

VER8-06

Noble Ambitions

A One-Round Dungeons & Dragons® Living Greyhawk™ Verbobonc Regional Adventure

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The true power rises to claim the Viscounty of Verbobonc as his own. Only a handful of secrets, carefully collected by the heroes of Verbobonc, provide the power to stop him. Now the time has come to battle your way to the schemer before his well-laid plans come to fruition. A one-round Verbobonc adventure for PCs level 4-15 (APL 6-16) and the ultimate adventure in the Verbobonc region of Living Greyhawk.

Resources for this adventure [and the authors of those works] include *Complete Adventurer* [Jesse Decker], *Complete Champion* [Ed Stark et al], *Complete Mage* [Ari Marmell and Skip Williams], *Complete Warrior* [Andy Collins, David Noonan and Ed Stark], *Magic Item Compendium* [Andy Collins et al.], *Players Handbook II* [David Noonan], and *Spell Compendium* [Matthew Sernett et al.]

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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Players Read No Farther

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 rule 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 PCs (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in Appendix 1. For your convenience, that appendix is split by APL

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Session 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 PCs to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportionate to the modified average PC level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine this modified Average Party Level (APL) follow the steps below:

1. Determine the PC 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 PC 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 PC's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

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
CR of Animal	7	7	9	10	11

3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of PCs 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 PC is three PC levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that PC 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 PCs 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.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level PCs 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 PCs 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 Verbobonc. *As of September 1, 2007, there is no Time Unit cost to play the adventure portion of this module; however, standard Time Unit costs still apply to crafting, magic item creation, performing or other non-adventure related activities or penalties. The cost for Standard Upkeep is 12 gp for PCs whose home region is located in Verbobonc, or 24 gp for out-of-region PCs. Both Rich Upkeep and Luxury Upkeep cost 75 gp regardless of home region.*

PCs 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 PC that does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the PC possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a DC 20 Survival check, the PC 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 PC 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*.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

HALMADAR'S HISTORY

Halmadar the Cruel was a warlord who rampaged throughout the Shield Lands from 420 CY to 455 CY. Halmadar was particularly powerful because he managed to acquire both the Hand of Vecna and the Eye of Vecna. Halmadar was betrayed by his own lieutenants, drugged, and buried alive in a tomb in the Kron Hills, near the gnomish town of Osnabrodt.

Halmadar did not rest easy. The wickedness of the artifacts and his own cruelty sustained him in a quasi-living state. In 581 CY, Halmadar escaped his tomb and hatched a plot to bring Verbobonc under his control. As he was now a servitor of Vecna, god of secrets, Halmadar gave up his former ways of warlike conquest and embraced trickery and guile. Halmadar remains a powerful fighter, but hatched a plan worthy of a devotee of the Whispered One. This plan centered around Castle Estival, and the well of power it conceals.

HOUSE ESTIVAL

Long before Verbobonc was an independent nation, the Estival family built a great castle on the edge of the misty Iron Wood. Until recently, this castle has stood empty, vacant from the time that the Estival's Keoish allies were driven from Verbobonc.

The Estivals were rumored to be demon-worshippers, necromancers, and worse. Legends tell of a vast well of power beneath the castle, a well of power whose secrets are best kept from the eyes of mortal man. For nearly 250 years, Castle Estival sat vacant, looming over Verbobonc's heartland and shunned by the locals. Still, the well of power abused by House Estival in its evil reign remains. Castle Estival squats over a great pool of Oerthblood.

THE NATURE OF OERTHBLOOD

Deep beneath the Iron Wood is a source of great power: the Oerthblood – a magical substance said to have the power to shape reality itself. Oerthblood has been reputed to have been discovered deep in Castle Greyhawk, in the foundations of Tenser's tower, and in the Caldron of Night at the end of the Causeway of Fiends in the Great Kingdom. As revealed in VER8-03 *Darkness is Unbound*, Oerthblood also manifests beneath certain key locations in Verbobonc, including a reservoir of the substance beneath the quarry along the River Road and another reservoir in the Iron Wood, protected by the druid Hermann M. The greatest pool of the substance, however, lies beneath the dungeons of Castle Estival.

The power of Oerthblood has manifested itself in various ways. In recent times, its power was used by Breyin the Moonlord to reinforce the prison binding the ancient evil known only as the Great Dire Dark. While the Great Dire Dark was eventually released from its prison, it was defeated by heroes of Verbobonc (see VER4-03 *Glory's Warriors*). But the Oerthblood remains.

It is important to point out that Oerthblood is not, of itself, inherently destructive or evil. However, the blood tends to absorb nearby evil and spawn unnatural creations (such as in VER8-03 *Darkness is Unbound* and in this adventure).

After Halmadar exhumed himself from his tomb, his latent power sensed the presence of the Oerthblood beneath Castle Estival. He chose to impersonate a scion of that lost family in order to have a 'legitimate' reason to gain entry to the castle.

A vast network of dungeons extends beneath much of the Iron Wood. Many of these dungeons extend to beneath Castle Estival as well, and remain polluted with evil from the days House Estival occupied the castle.

HALMADAR'S PLOTS

In early 596 CY, Halmadar relied upon certain foreign agents of Vecna—forgers and scholars from Keoland—in order to prepare his disguise as Wellborn Estival, the last surviving member of House Estival. Halmadar, in the guise of the Keoish merchant Wellborn Estival, returned to Verbobonc to put his plans into motion.

First, "Estival" endeared himself to the populace by providing food during a particularly harsh winter that he was able, in part, to orchestrate (see VER6-01 *Discontent of Our Winter*). "Estival" also endeared himself to local adventurers with frequent and generous monetary stipends.

Then, "Estival" engineered his ascension to the throne of Verbobonc by kidnapping Viscount Langard and secreting him away in his distant underground lair (see VER8-02 *Crypt Things*), and setting the nobles of Verbobonc against each other with violent infighting (see VER7-03 *Mourning Glory*, VER7-05 *Lion and the Dragon*, and VER7-06 *Swan and the Crow*).

Most of the recent evils at work in the Viscounty of Verbobonc are Halmadar's doing. For example, the elven warchief Rygor was revealed to be his agent, fomenting violence in the Gnarley Forest (see VER6-04 *Sign of the Black Orchid*, VER6-05 *Reclamation* and VTF8-03 *A Mother's Love*).

Although nearly thwarted by the sudden popularity of the newly-emboldened Lord Ludovic Langmuir (see VER8-01 *Mediation*), "Estival's" payoffs to local adventurers won the day: the Velunan ambassador sent to appoint the successor to the missing Viscount Langard generally chose to endorse the high-paying Estival over Lord Langmuir.

His appointment as Viscount Estival has allowed Halmadar to play his hand more openly. Under the guise of a spy named "Masquerade", Halmadar subverted the Cult of Trithereon in Verbobonc City and engineered a mass assassination of many of Verbobonc's nobles (see VER18-01 *Investiture* and its aftermath). He has incorporated the lawful military of Verbobonc into his personal and increasingly ruthless house guard, the Bondsmen of House Estival. He ordered the complete destruction of the barge-town of Darkhapor, along with all of its men, women and children (see VER8-04 *Bred in the Bone*). He has turned Verbobonc into a fascist state in his own vice-like grip.

Although this consolidation of power would be enough to satisfy most mortal warlords, Halmadar seeks one other step: he desires to become truly immortal, a proxy to his master Vecna. Halmadar will sacrifice all of Verbobonc to fuel his own ascension. Although thwarted by Magister Obble Har in an attempt to harness the power of the Skyroads, Halmadar has now turned to the power of Oerthblood to bathe the Viscounty of Verbobonc in blood and fire and see his own rise to limitless power.

HALMADAR'S FOES

Halmadar's successes have not gone entirely as planned. Certain heroes have managed to uncover bits of his plot, free Viscount Langard from his imprisonment, and establish a paramilitary resistance to the Bondsmen called the Company of the Black Rose. Some of Halmadar's agents—such as Rygor the elven warchief and Hodgi Pepperquill the gnome forger—have been

dealt with (see VTF8-03 *A Mother's Love*). Adventurers managed to save Bishop Haufren from a vile death engineered by Halmadar and his allies (see VER8-02 *Crypt Things*). Many nobles were saved from Halmadar's assassination plots by quick-acting adventurers (see VER18-01 *Investiture* and its aftermath).

A few other significant players also have taken notice of Halmadar's activities:

- Viscount Langard is doing all he can to wrest control from Viscount Estival.
- Langard's close ally, the dryad Elespeth (see VER4-09 *Wicked Three*) is receiving prophetic premonitions to thwart Halmadar's plans.
- The powerful druid Hermann M, who seems himself protector of Verbobonc's Oerthblood, has learned that someone is tapping this ancient source of power.
- Magister Har of the Wrinkle Academy foiled Halmadar's plans to usurp the power of the Skyroads, although it cost Magister Har his life (see VER7-08 *Race the Spirit's Lightning*).

THE PROPHECY

Halmadar's rise was foretold by an ancient prophecy. Certain gods of magic (including the elven goddess Hanali Celanil and the elven god Corellon Larethian) have long foreseen that a mortal may attempt to extend Vecna's reach through a prophesied ritual.

The prophecy has been mistranslated twice in the past year: once accidentally and once intentionally. First, some of the background events of VER7-08 *Race the Spirit's Lightning* arise from the fact that Wee Jas considered only a fragment of this prophecy and, as a result, misinterpreted it as applicable to Magister Har as a proxy of Boccob, rather than to Halmadar as a proxy of Vecna. Second, the prophecy fragment that Rygor (an agent of Halmadar) gave to Shannus in order to mislead him substituted "in defeating the cruel and horrible dire dark" for the last line. This was intended to—and succeeded in—spurring Lord Shannus to war against his fellow nobles in VER7-03 *Mourning Glory* and thereafter.

The prophecy in its entirety reads was revealed to adventurers in VER8-05 *Quisling* and is as follows:

**I speak this prophecy to the three,
The Ruby, the Book, and the speaker of Lies
Skilled above all in the domain of his god,
A master and servant from Oerth will arise.**

Beware! His darkness is unbound,

and few believe he has returned.

***Through his lies his guile continues,
Seizing power that'd once been spurned.***

***Knowledge is the path to his ascension,
and magic will be the key to the door.
Death will greet him and embrace him,
secrets once seen will no longer obscure.***

***For when traders fall and traitors strike,
the humbled master will grasp his role.
Then the brave at heart must stem the striving,
and keep the master from his goal.***

***So look to those who choose adventure,
heralding both from near and far.
For these brave souls will be decisive,
in defeating Halmadar.***

The prophecy warns against the rise of Halmadar as a proxy of Vecna, and that adventurers will be needed to stop him. Stopping Halmadar directly is the thrust of this adventure.

CAST OF PCS

The PCs interact with several NPCs in the course of this adventure. As these PCs have appeared in other Verbobonc adventures, it is important that they are roleplayed consistently by all DMs, so players recognize these NPCs when they meet them again.

Halmadar the Cruel: Halmadar the cruel has been for several years now living under the disguise of a Keoish noble named Wellborn Estival. Halmadar

Several months ago it was determined that Lord Estival had the strongest claim to the title of Viscount, and he was invested with that authority by the Velunan emissary Richter Warwick. Just before the Investiture ceremony a group of assassins struck at the noble families, killing many of them. The Mounted Borderers discovered the staging point for the assassins and learned that the Church of Trithereon was implicated as being the masterminds behind the assassinations. Viscount Estival responded by making the worship of Trithereon a crime in Verbobonc (see Appendix #3 Laws of the Viscounty). As Viscount, Estival has become increasingly tyrannical. He has incorporated the lawful military of Verbobonc into his personal and increasingly ruthless house guard (the Bondsmen of House Estival), provoked controversies with Veluna and Furyondy, and driven away many good-hearted allies in the Viscounty.

Lord Ludovic Langmuir: Lord Ludovic has grown mightily since he escaped from under the thumb of his domineering mother. That he has fallen in love with such a young and fiercely independent lady has filled his life with a vigor that he readily admits he has never felt before. Ludovic and Elise have spent the past several months in Verbobonc City, passing their days in each others company. Ludovic's courtship has been long, understandably so considering the age difference between Ludovic and the young Lady Elise.

Lady Elise Brandenburg: The Lady Elise has slowly recovered from the horrors of the past several months, and has found in Ludovic a man who escaped from his mother with his kindness and goodness intact. Since the worship of Trithereon was made illegal the Lady Elise has made a show of removing all shrines to the god from her holdings. Whether the young Lady has given up Trithereon in her heart is a subject of much discussion in the city of Verbobonc.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Pre-Adventure events: With the discovery in VER8-05 *Quisling* that the Viscount Estival was in fact Halmadar the Cruel, many adventurers chose to assault Castle Greyfist in Verbobonc City and depose the Vecnan warlord from his position of power. The adventurers fought bravely to secure the outer walls, suffering many casualties, while another band of adventurers struck at the inner bailey's defenses through a very risky scheme to rob Halmadar of his ability to call in reinforcements and denied him the freedom to flee the castle. This second mission was successful, and the group of adventurers were able to remove the abjuration protecting the inner bailey and put into it's place a spell developed by the late Magister Har: *Har's impervious impediment*. This spell not only blocks out inter-dimensional travel, but also blocks anyone from leaving the area via inter-dimensional means. Halmadar's ascension to become the Proxy of Vecna is still progressing well, and in this adventure a band of heroes is called upon to stop him before it is too late.

Introduction: The stage is set leading in from the VER18-02 battle interactive results or for home play.

Encounter 1. The Setup. The PCs are gathered from group of survivors at an impromptu aid station and asked to lead an assault on the main bailey while the main forces feint at the rear of the castle.

Encounter 2: The Inner Bailey. As the main forces lay down a barrage of magic the PCs make their way into the main keep.

Encounter 3: First Floor, The Grand Hall Moving into the keep the PCs enter the main hall and encounter Ludovic Langmuir being toyed with by one of Halmadar's minions.

Encounter 4: Second Floor, The Barracks. PCs may easily pass through the barracks and living quarters to reach Estival's quarters

Encounter 5: Third Floor, Estival's quarters. Above the grand hall the PCs enter the living quarters of the Viscount and discover that he has made some dramatic changes

Encounter 6. Halmadar. PCs confront Halmadar in the midst of his bid to become the Proxy of Vecna.

Conclusion.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

In preparation ask the players to gather their AR's for all Verbobonc Year 8 adventures they've played with the PC, as well as VER6-01 *Discontent of Our Winter* and VER7-01 *Cleanse Thy House* and the AR for VER6-03 *Castle Estival*. As these adventures have an impact on the effects in Encounter Six.

A NOTE ON SPELL EFFECTS

Most of this adventure occurs inside the effects of a powerful magical field called *Har's impervious impediment*. In this area, no dimensional travel functions at all into, out of, or within the area. Even simple travel such as *benign transposition* or *anklets of translocation* is prevented within this field. No creatures may be summoned or called into the area of *Har's impervious impediment*.

Furthermore, divinatory magics are currently being blocked by the direct attentions of Vecna. Attempts to divine the future in this adventure (such as *augury*, *commune*, or *contact other plane*) provide no helpful information.

Finally, Vecna has arranged for several of his extraplanar plots to come to fruition in order to aid Halmadar here. If any creatures are called to Oerth by the party, they are either secret agents of Vecna or acting on conflicting orders from higher-placed agents of Vecna. If the PCs use any sort of conjuration (calling) effect such as *planar ally* or *gate* (but not including conjuration (summoning) spells such as *summon monster* or *summon nature's ally*), the called creature immediately attacks the party as best it can and fights to the death. Agents of good, such as

angels, are likely to apologize to the party before launching such an attack (perhaps with a short explanation like “I apologize for what I am about to do, but I am compelled by a higher power than you.”). Note, however, that such conjuration magics fail within *Har’s impervious impediment* anyway.

