement.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

This adventure involves an investigation, and as such there are various places where the PCs might “go off the reservation” and thereby deviate from the order of the encounters as presented. The following summary is just one path that the characters might take through the adventure. If events unfold differently, it’s perfectly OK to reorder the encounters and make other adjustments as needed. The order in which the encounters are presented assumes that the PCs do not figure out what is really going on until after they have already been to Tanner’s Ferry, met with the Elector, and sought out the “bandits” who have been plaguing the village. If they become suspicious earlier, or if they employ various spells that might enable them to divine more information earlier than expected, just go with the flow. Most of the encounters have some alternatives in case the PCs don’t follow the script. PCs are funny that way.

Introduction: The PCs are in Orlane for reasons of their own devising. Military PCs are summoned to a meeting with Captain Dorn Stelgaard of the 20th Battle, who is responsible for the local administration of the mustering process. (To minimize the distance that recruits must travel, mustering centers are set up in Orlane, Shiboeth, and Hookhill. This year, the 5th Battle is responsible for Orlane, the 4th is responsible for Hookhill, and the 17th is responsible for Shiboeth.) Non-military PCs are to be recruited by military PCs as “civilian advisers.”

Encounter 1: Watcher Captain Stelgaard interviews the PCs to determine their loyalty and willingness to deal with potentially treasonous activities. After he is satisfied that they can handle the mission, he explains the situation with the missing recruits from Tanner’s Ferry.

Encounter 2: The PCs journey towards the intersection of the Javan and Realstream Rivers. Tanner’s Ferry is practically in Geoff although on the Gran March side of the river; the closest city is actually Preston, although there is no road linking them, and travelers to Preston would need to go to Leilam’s Orchard and then through Hochoch. Their arrival in Tanner’s Ferry is uneventful, though if they are attentive they may discover the remains of what seems to be a wrecked wagon just outside the village, along with signs of a struggle.

Encounter 3: In Tanner’s Ferry, the PCs can speak with the villagers, who have no idea that their recruits have gone missing. As far as anyone knows, the teenagers left for Orlane (accompanied by several veterans who are family members) a couple of weeks before Mustering Day. The family members haven’t returned, which is a little bit unexpected, but it hasn’t been long enough to really alarm anyone. There are some bandits who have been causing trouble, but the Elector and his File seem to have the situation under control.

Encounter 4: The PCs should wish to speak with the Elector himself, and he will be happy to meet with them. His goal is to steer them in the direction of the bandits, hoping that the PCs will find and defeat the bandits, thereby eliminating a problem that has been plaguing him and also conveniently providing him with someone to blame for the disappearance of the missing villagers.

Encounter 5: The PCs, with assistance from a tracker provided by the Elector, find the bandits’ campsite. This encounter could go a variety of ways depending on how much the PCs believe the lies that the Elector told them. There are clues that everything here is not actually as it seems, but regardless of the outcome of the fight, the PCs should want to talk to the Elector again.

Encounter 6: Through various means, depending on what they have done so far and whom they believe, the PCs discover the location of the excavation that is

taking place outside of town. This either involves hearing the truth from the Gyri “bandits,” getting it from one of the “soldiers” working for the Elector, or various other options.

Encounter 7: The PCs reach the site of the excavation, where they find the enslaved villagers. Once they have been freed, the villagers can relate that just before the PCs arrived, the final seals on the outside of the ancient temple were broken, and Nathaniel has already gone inside. If the PCs didn’t fight them earlier, the Red Arrows turn on them now. Depending on what happened with the Gyri bandits, they might assist the PCs.

Encounter 8: Inside the temple, the PCs must contend with a puzzling room and an ancient trap in order to reach the altar. Some or all of them may acquire a curse that makes them more vulnerable to worshippers of Hextor, which will put them at a disadvantage in the final encounter.

Encounter 9: The PCs confront Nathaniel, who has just retrieved the Hellscepter from the temple’s main altar. Nolar Thotec arrives to take the relic and leaves the PCs and Nathaniel to duke it out.

Conclusion: Depending on what the PCs discovered and their actions throughout the adventure, there are various conclusions that can occur. Hopefully, the PCs have rescued the villagers, figured out the truth about the “bandits” and the “soldiers,” and defeated the corrupt Elector. Nolar Thotec and the Hextorite relic will most likely have to be dealt with another day, but the PCs have still won a significant victory.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

The PCs are going on this adventure at the direct request of the Gran March Army, so characters who are active-duty members or veterans of the armed forces of the March (or allied nations such as the Yeomanry with whom Gran March has a treaty allowing for the sharing of military forces) will count this adventure as military time and receive their standard wages and any other benefits as detailed in the appropriate meta-organization document.

Before beginning the adventure, you should check to see which Year Four and Year Five Gran March regional adventures the PCs have been through. In particular, you are looking for the following information, but try not to reveal to the players exactly what it is you seek:

- **Enmity of Nolar Thotec** from GRM4-01 *Homecoming*.
- **Vengeance of Nolar Thotec** or **Extreme Vengeance of Nolar Thotec** from GRM4-IN1 *The Trial of Olowyn*.

- **Gratitude of Nolar Thotec** from GRM5-02 *Enemy of My Enemy*.

Also, you should go ahead and get some skill checks for each PC. Because a big chunk of the adventure’s direction is based on how successfully Nathaniel lies to the PCs, you don’t want to give anything away by calling for die rolls. To maximize the obfuscation, get three of each of the following: Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Sense Motive, and Spot checks. The most important are the Sense Motive checks, of course, but the others will probably come in handy as well.

You can also get a few Will saves for each PC, if you like; asking for Will saves at the start of an adventure is an excellent technique for instilling fear and paranoia in the players.

INTRODUCTION

When everyone is ready to begin, read or paraphrase the following:

It is the first week of Reaping, and the city of Orlane is even busier than usual. Aside from the normal hustle and bustle of the civilian population and the increased flow of Knights and soldiers and equipment into Hochoch, there are green recruits from all over the southwestern portion of Gran March undergoing basic training. The cheerful, intoxicating feeling of the many parties held around Mustering Day has passed, and the newly-conscripted soldiers are just now beginning to get a true understanding of what day-to-day life in the Army is like.

Meanwhile, the local farmers are bringing in the fall harvest, adding to the noise and confusion in and around the city. Looking around, it’s hard to see more than vague reminders that only three years ago, almost everything here was burned and pillaged by an invading army of giants. The rebuilding of Orlane is truly an impressive accomplishment and a testament to the resilience and determination of the people of Gran March.

The weather is beautiful, with crisp fall air that is just chilly enough in the morning to get you out of bed with a spring in your step and just warm enough during the day to keep you feeling that way.

Active-duty military characters and veterans (as well as members of the armies of countries with whom Gran March has a treaty, such as the Yeoman Militia) have been summoned to a meeting with Captain Dorn Stelgaard at the keep of the 5th battle. Such characters should be given *Player Handout #1*.

There are several different ways that you can bring non-military characters into the adventure. If time permits, you can have the military characters meet with Watcher Captain Stelgaard as detailed in *Encounter 1*,

and then have those PCs sent to recruit the non-military PCs as “civilian advisers.” The military characters would then interrogate the non-military characters in the same fashion that the Captain interrogated them before accepting them as part of the investigation team. (The reason civilians would be sent on a mission like this at all is because oftentimes, persuading “reluctant” recruits to report for duty requires a very diplomatic and decidedly non-military approach. The senior officers of the Army feel that if a non-military person or two is along, that will help soften the locals’ impression of soldiers dragging children away to force them into the Army.)

If you would rather not go through a two-phase introduction, or if there are no military PCs in the party at all, then you can have all of the PCs report to Captain Stelgaard at the same time, using *Player Handout #2* for the non-military characters.

If time is very tight or you don’t feel like having each PC go through the “loyalty exam” individually, then you can simply have all of the PCs report to Captain Stelgaard, who will designate a leader (the highest-ranking military PC or the highest-level fighter-type if there are no military PCs) and only put that PC through the questioning process, making him or her responsible for everyone else. It’s more fun if you have the time and inclination to put each PC on the spot, though, and hopefully provides a good roleplaying opportunity.

Regardless of how you get them there, those PCs that head to the meeting with Captain Stelgaard should proceed to Encounter 1.

ENCOUNTER 1: A TEST OF LOYALTY

Key ideas of this encounter: The PCs report to Watcher Captain Dorn Stelgaard, Faithful Wolverine, of the 5th Battle. The Captain asks them some questions to determine their loyalty and willingness to enforce the laws of Gran March regarding conscription. Once he is satisfied that they will do what needs to be done, he explains the situation with the missing recruits from Tanner’s Ferry and sends them on their way.

The 5th Battle is housed in a large keep on the northwestern side of the city. A number of large tents have been erected outside the keep to serve as temporary barracks for the new recruits undergoing basic training here. You are admitted to the office of Watcher Captain Dorn Stelgaard, Faithful Wolverine, with little difficulty. The Captain is a tall human of obvious Suel descent, with blonde hair and piercing blue eyes. He is clad in full plate mail and wears a prominent holy symbol of Heironeous. He studies you carefully for a moment.

Watcher Captain Stelgaard is a paladin of Heironeous, and he scans each of the PCs with his *detect evil* ability before greeting them. Any PC who radiates

evil will need to provide a very good explanation before the Captain will agree to allow that PC to go on the mission.

☛ Watcher Captain Dorn Stelgaard, Faithful Wolverine: LG Male Suel Pal9 of Heironeous.

Roleplaying Notes: Watcher Captain Stelgaard is a very loyal soldier and a devoted servant of the Invincible Warrior and the Knights of the Watch. If he has a sense of humor, nobody has been able to find it yet. He is unfailingly polite, but stern, and speaks in clipped tones. There’s a reason why this guy is trusted with tracking down and finding potential traitors – he’s got the right personality for the job. However, he isn’t a fool who sees “insurgents” under every rock and shrub. He believes that the law must be applied uniformly, but fairly and justly, with the greater good always in mind.

Watcher Captain Stelgaard greets the PCs by name (if he summoned them) or asks to be introduced to them (if they were brought by other PCs, which may be the case for non-military characters). Military PCs and veterans can see that he has obviously been studying their service records, as a series of file folders and papers are stacked neatly on his desk, many of which bear familiar names. The Captain will explain that he requires a group of individuals to look into a delicate situation, and that he needs to ask them a few questions before he can decide whether or not they are right for the job.

This can be a lengthy roleplaying encounter or not, depending on how much time is available and the inclination of the players to discuss such matters at length. For new players, this is a good opportunity to introduce the major element of Gran March as a region – the Army and its effect on all aspects of life. Ideally, each PC should at least be asked one of the following questions. If you have a bit of time, it’s helpful to decide in advance which questions you will ask to which characters, so that each character has to answer a question that is at least somewhat uncomfortable.

To any character, preferably non-military: ***Are you familiar with the laws concerning the mandatory conscription of able-bodied men in Gran March?***

(If the PC says yes, he asks the PC to explain the laws. If the PC says no, he looks disgusted and asks if anyone else does.) A good answer includes that all human males must report for duty at age 15 (and males of other races must report upon reaching their specific race’s age of majority), that all females and certain non-human males (such as the Dim Forest elves) have the option to report but are not required to do so, that those who are mentally unfit for the Army are sent to the work gangs, and that failure to report is treason punishable by death. The PC doesn’t have to recite every detail. The purpose of this question is simply to establish what the law is in case there are PCs (or players) who do not know the facts.

To a military PC or veteran who has ever received a demerit: ***I see from your service record that you were given a demerit. Why don't you explain the circumstances?***

(Depending on the PC's explanation of events, he will follow up with pointed questions, such as the following.) Do you have a general disregard for the lawful orders of your superior officers? Do you believe that the rules shouldn't apply to you? Try to make this as uncomfortable as you can without it turning hostile. The Captain does not want to risk sending someone on the mission who might have "issues" with military life. The worst possible ambassador for the Army would be a disgruntled soldier.

To any male character who is not a citizen of Gran March: ***If you reside in this region for more than a year and a day, you will become eligible for conscription into the Gran March Army. Do you believe that is a fair requirement to impose on those who are not natives of this country? Will you report as required if and when the circumstances dictate?***

(The Captain isn't looking to conscript anyone on the spot... he just wants to get a sense for whether or not the PC respects that the requirement of military service is the law of the land in Gran March and must be followed even by those who were not born here.)

To any character: ***Do you believe that Gran March's policy of conscripting all able-bodied males is good or bad for the country?***

(This is obviously a loaded question, but there really are a lot of benefits to mandatory conscription. Apart from the undeniable benefit of having an army with which to defend itself, the country also gains an educated and literate citizenry, a guarantee that every common man has received basic military training and can therefore defend his home and family, and a general sense of law and order that other, more chaotic, nations do not always enjoy.)

To any character: ***What benefits do you think the Sheldomar Valley as a whole derives from the fact that Gran March maintains such a large standing army?***

(This is an opportunity for someone to wax poetic about how the Gran March is basically the police force of the Sheldomar Valley, or for a pacifistic character to rail against that same fact. Either way, the Captain simply listens and takes notes.)

(To a character from Bissel, Geoff, or the Principality of Ulek): ***Where do you think your country would be today if it were not for the assistance and efforts of the armed forces of Gran March?***

(Again, no real right or wrong answer here, but there are Battles stationed in two of those countries – and the troops in Bissel were removed only a short time ago and

no sooner had they left than Thornward was conquered by invaders – so there's no arguing that they have had an impact, whether for good or ill.)