INTRODUCTION

This adventure picks up after VERI8-02 *Assault on Castle Greyfist*, the battle interactive of the Last Weekend in Verbobonc. If you are at the convention, choose whichever beginning is applicable from the results of the interactive. If this is a home game or if the game is being run at a convention after Last Weekend in Verbobonc, read the third option.

Option #1: If the PCs were unsuccessful in the battle interactive, read the following.

The groans of the wounded mingle with the sounds of battle coming from the stair above. The cleric of St. Cuthbert kneeling over you peers down with a concern on his battered face. “The gods aren’t done with you yet. If you’re feeling better Langard and the bishop will need to talk to you. They’re waiting upstairs.”

Option #2: If the PCs were successful in the battle interactive, read the following.

The weary looks from the soldiers speak of the battle long fought as they escort you through the front rooms of the Scythe and Sheaf and down the hall towards the impromptu headquarters of Langard and Bishop Haufren.

Option #3: If the game is being played after Last Weekend in Verbobonc, read the following.

The battle still rages outside as you walk through the front rooms of the Scythe and Sheaf towards the impromptu headquarters of Langard and Bishop Haufren.

Continue to Encounter One: The Setup.

ENCOUNTER ONE: THE SETUP

This encounter sets up the action for the rest of the encounters, so it is vital that all of the relevant information is provided to the PCs. Read the first portion of the text below, and then read the appropriate portion of the text following dependent upon whether the PCs had

won the battle in VERI8-02 *Assault on Castle Greyfist*, if they had lost the battle in VERI8-02 *Assault on Castle Greyfist*, or if the adventure is being run after the Interactive VERI8-02 *Assault on Castle Greyfist* takes place.

The back of the Scythe and Sheaf Inn has seen better days. A few of the tables have been pushed aside leaving a large open area. Langard, Lord and Lady Milinous and Bishop Haufren stand around a long table, talking in low voices as they pore over a map of Verbobonc City. Seeing you enter, the group looks up.

Langard speaks first, a wry half-smile flickering over his features. “Welcome to our headquarters. I’m sorry our hospitality is strained, but our situation is rather dire.

“We know that Halmadar is in the process of becoming the Proxy of Vecna through some ritual inside the Keep of Castle Greyfist. If he succeeds, it will greatly increase the power of Vecna here on Oerth, most likely bring ruination to our Viscounty, and of course cost us all our lives.

“Naturally, we want him to be stopped and that’s where your party comes in.”

Option #1: If the PCs have lost the battle in VERI8-02 *Assault on Castle Greyfist* read the following.

Lord Milinous gruffly clears his throat. “Our situation is grim. We’ve been beaten back and our losses keep us from pressing the attack further.”

Lady Elinor wraps her arms around her husband and his dark mood visibly lightens. “We’re not dead yet, dear. While our options are few we still have enough resources for a feint.”

Langard motions to the map before him, calling your attention to the battlefield. “I will lead the remaining forces around the other side of Castle Greyfist. I doubt Halmadar will be able to pass up such tempting bait. When he does so, we need you to enter the castle’s keep and stop Halmadar’s ritual.”

Follow on to **Development: The Plan** below.

Option #2: If the PCs won the battle in VERI8-02 *Assault on Castle Greyfist*, read the following.

Lord Milinous clears his throat. “Our forces have cleared most of the area outside of Castle Greyfist, but Halmadar has been able to keep our forces from assaulting the main keep.”

Lady Elinor wraps her arms around her husband. “It’s almost finished, and then we can live in peace.” The

two nobles share a brief smile before Langard quietly coughs, interrupting the moment.

“So our best option is to draw off the main force and let a smaller group to enter the keep.” Langard motions to the map before him. “I will lead the remaining forces around the other side of Castle Greyfist, there we will engage them. While we do so we need you to enter the keep and stop Halmadar’s ritual.”

Follow on to **Development: The Plan** below.

Option #3: If the adventure is being run after the Last Weekend in Verbobonc convention, read the following.

Lord Milinous clears his throat. “The battle has been joined, and we’re holding our own.”

Lady Elinor, clearly unwilling to stray far from her husband, wraps her arm around his broad shoulders. “We fear, though, that this battle is just part of Halmadar’s plan to delay us while he completes his transformation into the proxy of Vecna.”

Langard motions to the map before him. “Our plan then is to strike on either side of the Keep. While the main forces keep the enemy occupied we need your group to assault the keep inside Castle Greyfist, find Halmadar, and stop his ritual.”

Development: The Plan

After the situation is explained Langard continues on with his presentation of the plan.

Langard directs your attention to the map of Verbobonc City. “When the assault begins, the enemy’s attention will be drawn away from the defenses of the keep. It is then that we need you to use these two cloaks to dimension door to a point just outside of the greenish hued field around the inner bailey.” Langard motions to two black cloaks sitting on a bench nearby.

“Each cloak allows the wearer to bring two medium or smaller people with them. So these two cloaks allow your whole group to reach the bailey. We’ve cleared the way up to where you can use them. A runner is going to bring you to the jumping off point.

“Once you reach the bailey, move quickly into the keep. If you can, lock the doors behind you, and then make your way upwards to where Halmadar is performing his rite.”

Development: The Plan. Langard asks the PCs if they have any questions. Here are some likely questions the PCs may have.

Why are we attacking Castle Greyfist? Halmadar, the power that has been behind so many of the plots in the Viscounty, is in the middle of trying to become the proxy of Vecna and we need to stop him.

Why us? You’re the best-rested and best-equipped group we have available.

What is the greenish hued field? It’s called *Har’s impervious impediment*, and was put into place by a group such as yours. It keeps one from traveling inter-dimensionally into it or within it. It harms any evil creature that enters it, and furthermore it dimensionally locks individuals within from leaving the area via inter-dimensional means.

Can it be dispelled? The spell was provided to us by Magister Har’s former familiar, who gave us indication that it would take a magical force of divine strength to dispel it. Halmadar may reach that point, but not if you stop him first.

What do we know of what we’ll face when we’re inside? Alas, we do not. We know that Lord Ludovic and the Lady Elise are unaccounted for. We fear they are inside.

Are they allied with Halmadar? If is doubtful that anyone would still ally themselves with a creature such as Halmadar after they knew his identity.

How will we know it’s time? By the sounds of battle, of course. We plan to be obvious with our assault, so it will be impossible to miss. Do not delay when our feint begins, or it will have been for nothing.

What resources do you have for us? Only the cloaks, the remainder of our magics is needed during the fight outside of the bailey of the castle.

We have extra people (animal companions, Large sized PCs, etc.). Do you have any more cloaks? No, those are all we have available. If you have teleportation or *dimension door* magics of your own, you can use them as well: otherwise, there can only be as many of you as the cloaks we’re providing will allow.

Couldn’t we just fly to the top of the keep? If you do so you most likely will be seen and targeted by the enemy, ruining our plan to buy you time to stop Halmadar and throw away the lives being spent to buy you that time. Please don’t.

Development: We’re really hurt! If the adventure is being played during Last Weekend in Verbobonc the PCs may be severely injured, their resources badly tapped, or just recently raised from the dead. If this adventure is being run at Last Weekend in Verbobonc also read the following.

Bishop Haufren steps forward. His stern gaze sweeps over your party. Lifting a blackened mace from his side he brandishes it before him. "This is the Renvash Splinter, restored by brave souls, and in its restoration so shall we restore our Viscounty."

Haufren lowers his head. In a fierce whisper he prays. "St. Cuthbert, You know me as a faithful servant to your law. You know me to be a fair man when judging the scales. I tell you this, the scales of justice require retribution this day. Bless these who stand before this table, mend their wounds, cleanse their souls, restore their ability and they will deliver your justice."

A brilliant flash of white light fills the room and is gone. As your sight slowly returns you find yourself well rested, fully healed and ready to face the trial ahead.

Bishop Haufren lowers the Renvash Splinter. "Amen," is all he says.

The PCs are completely healed of any hit point, ability drain or damage. Any negative levels they had received during the battle interactive are restored and they are well rested as if they had just woken from eight hours of rest.

ENCOUNTER TWO: THE INNER BAILEY

Once the PCs have finished asking their questions and receiving their orders, allow them as much time as they wish to make their plans. When they are ready to go, read the following:

The low storm clouds and the back alleys of Verbobonc provide cover most of the way to the jumping off point and shield your view from the fighting in the streets. Your guide; a young halfling man in grayish clothing bristling with daggers, quickly sprints along the edge of the street that provides cover from view of Castle Greyfist.

Within minutes you've reached your destination, a coach house just a few hundred feet from the outer walls of the castle. With practiced ease, the halfling weaves a bit of magic and the door pops open. The halfling slowly opens the door and, seeing the room unoccupied, motions you inside.

"Make whatever preparations you need, but be quick about it. We only have a matter of minutes."

If asked exactly how long the PCs have the halfling shrugs his shoulders. He's been given orders to escort the

party to this location and wait with them until they go. Other than that he has no knowledge of the plan.

Allow the PCs to make any preparations they feel necessary. Give the PCs 10 minutes to discuss options and make their plans without telling them they have 10 minutes. After 10 minutes, whether the PCs are ready or not read the following:

The sounds of battle rise from the far side of the castle. Flashes of arcane energies flicker against the sky. Now is clearly the time that Langard had planned for you to make your assault.

Upon the first round of battle all of Halmadar's forces that had been positioned at the keep are drawn away. The PCs have 5 rounds to use the cloaks and enter the Keep before Halmadar's forces realizes the attack is a feint and replaces the troops guarding the outside of the Keep.

Be sure to ask which PCs use the cloaks, and point out to them that doing so means they must remove any magic item currently in their cloak slot (they likely will be able to replace it again at the other side of their dimensional jump, but they do not know this).

Provided that the PCs utilize the cloaks or use their own inter-dimensional travel to reach the bailey, read the following.

In a flash the inner bailey appears, the shimmering green wall flickers mere feet from your party. Within the shimmering field the keep of Castle Greyfist looms upwards against the blackening skies. The great double doors of the keep are closed.

Ask the PCs for a DC 19 Spot check. Those PCs who succeed add the following.

Now that you're closer to the keep you can see that what appears to be blood has begun to drip down the outside of Castle Greyfist's keep from the parapets above. Hundreds of gallons of blood must have been shed in order to cover the entirety of the upper parapets

The doors of the keep are closed but not locked, as the creatures that are here wished easy travel to defenses outside the keep and many of them were capable of inter-dimensional travel on their own.

Har's impervious impediment stopped that easy movement, and the defenders haven't been able to adjust yet. The PCs are free to move up to the doors and enter the keep. If they do so continue on to Encounter Three.

The PCs can bar and lock the doors behind them, if they choose.

If the PCs took longer than 5 rounds after the battle began to reach this location add the following:

Whatever element of surprise you may have had has been lost. Several creatures wait for your arrival.

This encounter is un-tiered and designed to spur the PCs into the keep as quickly as possible. These creatures do not appear between the PCs and the keep. Instead, they are outside of *Har's impervious impediment* and are loath to enter it.

APL 6 (EL 10)

Babau (4): hp 66 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 12)

Babau (9): hp 66 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 10 (EL 14)

Bebilith (4): hp 150 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 12 (EL 16)

Bebilith (4): hp 150 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Nalfeshnee: hp 175; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 14 (EL 18)

Nalfeshnee (4): hp 175 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 16 (EL 20)

Nalfeshnee (4): hp 175 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Marilith (2): hp 216 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: These demons attempt to eliminate the party as quickly as possible. They spread their attacks out among the PCs, hoping to do as much damage as possible right away.

Treasure: none

Development: If the PCs remain outside, an identical group of demons appears as reinforcements 5 rounds after combat with the first group ends. This should encourage the PCs to enter the keep. Then continue with Encounter Three below.

ENCOUNTER THREE: FIRST FLOOR, THE GRAND HALL

This encounter provides exposition to the PCs from Lord Ludovic Langmuir, as well as explaining the mechanic for what secrets are the source of Halmadar's power. When the PCs enter the grand hall read the following.

The grand hall of the keep of Castle Greyfist echoes with the plucking of a dulcimer and lilting laughter as a man's voice asks. "—actually thought a young woman like Elise would find favor in a man like you?"

The voice that answers falters in his reply "You've taken everything, why can't you just let me die?" Laughter again echo's through the chamber. "Because, my good Lord—your pain is so very amusing!"

Inside the grand hall, the bard Fillister (an extraplanar creature that has adopted a human form) has been amusing himself while Halmadar prepares for his ascension by torturing Lord Ludovic Langmuir. Langmuir has been unceremoniously staked to an upturned table with whatever metal was handy (crossbow bolts, daggers, a short sword, etc) and the bard has been using scrolls of *modify memory* to pry forth out of Langmuir every painful memory that the tortured man has lived through.

Fillister is not a fool, however, and he fully expects that while the battle rages outside that some force is going to attempt to penetrate the keep. He has therefore prepared himself and his guards for the adventurers' arrival.

Fillister's hired muscle doesn't particularly share his amusement over the torture of Lord Langmuir, but they respect the bard's abilities to improve their fighting prowess. As instructed, they've drunk the potions provided to them and await the battle to come.

Provide all of the opponents with Listen and Spot checks to detect the PCs as they enter, roll initiative and resolve the combat. The hall is quite large as indicated on **Map #2** Ground Floor. The ceiling here is 15 feet high and constructed of thick stone. Draw out the location, noting the square where Lord Langmuir has been staked.

APL 6 or 8 (EL 9)

Fillister: male Nerra (Varoot) Bard 8; hp 74; Appendix 1.

The Hired Muscle (2): Khaasta Barbarian 2; hp 77 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 13)

Fillister: male Nerra (Varoot) Bard 10/Sublime chord2; hp 110; Appendix 1.

The Hired Muscle(2): Khaasta Barbarian 2/ Fighter 2/Exotic Weapon Master 1; hp 122 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 15)

Fillister: male Nerra (Varoot) Bard 10/Sublime Chord 2/Fatespinner 2; hp 144; Appendix 1.

The Hired Muscle (2): Khaasta Barbarian 2/ Fighter 4/Exotic Weapon Master 1; hp 152 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 14 (EL 17)

Fillister: male Nerra (Varoot) Bard 10/Sublime Chord2/Fatespinner4; hp 160; Appendix 1.

The Hired Muscle (2): Khaasta Barbarian 2/ Fighter 6/Exotic Weapon Master 1; hp 182 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 16 (EL 19)

Fillister: male Nerra (Varoot) Bard 10/Sublime Chord4/Fatespinner4; hp 180; Appendix 1.

The Hired Muscle (2): Khaasta Barbarian 2/ Fighter 8/Exotic Weapon Master 1; hp 226 each; see Appendix 1.

Tactics: Fillister has already cast *inspirational boost* and begun playing his lute before the PCs arrive. He has also taken the liberty to use several divine scrolls to increase his own and his companion's abilities. These spells are noted in the stat blocks of each of the opponents. Fillister knows that the noble Langmuir is probably valuable, and so he hangs back around the noble, hoping that the noble keeps him from being targeted by area effect spells. From the relatively safety behind the lines, Fillister casts his enchantment spells on as many of the PCs as he can. He especially delights in catching a PC with his *puppeteer* spell and causing them to provoke attacks of opportunity from the barbarians. At all levels he is able to utilize his Captivating Melody feat to increase the DCs of his enchantment spells by 2. Fillister also delights in using his reflective spell resistance to turn targeted spells back on the caster.

The khaasta barbarians have been promised that they can keep any slaves they capture in payment for protecting Halmadar. In order to capture slaves they usually strike for non-lethal damage. Other than this tactic, they lack any subtlety and wade into combat with a will, raging on the first round and power attacking as noted in the stat blocks.

At APL 10 and higher Fillister has access to a far greater range of spells and uses them to remove any spellcasters from the combat through the use of the *feeblemind* spell. Please note that arcane spell casters receive a -4 penalty to their saves against this spell.

At APL 12 and higher Fillister is keenly aware of how damaging *feeblemind* would be were he ever targeted by the spell. He therefore targets first any spellcasters who may appear capable of casting such a spell (wizards and sorcerers), before he continues with his other enchantments. Also at this level he has imbued himself with a Heightened *Tasha's hideous laughter* via his Retributive Spell feat and gleefully targets anyone who

physically attacks him with it. At these APLs Fillister also has gained the ability to cast *snowsong*.

At APL 14 and higher Fillister has access to *limited wish*, and uses it as appropriate to cast damage dealing spells or other effects. At this APL Fillister also has used *limited wish* to cast *righteous aura* on himself. This spell effect enhances his spellcasting, but causes his body to explode in a positive energy burst that hurts evil creatures in a 20 foot burst around him. It heals good aligned creatures of the same amount.

Treasure: Defeat and loot the villains.

APL 6 and 8: Loot 94 gp; Magic 2818 gp; *bracers of arcane freedom* (192 gp), *cloak of charisma +4* (1333 gp), *vest of resistance +2* (333 gp), *cloak of predatory vigor* (2) (116 gp each), *devastation gauntlets* (2) (166 gp each), *+1 falchion* (2) (198 gp each); Total 2912 gp.

APL 10 and 12: Loot 3 gp; Magic 6327 gp; *bracers of arcane freedom* (192 gp), *cloak of charisma +6* (3000 gp), *vest of resistance +4* (1333 gp), *+3 mithral buckler* (842 gp), *cloak of predatory vigor* (2) (116 gp each), *devastation gauntlets* (2) (166 gp each), *+1 bastard sword* (2) (198 gp each); Total 6330 gp.

APL 14: Loot 3 gp; Magic 8493 gp; *bracers of arcane freedom* (192 gp), *cloak of charisma +6* (3000 gp), *vest of resistance +4* (1333 gp), *+3 mithral buckler* (842 gp), *veil of allure* (1166 gp), *belt of battle* (1000 gp), *cloak of predatory vigor* (2) (116 gp each), *devastation gauntlets* (2) (166 gp each), *+1 bastard sword* (2) (198 gp each); Total 8496 gp.

APL 16: Loot 3 gp; Magic 10,493 gp; *bracers of arcane freedom* (192 gp), *cloak of charisma +6* (3000 gp), *vest of resistance +4* (1333 gp), *+3 mithral buckler* (842 gp), *veil of allure* (1166 gp), *belt of battle* (3) (1000 gp each), *cloak of predatory vigor* (2) (116 gp each), *devastation gauntlets* (2) (166 gp each), *+1 bastard sword* (2) (198 gp each); Total 10,496 gp.

Development: If The Party is Captured. If the party loses this combat, the PCs are sold into slavery by the khaasta on the outer planes. The adventure is over, and all surviving PCs earn the Sold on the Open Market entry on the AR.

Development: Save Me! If the PCs defeat the bard and his barbarians, Lord Ludovic (if he is still alive) pleads with the PCs to release him. If they do so he provides valuable information. After the PCs release Lord Ludovic read the following.

The broken form of Lord Langmuir huddles on the floor of the keep. At some point his left hand was cut off and his left eye removed. It is the utter look of

hopelessness in his eyes though that tells that his physical torture was a pale shadow compared to what was done to his mind.

Lord Langmuir has been captive here at the keep for about two days. During that time Halmadar has taken great pleasure in using scrolls of *modify memory* to reveal to Lord Langmuir the extent of his plotting and scheming in Langmuir's own life. Essentially Halmadar had used his bard Fillister's enchantments to command, suggest, and modify the memories of Langmuir and the Lady Elise into believing that they loved each other. For several months Halmadar has deceived the Lady Elise into thinking he was Langmuir and then implanting memories of those meetings into Langmuir's mind.

These fictions and secrets have done much to bolster Halmadar's power with his god Vecna. With each layer of deceit Halmadar's power has grown. Langmuir's usefulness ended when the PCs discovered Halmadar's identity, and Halmadar decided to sacrifice Langmuir's secrets to his god, along with the nobles left eye and hand, which he burned in one of the braziers nearby.

Roleplay Langmuir as a man whose will has been broken through repeated cruelty. If asked he listlessly tells the PCs what happened to him.

- He was to have dinner with Viscount Estival two days ago in celebration of his impending marriage to the Lady Elise.
- When Lord Ludovic and Lady Elise arrived they were ushered inside where several of the draconic creatures (the khaasta) took them prisoner.
- The Lady Elise was taken upstairs. Lord Langmuir doesn't know if she's alive or dead.
- During the torture, Viscount Estival cut off his hand and plucked out his eye, burning them on a brazier.
- Viscount Estival, with the help of his bard, also cast spells on him, reaching into Lord Langmuir's mind and showing him how Viscount Estival had manipulated the Lady Elise and Lord Langmuir into thinking they were in love.
- With each secret that Viscount Estival revealed to Lord Langmuir concerning Lord Langmuir and Lady Elise's manipulation Viscount Estival seemed to grow in power, becoming stronger and stronger.
- Langmuir thinks it was as if Viscount Estival was sacrificing the secrets to his god and his god was responding with blessings of strength and power.
- Langmuir shudders to think that if Viscount Estival gained so much power off of the manipulations and

secrets from his own life, what other secrets may be out there to empower Viscount Estival.

Lord Langmuir follows whatever directions the PCs ask of him, but he is in no condition to assist them in their task, leaving the PCs free to move on to Encounter Four.

Development: Column of Blood In the room marked on the map, a small armory, is a column of Oerthblood that has been made to flow upwards, providing one of the components to power Halmadar's ascension to become the Proxy of Vecna. The column of Oerthblood here on the first floor is obscured by a stone pillar that has been built around it all the way to the ceiling. Similar pillars stand about this storeroom and are studded with empty hooks for weapons and armor. Even if they discover this column, stopping it now only floods this level of the keep (very gradually) and does not materially impact Halmadar's ritual.

ENCOUNTER FOUR: SECOND FLOOR, THE BARRACKS

The second floor of Castle Greyfist's keep is taken up by the barracks for the elite troops in Estival's employ. When the PCs reach the second floor read the following:

Rows upon rows of bunks line these rooms, indicating they house the guard for Castle Greyfist. The bunks lie empty, the weapons and armor racks too. Foot lockers beside the beds have been flung open. There appears to be little of value here.

There is little of interest here, and almost nothing to steal, even if the PCs were leisurely making their way upwards.

Development: Column of Blood. The column of Oerthblood rising through the second floor is obscured by a wooden box that has been built around it all the way to the ceiling. Several other similar boxes stand about this storeroom. Unless the PCs note specifically that they are opening all of the boxes in this storeroom they do not find the column. Even if they discover this column, stopping it now only floods the first two levels of the keep (very gradually) and does not materially impact Halmadar's ritual.

When the PCs are ready allow them to continue on to the third floor and Encounter Five.

ENCOUNTER FIVE: THIRD FLOOR, ESTIVAL'S QUARTERS

When the PCs enter the third floor read the following.

Across this wide and open room are stairs leading up. From above you can hear howling wind and the occasional far off detonation of some spell. To the side there are several doors, opening to other rooms.

Through these doors are the living quarters of Viscount Estival. From here, the PCs may examine this floor, or ascend to the parapet atop the keep.

Investigate This Floor

If the players choose to investigate the other rooms read the following:

This inner hall is grandly appointed, with numerous desks and scribing stations all along the walls. A large table is set out in the center of the room and is covered by a map of Verbobonc. A pair of ornately carved doors each bearing the symbol of House Estival stand at the north. Nobody is here.

The ornately carved doors lead to the Viscount's private bedroom, and the doors are closed and locked (DC 40 Open Locks).

If the PCs enter the bedroom of Lord Estival read the following.

The living quarters of Viscount Estival would be unremarkable if it weren't for the column of blood near the bed. Some five feet on its side the column extends up out of the floor below and penetrates the ceiling. Even as you watch, the thick blood gently rises, flowing upwards

The column of blood is enclosed in a permanent *wall of force*. The PCs may be able destroy the wall via *disintegrate* or a similar effect. The Oerthblood drains out and gradually floods the rest of the keep. This has no effect on Halmadar's ritual.

Further Upward

The stairs lead up to the parapet atop the keep. Both the stairways leading up are trapped, so the PCs face a trap whichever way they choose. Each of the stairways are trapped on the lowest step as follows:

APL 6 (EL 5)

Enervation Trap: CR 5; magical device; proximity trigger (target within 40 ft.); automatic reset; spell effect (*enervation*, 7th-level wizard, Atk +10 ranged touch, 1d4 negative levels); Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29.

APL 8 and 10 (EL 9)

Chained enervation Trap: CR 9; magical device; proximity trigger (target within 60 ft.); automatic reset; spell effect (*enervation*, 15th level wizard, Atk +14 ranged touch, 1d4 negative levels at first target, Atk +14 ranged touch, 1d2 negative levels at every creature within 30 ft. of first target); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

APL 12 (EL 11)

Twined Chained enervation Traps: CR 11; magical device; proximity trigger (target within 60 ft.); automatic reset; spell effect (*enervation*, 15th level wizard, Atk +14/+14 ranged touch, 1d4 negative levels at first target, Atk +14/14 ranged touch, 1d2 negative levels at every creature within 30 ft. of first target); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

APL 14 (EL 13)

Chained energy drain Trap: CR 13; magical device; proximity trigger (target within 65 ft.); automatic reset; spell effect (*energy drain*, 17th-level wizard, Atk +15 ranged touch, 2d4 negative levels Atk +15 ranged touch, 1d4 negative levels at every creature within 30 ft. of first target); Search DC 37; Disable Device DC 37.

APL 16 (EL 15)

Empowered Chained energy drain Trap: CR 15; magical device; proximity trigger (target within 65 ft.); automatic reset; spell effect (*energy drain*, 17th-level wizard, Atk +15 ranged touch, 2d4x1.5 negative levels Atk +15 ranged touch, 1d4x1.5 negative levels at every creature within 30 ft. of first target); Search DC 39; Disable Device DC 39.

ENCOUNTER SIX: HALMADAR

In this Encounter, the PCs confront Halmadar atop Castle Greyfist. When they arrive, read the following:

The sky above Castle Greyfist is a strange swirl of colors. The sounds of battle far below seem strangely muted. The evil Viscount Estival is here, as you have never seen him before. In his true shape as Halmadar the Cruel, Estival is a withered, once-powerful man with stringy hair carrying several dozen small weapons—hammers, axes, and so on.

Some type of thick blood welling up from within the keep sprays over the area here. Lady Elise Brandenburg is lashed to the top of a tall spire, soaked with the blood and barely conscious.

Halmadar wheels on you as you arrive. "You have come all this way, bested my defenders, and discovered all of my ruses—only to meet your ends!"

Let us see how you fare, heroes, when my lord Vecna strips from you that which you hold most dear!"

At this point, the entire area is covered by an *antimagic field* effect. This affects both the PCs and Halmadar. There is no way to remove this effect, but it may be mitigated somewhat (see below).

You should have all of the PCs take some time to adjust their PCs' statistics for being in an *antimagic field*.

A Note About Antimagic: Antimagic effects are rare, mostly because they are complicated and are often done wrong. It is worth giving your players several minutes to recalculate their PCs in the effects of the antimagic field here. The best advice is to not ask them to delete all magic effects on their PCs; rather, to have them recalculate their PC statistics from the ground up (starting with attributes, etc.). You might even give them new PC sheets to do this. They'll find this is incredibly easy to do, as they can ignore all magical effects. You can also tell them that they should only recalculate skills they typically use in combat (such as Tumble or Concentration).

Note that any favors that the PCs may have from previous ARs should be considered supernatural or spell-like, and are therefore unusable in an *antimagic field*, unless they are specifically listed as extraordinary abilities.

Before getting to the fight, however, there are two further effects that may impact the players.

The Good News: Secrets. Once the PCs have depowered their PCs for being in the *antimagic field*, share with them the good news: Vecna thrives on secrets, and secrets exposed are Halmadar's weakness. Determine the number of Secrets that a PC has received in a Year 8 Verbobonc regional adventure (there are a maximum of five **Secrets** available in VER8-01 to VER8-05). For *each Secret* that a PC possesses, that PC may select *one* magic item, prepared spell (in the case of wizards, clerics, druids, and so on), spell known (in the case of bards, sorcerers, favored souls, and so on), currently ongoing spell effect (such as *heroes' feast*), favor, or spell-like ability. This selected item works normally despite being in an *antimagic field*. Note that in the case of a prepared spell, the spell may only be used once; however, a spell known may be used multiple times.

Note that Vecna allows Halmadar two "exceptions" to the *antimagic field* as well. First, Halmadar is immune to all mind-affecting effects. Second, Halmadar is under a *freedom of movement* effect that cannot be suppressed or dispelled.

The Bad News: Estival's Favors Are Due. You should have the PCs show you their ARs for VER6-01

Discontent of Our Winter and VER7-01 *Cleanse Thy House*. These PCs may have earned Estival's Favor and may have checked one or more boxes in order to gain extra gold from Lord Estival. PCs may have up to 10 boxes checked. Determine the number of checked boxes for each PC. This number is a penalty for that PC. Halmadar instinctively and automatically knows this number with respect to each PC. The penalty applies in *both* of the following cases in this encounter:

- This number is a bonus to all attack and damage rolls that Halmadar makes against that PC.
- This number is a penalty to that PC's Fortitude saves against Halmadar's Anvil of Thunder feat.

Also, note whether any PCs possess the Ring of Estival from VER6-03 *Castle Estival* (regardless of whether later upgrades have been made). Any owner of the Ring of Estival, whether or not it is worn, is subject to Halmadar's attacks. Such PCs automatically fail any Fortitude save against Halmadar's Anvil of Thunder feat. Halmadar instinctively and automatically knows who these PCs are.

At this point, you should roll initiative for Halmadar and the PCs and proceed with the final combat of the Verbobonc regional campaign.

APL 6 (EL 10)

Halmadar the Cruel: male human Fighter 10; hp 94; Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 12)

Halmadar the Cruel: male human Fighter 12; hp 94; Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 14)

Halmadar the Cruel: male human Fighter 14; hp 94; Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 16)

Halmadar the Cruel: male human Fighter 16; hp 94; Appendix 1.

APL 14 (EL 18)

Halmadar the Cruel: male human Fighter 18; hp 94; Appendix 1.

APL 16 (EL 20)

Halmadar the Cruel: male human Fighter 20; hp 94; Appendix 1.

Tactics: Halmadar is an efficient and intelligent fighter. His preferred mode of attack is to throw as many pairs of axes and hammers as possible, in order to make use of his

Anvil of Thunder feat against as many foes as possible each round (particularly foes that seem to be doing him the most damage). You should roll his attacks one at a time, in order to follow up hammer attacks against foes that have been hit by an axe attack in the same round. Remember that Halmadar's first axe attack each round benefits from a triple weapon capsule, and is therefore more damaging.

If one opponent seems to have a particularly effective weapon, Halmadar is likely to Quick Draw his adamantine greatsword and attempt to sunder it.

Halmadar fights until destroyed. If Halmadar reaches 0 hit points or is rendered unconscious, Vecna claims his soul and Halmadar dies. In no event will Vecna allow Halmadar to be captured.

Treasure: Loot Halmadar.

APL 6 and 8: Loot 2211 gp.

APL 10 and 12: Loot 2487 gp.

APL 14: Loot 2949 gp.

APL 16: Loot 3410 gp.