To any character: ***If a woman is widowed, and her only son reaches age 15, do you believe that she should still send her son to the Army, even though there will be no one left at home to care for her?***

(The legally correct answer is yes, of course. If the PC demurs, the Captain will point out that the widow is not totally on her own. For example, she can expect to be cared for by her community, even without her son at home; she should also have her late husband's pension and any other benefits depending on whether he died in the service or not. The point is that everyone has a duty to serve, even if it causes hardship.)

To any character: ***What do you think would happen if the nation adopted a policy that individuals could buy their way out of the military service requirement by paying a certain sum of gold?***

(The Captain is looking for an answer that this would be bad for the country; part of what makes Gran March strong is that everyone, from the lowest commoner to the highest noble, has to serve in the armed forces, which puts everyone on an equal footing. Also, allowing the rich to buy their way out of service would cause resentment among those who could not afford to pay, leading to the possibility of civil unrest. Matters could be even worse if the fee was set low enough and even those of the middle class were able to pay it, since if too many people bought off their service requirement, the Army might not have enough available soldiers to fulfill its responsibilities.)

To any citizen of Gran March: ***Do you believe that refusing to report for service should be classified as treason and punishable by death?***

(If the PC says yes, the Captain asks if the PC would be willing to carry out the sentence personally. If the PC says yes, the Captain asks if the PC would still be willing to do it if the person to be executed were 15 years old and a member of his own family. If the PC says no at any point, the Captain presses the issue, asking the PC to justify himself and explain why it isn't treason, what he thinks the punishment should be, and/or why it should be anything less than death.)

To any character: ***Can you think of any circumstances in which it would be justifiable for an eligible citizen not to report for military service?***

(Reasonable answers include natural disasters, an attack on their homes, personal injury or grave illness, etc. – as long as the character includes the proviso that the individual should inform the authorities of the situation and report for service as soon as he is fit for duty. Any justification that includes letting someone out of service altogether will cause the Captain to react with disdain, but he does recognize that there are exigent

circumstances that could legitimately delay someone from showing up on Mustering Day.)

To any character, ideally female: *Do you believe that conscription should be mandatory for females as well as for males?*

(Legally speaking, there's no right or wrong answer to this question, since females are allowed to volunteer but not compelled to serve. Hopefully it sparks an interesting discussion, though. If there are no females in the party, but there are elves, you could change the question to ask about whether Dim Forest elves should be required to serve, since they are currently exempted by treaty.)

After each PC has answered one or more questions, the Captain will make a judgment about whether the PC should be allowed to go on the mission or not. He will err on the side of being generous here, since we want everyone to be able to play the game. However, he's not above making pointed remarks, such as telling a character who expressed a dislike of the mandatory conscription that this mission might teach him a thing or two.

Some characters (especially non-natives) may be neither particularly patriotic nor particularly treasonous. That's fine, and the Captain will allow such characters to go on the adventure as long as they agree to uphold the laws of Gran March (and they don't try to talk the recruits out of serving). Since the mission consists of taking citizens of Gran March to serve in the Army of Gran March, that really shouldn't be a problem for most characters from other regions.

After Watcher Captain Stelgaard has finished questioning the PCs, he will explain why he needs them. Read or paraphrase the following:

"As you have no doubt figured out from my line of questioning, I need a group of able – and loyal – individuals to undertake a somewhat sensitive mission. Every year, a small number of individuals who are expected to report for military service fail to do so. In accordance with the law, the Army sends investigators to the affected villages to determine the reason. I want you to travel to a village called Tanner's Ferry, which is on the very edge of our border, where the Javan River meets the Oytwood. We were expecting four or five new recruits from Tanner's Ferry, but none of them reported. It's been over a month and still no sign of them.

"I want to be clear that we expect you to resolve this matter peacefully if at all possible. These are our own citizens we're talking about. Most of the time when someone fails to report, the reason is benign – an error in our records, a death or serious illness in the family, a mother who can't bear to let her baby leave the house, or simply a delay in traveling to the designated mustering site. It is my expectation that you will find something along those lines and that

you will be able to bring the missing recruits back here without further incident.

"However, occasionally there are seditious activities that are discovered, and those must be dealt with accordingly. Tanner's Ferry is on the border with Geoff, not far from Preston; although the battle lines have shifted far away and that area is pacified, to the best of our knowledge, you must be alert for anything. If you encounter a situation that is far beyond your capabilities, I do not expect you to throw your lives away in attempting to apprehend traitors – simply report back here and I will dispatch whatever forces are necessary to enforce the laws of Gran March."

If there are any characters who have expressed absolutely, unequivocally treasonous points of view and refused to recant their position even under direct questioning, the Watcher Captain will force the character to swear a loyalty oath before Heironeous (administered on the spot) or be arrested (if a citizen) or sent away (if not a citizen). Hopefully it won't come to that, but if it's clear that a character is just wildly inappropriate for this adventure and the player has another character that would be more philosophically compatible with this mission, and the APL won't be skewed, it wouldn't be a bad idea to let the player switch characters rather than have to leave the table.

The Watcher Captain will answer whatever questions he can; he has a list of the missing recruits, which is Player Handout #3 (the handout also contains some very basic information about the village of Tanner's Ferry). The Captain can relate at least the following information:

- There were four male children who should have reached age fifteen this year and reported for duty. There might also have been one or more female children who decided to enlist, as that is becoming more and more common these days, but there wouldn't have been any advance records kept since females are not required to enlist.
- Tanner's Ferry is a fairly remote village, on the very edge of Gran March where the Javan meets the Oytwood. There's not even a proper road leading to the city. The quickest way to get there is to take the military road from Orlane to Leilam's Orchard and then head south.
- The village doesn't get a lot of visitors, but it's still fairly good-sized, considering its location. They're largely self-sufficient, hunting and logging in the Oytwood, with limited traffic from barges along the Javan. Although the city of Preston is not far on the other side of the river, there's no easy way to get across. There used to be a ferry, but the military shut it down in order to better control the entry and exit points between Gran March and Geoff. Even when

the ferry was running, though, the main trade route for Preston was still through Hochoch.

- Tanner's Ferry is named for an actual ferry that used to carry people and goods across the Javan to Preston, but the military shut it down when the giants conquered most of Geoff. It would have been destroyed during the siege of Preston a few years ago anyway. The military road between Gran March and Geoff leads through Hochoch and doesn't go anywhere near Tanner's Ferry.
- The new recruits were expected to arrive in Orlane on Mustering Day (the first day of Richfest). Recruits are assigned to units for basic training and actually start their service one month later (the first day of Reaping). There are three main locations where recruits come – Orlane, Hookhill, and Shibolet – to minimize the travel distance and to avoid concentrating everyone in a single city.
- There has been no report at all from Tanner's Ferry regarding the missing recruits. Normally the Elector (whose name is Nathaniel Celebrimbor; Watcher Captain Stelgaard doesn't know him personally) should have sent word if there was going to be a delay. The Electors are responsible for submitting a list each year of the eligible male children who are expected to come of age in the following year. Those reports, along with information collected from active-duty soldiers about their families and home towns, is how the Army knows roughly how many recruits to expect each year and where they're coming from.
- Tanner's Ferry is certainly not the only place where investigators are being sent. There are a handful of missing recruits from all across Gran March each year. It's a bit unusual for so many recruits from the same village to go missing at once, though, which is why the Captain is sending a larger group than normal. Still, there's been no report of trouble in the area, so he doesn't feel the need to start a full-blown military operation to look for a handful of missing teenagers.
- The PCs are to resolve the situation peacefully if at all possible. Assuming there is a reason why the recruits didn't report, the PCs are to assess the validity of that reason and use their best judgment, but the expected outcome is that the PCs will return to Orlane with the missing soldiers-to-be in tow. The Captain will be waiting for their report.
- No matter what they discover, under no circumstances are the PCs authorized to execute anybody for treason (except in the course of defending themselves, should that be necessary; if they are attacked with lethal force they may use lethal force to ensure their own safety and the safety of any innocents). Anyone involved in seditious

activities should be arrested and brought back to Orlane to face trial. Gran March is a lawful nation.

Development: After all questions have been asked and answered, the Watcher Captain will wish the PCs good luck and send them on their way. They can draw basic supplies from the 5th Battle if needed, with the exception of horses (which are in short supply right now due to all the new recruits and the ongoing harvest). Once the PCs are ready to depart, proceed to Encounter 2.

ENCOUNTER 2: ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Key ideas of this encounter: The PCs make the uneventful journey to Tanner's Ferry, possibly asking around in Leilam's Orchard first. If they have been paying attention to their surroundings, they may find a wagon that has been crudely concealed and signs of a struggle. If the party is on foot, it takes three days to get to Leilam's Orchard and another two days to get to Tanner's Ferry, arriving in the middle of the afternoon. If the party is all mounted, the trip takes about half that time.

The weather remains pleasant throughout. The PCs can take the military road west out of Orlane to Leilam's Orchard, where they should turn southwest and travel along an overgrown trail to Tanner's Ferry. There's no military road to the village, although it's clear that people do pass along this trail from time to time, as evidenced by wagon ruts and other signs of passage. (Alternatively, the PCs might choose to travel all the way to the Javan River and then follow the river, which will also take them to the village eventually, but doing so will take somewhat longer.)

Some or all of the PCs may have contacts in the town of Leilam's Orchard from past adventures, but asking around there will net them little. Soldiers pass back and forth between Orlane and Hochoch all the time, and of course there were recruits from all over the place on the roads around Mustering Day. Any number of groups that passed through here could have matched the vague description the PCs have to work with ("at least four boys and maybe also some girls that were on their way to Orlane"). A successful Gather Information check (DC 15) would turn up the information that Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor and his personal file of soldiers passed through here right around Mustering Day, but that's not unusual. The Elector has a house outside of Tanner's Ferry and he's in and out of the area on a regular basis. He certainly didn't mention any missing recruits or other problems, and he didn't seem upset or disturbed.

There have not been any recent reports of trouble in Tanner's Ferry, and Leilam's Orchard is definitely the place that the residents of Tanner's Ferry would come first if they had serious trouble. There are always rumors

of bandits in the Oytwood, of course, especially with all of those refugees from Geoff running around the last few years. And then of course there's the Rushmoors, where the barbarians, swamp critters, frog-men and followers of the Whispered One are constantly acting up in some fashion or another.

Once they leave the military road, if the PCs are actively searching for any signs of passage to and from the village, they find ample evidence of travelers, but nothing that is specifically relevant to their investigation. The amount of time that has passed (over five weeks by this point) has removed any signs of the recruits' travel northward or the Red Arrows' travel southward. There are no taverns or hostels between Leilam's Orchard and Tanner's Ferry, and no campsites that look like they have been used in the last week or so. Anything dating back to the time when the recruits should have passed this way would have been completely eradicated by the passage of time and weather.

However, on their last day of travel, when they are within a few miles of Tanner's Ferry, if the PCs are scouting, a successful Survival check (DC 20) reveals the remains of a wagon. It appears that the wagon was damaged in a fight of some sort – there are places where arrows seem to have stuck into the wood, and one of the wheels is shattered. The wagon itself has been looted and dragged off the usual path of travel, but there are still a few drag marks and footprints that the PCs can find. It would appear that the wagon's owner was robbed. The cargo was somewhat unusual as well – the wagon is empty, but a successful Search check (DC 15) in the area turns up a broken shovel and a busted box that is labeled “pick handles” in Common on the side (though the contents are missing). It seems somewhat strange that these types of mining supplies would be headed for Tanner's Ferry; as far as any of the PCs know or have been told, there are no mines of any sort in the area.

Trying to back-track whoever might have attacked or moved the wagon is futile, as too much time has passed and efforts have been made to conceal any tracks leading away. This attack was actually the work of the Gyri “bandits” who have been keeping an eye on the enslaved villagers for the last several weeks. The wagon was sent by Nolar Thotec to bring extra supplies to the excavation site, but the Gyri intercepted it and destroyed the supplies in hopes of disrupting the work.

Development: Once the PCs have finished examining the destroyed wagon (or if they fail to notice it), they will arrive in Tanner's Ferry. Proceed to Encounter 3.

ENCOUNTER 3: AT THE FERRY

Key ideas of this encounter: The PCs arrive in the village of Tanner's Ferry and have the opportunity to talk to some of the locals. Nobody is aware that the young men and women failed to report for duty in Orlane.

There has been some trouble with bandits lately, but the Elector and his men have everything under control.

Tanner's Ferry looks much like any other small village in Gran March. There are about thirty houses scattered around a cleared central area with a large fire pit. Other than a general store, there are no real shops or inns, although you do see a blacksmith's anvil outside of one house and bundles of lumber and cut timber are stacked outside of several others. A small shrine pays homage to the Harvest Church.

A few children play in the warmth of the day, watched over by an alert mother and a friendly-looking dog. There certainly doesn't seem to be anything to indicate that this placid scene is actually a hotbed of treasonous activity against the lawful government of the nation.

The villagers here don't know much, so the town isn't laid out in any great detail. Tanner's Ferry is home to about 100 people. Most of the men make their living by cutting timber in the Oytwood. It's about a 20-minute walk to the banks of the Javan, but since the military shut the ferry down, few people go there (other than a handful of fishermen). The current is too strong for swimming and the river is too wide and deep to ford without the ferry. The blacksmith's anvil is mostly used for repairing and sharpening axes. The general store carries a very basic selection of the necessities of life (about what one would expect to find in any frontier town). There is a brewer, who makes basic mead and also distills some of the berries found in the Oytwood into stronger liquor, but there is no full-time public house, as the local population isn't large enough to support such a venture.