When Halmadar falls, the PCs may eventually get Lady Elise Brandenburg free. Go to the Conclusion.

Development: Freeing Elise. Lady Elise Brandenburg is currently lashed to a tall spire, bathing in the Oerthblood in preparation before Halmadar murders her (as a descendant of Kas, Vecna's greatest enemy, this act serves to raise Halmadar in Vecna's favor). Elise is currently unconscious.

Getting to Elise is no easy matter, however. She is 30 feet up a metal spire slick with Oerthblood (Climb DC 35) and locked to the spire with two sets of adamantine manacles (Open Locks DC 35 each, or burst with Strength DC 28 each).

If freed, Halmadar is dramatically weakened: he takes a cumulative -2 on all attack rolls and saving throws each round Elise is free. However, he immediately turns his attacks on a freed Elise, if possible: in her current state, Elise has an AC of 10, 30 hit points, and a Fortitude save bonus of +2. Halmadar would rather kill Elise prematurely than see her get away.

CONCLUSION

You descend from the top of blood-slicked Castle Greyfist, Lady Elise Brandenburg [add, if appropriate, and Lord Ludovic Langmuir] safely in your care.

The valiant men and women spread before you is a true testament to the heroism of Verbobonc. A host of soldiers and citizens, all battered by this days events, are led by Bishop Haufren, Lord and Lady Milinous, and Langard. All are alive, thanks to your quick action and bravery. Someone raises a cheer as you approach, and the host erupts in applause.

You are guests of honor at the ceremony to re-invest Viscount Langard as the true Viscount of Verbobonc. All of the notables of Verbobonc are in attendance: from Thuldon Rockspitter of Clan Rockhall, to the gnome brewer Hermann M; from the gloomy dust mephit Threnodee to Canoness Ydey.

[Add, if Langmuir survived: *Lord Ludovic Langmuir, healed in body, but not in spirit, attends. Throughout dinner he and Lady Elise exchange wary glances, perhaps not sure if the feelings they still feel are just the remnants of Halmadar's manipulations, or if they had some real grounding in truth.*]

The trials through which Viscount Langard, Lord and Lady Milinous, and all the common people have passed has forged in the inhabitants of Verbobonc the same strength that a blacksmith's forge imbues into iron, transforming it into shining steel. The future of Verbobonc may be uncertain, but her trials, and the trials of her people, have given her the strength, ability, and skill to flourish in the future.

Earth and Stone, Man and Gnome!

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 PC.

ENCOUNTER THREE: FIRST FLOOR, THE GRAND HALL

Defeat Fillister and the hired muscle

APL 6	270 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	390 XP
APL 12	450 XP
APL 14	510 XP
APL 16	570 XP

ENCOUNTER FIVE: THIRD FLOOR, ESTIVAL'S QUARTERS

Disable or survive either trap on the stairs upward

APL 6	150 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	270 XP
APL 12	330 XP
APL 14	390 XP
APL 16	450 XP

ENCOUNTER SIX: HALMADAR

Stop Halmadar

APL 6	300 XP
APL 8	360 XP
APL 10	420 XP
APL 12	480 XP
APL 14	540 XP
APL 16	600 XP

STORY AWARDS

If Lord Ludovic Langmuir survives.

APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP
APL 10	90 XP
APL 12	105 XP
APL 14	120 XP
APL 16	135 XP

Good roleplaying and problem solving

APL 6	120 XP
APL 8	150 XP
APL 10	180 XP
APL 12	210 XP
APL 14	240 XP
APL 16	270 XP

TOTAL POSSIBLE EXPERIENCE

APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1,125 XP
APL 10	1,350 XP
APL 12	1,575 XP
APL 14	1,800 XP
APL 16	2,025 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, PCs 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 PC 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 PCs cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that PCs 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), PCs may return to retrieve loot. If the PCs 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 PC 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 PCs may want to use them during the adventure. Many times PCs 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 PCs total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate.

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

Encounter Three: First Floor, the Grand Hall

Defeat and loot the villains.

APL 6 and 8: Loot 94 gp; Magic 2818 gp; *bracers of arcane freedom* (192 gp), *cloak of charisma +4* (1333 gp), *vest of resistance +2* (333 gp), *cloak of predatory vigor* (2) (116 gp each), *devastation gauntlets* (2) (166 gp each), *+1 falchion* (2) (198 gp each); Total 2912 gp.

APL 10 and 12: Loot 3 gp; Magic 6327 gp; *bracers of arcane freedom* (192 gp), *cloak of charisma +6* (3000 gp), *vest of resistance +4* (1333 gp), *+3 mithral buckler* (842 gp), *cloak of predatory vigor* (2) (116 gp each), *devastation gauntlets* (2) (166 gp each), *+1 bastard sword* (2) (198 gp each); Total 6330 gp.

APL 14: Loot 3 gp; Magic 8493 gp; *bracers of arcane freedom* (192 gp), *cloak of charisma +6* (3000 gp), *vest of resistance +4* (1333 gp), *+3 mithral buckler* (842 gp), *veil of allure* (1166 gp), *belt of battle* (1000 gp), *cloak of predatory vigor* (2) (116 gp each), *devastation gauntlets* (2) (166 gp each), *+1 bastard sword* (2) (198 gp each); Total 8496 gp.

APL 16: Loot 3 gp; Magic 10,493 gp; *bracers of arcane freedom* (192 gp), *cloak of charisma +6* (3000 gp), *vest of resistance +4* (1333 gp), *+3 mithral buckler* (842 gp), *veil of allure* (1166 gp), *belt of battle* (3) (1000 gp each), *cloak of predatory vigor* (2) (116 gp each), *devastation gauntlets* (2) (166 gp each), *+1 bastard sword* (2) (198 gp each); Total 10,496 gp.

Encounter Six: Halmadar

Loot Halmadar.

APL 6 and 8: Loot 2211 gp.

APL 10 and 12: Loot 2487 gp.

APL 14: Loot 2949 gp.

APL 16: Loot 3410 gp.

TREASURE CAP

APL 6:	900 gp
APL 8:	1,300 gp
APL 10:	2,300 gp
APL 12:	3,300 gp
APL 14:	6,600 gp
APL 16:	9,900 gp

TOTAL POSSIBLE TREASURE

APL 6:	5,123 gp
APL 8:	5,123 gp
APL 10:	8,817 gp
APL 12:	8,817 gp
APL 14:	11,445 gp
APL 16:	13,906 gp

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Bested Halmadar the Cruel. You have defeated the warlord Halmadar the Cruel in his efforts to destabilize the Viscounty of Verbobonc and become a proxy of Vecna. You have gained some measure of power over secret things. You cannot be surprised in combat and always act in surprise round.

Castle Greyfist is Liberated. Langard is restored to his rightful place as Viscount of Verbobonc and rewards you with a patent of nobility and several hundred acres of land in one of (circle one): the Iron Wood, the Heartlands of Verbobonc, the Kron Hills, the Gnarley Forest, or the Lortmil Mountains.

Sold on the Open Market. You have been captured by extraplanar slavers and sold on the open market in the outer planes. Your PC is eventually able to return home, but by that time your lust for adventure is over. This PC is permanently retired from play.

Gratitude of the Verbobonc Triad. We are grateful for the opportunity to share years of stories for you and with you.

ITEM ACCESS

APL 6

Bracers of arcane freedom (Freq: Adv, MIC, 2,300 gp)

Cloak of predatory vigor (Freq: Adv, MIC, 1,400 gp)

Devastation gauntlets (Freq: Adv, MIC, 2,000 gp)

Mithral buckler (Freq: Adv, DMG)

APL 10 (as APL 6 plus the following)

+3 mithral buckler (Freq: Adv, DMG)

APL 14 (as APL 6-10 plus the following)

Belt of battle (Freq: Adv, MIC, 12,000 gp)

Veil of allure (Freq: Adv, MIC, 14,000 gp)

APPENDIX 1:

APL 6

ENCOUNTER THREE: THE GRAND

HALL

FILLISTER

CR 8

Male Varoot Bard 8

NE Medium outsider (extraplanar)

Init +6; **Senses** Darkvision 60', Listen +7, Spot +2

Languages Common, Abyssal, Drow, Giant, Gnome, Flan,

AC 25, touch 15, flat-footed 20

(+6 greater mage armor, +5 dex, +3 natural, +1 mithral buckler)

hp 74 (8 HD)

Resist Cold 5, Electricity 5, Fire 5

Fort +9, **Ref** +13, **Will** +10

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee dagger +8 (1d4+3/19-20)

Ranged dagger +8 (1d4+3/19-20)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +6

Combat Gear rapier, feathers, small tarts, bracers of arcane freedom*

Bard Spells Known (CL 8th; +6 melee touch, +11 ranged touch):

3rd (3/day) — *glibness* (DC 19), *haste*, *puppeteer** (DC 23)

2nd (5/day) — *glitterdust* (DC 20), *invisibility*, *suggestion* (DC 22), *wave of grief** (DC 22)

1st (5/day)—*charm person*, *insidious rhythm** (DC 21), *inspirational boost**, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 21)

0 (3/day)—*daze* (DC 18), *detect magic*, *know direction*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Pre-cast Spells: *glibness* (CL 8, factored into these stats), *bear's endurance* (CL3, factored into these stats), *cat's grace* (CL3, factored into these stats), *greater mage armor** (CL 5, factored into these stats) *inspirational boost** and *inspire courage* (factored into these stats), *invisibility purge* (from scroll - CL 9 – 45 feet) *stalwart pact** (CL 16, activates at 29 hp)

Abilities Str 11, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 26

SQ Immunity to Gaze attacks, vulnerability to sonic, reflective spell resistance 20 (any spell targeted on you reflects back to the caster affecting the caster)

Feats Spell Focus (Enchantment), Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment), Captivating Melody*, Melodic Casting*

Skills Bluff +19 (currently +49), Diplomacy +10, Disguise +29, Gather Information +19, Intimidate +10, Listen +7, Perform (Stringed Instruments) +19, Spellcraft +8, Tumble +14, Use Magic Device +19

Possessions: *cloak of charisma* +4, *vest of resistance* +2, mithral buckler

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

THE HIRED MUSCLE

CR 5

Male Khaasta Barbarian 2

CE Medium Monstrous Humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6

Languages Common, Draconic

AC 24, touch 8, flat-footed 24

(+2 Dex, +2 Deflection, +8 Natural Armor, +6 *greater mage armor**, -4 Reckless Rage)

hp 77(5 HD)

Fort +13, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +1 falchion +17 (2d4+22/18-20)* or +1 falchion +17 (2d4+22/18-20) and bite +9 (1d6+15)*

* includes -4 for striking for non-lethal damage.

Ranged javelin (1d6+15)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +17

Atk Options Power attack, Reckless Rage

Combat Gear, *cloak of predatory vigor**, *devastation gauntlets**, *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of barkskin* +2, *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of haste*.

Pre-cast Spells: *barkskin* (CL3, factored into these stats), *bull's strength* (CL3, factored into these stats) *bear's endurance* (CL3, factored into these stats), *greater mage armor** (CL 5, factored into these stats), *inspirational boost** and *inspire courage* (factored into these stats), *protection from evil* (CL3, factored into these stats)

Abilities Str 34, Dex 15, Con 28, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 11

SQ Uncanny Dodge, Fast Movement

Feats Power Attack, Reckless Rage*

Skills Climb+18, Jump +22, Knowledge (the planes) +6, Listen +6, Spot +6

Possessions: combat gear plus +1 *falchion*, javelins

Reckless Rage (Ex) When not raging, the hired muscle statistics change as follows:

AC 28, touch 12, flat-footed 26

(+2 Dex, +2 deflection, +6 greater mage armor, +8 natural armor); uncanny dodge

hp 62

Fort +10, **Will** +3

Melee +1 falchion +18 (2d4+17/18-20) or +1 falchion +18 (2d4+17/18-20) and bite +12 (1d6+16)

Grp +14

Abilities Str 28, Con 22

Skills Jump +19

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER SIX: HALMADAR

HALMADAR THE CRUEL

CR 10

Male human Fighter 10

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common, Elven, Gnome, Oeridian

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15

(+3 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 104 (10 HD) **DR** 2/-

Immune mind-affecting effects

Fort +11, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares) in breastplate

Melee adamantite greatsword +15/+10 (2d6+6/19-20)

Ranged handaxe +16 (1d6+5/x3)

Ranged handaxe +12/+7 (1d6+5/x3) and light hammer +12 (1d4+3) plus a Rapid Shot attack at +14 to hit [either a handaxe (1d6+5/x3) or a light hammer (1d4+5)]. These numbers assume that Point Blank Shot is in effect, and does not incorporate range increments (10 feet for handaxes, 20 feet for light hammers)

Base Atk +10; **Grp** +14 (plus *freedom of movement*)

Atk Options Anvil of Thunder (Fort DC 19), triple weapon capsules*

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

Feats Anvil of Thunder*, Improved Sunder, Leadership, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Rapid Shot, Throw Anything*, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (handaxe), Weapon Focus (light hammer)

Skills Bluff +7, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +7 (+9 to act in PC), Gather Information +4, Knowledge (local: VTF) +8, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +8, Sense Motive +5

Possessions masterwork handaxes with triple weapon capsules* (12); masterwork light hammers (12), adamantite greatsword, adamantite breastplate, holy symbol of Vecna

Triple Weapon Capsules Each of Halmadar's handaxes have a triple weapon capsule containing quickflame (an extra 1d6 fire damage), quickfrost (an extra 1d6 cold damage) and wyvern poison (Fort DC 17, damage 2d6 Con/2d6 Con). Halmadar can activate a triple weapon capsule with a single swift action, but can only do this with one handaxe attack each round. Halmadar is not at risk of poisoning himself with these attacks.

Description *Halmadar looks as though he was a once-powerful man, but his muscles have withered away, his hair has fallen out, and his skin is stretched tight over his bones. Despite his appearance, he possesses prodigious strength and is festooned with weaponry.*

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER THREE: THE GRAND HALL

FILLISTER **CR 8**
 Male Varoot Bard 8
 NE Medium outsider (extraplanar)
Init +6; **Senses** Darkvision 60', Listen +7, Spot +2
Languages Common, Abyssal, Drow, Giant, Gnome, Flan,

AC 25, touch 15, flat-footed 20
 (+6 greater mage armor, +5 dex, +3 natural, +1 mithral buckler)
hp 74 (8 HD)
Resist Cold 5, Electricity 5, Fire 5
Fort +9, **Ref** +13, **Will** +10

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee dagger +8 (1d4+3/19-20)
Ranged dagger +8 (1d4+3/19-20)
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +6
Combat Gear rapier, feathers, small tarts, *bracers of arcane freedom**
Bard Spells Known (CL 8th; +6 melee touch, +11 ranged touch):
 3rd (3/day) — *glibness* (DC 19), *haste*, *puppeteer** (DC 23)
 2nd (5/day) — *glitterdust* (DC 20), *invisibility*, *suggestion* (DC 22), *wave of grief** (DC 22)
 1st (5/day)—*charm person*, *insidious rhythm** (DC 21), *inspirational boost**, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 21)
 0 (3/day)—*daze* (DC 18), *detect magic*, *know direction*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*
Pre-cast Spells: *glibness* (CL 8, factored into these stats), *bear's endurance* (CL3, factored into these stats), *cat's grace* (CL3, factored into these stats), *greater mage armor** (CL 5, factored into these stats) *inspirational boost** and *inspire courage* (factored into these stats), *invisibility purge* (from scroll - CL 9 - 45 feet) *stalwart pact** (CL 16, activates at 29 hp)

Abilities Str 11, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 26
SQ Immunity to Gaze attacks, vulnerability to sonic, reflective spell resistance 20 (any spell targeted on you reflects back to the caster affecting the caster)
Feats Spell Focus (Enchantment), Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment), Captivating Melody*, Melodic Casting*
Skills Bluff +19 (currently +49), Diplomacy +10, Disguise +29, Gather Information +19, Intimidate +10, Listen +7, Perform (Stringed Instruments) +19, Spellcraft +8, Tumble +14, Use Magic Device +19
Possessions: *cloak of charisma* +4, *vest of resistance* +2, mithral buckler

 * see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

THE HIRED MUSCLE CR 5

Male Khaasta Barbarian 2
 CE Medium Monstrous Humanoid
Init +2; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6
Languages Common, Draconic

AC 24, touch 8, flat-footed 24
 (+2 Dex, +2 Deflection, +8 Natural Armor, +6 *greater mage armor**, -4 Reckless Rage)
hp 77(5 HD)
Fort +13, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee +1 falchion +17 (2d4+22/18-20)* or +1 falchion +17 (2d4+22/18-20) and bite +9 (1d6+15)*
 * includes -4 for striking for non-lethal damage.
Ranged javelin (1d6+15)
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +17
Atk Options Power attack, Reckless Rage
Combat Gear, *cloak of predatory vigor**, *devastation gauntlets**, *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of barkskin* +2, *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of haste*.
Pre-cast Spells: *barkskin* (CL3, factored into these stats), *bull's strength* (CL3, factored into these stats) *bear's endurance* (CL3, factored into these stats), *greater mage armor** (CL 5, factored into these stats), *inspirational boost** and *inspire courage* (factored into these stats), *protection from evil* (CL3, factored into these stats)

Abilities Str 34, Dex 15, Con 28, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 11
SQ Uncanny Dodge, Fast Movement
Feats Power Attack, Reckless Rage*
Skills Climb+18, Jump +22, Knowledge (the planes) +6, Listen +6, Spot +6
Possessions: combat gear plus +1 *falchion*, javelins

Reckless Rage (Ex) When not raging, the hired muscle statistics change as follows:
AC 28, touch 12, flat-footed 26
 (+2 Dex, +2 deflection, +6 greater mage armor, +8 natural armor); uncanny dodge
hp 62
Fort +10, **Will** +3
Melee +1 falchion +18 (2d4+17/18-20) or +1 falchion +18 (2d4+17/18-20) and bite +12 (1d6+16)
Grp +14
Abilities Str 28, Con 22
Skills Jump +19

 * see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER SIX: HALMADAR

HALMADAR THE CRUEL **CR 12**
 Male human Fighter 12
 NE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +3; **Senses** Listen +0, Spot +0
Languages Common, Elven, Gnome, Oeridian

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15
 (+3 Dex, +5 armor)
hp 136 (12 HD) **DR** 2/-

Immune mind-affecting effects

Fort +13, Ref +7, Will +4

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares) in breastplate

Melee adamantine greatsword +18/+13/+8 (2d6+7/19-20)

Ranged handaxe +20 (1d6+6/x3)

Ranged hammer +16/+11/+6 (1d6+6/x3) and light hammer +16/+11 (1d4+3) plus a Rapid Shot attack at +18 to hit [either a handaxe (1d6+6/x3) or a light hammer (1d4+6)]. These numbers assume that Point Blank Shot is in effect, and does not incorporate range increments (10 feet for handaxes, 20 feet for light hammers)

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +17 (plus *freedom of movement*)

Atk Options Anvil of Thunder (Fort DC 21), triple weapon capsules*

Abilities Str 20, Dex 17, Con 20, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 14

Feats Anvil of Thunder*, Brutal Throw*, Improved Sunder, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Leadership, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Rapid Shot, Throw Anything*, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (handaxe), Weapon Focus (light hammer)

Skills Bluff +8, Diplomacy +14, Disguise +8 (+10 to act in PC), Gather Information +4, Knowledge (local: VTF) +9, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +9, Sense Motive +7

Possessions masterwork handaxes with triple weapon capsules* (12); masterwork light hammers (12), adamantine greatsword, adamantine breastplate, holy symbol of Vecna

Triple Weapon Capsules Each of Halmadar's handaxes have a triple weapon capsule containing quickflame (an extra 1d6 fire damage), quickfrost (an extra 1d6 cold damage) and wyvern poison (Fort DC 17, damage 2d6 Con/2d6 Con). Halmadar can activate a triple weapon capsule with a single swift action, but can only do this with one handaxe attack each round. Halmadar is not at risk of poisoning himself with these attacks.

Description *Halmadar looks as though he was a once-powerful man, but his muscles have withered away, his hair has fallen out, and his skin is stretched tight over his bones. Despite his appearance, he possesses prodigious strength and is festooned with weaponry.*

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER THREE: THE GRAND HALL

FILLISTER

CR 12

Male Varoot Bard 10/Sublime Chord 2

NE Medium outsider (extraplanar)

Init +6; **Senses** Darkvision 60', Listen +15, Spot +2

Languages Common, Abyssal, Drow, Giant, Gnome, Flan

AC 38, touch 25, flat-footed 33

(+6 greater mage armor, +5 dex, +3 natural, +10 deflection, +4 Mithril Buckler)

hp 110 (12 HD)

Resist Cold 5, Electricity 5, Fire 5

Fort +12, **Ref** +16, **Will** +16

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee dagger +11 (1d4+3/19-20)

Ranged dagger +16 (1d4+3/19-20)

Base Atk +8; **Grp** +8

Combat Gear rapier, feathers, small tarts, *bracers of arcane freedom**

Sublime Chord Spells Known (CL 12th; +6 melee touch, +11 ranged touch):

5th (4/day) — *feeble mind* (DC 27), *song of discord* (DC 27)

4th (4/day) — *dominate person* (DC 26) *freedom of movement*, *greater harmonize**, *modify memory**

Bard Spells Known (CL 10th; +6 melee touch, +11 ranged touch):

4th (2/day) — *modify memory**, *sirine's grace**

3rd (4/day) — *glibness*, *haste*, *puppeteer** (DC 25)

2nd (6/day) — *glitterdust* (DC 22), *invisibility*, *suggestion* (DC 24), *wave of grief** (DC 24)

1st (6/day)—*improvisation**, *insidious rhythm** (DC 21), *inspirational boost**, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 23)

0 (3/day)—*daze* (DC 20), *detect magic*, *know direction*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Pre-cast Spells: *glibness* (CL 10, factored into these stats), *bear's endurance* (CL3, factored into these stats), *cat's grace* (CL3, factored into these stats), *freedom of movement* (CL 12), *greater harmonize** (CL 12), *greater mage armor** (CL 5, factored into these stats) *improvisation** (CL10) (*inspirational boost** and *inspire courage* (factored into these stats), *invisibility purge* (from scroll - CL 9 – 45 feet) *sirine's grace** (CL 10, factored into these stats) *stalwart pact** (CL 16, activates at 43 hp)

Abilities Str 11, Dex 20, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 30

SQ Immunity to Gaze attacks, vulnerability to sonic, reflective spell resistance 23 (any spell targeted on you reflects back to the caster affecting the caster)

Feats Spell Focus (Enchantment), Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment), Captivating Melody*, Melodic Casting*, Spell Penetration

Skills Bluff +14 (currently +44), Diplomacy +10, Disguise +26, Gather Information +18, Intimidate

+10, Listen +15, Knowledge (Arcana) +14, Perform (Stringed Instruments) +25, Spellcraft +16, Tumble +6, Use Magic Device +19

Possessions: *cloak of charisma* +6, *vest of resistance* +4, +3 *mithral buckler*

Song of Arcane Power (Su): A sublime chord of 2nd level or higher with 12 or more ranks in a Perform skill learns how to use her bardic music to assist her spellcasting. As a move action, she can prepare to cast a spell by giving voice to the song of power. The next spell she casts gains a bonus to its caster level based on the result of the sublime chord's Perform check:

Perform Check Result	Caster Level Increase
9 or lower	+0
10 to 19	+1
20 to 29	+2
30 or higher	+4

The spell to be enhanced by the song of arcane power must be cast by the end of the sublime chord's next turn, or else the song fades with no effect (other than consuming a bardic music use).

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

THE HIRED MUSCLE

CR 8

Male Khaasta Barbarian 2 Fighter 2 Exotic Weapon Master 1

CE Medium Monstrous Humanoid

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6

Languages Common, Draconic

AC 23, touch 8, flat-footed 23

(+2 Dex, +8 Natural Armor, +6 greater mage armor, -4 Reckless Rage)

hp 122(8 HD)

Fort +18, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +1 *bastard sword* +20/+15 (1d10+30/19-20)* or +1 *bastard sword* +20/+15 (1d10+30/19-20)* and bite +9 (1d6+15)*

* Includes 3 point power attack and -4 for striking for non-lethal damage

Ranged javelin (1d6+15)

Base Atk +10; **Grp** +22

Atk Options Power attack, Reckless Rage, Combat Expertise

Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of barkskin* +2, *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of haste*, *cloak of predatory vigor**, *devastation gauntlets**

Pre-cast Spells: *barkskin* (CL3, factored into these stats), *bull's strength* (CL3, factored into these stats) *bear's endurance* (CL3, factored into these stats), *greater mage armor** (CL 5, factored into these stats) *inspirational boost** and *inspire courage* (factored into these stats), *protection from evil* (CL 3, factored into these stats)

Abilities Str 34, Dex 16, Con 28, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 11

SQ Uncanny Dodge, Fast Movement, Uncanny Blow
Feats Power Attack, Reckless Rage*, Exotic weapon proficiency (bastard sword), Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Combat Expertise

Skills Climb+18, Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Jump +26, Knowledge (the planes) +8, Listen +6, Spot +6

Possessions: combat gear plus +1 *bastard sword*, javelins

Reckless Rage (Ex) When not raging, the hired muscle statistics change as follows:

AC 27, touch 15, flat-footed 27

(+2 Dex, +2 Deflection +6 greater mage armor, +8 natural armor); uncanny dodge

hp 98

Fort +15, **Will** +3

Melee +1 bastard sword +17/+12 (1d10+32/19-20)* or +1 bastard sword +17/+12 (1d10+32/19-20)* and bite +9 (1d6+15)*

* Includes 5 point power attack

Grp +17

Abilities Str 28, Con 22

Skills Jump +23

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER SIX: HALMADAR

HALMADAR THE CRUEL

CR 14

Male human Fighter 14

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common, Elven, Gnome, Oeridian

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15

(+3 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 186 (14 HD) **DR** 2/-

Immune mind-affecting effects

Fort +16, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares) in breastplate

Melee adamantine greatsword +21/+16/+11 (2d6+9/19-20)

Ranged mwk handaxe +23 (1d6+7/x3)

Ranged mwk handaxe +19/+14/+9 (1d6+7/x3) and light hammer +19/+14 (1d4+4) plus a Rapid Shot attack at +21 to hit [either a handaxe (1d6+7/x3) or a light hammer (1d4+7)]. These numbers assume that Point Blank Shot is in effect, and does not incorporate range increments (20 feet for handaxes, 40 feet for light hammers)

Base Atk +14; **Grp** +20 (plus *freedom of movement*)

Atk Options Anvil of Thunder (Fort DC 23), triple weapon capsules*

Abilities Str 22, Dex 17, Con 24, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 14

Feats Anvil of Thunder*, Brutal Throw*, Far Shot, Improved Sunder, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Leadership, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Rapid Shot, Throw Anything*, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (handaxe), Weapon Focus (light hammer)

Skills Bluff +9, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +9 (+11 to act in PC), Gather Information +4, Knowledge

(local: VTF) +10, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +10, Sense Motive +8

Possessions masterwork handaxes with triple weapon capsules* (15); masterwork light hammers (15), adamantine greatsword, adamantine breastplate, holy symbol of Vecna

Triple Weapon Capsules Each of Halmadar's handaxes have a triple weapon capsule containing quickflame (an extra 1d6 fire damage), quickfrost (an extra 1d6 cold damage) and wyvern poison (Fort DC 17, damage 2d6 Con/2d6 Con). Halmadar can activate a triple weapon capsule with a single swift action, but can only do this with one handaxe attack each round. Halmadar is not at risk of poisoning himself with these attacks.

Description *Halmadar looks as though he was a once-powerful man, but his muscles have withered away, his hair has fallen out, and his skin is stretched tight over his bones. Despite his appearance, he possesses prodigious strength and is festooned with weaponry.*

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER THREE: THE GRAND HALL

FILLISTER

CR 14

Male Varoot Bard 10/Sublime Chord 2/Fatespinner 2
NE Medium outsider (extraplanar)

Init +6; **Senses** Darkvision 60', lowlight vision 60'
Listen +15, Spot +2

Languages Common, Abyssal, Drow, Giant, Gnome, Flan

AC 46, touch 33, flat-footed 40

(+6 greater mage armor, +6 dex, +3 natural, +13 deflection, +4 Mithril Buckler, +4 insight bonus)

hp 144 (12 HD)

Resist Cold 15, Electricity 5, Fire 5

DR: 5/cold iron

Fort +12, **Ref** +17, **Will** +20

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee dagger +12 (1d4+3/19-20)

Ranged dagger +17 (1d4+3/19-20)

Base Atk +9; **Gp** +9

Combat Gear rapier, feathers, small tarts, *bracers of arcane freedom**

Sublime Chord Spells Known (CL 14th; +6 melee touch, +11 ranged touch):

6th (4/day) — *nixie's grace**, *snowsong** (DC 29)

5th (6/day) — *cone of cold* (DC 26) *feeble mind* (DC 28), *song of discord** (DC 28)

4th (6/day) — *dominate person* (DC 27) *freedom of movement*, *greater harmonize**, *modify memory**

Bard Spells Known (CL 10th; +6 melee touch, +11 ranged touch):

4th (3/day) — *modify memory**, *sirine's grace**

3rd (5/day) — *glibness*, *haste*, *puppeteer** (DC 26)

2nd (6/day) — *glitterdust* (DC 23), *invisibility*, *suggestion* (DC 25), *wave of grief** (DC 25)

1st (7/day)—*improvisation**, *insidious rhythm** (DC 24), *inspirational boost**, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 24)

0 (3/day)—*daze* (DC 23), *detect magic*, *know direction*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Pre-cast Spells: *glibness* (CL 10, factored into these stats), *bear's endurance* (CL3, factored into these stats), *cat's grace* (CL3, factored into these stats), *freedom of movement* (CL 12), *greater harmonize* (CL 12), *greater mage armor** (CL 5, factored into these stats) *improvisation** (CL10) (*inspirational boost* and *inspire courage* (factored into these stats), *invisibility purge* (from scroll - CL 9 – 45 feet) *nixie's grace** (CL 14, factored into these stats), *sirine's grace** (CL 10, factored into these stats) *stalwart pact** (CL 16, activates at 43 hp), *snow song**, (CL 14, factored into these stats),

Abilities Str 11, Dex 22, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 36

SQ Immunity to Gaze attacks, vulnerability to sonic, reflective spell resistance 26 (any spell targeted on

you reflects back to the caster affecting the caster), fickle finger of fate, spin fate

Feats Spell Focus (Enchantment), Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment), Captivating Melody*, Melodic Casting*, Spell Penetration

Skills Bluff +17 (currently +47), Diplomacy +13, Disguise +29, Gather Information +21, Intimidate +13, Listen +15, Knowledge (Arcana) +14, Perform (Stringed Instruments) +38, Spellcraft +16, Tumble +6, Use Magic Device +22

Possessions: *cloak of charisma* +6, *vest of resistance* +4, +3 *mithral buckler*

Song of Arcane Power (Su): A sublime chord of 2nd level or higher with 12 or more ranks in a Perform skill learns how to use her bardic music to assist her spellcasting. As a move action, she can prepare to cast a spell by giving voice to the song of power. The next spell she casts gains a bonus to its caster level based on the result of the sublime chord's Perform check:

Perform Check Result	Caster Level Increase
9 or lower	+0
10 to 19	+1
20 to 29	+2
30 or higher	+4

The spell to be enhanced by the song of arcane power must be cast by the end of the sublime chord's next turn, or else the song fades with no effect (other than consuming a bardic music use).