The people are cautious around strangers, simply because of all the unrest in Geoff and the ever-present possibility of something unpleasant coming out of the forest or the not-too-distant Rushmoors, but everyone here is friendly. Asking around, the PCs can determine the following information. Feel free to roleplay this out to a certain extent, but this isn't a portion of the adventure where you want to spend too much time if you are running in a standard convention slot.

- There were a total of six teenagers who were reporting for duty from Tanner's Ferry – the four boys listed on *Player Handout #3* and two girls who had decided to enlist as well.
- Nothing unusual surrounded their departure. The town had a small going-away party for them about a week before Mustering Day and then they left (on foot). They had allotted five days to make the journey to Orlane, figuring to arrive a day early and partake of the festivities.
- The six new recruits were accompanied by two adults – veterans of the Army – to make sure that they didn't get into any trouble along the way.

- The two adults haven't returned yet, but that's not really surprising. One of them is an older brother who mustered out last year and who had expressed an interest in seeing Ander's Falls because of some dwarves from Barony Cragmor that he met during his final year of service. The other is an older adult, a widower who probably decided to stay in Orlane and see if he could find a pretty farmer's daughter to marry and bring home.
- It's a little bit unusual that there were so many children of the appropriate age in the same year in such a small village, but... (blushing) well, we don't really talk about this sort of thing in public, you understand, but there was this priestess of Wenta who came through town, oh, I guess it must have been about fifteen years ago, and she had some very... enthusiastic ideas about certain rituals pertaining to the fall harvest. I guess they must have worked, because there sure were a lot of new babies the following summer! We'll be sending quite a few kids from Tanner's Ferry to the Army for the next few years.
- Nobody here has anything against the Army, the Commandant, or the country. All of our fathers and husbands are veterans, and a few of our mothers and wives are too! When you live out in the middle of nowhere, you place a high premium on personal responsibility. Besides, the military training is good for everybody. It's not like we can make a living out here by being soft.
- If asked about the Knights of the Watch taking over Arweth, everyone will tell the PCs that it seems like a good idea and they will feel more secure with the Knights as a neighbor.
- Well... It is true that young Nick Tanner wasn't too happy about going to the Army, and who can blame him, what with the ferry being shut down the way it was. His father worked on the Javan for his whole life, with *his* own father, who built the ferry with his own two hands, you know. It wasn't right, the way the Army just came in and took away the family's livelihood like that, no matter what they said about the risk of letting people in and out of Geoff.
- One of the two girls who joined up, Susa, we all knew that she'd enlist when she came of age. She really wanted to be in the Army her whole life. Always a tomboy, that one. The other girl, Melisande, well, she wasn't so keen on the idea, but with her boyfriend Risla bound for the Army, she wasn't about to let him out of her sight! Quite a couple, those two... no matter what anyone said or did, they wouldn't be separated, not for a moment. *(whispering)* I almost think they might have run off together rather than join the service.
- We don't see a lot of refugees from Geoff coming through anymore, although we did until a year or so ago. Occasionally we get somebody from Preston or Hochoch, but the military road pretty much takes everybody who crosses the border straight into Orlane. We get the occasional goblin or other wandering monster, but nothing that we can't handle. We keep our axes AND our wits sharp around here. (**Note:** Since Geoff has recently opened up the Downlands to settlement, the number of refugees entering the country from Geoff has almost completely stopped and in fact many of the Gyri refugees who took shelter in Gran March during the last few years are now returning to Geoff.)
- Yeah, there are some bandits operating in the area... it's not too uncommon to have to deal with that sort of thing in the Oytwood. Could be goblinoids cast off from the giant armies, could be Gyri on the run, could be elves... but the Elector said that he had things under control, and apart from one tinker who was ambushed and had his wagon stolen, there hasn't been any actual trouble here in the village. The Elector's men fought the bandits to a draw, with several casualties on both sides, and they haven't been heard from since. The Elector gave the tinker some money to replace his stolen goods and had his personal file escort the man back to Leilam's Orchard. Don't know where he would have gone after that. (**Note:** The "tinker" was actually an agent of the Red Arrows sent by Nolar Thotec. He certainly didn't tell the story of his attack to anyone in Leilam's Orchard, which is why the PCs didn't hear about it if they asked if there were any reports of trouble in Tanner's Ferry.)
- You should probably talk to the Elector – he's in town, you know. He's got a nice hunting cabin not far from the village, where he stays a lot, especially this time of year. I'm sure that he would be happy to see you, especially if you're offering to help out with those bandits. You don't think that they could be the reason why our kids didn't report for duty, do you? They weren't carrying anything of real value... and certainly nothing that would be worth killing somebody for!
- The Elector's a nice enough man, friendly to everyone, doesn't really hold himself apart from the people or anything like that. He spent a lot of time in Shibolet recently; I guess it probably had something to do with the election for Commandant last year. His family had a lot of holdings in Orlane but I suppose they must have lost most of it during the attack a few years ago. It's not my business to know his business.

Assuming the PCs explain why they are here, the villagers they talk to will be very concerned. They will press the PCs for all the information they can get (which isn't much). The locals had no idea that the kids didn't

report for duty like they were supposed to. Nobody was worried, but then why should they have worried? It hadn't been enough time to expect letters home, and the adults who went had valid reasons for not coming back right away. Besides, the Elector is in town, and if there had been any trouble, surely he would have known about it and said something. The villagers will encourage the PCs to talk to the Elector and tell him what's going on. They can easily provide directions to his hunting lodge, which is not far from the village (about a 30-minute walk). There are other houses scattered around outside the village proper; a fair number of the folks who live here do so because they value their independence and privacy, though most of the houses are built in the central cluster for safety and convenience.

Nobody here has actually seen the bandits, but they've certainly heard about the attack on the tinker. Again, the Elector would have the most information, because his soldiers have been trying to track down the bandits for the last week or so, and the Elector personally helped out the tinker who got robbed.

There aren't a lot of details provided here about the individual families from which the recruits were drawn. That's because it's entirely possible that the PCs would go off on a wild-goose chase and want to investigate each family in detail to find out who might have had some treasonous motives. The reality is that all the families are humble and loyal and good. Establish this fact quickly and conclusively so that the adventure doesn't get bogged down. With that said, there are a couple of red herrings provided (Nick Tanner being bitter about the loss of his family's livelihood when the Army shut the ferry down, and the couple who might have run off together rather than join the service) so that you can sow a few seeds of doubt in the PCs' minds and make the investigation more interesting.

Development: After the PCs have gotten what information they can from the villagers, they will most likely want to talk to the Elector. That meeting is detailed in Encounter 4. If they decide to just go off into the woods and start searching for the bandits, then you can either skip directly to Encounter 5, or simply say that the PCs search around for a while, give them some Survival checks, and say that they don't find anything. That will most likely lead them back to the Elector as their next best source of information, and thus to Encounter 4.

ENCOUNTER 4: A VISIT TO THE ELECTOR

Key ideas of this encounter: The PCs talk to Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor (pronounced Kell-eh-BRIM-boar) at his hunting lodge. He tries to steer them in the direction of blaming the "bandits" for the missing recruits and offers to send his men to help if the PCs will track down and arrest or kill the bandits.

The Elector's hunting lodge is a sturdy-looking, single-story log cabin that looks as though it must have been in the family for several generations. A faint wisp of smoke rising from the chimney indicates that someone is here, and the two soldiers in Gran March livery rising to greet you from their posts on either side of the door remove any other doubt that Nathaniel Celebrimbor must be within.

This is one of those types of encounters that require you to pull off a fairly significant deception. Showing the bad guy to the PCs before they're actually supposed to fight him is a design decision wrought with peril. Nevertheless, in this case it's necessary, and the PCs really don't have much of a reason to suspect the Elector of anything at this point. Still, it's possible that the PCs will decide on the spot that the Elector is the villain. See the Troubleshooting section for some suggestions if this occurs.

The two soldiers at the door will admit the PCs to see the Elector without doing more than giving them a cursory examination. He's been expecting that someone would show up sooner or later, and he's already rehearsed his story. Just to make sure, though, while the PCs are talking with the door guards, the Elector will quaff an *elixir of glibness* (gives him the benefits of the spell), giving him a +30 bonus on his Bluff checks for the next hour along with some resistances against divination magic that would reveal the truth or falsehood of his words. He also wears a *ring of mind shielding* at all times, a legacy of the many political clashes he's been through. Most of the Electors and other important people in Gran March wear such items, so it's not automatically unusual or suspicious.

With the *potion of glibness* active, the Elector has a minimum of +38 on his Bluff skill checks (at APL 2, and it only goes up from there). Assuming he takes 10, the PCs would have to succeed on a DC 48 Sense Motive check to know when he is lying to them. (His "soldiers," on the other hand, are not nearly so glib; if the PCs are smart enough to interrogate them, details may be found in the Troubleshooting section.) Spells and abilities that would detect the Elector's alignment or thoughts fail because of his *ring of mind shielding*. (If asked, he will admit that he's wearing such an item; after all, he has access to state secrets and most of his peers purchased them last year during the election, at the suggestion of Commandant Vrianian himself.)

Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor is a middle-aged human of Oeridian descent. He appears to be in good health and physically fit. He is wearing light hunting leathers (leather armor) when the PCs are shown into his presence. He is not carrying a weapon, but anyone who looks around will see several crossbows and longswords (good for boar hunting). There are also two more Gran March soldiers present inside the hunting lodge. There is nothing anywhere in the building that would suggest the Elector is a follower of Hextor and although he does have

his divine focus with him, it is well-hidden beneath his clothes. Even if the PCs sneak off to perform a surreptitious search, they won't find anything – no secret basements filled with prisoners, no hidden shrines to Hextor, nothing that would be even remotely incriminating. Do your best to convince them that everything is exactly what it seems to be.

After offering them something to drink (he has a well-stocked liquor cabinet, including the local brew; there are no poisons or other unpleasant surprises) the Elector will ask the PCs why they have come to Tanner's Ferry. The very first question that the PCs are likely to ask is whether or not the Elector has an "official explanation" for the missing recruits. Of course, he doesn't, because his cover story is that he has no idea that the villagers are even missing until the PCs tell him! As far as he knows, they left the village and reported for duty in Orlane, and this is the first he has heard otherwise.

Assuming they explain about the missing recruits, the Elector will become very agitated (because he is so concerned for the safety and well-being of his people). He will immediately attempt to turn the PCs' suspicions on the bandits who have been operating in the area. Read or paraphrase the following:

The Elector slams his fist into his palm. "Damn it! I should have known those petty thieves wouldn't be able to leave well enough alone. I thought after my men killed a couple of them that they had gotten the idea and would move on in search of greener pastures, but apparently I was mistaken. Such acts cannot go unpunished, even if it weren't my own people at risk. I hope that it is not too presumptuous of me to assume that you would be interested in helping justice be done in this matter?"

The PCs will no doubt have plenty of questions for the Elector. Keeping in mind his massive bonus on Bluff checks, each of the pieces of information below can be shared. For your reference, each is marked as being true, partially true, or false.

- "The children who left here – I suppose it's wrong to call them children, now that they are old enough to serve Commandant and Country, but I've watched them all grow up, you know – they were very excited to be joining the Army. All of their fathers are veterans, of course, and most of them have brothers in the service. There were even two girls... er, I mean, *young women* who had chosen to volunteer." (True; the Elector knows the names and family details of the missing recruits, but nothing more than what the PCs have already been told.)
- "The bandit attack didn't occur until a long while after the group had already left for Orlane. Of course, we had no idea that the recruits never made it to report for duty. The bandits must have waylaid them between here and Leilam's Orchard." (Partially true – the attack on the wagon did come after the

villagers had already been taken, but they weren't taken by the "bandits" at all.)

- "That poor tinker who was attacked – the bandits stole most of his wares, but I replaced the value of his goods and made sure he was escorted back to the military road at Leilam's Orchard." (True as far as it goes, but omitting the fact that he wasn't a tinker and he was bringing supplies for the secret excavation project.)
- "After the attack on the tinker, I had my men begin patrolling more deeply into the Oytwood. About a week ago, we found signs of where the bandits had been camping, and we nearly caught them. It was a pretty fierce battle, according to my men – we killed two of the brigands, but at least four more of them escaped, and I lost several of my own in the process." (True)
- "The bandits we killed definitely had the look of Gyri. I wouldn't be surprised if they were driven from their own homes by the giant army, and instead of seeking an honest living in Orlane along with all the others, they decided to turn to a life of crime instead." (Partially true. The men are indeed refugees from Geoff, and they are indeed hiding out from the authorities, but not because they are criminals.)
- "We never saw any signs of a struggle or indications that our people had done anything other than follow the trail to Leilam's Orchard and from there take the military road to Orlane. Your arrival is the first I've heard of any problems." (Totally false.)
- "I'll be happy to send my best tracker and most of my men to help you if you're willing to go after those brigands. With any luck, you can find our children and bring them back alive, or at least give those bastards the punishment they so richly deserve!" (Partially true. The Elector definitely wants to see the bandits dealt with, since they're harassing his secret project and trying to free the villagers he's enslaved.)
- "Of course, we don't know exactly where they are hiding, but we know where they have been sighted, and I'm sure that they'll be flushed out sooner or later." (False. The Elector actually used divination magic to determine exactly where the brigands are holed up. He just didn't want to risk his remaining forces in a frontal assault. With the addition of the PCs to his own forces, he figures that the odds are far enough in his favor that it's worth the risk.)

Assuming that the PCs seem to be buying his story, the Elector will offer them the use of four of his six remaining soldiers. He originally had eight, but two were killed in the earlier skirmish with the brigands and he will want to keep two with him "in case these bandits are just the vanguard of a much larger force – we'll need

someone to send to Orlane for the Army!", thus leaving four soldiers to accompany the PCs.

❖ **Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor:** LE Male Oeridian Aristocrat/Cleric of Hextor; Bluff +38 or better; see appropriate *Appendix*.

❖ **Elector's Guards (4):** LE Male Human Rogues; dressed as standard Gran March soldiers; see appropriate *Appendix*.

Roleplaying Notes: The Elector is putting on a very convincing show of being the concerned nobleman looking out for the welfare of his citizens. Of course, the truth is that HE's the biggest threat to their welfare, but with the assistance of his magical items, he hopes that nobody will figure that out until it's too late. He doesn't really need the PCs to be killed – he just needs them to be distracted long enough for the excavation to be completed. The "soldiers" are actually members of the Red Arrows, but they are also all veterans of the Gran March Army, so they know how they are supposed to act and can play their parts convincingly. They make every effort to be unobtrusive and let the Elector do all the talking.

Troubleshooting: Nathaniel really just wants to get the PCs to head off and take care of the bandits for him – the work at the dig site is nearly complete, and if he can use the PCs to deal with the pesky Gyri who have been harassing his men and disrupting his work, then he'll be happy. If they do his dirty work and then consider their job finished and leave town to file a report, then so much the better.

Although there aren't really any inconsistencies in the Elector's story (that the PCs have much hope of knowing about, anyway) it's still quite possible that they will suspect there's more going on here than meets the eye. He will, of course, deny any and all connections that the PCs might try to draw between himself or his men and the missing recruits. The more they press him, the more he will insist that the bandits must be responsible. He won't yell or engage in histrionics – that will just make them more suspicious. Military PCs who are Sergeants or below will automatically have to defer to his rank, and he will order them to assist his men if that's what it takes.

The PCs shouldn't be able to use Sense Motive to pick up on any falsehoods and they shouldn't be able to use magic, either. Without any real evidence, if the PCs try to arrest the Elector or use force against him, they will be in the wrong legally (assaulting an Elector is not a trivial offense). All you need to do is obscure the truth long enough for the PCs to leave in search of the bandits, because as soon as they're gone, the Elector heads for the dig site, and the next time the PCs see him will be in the final encounter.

The biggest risk of the truth being discovered actually isn't with the Elector at all – it's with his men.

The two guards at the front door (there are two more guards inside the house) should fade into the woodwork as quickly as possible. Treat the guards as part of the boxed text and everything should be okay. However, if a PC uses *detect evil* on one of the guards, there's no concealing the fact that the Red Arrows will indeed detect as evil. The Elector (of course) has a convenient explanation for this – the members of his file recently went through a duty rotation in the Rushmoors, where they were part of the unit of the 9th Battle that is guarding a recently-discovered site of the Whispered One. While they were there, they picked up some sort of curse, which is affecting a lot of the soldiers who spend too much time in the area. The curse manifested itself as a black ring around one eye – it was very disturbing. Fortunately there was a cleric who was able to remove the curse, but the aura must still be persisting. Nathaniel is sure it will fade sooner or later, and in the meantime, he can certainly vouch for the trustworthiness of his own soldiers. This entire story is true, except that these men have not been there. PCs who are members of the 9th will not recognize them. This will probably lead to trouble.

Another risk is that the PCs might use *detect thoughts* on one of the guards. Should this occur, and the guard fails his saving throw, the PC will be able to sense the man's surface thoughts, which might indicate that the "soldier" isn't really a soldier at all – but is concentrating hard on trying to act like one. Should the PCs immediately jump to the conclusion that the Elector's guards are actually the bad guys based on this sort of evidence, he won't hesitate to throw the Red Arrows under the bus – he will side with the PCs, act completely shocked, and turn the "traitor" over to them for interrogation or whatever else they want. He will then leave, saying that he doesn't have the stomach for such things, and head directly to the dig site once he's clear of the PCs.

Development: Assuming that the PCs agree to go after the bandits, if they accept his offer of the use of his men (and they have no real reason not to) then the four guards from the hunting cabin will go with the PCs into the Oytwood. The Elector waits until they are out of sight and then leaves for the dig site, which is where his other two guards are currently located. The PCs may refuse the offer of assistance, saying that they can handle the bandits themselves. If that happens, the PCs still go into the Oytwood, but the guards accompany the Elector to the dig site. Either way, tracking down and dealing with the bandits is detailed in Encounter 5.

If things go off track and the PCs somehow discover the location of the dig site, perhaps from interrogating one of the Red Arrows, or even by faking like they're going to go after the brigands but actually trying to follow the Elector stealthily, then you can jump directly to Encounter 7.

If a fight actually breaks out between the PCs and the Elector, his four guards on the scene will come to his

defense. His goal will be to have the soldiers fight a delaying action while he casts *obscuring mist* from a scroll or makes his escape in some other suitable fashion and heads for the dig site. The PCs will most likely track him after they have dealt with the guards, which again will take them to Encounter 7. Stats for the Elector and the Red Arrows can be found in the appropriate *Appendix*. They aren't repeated here since the goal is for there not to be a fight in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 5: ON THE BANDITS' TRAIL

Key ideas of this encounter: The PCs (possibly accompanied by four of the Elector's guards) track down and confront the "bandits" that are believed to be responsible for the disappearance of the missing villagers.

After leaving the Elector's hunting lodge, it takes the PCs about thirty minutes to reach the area where the bandits were last sighted. Get a marching order, draw some forested terrain on the battle map, and read or paraphrase the following:

The Oytwood is not as ominously dark and oppressive as the Dim Forest, but it's still noticeably different when you pass out from beneath the open sky and find yourself surrounded by towering trees on all sides. The temperature drops, not to the point of being cold, but there is definitely a chill in the air.

Option 1: If the PCs are accompanied by the four soldiers from the Elector's file, one of the soldiers will take the lead. The soldiers actually know exactly where they're going (they were briefed by the Elector, who used divination magic to find the bandits' lair several days ago) but they put on a show of acting like they're tracking. The PCs can make Survival checks of their own, or they can make checks to assist the lead soldier as he does the "tracking." If the PCs insist on making their own separate checks, no matter what DCs they hit, tell them that they just don't see any tracks that look even remotely like what they're searching for. Either the Elector's man is a **REALLY** good tracker, or there's something else going on.

Option 2: If the PCs are doing their own tracking, then have them roll several Survival checks. It takes them about an hour to pick up the first sign of the brigands' passage and requires a DC 22 check to succeed.

In any case, once the PCs are on the right trail, after about 30 minutes of tracking through the woods, they will encounter the refugees from Geoff. Due to the limited visibility in the forest, the initial encounter distance is about 200 feet. Start rolling Spot and Listen checks for the PCs against the Hide and Move Silently checks of the bandits (see the appropriate *Appendix* for details) and start giving the brigands Spot and Listen checks against the corresponding checks of the PCs (and the Elector's men, if they're present).

If the PCs notice the brigands first, they see a number of cloaked and hooded men carrying longbows and creeping through the forest. It's up to the PCs whether to attempt to parley or simply attack. If the Elector's men are with the PCs, they will attack immediately as soon as they are aware of the brigands – they don't want to give the PCs time to talk and possibly figure out what's really going on!

If the brigands notice the PCs first, the way the encounter begins depends on whether the Elector's men are present or not. If the Elector's men are present, the brigands will attempt an ambush, attacking the false soldiers first along with any PCs that are dressed in Gran March military uniforms. (The Gyri have no reason to believe that the PCs aren't associated with the other people dressed like Gran March soldiers, and those guys are kidnapping and killing innocent people, so the woodsmen will assume that the PCs are corrupt too.) If the Elector's men are not present, then the bandits will attempt to parley.

If a conversation has any chance to ensue, it will start with one of the bandits calling out: *"So, more Gran March kidnappers and thugs who call themselves soldiers, eh? Well, we've no innocent women and children for you to take, so you'll have to settle up with our arrows instead!"* If a fight starts before there is any chance to parley, then work this kind of talk in on the bandits' actions (it is a free action to speak). The PCs should wonder why these supposed "brigands" are accusing **THEM** of being the kidnappers and thugs!

The Elector's men will do everything they can to ensure that the bandits are killed (and of course will deny the accusations made by the Gyri – after all, what else would known thieves and bandits do other than try to distract the lawful authorities?). If the PCs turn and side with the bandits, the Red Arrows will fight to the death, hoping to buy as much time as possible for Nathaniel to complete his mission (and knowing the punishment that awaits, if they are taken alive).

Creatures: This is a fight with a lot of NPCs (assuming the PCs brought the Elector's men). Don't let things bog down where you are rolling ten times as many dice as the players. Try to keep the action fluid and descriptive. Whichever side the PCs are fighting on should win easily simply because of the strength of numbers. If the PCs are attacking the bandits, then the Elector's soldiers assist them. If the PCs are attacking the soldiers, then the bandits assist them. Either way, it should be a fairly short fight.

APL 2 (EL 4)

🏹 or 🛡️ **Elector's Soldiers/Red Arrows (4):** Male Human Rog1; hp 6 each; see *Appendix 1*.

🏹 or 🛡️ **Bandits/Gyri Refugees (4):** Male Human War2; hp 15 each; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 4 (EL 6)

🗡️ or 🏹 **Elector's Soldiers/Red Arrows (4):** Male Human Rog2; hp 12 each; see *Appendix 2*.

🗡️ or 🏹 **Bandits/Gyri Refugees (4):** Male Human War2/Ftr1; hp 24 each; see *Appendix 2*.

APL 6 (EL 8)

🗡️ or 🏹 **Elector's Soldiers/Red Arrows (4):** Male Human Rog4; hp 24 each; see *Appendix 3*.

🗡️ or 🏹 **Bandits/Gyri Refugees (4):** Male Human War2/Ftr3; hp 42 each; see *Appendix 3*.

APL 8 (EL 10)

🗡️ or 🏹 **Elector's Soldiers/Red Arrows (4):** Male Human Rog6; hp 36 each; see *Appendix 4*.

🗡️ or 🏹 **Bandits/Gyri Refugees (4):** Male Human War2/Ftr5; hp 60 each; see *Appendix 4*.

Tactics: The Elector's men will drink their *potions of aid* if it looks as though the PCs aren't going to charge into melee with the bandits. If the PCs seem to be taking care of business, the Elector's men will save their potions – in case they need them to fight the PCs later. They will stay out of melee until there is an opportunity to kill one of the brigands; their primary goal is to ensure that the Gyri die and don't get the chance to talk to the PCs. They are unused to having to fight against trained opponents (they spend most of their time kicking around people who can't fight back) so their tactics are not necessarily ideal.

The Gyri will use standard tactics for bowmen – fire and retreat, fire and retreat, and try to catch the enemy in a crossfire if possible. They want to stay alive, but they realize that they are badly outnumbered, so rather than flee they will try to take out as many of the Gran March soldiers (PC and NPC alike) as they can. Their tactics are very well coordinated, as they have been fighting together for quite a while now.

Talking to the Brigands: If the PCs get the opportunity to actually talk to one of the supposed bandits, most likely after the battle has ended, they can learn the following information:

Note that the Elector's men will insist on killing the brigands (saying that kidnappers and traitors do not deserve to be taken prisoner) and will do everything they can to keep the PCs from actually talking to the men from Geoff. This may lead the PCs to fight with the soldiers immediately after having fought the bandits.

- The “bandits” are not really bandits at all – they are refugees from Geoff who were driven from their homes by the giants. They recently entered Gran March following the siege of Pregmere.
- They saw a lot of war atrocities – on both sides – and although they fled Geoff for the relative safety of

Gran March, they weren't sure whether or not they could trust anyone here. They had heard all sorts of stories back in Geoff about how refugees were put into the work gangs or enslaved or conscripted into the army and sent right back to the front lines.

- Before they could get to Orlane and learn the truth of the situation (which is that although there is some tension, the refugees are well-treated and permitted to make new lives for themselves) they came upon a group of Gran March soldiers who seemed to have kidnapped and enslaved a number of local commoners, including some boys and girls that were just teenagers. This seemed to confirm everything they had heard, although the way the prisoners were being treated seemed strange even in light of the wild rumors, so the Gyri decided to follow the group and see where they went.
- The soldiers dragged the villagers in chains through the forest and took them to a site a few miles outside of the village, where they shackled them to rocks and forced them to dig. They seem to be excavating some kind of ancient building, possibly a temple.
- Fearful of going to the authorities (after all, a group of Gran March soldiers were running around enslaving children, as far as they knew) the refugees nevertheless decided to lurk in the area and see what they could do to free these oppressed civilians. They didn't really have a plan, but they engaged in several skirmishes with the soldiers, with losses on both sides. “We'd have taken them back to Geoff with us,” attests the leader. “Better to face the giants and die free than to stay here and be a slave in your own home.”
- About a week ago, while they were watching the dig site, the Gyri noticed another man drive up with a wagon. He was bringing more digging supplies and tools to the excavation – a lot more. The refugees assumed this meant that the soldiers were going to go out and enslave even more of the innocent villagers, so they decided to attack the wagon and destroy the supplies.
- The Gyri want to do the right thing (they are Chaotic Good in alignment), but they are afraid of being arrested / executed / imprisoned / you name it. The PCs will need to negotiate some kind of deal with these men that includes a promise of their safety. (Escorting them to Orlane to join the other refugees from Geoff would probably be ideal, but anything that seems reasonable is fine.) If the PCs insist on arresting the refugees or otherwise turning them directly over to the Army, the Gyri will express their willingness to fight to the death rather than be thrown in some Gran March prison or enslaved on some Gran March work gang.