Spin Fate (Ex): A mage of many fates understands that "chance" is not as random as many believe it to be, and he can adjust the probability of certain events by applying a force that fatespinners refer to as "spin." Each day, a fatespinner can use a number of points of spin equal to his fatespinner class level. As a free action, a fatespinner can use stored spin to boost the save DC of a spell he casts, adding some or all his spin to the DC, on a point-for-point basis. For instance, a 5th-level wizard/3rd-level fatespinner casting fireball could choose to boost the DC of the spell by 1, 2, or 3 points. Once he uses up his spin for the day, his ability to tinker with probability in this fashion is also exhausted for the day. A fatespinner's spin is replenished whenever the PC successfully regains his spells for the day (whether through rest, preparation, or prayer).

Fickle Finger of Fate (Ex): On reaching 2nd level, a fatespinner gains the ability to affect the luck of others. Once per day as an immediate action (see page 86), he can force any other creature—friend or enemy—to reroll a roll that it has just made. A fatespinner must have line of sight to the creature to be affected. That creature must abide by the result of the reroll, whether it's higher or lower than the original roll.

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

THE HIRED MUSCLE**CR 10**

Male Khaasta Barbarian 2 /Fighter 4 /Exotic Weapon Master 1

CE Medium Monstrous Humanoid

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6**Languages** Common, Draconic**AC** 23, touch 8, flat-footed 23(+2 Dex, +8 Natural Armor, +6 *greater mage armor**, -4 Reckless Rage)**hp** 152(10 HD)**Fort** +19, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** +1 *bastard sword* +22/+17 (1d10+30/19-20)* or +1 *bastard sword* +22/+17 (1d10+30/19-20)* and bite +11 (1d6+15)*

* Includes 3 point power attack and -4 for striking for non-lethal

Ranged javelin +9 (1d6+15)**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +20**Atk Options** Power attack, Reckless Rage, Combat Expertise, Karmic Strike**Combat Gear** *cloak of predatory vigor**, *devastation gauntlets**, *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of barkskin* +2, *potion of bull's strength*, and *potion of haste***Pre-cast Spells:** *barkskin* (CL3, factored into these stats), *bull's strength* (CL3, factored into these stats), *bear's endurance* (CL3, factored into these stats), *greater mage armor* (CL 5, factored into these stats) *inspirational boost** and *inspire courage* (factored into these stats), *protection from evil* (CL 3, factored into these stats)**Abilities** Str 34, Dex 16, Con 28, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 11**SQ** Uncanny Dodge, Fast Movement, Uncanny Blow**Feats** Power Attack, Reckless Rage*, Exotic weapon proficiency (bastard sword), Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Combat Reflexes**Skills** Climb+20, Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Intimidate +13, Jump +29, Knowledge (the planes) +8, Listen +6, Spot +6**Possessions:** combat gear plus +1 *bastard sword*, javelins**Reckless Rage (Ex)** When not raging, the hired muscle statistics change as follows:**AC** 27, touch 15, flat-footed 27(+2 Dex, +2 Deflection +6 *greater mage armor*, +8 natural armor); uncanny dodge**hp** 122**Fort** +16, **Will** +4**Melee** +1 *bastard sword* +17/+12 (1d10+36/19-20)* or +1 *bastard sword* +17/+12 (1d10+36/19-20)* and bite +10 (1d6+23)*

* Includes 7 point power attack

Grp +19**Abilities** Str 28, Con 22**Skills** Jump +26

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER SIX: HALMADAR**HALMADAR THE CRUEL****CR 16**

Male human Fighter 16

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +0, Spot +0**Languages** Common, Elven, Gnome, Oeridian**AC** 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15

(+3 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 244 (16 HD) **DR** 2/-**Immune** mind-affecting effects**Fort** +19, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5**Speed** 20 ft. (4 squares) in breastplate**Melee** adamantite greatsword +24/+19/+14/+9 (2d6+10/19-20)**Ranged*** mwk handaxe +18 (1d6+16/19-20/x3)**Ranged*** mwk handaxe +14/+9/+4/-1 (1d6+16/19-20/x3) and light hammer +14/+9 (1d4+12) plus a Rapid Shot attack at +16 to hit [either a handaxe (1d6+16/19-20/x3) or a light hammer (1d4+16)]. These numbers assume that Point Blank Shot is in effect, and does not incorporate range increments (20 feet for handaxes, 40 feet for light hammers)

* Includes 8-point Power Throw

Base Atk +16; **Grp** +23 (plus *freedom of movement*)**Atk Options** Anvil of Thunder (Fort DC 25), triple weapon capsules***Abilities** Str 24, Dex 17, Con 28, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 14**Feats** Anvil of Thunder*, Brutal Throw*, Far Shot, Improved Critical (handaxe), Improved Sunder, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Leadership, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Power Throw*, Quick Draw, Rapid Shot, Throw Anything*, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (handaxe), Weapon Focus (light hammer)**Skills** Bluff +10, Diplomacy +16, Disguise +10 (+12 to act in PC), Gather Information +4, Knowledge (local: VTF) +11, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +11, Sense Motive +9**Possessions** masterwork handaxes with triple weapon capsules* (15); masterwork light hammers (15), adamantite greatsword, adamantite breastplate, holy symbol of Vecna**Triple Weapon Capsules** Each of Halmadar's handaxes have a triple weapon capsule containing quickflame (an extra 1d6 fire damage), colossal monstrous centipede poison (Fort DC 23, damage 2d6 Dex/2d6 Dex), and wyvern poison (Fort DC 17, damage 2d6 Con/2d6 Con). Halmadar can activate a triple weapon capsule with a single swift action, but can only do this with one handaxe attack each round. Halmadar is not at risk of poisoning himself with these attacks.**Description** *Halmadar looks as though he was a once-powerful man, but his muscles have withered away, his hair has fallen out, and his skin is stretched tight over his bones. Despite his appearance, he possesses prodigious strength and is festooned with weaponry.*

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER THREE: THE GRAND HALL

FILLISTER

CR 16

Male Varoot Bard 10/Sublime Chord 2/Fatespinner 4
NE Medium outsider (extraplanar)

Init +8; **Senses** Darkvision 60', lowlight vision 60'
Listen +19, Spot +6

Languages Common, Abyssal, Drow, Giant, Gnome, Flan

AC 48, touch 35, flat-footed 42

(+6 *greater mage armor**, +6 dex, +3 natural, +15 deflection, +4 Mithril Buckler, +4 insight bonus)

hp 160 (+14 temporary) (16 HD)

Resist Cold 15, Electricity 5, Fire 5

DR: 5/cold iron

Fort +17, **Ref** +22, **Will** +25

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee dagger +15/+10 (1d4+4/19-20)

Ranged dagger +19 (1d4+4/19-20)

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +9

Combat Gear rapier, feathers, small tarts, *bracers of arcane freedom**, *belt of battle**

Sublime Chord Spells Known (CL 16th; +6 melee touch, +11 ranged touch):

7th (4/day) — *limited wish*, *solipsism** (DC 36)

6th (4/day) — *hero's feast*, *nixie's grace**, *snowsong** (DC 35)

5th (6/day) — *cone of cold* (DC30), *feeble mind* (DC 34), *heroism*, *greater*, *song of discord* (DC 34)

4th (6/day) — *dominate person* (DC 33) *freedom of movement*, *greater harmonize**, *modify memory**

Bard Spells Known (CL 10th; +6 melee touch, +11 ranged touch):

4th (3/day) — *modify memory**, *sirine's grace**

3rd (5/day) — *glibness*, *haste*, *puppeteer** (DC 32)

2nd (6/day) — *glitterdust* (DC 27), *invisibility*, *suggestion* (DC 31), *wave of grief** (DC 31)

1st (7/day)—*improvisation**, *insidious rhythm** (DC 30), *inspirational boost**, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 30)

0 (3/day)—*daze* (DC 29), *detect magic*, *know direction*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Pre-cast Spells: *glibness* (CL 10, factored into these stats), *bear's endurance* (CL3, factored into these stats), *cat's grace* (CL3, factored into these stats), *freedom of movement* (CL 16), *greater harmonize* (CL 16), *greater mage armor** (CL 5, factored into these stats) *improvisation** (CL10) (*inspirational boost** and *inspire courage* (factored into these stats), *invisibility purge* (from scroll - CL 9 – 45 feet) *nixie's grace** (CL 16, factored into these stats), *limited wish: righteous aura* (CL 20, factored into these stats) *sirine's grace** (CL 10, factored into these stats) *stalwart pact** (CL 16, activates at 80 hp), *snow song**, (CL 16, factored into these stats),

Abilities Str 12, Dex 22, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 40 (15 +6 from race, +3 from stat increases, +8 enhance from *nixie's grace*, +4 moral from *snowsong*, +4 sacred from *righteous aura**)

SQ Immunity to Gaze attacks, vulnerability to sonic, reflective spell resistance 28 (any spell targeted on you reflects back to the caster affecting the caster), fickle finger of fate, spin fate

Feats Spell Focus (Enchantment), Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment), Captivating Melody*, Melodic Casting*, Spell Penetration, Chain Spell*

Skills Bluff +23 (currently +53), Diplomacy +20, Disguise +35, Gather Information +27, Intimidate +20, Listen +19, Knowledge (Arcana) +20, Perform (Stringed Instruments) +46, Spellcraft +20, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +30

Possessions: *cloak of charisma* +6, *vest of resistance* +4, *veil of allure**, +3 *mithral buckler*

Song of Arcane Power (Su): A sublime chord of 2nd level or higher with 12 or more ranks in a Perform skill learns how to use her bardic music to assist her spellcasting. As a move action, she can prepare to cast a spell by giving voice to the song of power. The next spell she casts gains a bonus to its caster level based on the result of the sublime chord's Perform check:

Perform Check Result	Caster Level Increase
9 or lower	+0
10 to 19	+1
20 to 29	+2
30 or higher	+4

The spell to be enhanced by the song of arcane power must be cast by the end of the sublime chord's next turn, or else the song fades with no effect (other than consuming a bardic music use).

Spin Fate (Ex): A mage of many fates understands that "chance" is not as random as many believe it to be, and he can adjust the probability of certain events by applying a force that fatespinners refer to as "spin." Each day, a fatespinner can use a number of points of spin equal to his fatespinner class level. As a free action, a fatespinner can use stored spin to boost the save DC of a spell he casts, adding some or all his spin to the DC, on a point-for-point basis. For instance, a 5th-level wizard/3rd-level fatespinner casting fireball could choose to boost the DC of the spell by 1, 2, or 3 points. Once he uses up his spin for the day, his ability to tinker with probability in this fashion is also exhausted for the day. A fatespinner's spin is replenished whenever the PC successfully regains his spells for the day (whether through rest, preparation, or prayer).

Fickle Finger of Fate (Ex): On reaching 2nd level, a fatespinner gains the ability to affect the luck of others. Once per day as an immediate action (see page 86), he can force any other creature—friend or enemy—to reroll a roll that it has just made. A fatespinner must have line of sight to the creature

to be affected. That creature must abide by the result of the reroll, whether it's higher or lower than the original roll.

Spin Destiny (Ex): Beginning at 3rd level, a fatespinner more clearly comprehends the matrix of reality and can use accumulated spin to adjust other random events. The method is identical to increasing a spell's save DC, but the fatespinner can now add spin to any skill check, attack roll, or saving throw that he attempts on a point-for-point basis. However, the spin utilized comes from the same limited reservoir of karma storage that allows him to adjust the DC of his spells. He must apply the bonus before making the roll.

Resist Fate (Ex): A fatespinner of 4th level and above embraces his extraordinary good luck. Once per day, he can reroll one roll that he has just made. He must abide by the result of the reroll, even if it's worse than the original roll.

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

THE HIRED MUSCLE **CR 12**
Male Khaasta Barbarian 2 /Fighter 6 /Exotic Weapon Master 1

CE Medium Monstrous Humanoid

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6

Languages Common, Draconic

AC 31, touch 8, flat-footed 27

(+5 Dex, +8 Natural Armor, +6 *greater mage armor**, +2 deflection, -4 Reckless Rage +4 insight bonus from snowsong)

hp 182(12 HD)

Fort +23, **Ref** +13, **Will** +10

Speed 40 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +1 *bastard sword* +20/+15/+10 (1d10+38/19-20)* or +1 *bastard sword* +20/+15 (1d10+38/19-20)* and bite +13 (1d6+24)*

* Includes 5 point power attack and -4 for striking for non-lethal damage

Ranged javelin +20 1d6+15)

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +24

Atk Options Power attack, Reckless Rage, Combat Expertise, Karmic Strike

Combat Gear *cloak of predatory vigor**, *devastation gauntlets**, *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of barkskin* +2, *potion of bull's strength*, and *potion of haste*.

Pre-cast Spells: *barkskin* (CL3, factored into these stats), *bull's strength* (CL3, factored into these stats), *bear's endurance* (CL3, factored into these stats), *greater mage armor** (CL 5, factored into these stats) *inspirational boost** and *inspire courage* (factored into these stats), *protection from evil* (CL 3, factored into these stats)

Abilities Str 34, Dex 16, Con 28, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12

SQ Uncanny Dodge, Fast Movement, Uncanny Blow

Feats Power Attack, Reckless Rage*, Exotic weapon proficiency (*bastard sword*), Weapon Focus (*bastard sword*), Combat Reflexes

Skills Climb+20, Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Intimidate +13, Jump +29, Knowledge (the planes) +8, Listen +6, Spot +6, swim +20

Possessions: combat gear plus +1 *bastard sword*, javelins

Reckless Rage (Ex) When not raging, the hired muscle statistics change as follows:

AC 35, touch 19, flat-footed 35

(+5 Dex, +2 Deflection +6 *greater mage armor*, +8 natural armor, +4 insight bonus); uncanny dodge

hp 146

Fort +20, **Will** +8

Melee +1 *bastard sword* +17/+12 (1d10+40/19-20)* or +1 *bastard sword* +17/+12 (1d10+40/19-20)* and bite +10 (1d6+25)*

* Includes 9 point power attack

Grp +21

Abilities Str 28, Con 22

Skills Jump +26

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER SIX: HALMADAR

HALMADAR THE CRUEL

CR 18

Male human Fighter 18

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common, Elven, Gnome, Oeridian

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15

(+3 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 289 (18 HD) **DR** 2/-

Immune mind-affecting effects

Fort +22, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares) in breastplate

Melee adamantite greatsword +27/+22/+17/+12 (2d6+12/19-20)

Ranged* mwk handaxe +21 (1d6+17/19-20/x3)

Ranged* mwk handaxe +17/+12/+7/+2 (1d6+17/19-20/x3) and light hammer +17/+12/+7 (1d4+13) plus a Rapid Shot attack at +19 to hit [either a handaxe (1d6+17/19-20/x3) or a light hammer (1d4+17)]. These numbers assume that Point Blank Shot is in effect, and does not incorporate range increments (20 feet for handaxes, 40 feet for light hammers)

* Includes 8-point Power Throw

Base Atk +18; **Grp** +26 (plus *freedom of movement*)

Atk Options Anvil of Thunder (Fort DC 27), triple weapon capsules*

Abilities Str 26, Dex 19, Con 32, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 14

Feats Anvil of Thunder*, Blind-Fight, Brutal Throw*, Far Shot, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Critical (handaxe), Improved Sunder, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Leadership, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Power Throw*, Quick Draw, Rapid Shot, Throw Anything*, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (handaxe), Weapon Focus (light hammer)

Skills Bluff +11, Diplomacy +17, Disguise +11 (+13 to act in PC), Gather Information +4, Knowledge

(local: VTF) +12, Knowledge (nobility and royalty)
+12, Sense Motive +10

Possessions masterwork handaxes with triple weapon capsules* (20); masterwork light hammers (20), adamantite greatsword, adamantite breastplate, holy symbol of Vecna

Triple Weapon Capsules Each of Halmadar's handaxes have a triple weapon capsule containing quickflame (an extra 1d6 fire damage), colossal monstrous centipede poison (Fort DC 23, damage 2d6 Dex/2d6 Dex), and gargantuan monstrous scorpion poison (Fort DC 23, damage 1d8 Con/1d8 Con). Halmadar can activate a triple weapon capsule with a single swift action, but can only do this with one handaxe attack each round. Halmadar is not at risk of poisoning himself with these attacks.