The PCs will have to do some serious persuading to convince the men from Geoff that these “soldiers” are not the norm in Gran March and in fact this is an aberration and a miscarriage of justice of the highest order. Good roleplaying and Diplomacy checks should carry the day here. Bonus points if the PCs mention Brother Geraint Brownbaker, the priest of Pelor who tends to the refugees outside of Orlane; one of these men has heard of him and if the PCs know him and speak well of him, then they must be ok. It will also help if any of the PCs are druids or other followers of the Old Faith (including Pelor) themselves. There’s no hard and fast DC here – just go with the flow.

Treasure: The possessions of the Gyri or the Red Arrows are the only treasure here.

Development: What happens next depends on whom the PCs sided with and whether or not anybody survived the battle other than the PCs.

If the PCs killed all of the “brigands” and any of the Elector’s men survived, they will congratulate the PCs on a job well done. They will offer to let the PCs loot the bodies and search for the bandits’ actual lair while they return to town and inform the Elector that the mission was a success. As it turns out, the “lair” is nothing more than a simple campsite that the bandits have been maintaining. They have almost no supplies and there are certainly no signs that the missing villagers were ever here. This should clue the PCs in to the fact that they have been misled, which should send them rushing back to the village. Proceed to Encounter 6.

If the PCs sided with the brigands and killed the Elector’s men, a search of the bodies will reveal that all of the “soldiers” have tattoos of a red arrow on their chests. Some of the PCs may recognize these tattoos as belonging to an organization called the Red Arrows that has been causing trouble in Gran March for at least the last several years, including making assassination attempts against Commandant Vrianian. The fact that these men had infiltrated the Elector’s file (whether the PCs suspect the Elector himself or not) should cause the PCs to realize that things are not as they seem, which should send them rushing back to the village. Proceed to Encounter 6.

If the PCs have managed to figure out the location of the dig site, either by talking to the Gyri or interrogating one of the Red Arrows, and they want to head straight there, bypassing the village, then proceed to Encounter 7.

ENCOUNTER 6: BACK TO THE FERRY

Key ideas of this encounter: The PCs return to the village, most likely suspicious that they’ve been misled. There’s no sign of the Elector or his men, but one of the villagers saw them leaving, and can point the PCs in the right direction.

When the PCs arrive back in the village, the scene that greets them depends on what happened in the previous encounter. If the PCs killed the brigands, the Elector’s men have already informed the villagers that the threat has been dealt with and the PCs will be greeted as heroes by the villagers. Of course, the villagers’ elation will turn to confusion when the PCs report that they didn’t find any sign of the missing teenagers or any evidence that they had actually been kidnapped by the bandits.

If the PCs killed the Elector’s men and are coming out of the woods with the “bandits” accompanying them, then they’re going to have to do some fast talking to persuade the villagers not to attack them! The villagers are a mixture of warriors and commoners, but they all have sharp timber axes, and they know how to use them. Don’t let an actual fight break out here (if the PCs chop up the commoners, it’s safe to say they’ve committed an evil act and can be removed from play) but this can make for a great roleplaying scene as the PCs try to explain that the good guys were actually the bad guys and these bad guys are actually good guys. Again, no hard and fast DCs – if the PCs are trying to do the right thing, let them do it (eventually... but make them sweat a bit first).

Either way, once the situation has been sorted out, if the PCs ask, they can learn that the Elector left his hunting lodge and passed by not too long ago (right after the PCs left their meeting with him, in fact). If the PCs don’t have any of the bandits with them or didn’t get directions from the Gyri, then the villager who saw the Elector can point them in the right direction to follow the Elector’s trail.

Development: The adventure could theoretically end here, if the PCs killed the bandits and think that their job is done. Of course, there’s still no sign of the missing recruits and other villagers, and the PCs would presumably want to report their great victory to the Elector in person, so reaching a conclusion at this point is very unlikely, but if it happens, it happens. Sometimes we just don’t put the pieces together before it’s too late. Proceed to the Conclusion.

Assuming that the PCs know they’ve been duped, however, they should now have a means of locating the excavation site, either with directions from the “bandits” or by following the Elector’s trail with the villagers’ assistance. Proceed to Encounter Seven.

ENCOUNTER 7: THE LOST RECRUITS

Key ideas of this encounter: The PCs arrive at the site that Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor has been trying so hard to conceal – the excavation of an ancient Hextorite temple. Nathaniel himself has already entered the temple, but the enslaved villagers are here, along with some more Red Arrows.

The dig site is about three miles outside of the village, so it should take the PCs no more than an hour to

get there (especially as they are probably feeling a great sense of urgency). Read or paraphrase the following when they arrive on the scene:

You have come upon what looks like a fairly large archaeological dig site. Lying on the ground or leaning wearily on their picks and shovels are a number of very tired and bloody humans ranging in age from mid-teens to adult. Standing guard over them are two soldiers in the livery of Gran March.

It appears that whatever these people were digging for, they have found it, as a tunnel opening that looks very recently cleared leads downward into darkness.

The two soldiers here are, of course, the two remaining Red Arrows. Any other soldiers that the PCs did not kill in Encounter 5 are also here, so in theory there could be a maximum of six Red Arrows. They immediately raise the alarm when they spot the PCs, knowing that once the PCs have seen the haggard villagers, there's no possible explanation that could prevent a fight. If any of the Gyri bandits survived the earlier encounter and are accompanying the PCs, they will definitely fight to defeat the slavers.

APL 2 (EL 2 to 5)

👤 **Elector's Soldiers/Red Arrows (min. 2, max. 6):** Male Human Rog1; hp 6 each; see *Appendix 1*.

👤 **Bandits/Gyri Refugees (max. 4):** Male Human War2; hp 15 each; see *Appendix 1*.

APL 4 (EL 4 to 7)

👤 **Elector's Soldiers/Red Arrows (min. 2, max. 6):** Male Human Rog2; hp 12 each; see *Appendix 2*.

👤 **Bandits/Gyri Refugees (max. 4):** Male Human War2/Ftr1; hp 24 each; see *Appendix 2*.

APL 6 (EL 6 to 9)

👤 **Elector's Soldiers/Red Arrows (min. 2, max. 6):** Male Human Rog4; hp 24 each; see *Appendix 3*.

👤 **Bandits/Gyri Refugees (max. 4):** Male Human War2/Ftr3; hp 42 each; see *Appendix 3*.

APL 8 (EL 8 to 11)

👤 **Elector's Soldiers/Red Arrows (min. 2, max. 6):** Male Human Rog6; hp 36 each; see *Appendix 4*.

👤 **Bandits/Gyri Refugees (max. 4):** Male Human War2/Ftr5; hp 60 each; see *Appendix 4*.

Note that if the PCs defeated all four of the Red Arrows in Encounter 5 and none of the Gyri died, the remaining two Red Arrows will be badly outnumbered. If that is the case you should dispense with running the actual combat (as it is just a formality) and say that the Gyri woodsmen take out the two soldiers in the first round of combat. Narrate some critical hits or other

excitement. The Gyri will tell the PCs to pursue Nathaniel into the tunnel opening while they tend to the battered villagers. (Of course, anything the PCs want to do for the villagers is fine too, but even the teenagers will tell the PCs to go after Nathaniel and come back for them later).

If the PCs really want to take the time to chat, the villagers can offer the following information:

- The story of how they were abducted by the Elector's men under pretense of a shared campsite (see the *Adventure Background*).
- They have been here, digging up this ancient ruin, ever since. The Gran March "soldiers" have been bringing them bread and water and keeping them guarded at all times.
- Whatever is in this ruin, the Elector really wants it badly. He even made a few of his own men get out shovels and picks and start digging when he didn't think they were making enough progress.
- Based on carvings and pieces of masonry they have dug up, the villagers think that this place is probably some kind of ancient Hextorite temple.
- Elector Nathaniel has been very eager to see this site dug out. Sometimes he talks to himself while he's watching the digging... almost like he's arguing with himself. From what the villagers have overheard, there seems to be some kind of ancient relic or other item of power inside that he really wants to get his hands on. (Note: Nathaniel isn't really talking to himself... he's exchanging *sendings* with his patron, Nolar Thotec.)
- The tunnel entrance was just opened up less than an hour ago – and Nathaniel has already gone inside. He opened up one of the supply crates and took out some weapons and armor, including full plate that looked like it had some kind of holy symbol on it. The soldiers helped him put on the armor. He then left the two soldiers out here to stand guard and entered the tunnel alone.

Treasure: The possessions of the Red Arrows are the only treasure here.

Development: The Gyri refugees won't accompany the PCs into the temple – but they will wait outside in case there are any more Red Arrows around and to help take care of the villagers. The villagers, of course, are in no condition to fight anybody. The PCs will therefore have to pursue Nathaniel themselves; when they do, proceed to Encounter 8.

ENCOUNTER 8: INTO THE DARKNESS BELOW

Key ideas of this encounter: The PCs enter the ancient temple, which is clearly dedicated to Hextor. They must bypass a trapped and somewhat puzzling room in order to reach the center of the temple.

The tunnel that the villagers have been painstakingly digging out stretches for several hundred feet down into the darkness. Read or paraphrase the following:

You can only imagine the amount of back-breaking work that the villagers had to go through in order to excavate this long, narrow, deep tunnel. After several hundred feet, you reach a stone slab etched with characters that seem to writhe and wriggle of their own accord. The slab is split in the middle by a seam, forming a double door. One side stands open; beyond is a flickering reddish light.

The carvings on the door are written in Infernal and represent a prayer to Hextor. On a successful DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check the PCs recognize the prayer as one that is commonly used at the entrance of Hextorite temples. On a subsequent DC 25 Knowledge (history), Bardic Knowledge, or Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) check the PCs realize that there is no known temple of Hextor in this part of Gran March. A DC 15 Craft (stonemason) check or Stonecunning would estimate the age of the stone at about three hundred years or so.

On the other side of the door is a narrow hallway paved with red marble flagstones. As the PCs walk down the hallway, balls of ghostly red witch-light spring into being and then fade away as they pass. The entire area has shadowy illumination (unless the PCs have brighter light sources of their own). It's clear that this temple was not terribly large; there are a few doors leaving the hallway, but the rooms beyond seem to be collapsed and crushed beneath tons and tons of earth. It will take a long time to fully excavate this site. At the end of the hallway is a steel door, which is neither locked nor trapped. It opens by turning a wheel valve in the center of the door and then pushing the door forward (i.e. the door opens into the next room).

Beyond the steel door is a strange room. The room is circular and about thirty feet in diameter. The walls are perfectly smooth and seem to be made of the same steel as the door. Every five feet, there is what looks like a handle set into the wall. There are no other doors, and indeed there are no other signs of seams or breaks in the wall whatsoever.

This room really consists of two layers – concentric circles, one inside the other. The PCs are inside the inner circle. There is only the one opening in the steel wall. By grabbing the handles and turning, the PCs can actually

rotate the entire inner circle (which is the steel wall that they see). However, as long as the door is open into the room, it blocks the cylinder from rotating, which means that the PCs cannot reveal the other doorway on the opposite side. The only way to progress to the altar room is to close the first door and then rotate the entire chamber so that the opening in the steel wall comes around to the far side, where it will reveal the other door. If the PCs are struggling with figuring this out, note that there is a little bit of movement that the steel cylinder can follow until it bumps into the open door. (The cylinder turns in either direction, but the door itself passes through the opening, so it will always block the cylinder from turning more than a few feet until the PCs close it.)

As the inner chamber rotates, the PCs will be able to see the wall of the outer chamber through the opening. The walls are carved with more of the writhing Infernal glyphs, which can be translated as a benediction to Hextor to protect the sacred treasures within the altar room and to punish any unbelievers with a terrible curse. The final word of this prayer – naturally, the word “curse” – is, in fact, a trapped glyph that will inflict a literal curse upon the PCs. This final glyph is actually etched on the other door on the far side of the cylinder, so it will eventually be revealed no matter which direction the PCs are turning the room.

Although they cannot avoid it entirely, the PCs might have a chance to detect and disable the glyph before it is triggered. As the chamber rotates, the succession of Infernal characters are coming into view in sequence, spelling out the text of the prayer. Try to get a sense for how quickly the PCs are turning the cylinder without being too obvious about it. If they are pushing as fast as they can, then the curse-glyph will simply come into view and be triggered. If they are turning it slowly, perhaps to study the Hextorite runes, then they will begin to see the glimmering edge of the curse-glyph before it has been fully revealed, and thus have a chance to disable it. Merely defacing the glyph isn't sufficient, unfortunately; it is a magical trap and can only be dealt with by someone who can disable magical traps (or a targeted *dispel magic*, which can suppress its effects temporarily). Search and Disable Device DCs are provided in case the PCs are cautious enough and have someone with the necessary skills.

The cylinder itself is four inches thick and is lined with lead, so *detect magic* and similar spells fail to pass through it. Should the PCs want to hack their way through the inner cylinder, it is made of steel (hardness 10, 120 hp to break through a section) with a thin sheet of lead. Even if they sunder the inner cylinder, however, there isn't enough room to move between the inner and outer cylinders, so their only real choice is to rotate the room. A character in *gaseous form* could move between the two cylinders, but the seal on the door to the altar room is air-tight and cannot be bypassed in this fashion.

APLs 2 and 4 (EL 3)

↗ **Ancient Hextorite Glyph:** CR 3; magic device; visual trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (weakened version of *bestow curse*, 3rd-level cleric, DC 13 Will negates); Search DC 27; Disable Device DC 27.

APLs 6 and 8 (EL 4)

↗ **Ancient Hextorite Glyph:** CR 4; magic device; visual trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*bestow curse*, 5th-level cleric, DC 15 Will negates); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

When the glyph is triggered, it bursts with a wave of red energy that fills the room. Everyone inside the cylinder must succeed on a Will save (as detailed above) or be afflicted with a special type of *bestow curse* spell. At APL 2 and 4, the affected characters suffer a -2 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, ability checks, and skill checks. At APL 6 and 8, the penalty increases to -4. Worshippers of Hextor are immune, but of course that won't apply to any of the PCs. The penalties from the curse ONLY apply against worshippers of Hextor (and any creatures they summon). The duration is permanent, and this curse is noted on the Adventure Record (**Ancient Hextorite Curse**).

The glyph resets after 1 minute, so if the PCs come through in multiple groups and move quickly, they might not all be exposed to it, or some of them might have to save against it more than once. A successful save does not render one immune to subsequent exposure.

Development: Once the cylinder has been rotated and the glyph has been triggered (or dealt with in some other fashion), the PCs can open the door. It's the same as the first door, made of steel with a valve in the center and opening up into the cylinder (thus preventing the cylinder from turning as long as it's open, which could make a retreat difficult for the PCs). When they open the door and enter the room beyond, they have reached the final confrontation; proceed to Encounter 9.

ENCOUNTER 9: THE ALTAR ROOM

Key ideas of this encounter: The PCs have reached the ancient Hextorite altar room. Nathaniel has already retrieved the Hellscepter from its resting place, and Nolar Thotec is here to retrieve it. After a bit of witty banter, Nolar departs, leaving the PCs and Nathaniel to settle accounts.

See DM Aid: Map #1 for this encounter.

When the PCs pass through the steel door from the previous chamber, the hallway extends 20 feet and is 10 feet wide. On the far side is an open archway, through which red light flickers brightly. The PCs can proceed through the hallway and into the next chamber. The altar room itself is octagonal, with each side of the octagon

being 20 feet in length. That makes the overall size of the room 10 squares (50 feet) both from top to bottom and from left to right. The altar is 10 feet from the far wall (directly opposite the PCs).

Read or paraphrase the following as soon as the first PC reaches the archway:

You enter what can only be the altar room of this ancient temple. Statues and tapestries depicting Hextor in all his terrible glory adorn all sides of this large octagonal chamber. At the far side, some forty feet away, stands a black basalt altar. Behind it are two men clad in the distinctive vestments of the clergy of the Herald of Hell. One of them is obviously Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor. The other is a thin human of medium height whose face is mostly covered with the hood of his long black cloak.

Nathaniel, clearly the junior of the two priests, jabs a finger in your direction. "Master! The interlopers have found us!"

The other priest, who is carrying a large scepter heavily adorned with rubies and other reddish-colored gemstones in his gloved hand, barely seems to be listening. "Yes, yes... it doesn't matter now... I finally have it. After all these years, I finally have it."

"But Master! Aren't you going to destroy them?"

The following scene will play out whether the PCs like it or not. However, if anybody wants to interrupt the boxed text, go ahead and roll initiative. Assume that Nolar Thotec has a *repulsion* spell active that will keep the PCs pushed out to the edge of the room (they can get 10 feet beyond the archway into the room, but no more). The effect can be resisted with a DC 28 Will save. Nathaniel is unaffected because he does not try to move towards Nolar during the dialogue.

Even outside of the *repulsion*, the PCs can still take actions, but if any of them take any offensive actions or draw his attention in any other way, Nolar will use a *greater command* ("Halt") against the PCs (treat this as affected by *Widen Spell*, so it is cast from an 8th-level slot, the DC is 25, and the area of effect is doubled, which should cover all of the PCs). Both the *repulsion* and the *greater command* will be dismissed when Nolar leaves the area at the end of the boxed text.

If the *repulsion* and the *greater command* are not strong enough to convince the PCs that they should not be attacking Nolar Thotec at their level, then he can kick off a *blasphemy*, but he will deliberately lower his caster level so that the PCs are paralyzed but not killed. Assume that any PCs so affected are only paralyzed for one minute, with Nolar impatiently tapping his foot while he waits for the duration to run out so that his "minions" can have their "fair fight" against each other. (Don't resort to this option unless *absolutely* necessary.)

If the PCs are in initiative but not taking offensive actions, then Nolar will take no actions other than continuing with his speech, while on his own turns Nathaniel will begin casting his own buff spells as well as talking, so that he gets the benefit of one action for each action the PCs take. In combat rounds, the conversation below should probably take a total of three rounds to complete, but feel free to make adjustments based on the situation.

The black robed man raises his head and regards you impassively. "Destroy them? Why should I bother? They're YOUR problem, not mine. Now that I have the Hellscepter, I have no more need of this place... or of you."

Nathaniel seems staggered by the other's words. "But ... I got you the relic! You can't just leave me! We had an arrangement!"

"Oh, I can, and I will. Since you obviously can't be trusted not to compromise your cover, seeing as how these imbeciles managed to follow you here, I don't see much of a reason to keep you around any longer. If they kill you, it will save me the trouble."

If any of the PCs have either the **Enmity** or the **Gratitude** of Nolar Thotec, then he says: *"But... I do recognize some of these would-be heroes..."*

If any of the PCs have the **Enmity** of Nolar Thotec, he looks at those PCs and sneers: *"This is an excellent opportunity for you to demonstrate your worth to me as a servitor, Nathaniel. Killing these FOOLS might make me reconsider your utter uselessness."*

If any of the PCs have the **Gratitude** of Nolar Thotec, he looks at those PCs and sneers: *"Some of your so-called interlopers have been quite useful to me in the past. I do so enjoy it when my SERVANTS fight it out for a place of honor at my side."*

The black robed man raises the jeweled scepter above his head. "Still... I think we should have a fair fight. The odds are clearly not in your favor, Nathaniel, and I'd like to try out my new toy." The cleric gestures with the relic and speaks what must be a command word: "Tindalos." Instantly, a wall of fire springs up between you and the altar. From within the flames, you see baleful yellow eyes open, revealing a reddish-furred dog-like creature.

"NOW we have something interesting," smiles the cleric. "If I see you again, Nathaniel, then I'll know I misjudged you, and you'll have the rewards I promised as befits a CAPABLE servant of our lord Hextor. If I don't see you again, well, then I'm sure the Scourge of Battle can find something useful to do with your soul."

At this point, it's time to roll initiative if you haven't already. Once the fight starts for real, Nolar Thotec's first action is simply to cast *word of recall* and disappear to parts

unknown, leaving Nathaniel and the hell hounds to fight the PCs. Just to be absolutely clear, when he departs, Nolar won't leave ANY lingering ill effects from anything he did to the PCs, with the exception of the *wall of fire* and the summoned creature(s). He's letting the fight play out as a "fair fight" for his own twisted amusement.

APL 2 (EL 5)

🐾 **Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor**: Male Oeridian Aristocrat2/Clr2 of Hextor; hp 27; see Appendix 1.

🐾 **Hell Hound**: hp 27; see *Monster Manual*, page 152.

APL 4 (EL 7)

🐾 **Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor**: Male Oeridian Aristocrat2/Clr3 of Hextor; hp 34; see Appendix 2.

🐾 **Hell Hound (3)**: hp 27 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 152.

APL 6 (EL 9)

🐾 **Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor**: Male Oeridian Aristocrat2/Clr4 of Hextor; hp 41; see Appendix 3.

🐾 **Hell Hound, 8-HD Advanced (3)**: hp 60 each; see Appendix 3.

APL 8 (EL 11)

🐾 **Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor**: Male Oeridian Aristocrat2/Clr8 of Hextor; hp 68; see Appendix 4.

🐾 **Nessian Warhound**: hp 117; see *Monster Manual*, page 152.

Tactics: The effect created by Nolar Thotec has done two things. First, it summoned the hell hound(s). Second, it created an illusionary *wall of fire* that stretches the width of the room (giving Nathaniel a round or two to cast his prep spells unless the PCs are bold enough to charge through it). The illusionary *wall of fire* (see page 298 in the *Player's Handbook* for description) does not give off any actual heat, but the PCs won't know that unless they get within 20 feet of it. It can be disbelieved on a successful Will save (DC 16). It is located 5 feet from the altar, so it appears 35 feet from the archway.

The hell hounds, on the other hand, are all too real, and they will immediately attack the PCs on their initiative, moving into range, opening with the breath weapon, and then entering into melee. The effect that summoned them is treated as if it had a CL 20th, so the hounds will not disappear for two minutes, and dispelling the *summon monster* effect should be practically impossible for PCs at these APLs.

Nathaniel will cast spells to buff himself up if the PCs give him time, and then he will enter combat, using his heavy flail. This should be a difficult fight, but not an impossible one. Don't forget that some or all of the PCs might be suffering from the curse, though, imposing a

penalty on their actions against Hextorites (i.e. all the foes in this encounter).

Treasure: Besides the possessions of Nathaniel (and the Nessian warhound at APL 8), there are a number of valuable items stockpiled here in the altar room.

Development: Nolar Thotec, unfortunately, is gone, and the ancient relic he sought is gone with him. What evil he may be able to wreak with such an item is a matter for future adventures. However, the PCs can take solace in the fact that they have defeated the corrupt Elector and rescued the kidnapped villagers. They've also gained knowledge of the relic (see the **Knowledge of the Hellscepter** AR effect). Proceed to the Conclusion.

CONCLUSION

With Nathaniel and his Red Arrows defeated, the PCs must now complete their original mission: returning the missing recruits to the Gran March Army. Although the villagers will be distressed over the PCs taking the children immediately after such an ordeal, their orders are clear. (As it happens, Watcher Captain Stelgaard wouldn't actually object if the PCs were to give the kids a few days to rest and clean up, but this could make for an interesting roleplaying moment). Despite everything they have been through, none of the six teenagers has reconsidered his or her desire to enlist (the boys have no choice, but the girls haven't changed their minds either). Of course, the PCs have gained the gratitude of the town of Tanner's Ferry, which is also in need of a new Elector (see **Gratitude of Tanner's Ferry** AR effect).

When they get back to Orlane with the new recruits, the PCs are sent to meet with Watcher Captain Dorn Stelgaard again, who will expect a full report, including all of the details of why the recruits did not report for duty in a timely fashion. Upon learning of the temple of Hextor, Watcher Captain Stelgaard will order a detachment of the Spellcasting Corps consisting mostly of clerics of Heironeous to leave immediately for the site and see what they can learn (and destroy whatever is left). The PCs receive a military commendation and an influence point with the Temple of Heironeous for their efforts, as well as the Captain's recommendation (see **Military Commendation, Influence Point with the Church of Heironeous, and Recommendation of Watcher Captain Dorn Stelgaard** AR effects).

If the PCs managed to capture Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor rather than kill him, the Captain will be extremely pleased. Unfortunately, Nolar Thotec ensures that his minion is unable to reveal any details about the Hextorite presence in Gran March, as Nathaniel dies a few days later while in military custody. (This isn't the first time a military prisoner has been assassinated while being held in the keep at Orlane.)

The PCs must also decide what, if anything, should be done with the refugees from Geoff. Though

technically they committed the crime of banditry, considering that they were attacking an agent of the Red Arrows, the military is willing to overlook that transgression. Whatever deal the PCs made with the Gyri will be honored, as long as it wasn't too far out of line. The most likely outcome is that the men will go to join their fellows in the Downlands of Geoff.

As for Nolar Thotec and the Hellscepter, unfortunately, there is no sign of either... for now.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

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

Encounter 5

Defeat the brigands or the Red Arrows.

APL 2: 120 xp.
APL 4: 180 xp.
APL 6: 240 xp.
APL 8: 300 xp.

Encounter 7

Defeat the remaining Red Arrows and rescue the villagers.

APL 2: 30 xp.
APL 4: 60 xp.
APL 6: 90 xp.
APL 8: 150 xp.

Encounter 8

Survive or disarm the trap.

APL 2: 60 xp.
APL 4: 90 xp.
APL 6: 120 xp.
APL 8: 120 xp.

Encounter 9

Defeat Nathaniel and the hell hound(s).

APL 2: 150 xp.
APL 4: 210 xp.
APL 6: 270 xp.
APL 8: 330 xp.

Story Award

Negotiate with the Gyri refugees instead of killing them outright. This award can be given even if the PCs fought the Gyri as long as they did not kill any of them.

APL 2: 45 xp.
APL 4: 65 xp.
APL 6: 90 xp.
APL 8: 110 xp.

Discretionary Roleplaying Award

APL 2: 45 xp.
APL 4: 70 xp.
APL 6: 90 xp.
APL 8: 115 xp.

Total possible experience

APL 2: 450 xp.
APL 4: 675 xp.
APL 6: 900 xp.
APL 8: 1,125 xp.

TREASURE SUMMARY

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

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

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

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before

the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

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

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

Encounter 5:

Gyri possessions. PCs should not gain this loot if they killed and looted the Red Arrows unless they kill everyone in both groups.

APL 2: L: 344 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 +1 leather armors (97 gp each).

APL 4: L: 344 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 +1 leather armors (97 gp each), 4 *potion of aids* (25 gp each).

APL 6: L: 240 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 +1 leather armors (97 gp each), 4 *potion of aids* (25 gp each), 4 +1 longswords (193 gp each).

APL 8: L: 4 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 +1 leather armors (97 gp each), 4 *potion of aids* (25 gp each), 4 +1 longswords (193 gp each), 4 *potions of cure serious wounds* (63 gp each), 4 +1 composite longbows (+3 Str bonus) (225 gp each).

Encounters 5 and 7:

Red Arrows’ possessions. PCs should not gain this loot if they killed and looted the Gyri unless they kill everyone in both groups.

APL 2: L: 324 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 6 *potions of aid* (25 gp each).