Description *Halmadar looks as though he was a once-powerful man, but his muscles have withered away, his hair has fallen out, and his skin is stretched tight over his bones. Despite his appearance, he possesses prodigious strength and is festooned with weaponry.*

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER THREE: THE GRAND HALL

FILLISTER

CR 18

Male Varoot Bard 10/Sublime Chord 4/Fatespinner 4
NE Medium outsider (extraplanar)**Init** +8; **Senses** Darkvision 60', lowlight vision 60'
Listen +19, Spot +6**Languages** Common, Abyssal, Drow, Giant, Gnome, Flan**AC** 48, touch 35, flat-footed 42(+6 *greater mage armor**, +6 dex, +3 natural, +15 deflection, +4 Mithril Buckler, +4 insight bonus)**hp** 180 (+16 temporary) (18 HD)**Resist** Cold 15, Electricity 5, Fire 5**DR:** 5/cold iron**Fort** +18, **Ref** +23, **Will** +26**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares)**Melee** dagger +16/+11/+6 (1d4+4/19-20)**Ranged** dagger +19 (1d4+4/19-20)**Base Atk** +9; **Gp** +9**Combat Gear** rapier, feathers, small tarts, bracers of arcane freedom*, belt of battle***Sublime Chord Spells Known** (CL 16th; +13 melee touch, +19 ranged touch):8th (4/day) — *moment of prescience**, *polar ray* (22d6)7th (5/day) — *limited wish*, *solipsism** (DC 36), *teleport*, *greater*6th (5/day) — *chain lightning* (DC 31), *hero's feast*, *nixie's grace**, *snowsong** (DC 35)5th (7/day) — *cone of cold* (DC30), *feeble mind* (DC 34), *heroism*, *greater*, *song of discord* (DC 34)4th (7/day) — *dominate person* (DC 32) *freedom of movement*, *greater harmonize**, *modify memory****Bard Spells Known** (CL 10th; +6 melee touch, +11 ranged touch):4th (3/day) — *modify memory**, *sirine's grace**3rd (5/day) — *glibness*, *haste*, *puppeteer** (DC 32)2nd (6/day) — *glitterdust* (DC 27), *invisibility*, *suggestion* (DC 31), *wave of grief** (DC 31)1st (7/day)—*improvisation**, *insidious rhythm** (DC 28), *inspirational boost**, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 30)0 (3/day)—*daze* (DC 29), *detect magic*, *know direction*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation***Pre-cast Spells:** *glibness* (CL 10, factored into these stats), *bear's endurance* (CL3, factored into these stats), *cat's grace* (CL3, factored into these stats), *freedom of movement* (CL 16), *greater harmonize* (CL 16), *greater mage armor** (CL 5, factored into these stats) *improvisation** (CL10) (*inspirational boost** and *inspire courage* (factored into these stats), *invisibility purge* (from scroll - CL 9 – 45 feet) *moment of prescience** (+22 bonus to one roll), *nixie's grace** (CL 16, factored into these stats), *limited wish: righteous aura* (CL 20, factored into these stats) *sirine's grace** (CL 10, factoredinto these stats) *stalwart pact** (CL 16, activates at 80 hp), *snow song*, (CL 16, factored into these stats),**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 22, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 40 (15 +6 from race, +3 from stat increases, +8 enhance from nixie's grace, +4 moral from snowsong, +4 sacred from righteous aura)**SQ** Immunity to Gaze attacks, vulnerability to sonic, reflective spell resistance 30 (any spell targeted on you reflects back to the caster affecting the caster), fickle finger of fate, spin fate**Feats** Spell Focus (Enchantment), Greater Spell Focus (Enchantment), Captivating Melody*, Melodic Casting*, Spell Penetration, Chain Spell*, Retributive spell* (heightened chain lightning DC 33)**Skills** Bluff +23 (currently +53), Diplomacy +20, Disguise +35, Gather Information +27, Intimidate +20, Listen +19, Knowledge (Arcana) +20, Perform (Stringed Instruments) +46, Spellcraft +20, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +30**Possessions:** *cloak of charisma* +6, *vest of resistance* +4, *veil of allure**, +3 *mithral buckler***Song of Arcane Power (Su):** A sublime chord of 2nd level or higher with 12 or more ranks in a Perform skill learns how to use her bardic music to assist her spellcasting. As a move action, she can prepare to cast a spell by giving voice to the song of power. The next spell she casts gains a bonus to its caster level based on the result of the sublime chord's Perform check:

Perform Check Result	Caster Level Increase
9 or lower	+0
10 to 19	+1
20 to 29	+2
30 or higher	+4

The spell to be enhanced by the song of arcane power must be cast by the end of the sublime chord's next turn, or else the song fades with no effect (other than consuming a bardic music use).

Spin Fate (Ex): A mage of many fates understands that "chance" is not as random as many believe it to be, and he can adjust the probability of certain events by applying a force that fatespinners refer to as "spin." Each day, a fatespinner can use a number of points of spin equal to his fatespinner class level. As a free action, a fatespinner can use stored spin to boost the save DC of a spell he casts, adding some or all his spin to the DC, on a point-for-point basis. For instance, a 5th-level wizard/3rd-level fatespinner casting fireball could choose to boost the DC of the spell by 1, 2, or 3 points. Once he uses up his spin for the day, his ability to tinker with probability in this fashion is also exhausted for the day. A fatespinner's spin is replenished whenever the PC successfully regains his spells for the day (whether through rest, preparation, or prayer).

Fickle Finger of Fate (Ex): On reaching 2nd level, a fatespinner gains the ability to affect the luck of others. Once per day as an immediate action (see page 86), he can force any other creature—friend or enemy—to reroll a roll that it has just made. A fatespinner must have line of sight to the creature to be affected. That creature must abide by the result of the reroll, whether it's higher or lower than the original roll.

Spin Destiny (Ex): Beginning at 3rd level, a fatespinner more clearly comprehends the matrix of reality and can use accumulated spin to adjust other random events. The method is identical to increasing a spell's save DC, but the fatespinner can now add spin to any skill check, attack roll, or saving throw that he attempts on a point-for-point basis. However, the spin utilized comes from the same limited reservoir of karma storage that allows him to adjust the DC of his spells. He must apply the bonus before making the roll.

Resist Fate (Ex): A fatespinner of 4th level and above embraces his extraordinary good luck. Once per day, he can reroll one roll that he has just made. He must abide by the result of the reroll, even if it's worse than the original roll.

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

THE HIRED MUSCLE

CR 14

Male Khaasta Barbarian 2 Fighter 8 Exotic Weapon Master 1

CE Medium Monstrous Humanoid

Init +7; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6

Languages Common, Draconic

AC 27, touch 8, flat-footed 27

(+5 Dex, +8 Natural Armor, +6 greater mage armor, -4 Reckless Rage)

hp 226 (14 HD)

Fort +25, **Ref** +13, **Will** +10

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +1 bastard sword +23/+18/+13 (1d10+42/19-20)* or +1 bastard sword +23/+18/+13 (1d10+42/19-20)* and bite +16 (1d6+27)*

* Includes 5 point power attack and -4 for striking for non-lethal damage

Ranged javelin +19 (1d6+13)

Base Atk +14; **Grp** +27

Atk Options Power Attack, Reckless Rage, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Karmic Strike

Combat Gear, *cloak of predatory vigor**, *devastation gauntlets**, *belt of battle**, *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of barkskin* +2, *potion of bull's strength*, and *potion of haste*.

Pre-cast Spells: *barkskin* (CL3, factored into these stats), *bull's strength* (CL3, factored into these stats), *bear's endurance* (CL3, factored into these stats), *greater mage armor** (CL 5, factored into these stats), *inspirational boost** and *inspire courage* (factored into these stats), *protection from evil* (CL 3, factored into these stats)

Abilities Str36, Dex 20, Con 30, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12

SQ Uncanny Dodge, Fast Movement, Uncanny Blow

Feats Power Attack, Reckless Rage*, Exotic weapon proficiency (bastard sword), Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Combat Reflexes, Weapon Specialization (bastard sword), Karmic Strike*

Skills Climb+21, Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Intimidate +14, Jump +30, Knowledge (the planes) +8, Listen +6, Spot +6, Swim +29

Possessions: combat gear plus +1 *bastard sword*, javelins

Reckless Rage (Ex) When not raging, the hired muscle statistics change as follows:

AC 31, touch 17, flat-footed 31

(+5 Dex, +2 Deflection +6 greater mage armor, +8 natural armor); uncanny dodge

hp 184

Fort +22, **Will** +8

Melee +1 bastard sword +20/+15/+10 (1d10+44/19-20)* or +1 bastard sword +20/+15/+10 (1d10+44/19-20)* and bite +10 (1d6+27)*

* Includes 9 point power attack

Grp +24

Abilities Str 30, Con 24

Skills Jump +27

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER SIX: HALMADAR

HALMADAR THE CRUEL

CR 20

Male human Fighter 20

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common, Elven, Gnome, Oeridian

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15

(+3 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 364 (20 HD) **DR** 2/-

Immune mind-affecting effects

Fort +24, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares) in breastplate

Melee adamantite greatsword +30/+25/+20/+15 (2d6+13/19-20)

Ranged* mwk handaxe +21 (1d6+26/x3)

Ranged* mwk handaxe +17/+12/+7/+2 (1d6+26/x3) and light hammer +15/+10/+5 (1d4+18) plus a Rapid Shot attack [either a handaxe at +19 (1d6+26/x3) or a light hammer at +17 (1d4+23)]. These numbers assume that Point Blank Shot is in effect, and does not incorporate range increments (40 feet for either type of weapon)

* Includes 13-point Power Throw

Base Atk +20; **Grp** +29 (plus *freedom of movement*)

Atk Options Anvil of Thunder (Fort DC 29), triple weapon capsules*

Abilities Str 28, Dex 19, Con 36, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 14

Feats Anvil of Thunder*, Blind-Fight, Brutal Throw*, Far Shot, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved

Sunder, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Leadership, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Power Throw*, Quick Draw, Ranged Weapon Mastery (handaxe)*, Rapid Shot, Throw Anything*, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (handaxe), Weapon Focus (light hammer), Weapon Specialization (handaxe)

Skills Bluff +12, Diplomacy +18, Disguise +12 (+14 to act in PC), Gather Information +4, Knowledge (local: VTF) +13, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +13, Sense Motive +11

Possessions masterwork handaxes with triple weapon capsules* (25); masterwork light hammers (25), adamantite greatsword, adamantite breastplate, holy symbol of Vecna

Triple Weapon Capsules Each of Halmadar's handaxes have a triple weapon capsule containing colossal monstrous centipede poison (Fort DC 23, damage 2d6 Dex/2d6 Dex), colossal monstrous scorpion poison (Fort DC 33, damage 1d10 Con/1d10 Con) and colossal monstrous spider poison (Fort DC 28, damage 2d8 Str/2d8 Str). Halmadar can activate a triple weapon capsule with a single swift action, but can only do this with one handaxe attack each round. Halmadar is not at risk of poisoning himself with these attacks.

Description *Halmadar looks as though he was a once-powerful man, but his muscles have withered away, his hair has fallen out, and his skin is stretched tight over his bones. Despite his appearance, he possesses prodigious strength and is festooned with weaponry.*

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

APPENDIX 2: NEW RULES ITEMS

MAGIC ITEMS

BELT OF BATTLE

Price (Item Level): 12,000 gp (13th)
Body Slot: Waist
Caster Level: 9th
Aura: Moderate; (DC 19) transmutation
Activation: — and swift (mental)
Weight: —

A belt of battle helps you avoid being caught off guard in combat and allows occasional bursts of extra activity. While worn, it grants you a +2 competence bonus on initiative checks. This is a continuous effect and requires no activation. In addition, a belt of battle has 3 charges, which are renewed each day at dawn. Each time you activate the belt, one of the black pearls set into its buckle turns white. The pearls return to normal when the ring's charges renew. Spending 1 or more charges grants you an extra action, which must be taken immediately (before you take any other action).

- 1 charge: 1 move action.
- 2 charges: 1 standard action.
- 3 charges: 1 full-round action.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *haste*.

Cost to Create: 6,000 gp, 480 XP, 12 days.

BRACERS OF ARCANE FREEDOM

Price (Item level): 2,300 gp (6th)
Body Slot: Arms
Caster Level: 7th
Aura: Moderate; (DC 18) abjuration
Activation: Swift (command)
Weight: 1/2 lb.

Bracers of arcane freedom allow you to cast arcane spells without the normal complex gestures required. When you activate these bracers, you omit the somatic component of the next arcane spell you cast before the end of your turn (as if applying the Still Spell feat to it, but without altering the spell's level or casting time). This effect functions two times per day.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *freedom of movement*.

Cost to Create: 1,150 gp, 92 XP, 3 days.

CLOAK OF PREDATORY VIGOR

Price (Item Level): 1,400 gp (5th)
Body Slot: Shoulders
Caster Level: 3rd
Aura: Faint; (DC 16) conjuration
Activation: Swift (mental)
Weight: 2 lb.

A cloak of predatory vigor helps you channel the power of your combat frenzy into rejuvenating energy. While in a rage or frenzy, you can activate this cloak to heal damage to yourself equal to your Hit Dice. This effect functions two times per day.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *cure moderate wounds*.

Cost to Create: 700 gp, 56 XP, 2 days.

DEVASTATION GAUNTLETS

Price (Item Level): 2,000 gp (6th)
Body Slot: Hands
Caster Level: 5th
Aura: Faint; (DC 17) transmutation
Activation: Swift (command)
Weight: —

Devastation gauntlets are prized by anyone who earns gold by fighting in melee, from raging barbarians to wily swashbucklers. These gauntlets have 3 charges, which are renewed each day at dawn. Spending 1 or more charges grants you a bonus to the damage dealt by a critical hit you make in melee. You activate the gauntlets after you have confirmed a critical hit, but before damage is rolled.

- 1 charge: +2d6 points of damage.
- 2 charges: +3d6 points of damage.
- 3 charges: +4d6 points of damage.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *keen edge*.

Cost to Create: 1,000 gp, 80 XP, 2 days.

VEIL OF ALLURE

Price (Item Level): 14,000 gp (14th)
Body Slot: Face
Caster Level: 5th
Aura: Faint; (DC 17) transmutation
Activation: —
Weight: —

A veil of allure increases the save DC of your enchantment spells or spell-like abilities, as well as the Charisma-based save DCs of your extraordinary or supernatural abilities, by 2.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *eagle's splendor*.

Cost to Create: 7,000 gp, 560 XP, 14 days.

NEW FEATS

ANVIL OF THUNDER [STYLE]

You have mastered the style of fighting with hammer and axe at the same time, and have learned to deal thunderous blows with this unique pairing of weapons.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (warhammer or light hammer), Weapon Focus (battleaxe, handaxe, or dwarven waraxe).