APL 4: L: 624 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 6 *potions of aid* (25 gp each), 6 *potions of shield of faith* +4 (50 gp each).

APL 6: L: 356 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 6 *potions of aid* (25 gp each), 6 *potions of shield of faith* +4 (50 gp each), 6 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 6 +1 studded leathers (98 gp each).

APL 8: L: 104 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 6 *potions of aid* (25 gp each), 6 *potions of shield of faith* +4 (50 gp each), 6 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (25 gp each), 6 +1 studded leathers (98 gp each), 6 +1 composite shortbows (+1 Str bonus) (204 gp each), 6 +1 short swords (193 gp each).

Encounter 9:

Nathaniel’s (and Nessian Warhound’s) possessions.

APL 2: L: 29 gp, C: 0 gp, M: +1 full plate (221 gp), potion of cat's grace (25 gp), ring of mind shielding (667 gp).

APL 4: L: 29 gp, C: 0 gp, M: +1 full plate (221 gp), potion of cat's grace (25 gp), ring of mind shielding (667 gp), cloak of resistance +1 (83 gp).

APL 6: L: 3 gp, C: 0 gp, M: +1 full plate (221 gp), potion of cat's grace (25 gp), ring of mind shielding (667 gp), cloak of resistance +1 (83 gp), +1 heavy flail (193 gp).

APL 8: L: 3 gp, C: 0 gp, M: +1 full plate (221 gp), potion of cat's grace (25 gp), ring of mind shielding (667 gp), +1 heavy flail (193 gp), amulet of natural armor +2 (667 gp), +1 large chain shirt barding, quadruped (142 gp).

Altar room treasures.

APL 2: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: belt of one mighty blow (125 gp), bullet of sound (16 gp), magic sleeping bag (83 gp), safewing emblem (21 gp).

APL 4: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: field provisions box (167 gp), gloves of fortunate striking (167 gp), saw of prodigious cutting (167 gp), spool of endless rope (167 gp), belt of one mighty blow (125 gp), bullet of sound (16 gp), magic sleeping bag (83 gp), safewing emblem (21 gp).

APL 6: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: armbands of might (342 gp), lockpicking ring (375 gp), papyrus of deception (167 gp), tunic of steady spellcasting (208 gp), field provisions box (167 gp), gloves of fortunate striking (167 gp), saw of prodigious cutting (167 gp), spool of endless rope (167 gp), belt of one mighty blow (125 gp), bullet of sound (16 gp), magic sleeping bag (83 gp), safewing emblem (21 gp).

APL 8: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: belt of hidden pouches (417 gp), crossbow of reloading (528 gp), doorbreaker (359 gp), ring of magic fang (500 gp), survival pouch (417 gp), armbands of might (342 gp), lockpicking ring (375 gp), papyrus of deception (167 gp), tunic of steady spellcasting (208 gp), field provisions box (167 gp), gloves of fortunate striking (167 gp), saw of prodigious cutting (167 gp), spool of endless rope (167 gp), belt of one mighty blow (125 gp), bullet of sound (16 gp), magic sleeping bag (83 gp), safewing emblem (21 gp).

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 2: L: 697 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 1,696 gp – Total: 2,393 gp (450 gp).

APL 4: L: 997 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 2,847 gp – Total: 3,844 gp (650 gp).

APL 6: L: 599 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 5,642 gp – Total: 6,241 gp (900 gp).

APL 8: L: 111 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 12,206 gp – Total: 12,317 gp (1,300 gp).

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Special

➤ **Ancient Hextorite Curse:** You suffer the following (circle the appropriate text and cross out the other text):

- -2 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks
- -4 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks

The above penalties only apply when you are fighting, or otherwise working against, worshippers of Hextor or their summoned or sworn allies. The curse is permanent, but it may be by the following spells: *wish*, *miracle*, *remove curse* (CL 15th or higher), *break enchantment* (DC 26).

☛ **Knowledge of the Hellsceptor:** You have gained knowledge, however little, of an ancient Hextorite relic known only as the Hellsceptor. Though its location is currently unknown, this information may come into play in a future adventure.

☛ **Influence Point with the Church of Heironeous:** For your efforts in discovering an ancient site of evil, you have gained one Influence Point with the Church of Heironeous in Gran March. Uses for this influence are detailed in the Accepted Religions metaorganization document.

☛ **Gratitude of Tanner's Ferry:** Although Tanner's Ferry doesn't have a lot to offer in the way of material goods, they do have access to a variety of rare woods and other special materials from within the Oytwood. You may expend this favor (marking it as USED) in order to gain access (Frequency: Adventure) to purchase a single wooden item you have access to, which can then be made from any one of the following special materials: bronzewood (*Arms & Equipment Guide*), darkwood, or wildwood (*Races of the Wild*).

☛ **Recommendation of Watcher Captain Dorn Stelgaard:** Watcher Captain Dorn Stelgaard, Faithful Wolverine, of the 5th Battle in Orlane has taken a special notice of your diligence in determining the truth or falsehood of accusations of treason. Should you attempt to gain promotion through a Promotion / Review Board interactive, Captain Stelgaard will speak on your behalf to the officers. What benefits this may have will be revealed at that time.

☛ **Military Commendation:** You have received a commendation for your efforts on behalf of the Gran March Army to locate and return missing recruits who had failed to report for the start of their mandatory enlistment.

Item Access

APL 2:

- Belt of One Mighty Blow (Adventure; Miniatures Handbook)
- Bullet of Sound (Adventure; Miniatures Handbook; Limit 10)
- Magic Sleeping Bag (Adventure; Miniatures Handbook)
- Ring of Mind Shielding (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- Safewing Emblem (Adventure; Races of the Wild)

APL 4 (all of APL 2 plus the following):

- Field Provisions Box (Adventure; Miniatures Handbook)
- Gloves of Fortunate Striking (Adventure; Miniatures Handbook)
- Saw of Prodigious Cutting (Adventure; Arms & Equipment Guide)
- Spool of Endless Rope (Adventure; Complete Adventurer)

APL 6 (all of APLs 2, 4 plus the following):

- Armbands of Might (Adventure; Complete Adventurer)
- Lockpicking Ring (Adventure; Complete Adventurer)
- Papyrus of Deception (Adventure; Complete Adventurer)
- Tunic of Steady Spellcasting (Adventure; Complete Adventurer)

APL 8 (all of APLs 2, 4, 6 plus the following):

- +2 Large Chain Shirt Barding, Quadruped (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- Amulet of Natural Armor +2 (Adventure; Dungeon Master's Guide)
- Belt of Hidden Pouches (Adventure; Races of the Wild)
- Crossbow of Reloading (Adventure; Miniatures Handbook)
- Doorbreaker (Adventure; Arms & Equipment Guide)
- Ring of Magic Fang (Adventure; Arms & Equipment Guide)
- Survival Pouch (Adventure; Races of the Wild)

APPENDIX 1 – APL 2

ENCOUNTERS 5 AND 7

Red Arrow “Soldier”: Male Human Rog1; CR 1; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 1d6+2; hp 6; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +3 Dex); Base Atk/Grp: +0/+1; Atk +1 melee (1d6+1/19-20, short sword) or +4 ranged (1d6+1/x3, masterwork composite shortbow); Full Atk +1 melee (1d6+1/19-20, short sword) or +4 ranged (1d6+1/x3, masterwork composite shortbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ trapfinding; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Climb +5, Disable Device +5, Hide +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +7, Open Lock +7, Search +5, Sleight of Hand +7, Spot +4, Tumble +7; Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: 2 short swords, masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork composite shortbow (+1 Str bonus), quiver with 20 arrows, soldier’s outfit and tabard, *potion of aid*.

Physical Description: Red Arrow thugs who are disguised as Gran March soldiers from the Elector’s file. Each has a tattoo of a red arrow on his chest that can only be discovered by removing or opening his uniform.

Gyri “Brigands”: Male Human War2; CR 1; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 2d8+4; hp 15; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +1 Dex); Base Atk/Grp: +2/+5; Atk +7 melee (1d8+4/19-20, masterwork longsword) or +4 ranged (1d8+3/x3, masterwork composite longbow); Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+4/19-20, masterwork longsword) or +4 ranged (1d8+3/x3, masterwork composite longbow); AL CG; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Jump +6, Ride +3, Swim +6; Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: masterwork longsword, +1 *leather armor*, masterwork composite longbow (+3 Str bonus), quiver with 20 arrows, explorer’s outfit.

Physical Description: Dressed to blend in well in the woods; Gyri refugees who were driven from their homes by the war with the giants.

ENCOUNTER 9

Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor: Male Oeridian Aristocrat2/Clr2 of Hextor; CR 3; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 4d8+4; hp 27; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18 (-1 Dex, +9 armor); Base Atk/Grp: +2/+4; Atk +6 melee (1d10+3/19-20, masterwork heavy flail); Full Atk +6 melee (1d10+3/19-20, masterwork heavy flail); SA smite 1/day, rebuke undead 4/day (+1, 2d6+3), spells; SQ aura, spontaneous casting; AL LE; SV

Fort +4, Ref -1, Will +8; Str 15, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +8, Concentration +10, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +6, Forgery +5, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +4, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +5, Ride +1, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +4, Spot +5; Improved Initiative, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Concentration), Weapon Focus^B (heavy flail).

Cleric Spells Prepared (4/3+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, inflict minor wounds, resistance, virtue*; 1st—*magic weapon**, *bane, cause fear, shield of faith*.

*Domain spell. Domains: Destruction (smite 1/day); War (free Weapon Focus, proficiency).

Possessions: silver unholy symbol of Hextor, masterwork heavy flail, +1 *full plate*, 2 spiked gauntlets, *potion of cat’s grace*, *ring of mind shielding*, ~~*elixir of gloomness*~~ (used in Encounter 4).

Physical Description: See Encounter 4.

APPENDIX 2 – APL 4

ENCOUNTERS 5 AND 7

Red Arrow “Soldier”: Male Human Rog2; CR 2; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 2d6+4; hp 12; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +3 Dex); Base Atk/Grp: +1/+2; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +5 ranged (1d6+1/x3, masterwork composite shortbow); Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+1/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +5 ranged (1d6+1/x3, masterwork composite shortbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ trapfinding, evasion; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Balance +5, Climb +6, Disable Device +6, Hide +8, Jump +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +8, Open Lock +8, Search +6, Tumble +8, Sleight of Hand +8, Spot +5; Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: 2 masterwork short swords, masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork composite shortbow (+1 Str bonus), quiver with 20 arrows, soldier’s outfit and tabard, *potion of aid*, *potion of shield of faith* +4.

Physical Description: Red Arrow thugs who are disguised as Gran March soldiers from the Elector’s file. Each has a tattoo of a red arrow on his chest that can only be discovered by removing or opening his uniform.

Gyri “Brigands”: Male Human War2/Ftr1; CR 2; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 2d8+1d10+6; hp 24; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +1 Dex); Base Atk/Grp: +3/+6; Atk +8 melee (1d8+4/19-20, masterwork longsword) or +6 ranged (1d8+3/x3, masterwork composite longbow); Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+4/19-20, masterwork longsword) or +6 ranged (1d8+3/x3, masterwork composite longbow); AL CG; SV Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Jump +7, Ride +3, Swim +7; Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword, longbow^B).

Possessions: masterwork longsword, +1 leather armor, masterwork composite longbow (+3 Str bonus), quiver with 20 arrows, explorer’s outfit, *potion of aid*.

Physical Description: Dressed to blend in well in the woods; Gyri refugees who were driven from their homes by the war with the giants.

ENCOUNTER 9

Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor: Male Oeridian Aristocrat2/Clr3 of Hextor; CR 4; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 5d8+5; hp 34; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18 (-1 Dex, +9 armor); Base Atk/Grp: +3/+5; Atk +7 melee (1d10+3/19-20, masterwork heavy flail); Full Atk +7 melee (1d10+3/19-20, masterwork heavy flail); SA smite 1/day, rebuke undead 4/day (+1,

2d6+4), spells; SQ aura, spontaneous casting; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +9; Str 15, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +8, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +6, Forgery +5, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +4, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +5, Ride +1, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +5, Spot +5; Improved Initiative, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Concentration), Weapon Focus^B (heavy flail).

Cleric Spells Prepared (4/3+1/2+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic*, *inflict minor wounds*, *resistance*, *virtue*; 1st—*magic weapon**, *bane*, *cause fear*, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*spiritual weapon**, *bull’s strength*, *sound burst*.

*Domain spell. Domains: Destruction (smite 1/day); War (free Weapon Focus, proficiency).

Possessions: silver unholy symbol of Hextor, masterwork heavy flail, +1 full plate, 2 spiked gauntlets, *potion of cat’s grace*, *ring of mind shielding*, ~~*elixir of glibness*~~ (used in Encounter 4), *cloak of resistance* +1.

Physical Description: See Encounter 4.

APPENDIX 3 – APL 6

ENCOUNTERS 5 AND 7

Red Arrow “Soldier”: Male Human Rog4; CR 4; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 4d6+8; hp 24; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +3 Dex); Base Atk/Grp: +3/+4; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +7 ranged (1d6+1/x3, masterwork composite shortbow); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+1/19-20, masterwork short sword) or +7 ranged (1d6+1/x3, masterwork composite shortbow); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ trapfinding, evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Balance +5, Climb +8, Disable Device +8, Hide +10, Jump +3, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +10, Search +8, Tumble +10, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +7; Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: 2 masterwork short swords, +1 studded leather armor, masterwork composite shortbow (+1 Str bonus), quiver with 20 arrows, soldier’s outfit and tabard, *potion of aid*, *potion of shield of faith* +4, *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Physical Description: Red Arrow thugs who are disguised as Gran March soldiers from the Elector’s file. Each has a tattoo of a red arrow on his chest that can only be discovered by removing or opening his uniform.

Gyri “Brigands”: Male Human War2/Ftr3; CR 4; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 2d8+3d10+10; hp 42; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +2 Dex); Base Atk/Grp: +5/+8; Atk +10 melee (1d8+5/19-20, +1 longsword) or +9 ranged (1d8+3/x3, masterwork composite longbow); Full Atk +10 melee (1d8+5/19-20, +1 longsword) or +9 ranged (1d8+3/x3, masterwork composite longbow) or +7/+7 ranged (1d8+3/x3, masterwork composite longbow); AL CG; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Climb +9, Jump +9, Ride +6, Swim +7; Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Rapid Shot^B, Weapon Focus (longsword, longbow^B).

Possessions: +1 longsword, +1 leather armor, masterwork composite longbow (+3 Str bonus), quiver with 20 arrows, explorer’s outfit, *potion of aid*.

Physical Description: Dressed to blend in well in the woods; Gyri refugees who were driven from their homes by the war with the giants.

ENCOUNTER 9

Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor: Male Oeridian Aristocrat2/Clr4 of Hextor; CR 5; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 6d8+6; hp 41; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18 (-1 Dex, +9 armor); Base Atk/Grp: +4/+6; Atk +8 melee (1d10+4/19-20, +1 heavy flail); Full

Atk +8 melee (1d10+4/19-20, +1 heavy flail); SA smite 1/day, rebuke undead 4/day (+1, 2d6+5), spells; SQ aura, spontaneous casting; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +10; Str 15, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +6, Forgery +5, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +4, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +5, Ride +1, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +5, Spot +5; Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Concentration), Weapon Focus^B (heavy flail).

Cleric Spells Prepared (5/4+1/3+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *inflict minor wounds*, *resistance*, *virtue*; 1st—*inflict light wounds**, *bane*, *cause fear*, *divine favor*, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*spiritual weapon**, *aid*, *bull’s strength*, *sound burst*.

^{*}Domain spell. Domains: Destruction (smite 1/day); War (free Weapon Focus, proficiency).

Possessions: silver unholy symbol of Hextor, +1 heavy flail, +1 full plate, 2 spiked gauntlets, *potion of cat’s grace*, *ring of mind shielding*, ~~*elixir of gloom*~~ (used in Encounter 4), cloak of resistance +1.

Physical Description: See Encounter 4.

Hell Hound, 8-HD Advanced: Medium Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar, Fire, Lawful); CR 5; HD 8d8+16; hp 60; Init +5; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +5 natural); Base Atk/Grp: +8/+9; Atk +9 melee (2d6+1 plus 1d6 fire, bite); Full Atk +9 melee (2d6+1 plus 1d6 fire, bite); SA breath weapon, fiery bite; SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunity to fire, scent, vulnerability to cold; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 13, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +17, Jump +16, Listen +11, Move Silently +17, Spot +11, Survival +11^{*}; Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Run, Track.

Breath Weapon (Su): 10-foot cone, once every 2d4 rounds, damage 2d6 fire, Reflex DC 16 half. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Fiery Bite (Su): A hell hound deals an extra 1d6 points of fire damage every time it bites an opponent, as if its bite were a flaming weapon.

Skills: Hell hounds have a +5 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. ^{*}They also receive a +8 bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent, due to their keen sense of smell.

APPENDIX 4 – APL 8

ENCOUNTERS 5 AND 7

Red Arrow “Soldier”: Male Human Rog6; CR 6; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 6d6+12; hp 36; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +3 Dex); Base Atk/Grp: +4/+5; Atk +8 melee (1d6+2/19-20, +1 short sword) or +8 ranged (1d6+2/x3, +1 composite shortbow); Full Atk +8 melee (1d6+2/19-20, +1 short sword) or +8 ranged (1d6+2/x3, +1 composite shortbow); SA sneak attack +3d6; SQ trapfinding, evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Balance +5, Climb +10, Disable Device +10, Hide +12, Jump +3, Listen +9, Move Silently +12, Open Lock +12, Search +10, Tumble +12, Sleight of Hand +12, Spot +9; Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: +1 short sword, masterwork short sword, +1 studded leather armor, +1 composite shortbow (+1 Str bonus), quiver with 20 arrows, soldier’s outfit and tabard, *potion of aid*, *potion of shield of faith* +4, *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Physical Description: Red Arrow thugs who are disguised as Gran March soldiers from the Elector’s file. Each has a tattoo of a red arrow on his chest that can only be discovered by removing or opening his uniform.

Gyri “Brigands”: Male Human War2/Ftr5; CR 6; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 2d8+5d10+14; hp 60; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +2 Dex); Base Atk/Grp: +7/+10; Atk +12 melee (1d8+7/19-20, +1 longsword) or +11 ranged (1d8+6/x3, +1 composite longbow); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+7/19-20, +1 longsword) or +11/+6 ranged (1d8+6/x3, +1 composite longbow) or +9/+9/+4 ranged (1d8+6/x3, +1 composite longbow); AL CG; SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Jump +11, Ride +7, Swim +8; Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Rapid Shot^B, Weapon Focus (longsword, longbow^B), Weapon Specialization (longsword, longbow^B).

Possessions: +1 longsword, +1 leather armor, +1 composite longbow (+3 Str bonus), quiver with 20 arrows, explorer’s outfit, *potion of aid*, *potion of cure serious wounds*.

Physical Description: Dressed to blend in well in the woods; Gyri refugees who were driven from their homes by the war with the giants.

ENCOUNTER 9

Elector Nathaniel Celebrimbor: Male Oeridian Aristocrat2/Clr8 of Hextor; CR 9; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 10d8+10; hp 68; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 9, flat-footed 21 (-1 Dex, +10 armor, +2 natural); Base Atk/Grp: +7/+10; Atk +14 melee (1d10+7/19-20, +1 heavy flail); Full Atk +14 melee (1d10+7/19-20, +1 heavy

flail); SA smite 1/day, rebuke undead 4/day (+3, 2d6+9), spells; SQ aura, spontaneous casting; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +12; Str 16, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +13, Concentration +16, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +6, Forgery +5, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (local – Sheldomar Valley metaregion) +5, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +5, Ride +1, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +8, Spot +5; Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Bluff, Concentration), Weapon Focus^B (heavy flail).

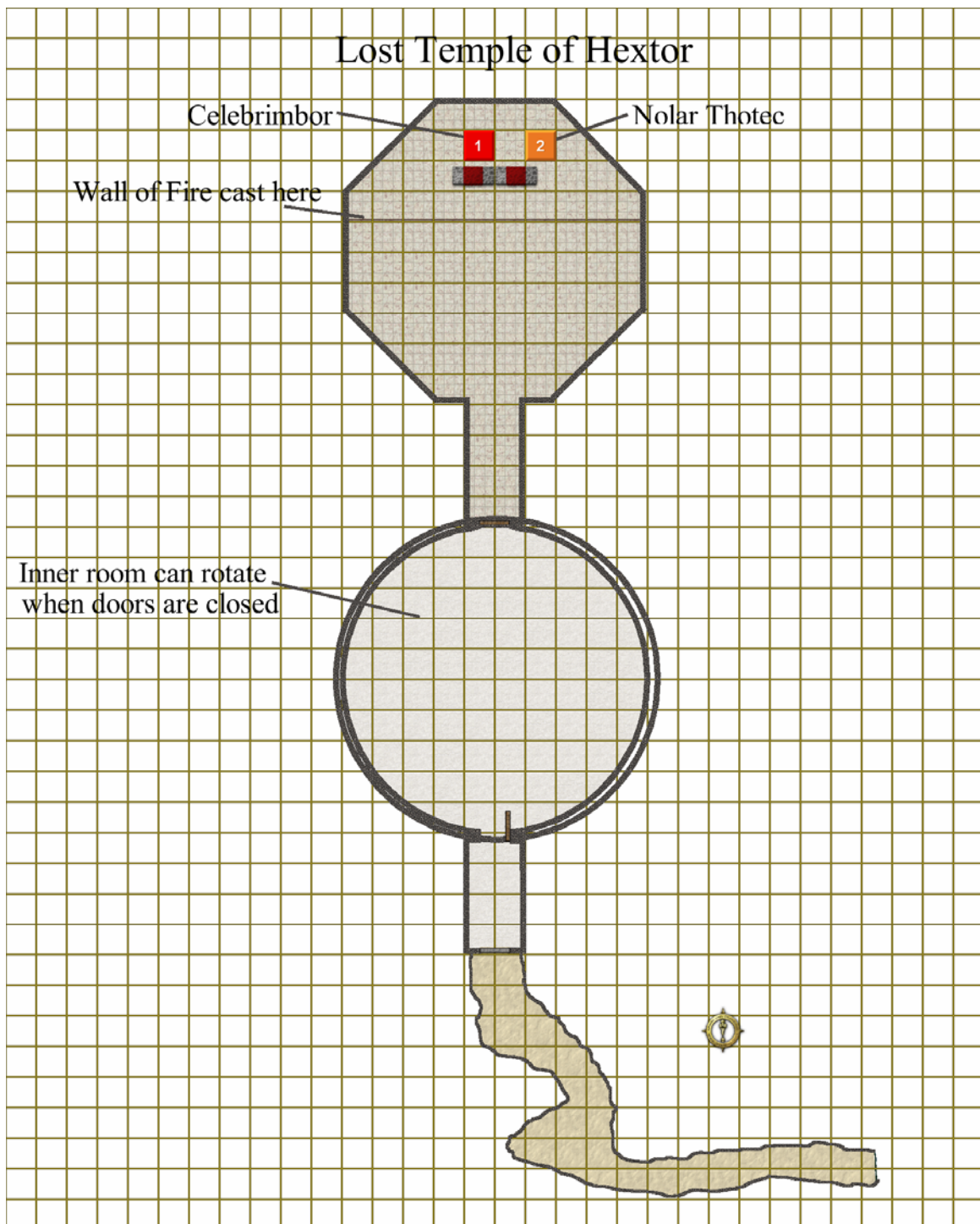
Cleric Spells Prepared (6/5+1/4+1/4+1/2+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *inflict minor wounds* (x2), *resistance*, *virtue*; 1st—*inflict light wounds*^{*}, *bane*, *cause fear*, *divine favor*, *entropic shield*, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*spiritual weapon*^{*}, *aid*, *bull’s strength*, *resist energy*, *sound burst*; 3rd—~~*magic vestment*~~^{*}, *cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *magic circle against good*; 4th—*divine power*^{*}, *freedom of movement*, *spell immunity*.

^{*}Domain spell. Domains: Destruction (smite 1/day); War (free Weapon Focus, proficiency).

Possessions: silver unholy symbol of Hextor, +1 heavy flail (+3 with oil), +1 full plate (+2 with *magic vestment*), 2 spiked gauntlets, *potion of cat’s grace*, *ring of mind shielding*, ~~*elixir of glibness*~~ (used in Encounter 4), *cloak of resistance* +1, *amulet of natural armor* +2, ~~*oil of greater magic weapon*~~ +3.

Physical Description: See Encounter 4.

DM AID: MAP #1 – ENCOUNTER NINE



PLAYER HANDOUT #1

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting with Watcher Captain Dorn Stelgaard, Faithful Wolverine, of the 5th Battle. You will meet with Watcher Captain Stelgaard in his offices in the 5th Battle's headquarters in the city of Orlane on the 8th of Reaping, OF 595.

You are to consider yourself on temporary assignment to the 5th Battle under Watcher Captain Stelgaard's command until such time as he releases you back to your normal duty rotation.

Please review the following incidents to ensure that you can relate a consistent and coherent account of them in response to any questions that Watcher Captain Stelgaard may ask you.

(Following is a list of all the demerits and "black marks" that have ever been placed in your personnel file, along with the date of each incident. Basically, if any PC or NPC military officer ever made a negative report about you, or if you have any certified demerits or other negative notations in the Play Notes section of any of your ARs, it is mentioned here. If you do not have any such incidents in your past, then this paragraph and the previous paragraph are not present at all.)

PLAYER HANDOUT #2

You are hereby requested to attend a meeting with Watcher Captain Dorn Stelgaard, Faithful Wolverine, of the 5th Battle. You will meet with Watcher Captain Stelgaard in his offices in the 5th Battle's headquarters in the city of Orlane on the 8th of Reaping, GY 595.

Your presence is requested pursuant to the possibility that you may be asked by Watcher Captain Stelgaard to serve as a civilian adviser on a military mission of great importance to the government of Gran March.

Please review the following incidents to ensure that you can relate a consistent and coherent account of them in response to any questions that Watcher Captain Stelgaard may ask you.

(Following is a list of any negative incidents that you have ever been involved with where a PC or NPC officer of the Gran March Army would have filed a formal complaint about you. If you have any appropriate notations in the Play Notes section of any of your Gran March regional ARs, or if you have any certs or AR notations that represent infamy or a negative reaction by any member of the armed forces of Gran March, then it is listed here. If you do not have any such incidents in your past, then this paragraph and the previous paragraph are not present at all.)

PLAYER HANDOUT #3

The following recruits were expected from the village of Tanner's Ferry and did not report for duty. All of them are human, male, and should have attained the age of majority within the past year.

- Padrig Afon (son of Ioann Afon, a woodsman)
- Kevil Blørnett (son of Mika Blørnett, a brewer)
- Nichora “Nick” Tanner (son of Percival Tanner, who formerly operated the ferry between Tanner’s Ferry and Geoff, current occupation unknown)
- Risla Whitetail (son of Duncan Whitetail, a woodsman)

MAP OF GRAN MARCH