Benefit: If you hit the same creature with both your axe and your hammer in the same round, it must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10 + 1/2 your PC level + your Str modifier) or be dazed for 1 round.

Source: *Complete Warrior*

BRUTAL THROW

You have learned how to hurl weapons to deadly effect.

Benefit: You can add your Strength modifier (instead of your Dexterity modifier) to attack rolls with thrown weapons.

Normal: A PC attacking with a ranged weapon adds his Dexterity modifier to the attack roll.

Special: A fighter can choose Brutal Throw as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Source: *Complete Adventurer*

CAPTIVATING MELODY

Prerequisites: Bardic music, ability to cast arcane spells.

Benefit: As a swift action before casting a spell, you can attempt a Perform check (DC 15 + the level of the spell you intend to cast). If you succeed, you can sacrifice one of your daily uses of bardic music to increase the save DC of the next enchantment or illusion spell you cast in the same round by 2. If the Perform check fails, you still lose one daily use of bardic music but gain no benefit.

You can apply Captivating Melody only to spells cast by the same class that grants you your bardic music ability. For instance, if you are a multiclass bard/wizard, you can apply this feat to bard spells, but not to spells you cast as a wizard.

Source: *Complete Mage*

CHAIN SPELL [METAMAGIC]

You can cast spells that arc to other targets in addition to the primary target.

Prerequisite: Any metamagic feat.

Benefit: Any spell that specifies a single target and has a range greater than touch can be chained so as to affect that primary target normally, then arc to a number of secondary targets equal to your caster level (maximum 20). Each arc affects one secondary target chosen by you, all of which must be within 30 feet of the primary target, and none of which can be affected more than once. You can choose to affect fewer secondary targets than the maximum.

If the chained spell deals damage, the secondary targets each take half as much damage as the primary target (rounded down) and can attempt Reflex saving throws for half damage (whether the spell allows the original target a save or not). For spells that don't deal damage, the save DCs against arcing effects are reduced by 4. For example, if a 10th-level wizard normally casts *cause fear* at DC 14, a chained *cause fear* could target a goblin chieftain at DC 14 and up to ten of his nearby guards at DC 10. A chained spell uses up a spell slot three levels higher than the spell's actual level.

Source: *Complete Arcane*

KARMIC STRIKE [GENERAL]

You have learned to strike when your opponent is most vulnerable—the same instant your opponent strikes you.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, Combat Expertise, Dodge

Benefit: You can make an attack of opportunity against an opponent that hits you in melee. On your action, you choose to take a -4 penalty to your Armor Class in exchange for the ability to make an attack of opportunity against any creature that makes a successful melee attack or melee touch attack against you. The opponent that hits you must be in your threatened area, and this feat does not grant you more attacks of opportunity than you are normally allowed in a round. You specify on your turn that you are activating this feat, and the change to your Armor Class and your ability to make these special attacks of opportunity last until your next turn.

Source: *Complete Warrior*

MELODIC CASTING

Prerequisites: Perform 4 ranks, Spellcraft 4 ranks, bardic music class feature.

Benefit: Whenever a Concentration check would be required to cast a spell or use a spell-like ability (such as when you cast defensively or are distracted or injured while casting), you can make a Perform check instead. In addition, you can cast spells and activate magic items by command word or spell completion while using a bardic music ability. Bardic music abilities that require concentration still take a standard action to perform.

Normal: A bard can't cast spells or activate magic items by command word or spell completion while using bardic music.

Source: *Complete Mage*

POWER THROW

You have learned how to hurl weapons to deadly effect.

Prerequisite: Str 13, Brutal Throw, Power Attack.

Benefit: On your turn, before making any attack rolls, you can choose to subtract a number from all thrown weapon attack rolls and add the same number to all thrown weapon damage rolls. This number may not exceed your base attack bonus. The penalty on attack rolls and the bonus on damage rolls applies until your next turn.

Special: A fighter can choose Power Throw as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Source: *Complete Adventurer*

RANGED WEAPON MASTERY

You have mastered a wide range of weapons. Your training with one specific weapon now extends to other weapons of a similar sort.

Prerequisites: Proficiency with selected weapon, Weapon Focus with selected weapon, Weapon Specialization with selected weapon, base attack bonus +8.

Benefit: When you select this feat, choose bludgeoning, piercing or slashing. You must have Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialization with a ranged weapon that deals this type of damage. When using any ranged weapon that has the damage type you selected, you gain a +2 bonus on attacks and a +2 bonus on damage. In addition, you increase its range increment by 20 feet.

Special: You can select this feat more than once. Each time, you can select a new damage type. A fighter can choose Ranged Weapon Mastery as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Source: *Players Handbook II*

RECKLESS RAGE

You are considered extreme even among other barbaric warriors, and you enter a deeper state of rage than others.

Prerequisites: Con 13, rage ability.

Benefit: Whenever you activate your rage ability, you take an additional -2 penalty to your Armor Class, but you gain an additional +2 bonus to Strength and Constitution. These bonuses and penalties stack with the effects of rage, greater rage, and mighty rage.

Source: *Races of Stone*

RETRIBUTIVE SPELL [METAMAGIC]

Benefit: When you cast a spell modified by this metamagic feat, the spell has no immediate effect. Any time you are dealt damage by a melee attack during the next 24 hours (or until you next prepare or ready your spells), you can choose to cast the spell on that attacker as an immediate action. Once activated, a retributive spell disappears (it can only affect one attacker). You can apply this feat only to a spell that targets a creature. A retributive spell can target only the attacker that triggered it, even if the spell would normally allow you to target multiple creatures. You can have only one retributive spell cast at a time. Casting a second retributive spell cancels the first (eliminating it with no effect). If you prepare or ready spells while you have a retributive spell cast, the spell dissipates with no effect. A retributive spell uses up a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actual level.

Source: *Complete Mage*

THROW ANYTHING

In your hands, any weapon becomes a deadly ranged weapon.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, proficiency with weapon, base attack bonus +2.

Benefit: You can throw a melee weapon you are proficient with as if it were a ranged weapon. The range increment of weapons used in conjunction with this feat is 10 feet.

Normal: You can't throw a melee weapon without taking a -4 penalty unless it has a range increment (such as a hand axe or dagger).

Source: *Complete Warrior*

NEW SPELLS

Harmonize, Greater
Transmutation

Level: Bard 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 min/level (D)

You blend magic and music seamlessly. When this spell is in effect, starting a bardic music effect requires only a move action. In addition, concentrating on a bardic music effect that requires concentration only requires a move action.

For example, this benefit means that you can maintain concentration on a bardic music effect and cast a spell, make an attack, or being (or maintain) another bardic music effect.

Improvisation

Transmutation
Level: Bard 1
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 round/level (D)

You gain access to a floating “pool” of luck, which manifests as bonus points you can use as desired to improve your odds of success at various tasks. This bonus pool consists of 2 points per caster level, which you can spend as you like to improve attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks, although no single check can receive a bonus greater than one-half your caster level. You must declare any bonus point usage before the appropriate roll is made. Used points disappear from the pool, and any points remaining when the spell ends are wasted. These points count as luck bonuses for the purpose of stacking.

For example, a 14th-level bard pauses while chasing a pickpocket to cast *improvisation*. At any time during the next 14 rounds, he could use the points to provide himself a +7 luck bonus on a Spot check, a +7 luck bonus on a Climb check, and a +7 luck bonus on two of his attacks.

Material Component: A pair of dice.

Insidious Rhythm

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Bard 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 immediate action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: One creature
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

The subject takes a –4 penalty on Intelligence-based skill checks and Concentration checks due to an endlessly recycling melody stuck in its mind. Whenever the subject attempts to cast, concentrate on, or direct a spell, it must succeed on a Concentration check (DC equal to *insidious rhythm*'s save DC + spell's level) or fail at the attempt.

Inspirational Boost

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting, Sonic]
Level: Bard 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 swift action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 round or special; see text

While this spell is in effect, the morale bonus granted by your inspire courage bardic music increases by 1. The effect lasts until your inspire courage effect ends. If you don't begin to use your inspire courage ability before the beginning of your next turn, the spell's effect ends.

MAGE ARMOR, GREATER

Conjuration (Creation) [Force]
Level: Sorcerer/wizard 3
Components: V, S

This spell functions like *mage armor* (PH 249), except that it requires no material component and its tangible field of force provides a +6 armor bonus to Armor Class.

Nixie's Grace

Transmutation [Water]
Level: Bard 6
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This potent spell infuses you with powerful fey magic, granting you many of the traits and abilities of a nixie

(MM 235). Upon casting this spell, you gain a swim speed of 30 feet. You can breathe underwater, and you gain low-light vision and damage reduction 5/cold iron. You also gain a +6 enhancement bonus to Dexterity, a +2 enhancement bonus to Wisdom, and a +8 enhancement bonus to Charisma.

Focus: A lock of nixie's hair, freely given to you by a nixie.

Puppeteer

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]

Level: Bard 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You force the subject to mimic your actions. The subject matches your motions exactly, though it takes a –4 penalty to Dexterity and Strength. Its movements look awkward, and its actions aren't as effective as if it were actually doing them itself. You can try to make the subject commit a suicidal act, but it receives another Will save to break the spell. If that save is successful, the subject collapses, helpless and in a comatose state, for 1d4 rounds. Anyone observing the subject of this spell can determine that the subject's actions are being controlled by making a DC 15 Sense Motive check (or DC 10 if the controlling bard is also visible). This spell doesn't grant the subject extraordinary, supernatural, spell-like abilities, or spellcasting abilities, even if you have and use such abilities during the spell's duration.

Righteous Aura

Abjuration [Good, Light]

Level: Paladin 4

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 hour/level

You are bathed in an unearthly glow for the duration of the spell, as if a *daylight* spell (PH 216) had been cast on you. You get a +4 sacred bonus to Charisma. If you die, your body is converted into an explosive blast of energy in a 20-foot-radius burst centered where you fell, dealing 2d6 points of damage per caster level

(maximum 20d6) to all evil creatures in the burst's area. Good creatures in the area are healed by the same amount, and undead take double this damage. Spell resistance cannot prevent this damage, but a successful Reflex save reduces it to half. Your body is disintegrated, so you cannot be raised with a *raise dead* spell. Spells that do not require an intact body, such as *true resurrection*, can be used to bring you back to life as normal.

Sirine's Grace

Evocation

Level: Bard 4, druid 5

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 round/level

For the duration of this spell, you gain a +4 enhancement bonus to Charisma and Dexterity, a deflection bonus to AC equal to your Charisma modifier, and a +8 bonus on Perform checks. You also gain a swim speed of 60 feet and the ability to breathe water. You can move and attack normally while underwater, even with slashing or bludgeoning weapons.

Material Component: A shard of mirror.

Snowsong

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]

Level: Bard 6

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: 30 ft.

Area: 30-ft. radius centered on you

Duration: 10 min./level

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Snowsong fills the area with a soft snowfall that melts and evaporates on contact with anything solid. When you cast the spell, you must designate all creatures in the area as either allies or enemies. While the snow falls, allies in the area hear a soft, lilting song that bolsters their spirits and confidence. At the same time, as the snow strikes their bodies, it melts and washes away scars, wounds, and filth. Allies under the effect of the snow gain a +4 morale bonus to Charisma and attack rolls, and a +4 insight bonus to Armor Class. In addition, the snow imparts fast healing 1 and resistance to cold 15 to all affected allies. All melee attacks made by allies in the *snowsong* deal an

additional 1d6 points of cold damage. Enemies in the area of a *snowsong* have a much different experience. To them, the snow is bitterly cold and leaves scabs and angry welts when it lands their skin. They perceive the music as a discordant jangle of crashes, scrapes, and howls. As long as they remain in the area, they suffer a 20% chance of spell failure (for both divine and arcane spells) when casting any spells with a verbal component. Enemies can resist the effects of a *snowsong* with a successful Will saving throw. These benefits remain in place as long as the spell persists and as long as the target remains in the spell's area. If a creature leaves the spell's area, all effects end for that creature until it returns to the *snowsong*'s area.

Solipsism

Illusion (Phantasm) [Mind-Affecting]

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 7

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You manipulate the senses of one creature so that it perceives itself to be the only real creature in all of existence and everything around it to be merely an illusion.

If the target fails its save, it is convinced of the unreality of every situation it might encounter. It takes no actions, not even purely mental actions, and instead watches the world around it with bemusement. The subject becomes effectively helpless and takes no steps to defend itself from any threat, since it considers any hostile action merely another illusion.

STALWART PACT

Evocation

Level: Cleric 5, Pact 5

Components: V, S, M, DF

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Touch

Target: Willing living creature touched

Duration: Permanent until triggered, then 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

Once this spell is cast, it remains dormant until the subject is reduced to half or less of its full normal hit points. Once the subject has taken enough

damage to reduce it to half or lower hit points, it immediately gains 5 temporary hit points per two caster levels (maximum 35 hit points at 14th level), damage reduction 5/magic, and a +2 luck bonus on saving throws. The hit points, damage reduction, and saving throw bonus disappear when the spell ends.

Material Component: Incense worth 250 gp.

Wave of Grief

Enchantment [Evil, Mind-Affecting]

Level: Bard 2, blackguard 2, cleric 2

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: 30 ft.

Area: Cone-shaped burst

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

All within the cone when the spell is cast take a –3 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, ability checks, and skill checks.

Material Component: Three tears.

MUNDANE ITEMS

ALCHEMICAL WEAPON CAPSULE

An alchemical weapon capsule allows the application of a specially prepared substance that affects the properties of a treated weapon.

Using an alchemical weapon capsule requires only a swift action (and does not provoke attacks of opportunity) if it is held in a properly attached weapon capsule retainer (see below). Otherwise, applying an alchemical weapon capsule is the equivalent of applying a magic oil (a standard action that does provoke attacks of opportunity).

Weapon Capsule Retainer: The most common method of delivering the effect of an alchemical weapon capsule is the weapon capsule retainer.

This long leather thong, wrapped around a melee weapon or a thrown weapon (but not a projectile weapon) just at the base of the blade or striking surface, holds a thin, fitted ring sized for a single alchemical capsule. A more expensive option is the triple weapon capsule retainer, which stores three capsules rather than one. A PC wielding a weapon with a triple retainer can use one, two, or all three capsules it holds as part of the same action.

Only one weapon capsule retainer (or triple retainer) can be attached to any weapon. Attaching a weapon capsule retainer to a weapon or putting a capsule into

an empty weapon capsule retainer is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity. Thus, filling an empty triple weapon capsule retainer requires three full-round actions.

An alchemical weapon capsule retainer can be filled with a single dose of an injury poison. Activating the weapon capsule coats the weapon with poison, allowing the wielder to deliver toxic strikes with the weapon. A PC using poison in this way faces all the normal perils of using poison (including accidental exposure when activating the capsule or with a natural 1 on the attack roll).

Quickflame: A quickflame alchemical capsule coats a melee weapon or a thrown weapon with a thin sheet of oil that instantly bursts into flame. This substance allows the weapon to deal extra fire damage for a short amount of time without damaging the weapon or its wielder. A weapon treated with quickflame deals 1d6 points of fire damage with each successful strike. The capsule's effects last for 1 round, ending at the beginning of the wielder's next turn. This fire damage doesn't stack with any other fire damage the weapon deals.

Quickfrost: A quickfrost alchemical capsule coats a melee weapon or a thrown weapon with a thin sheet of oil that instantly cools to a dangerously low temperature. This substance allows the weapon to deal extra cold damage for a short amount of time without damaging the weapon or its wielder. A weapon treated with quickfrost deals 1d6 points of cold damage with each successful strike. The capsule's effects last for 1 round, ending at the beginning of the wielder's next turn. This cold damage doesn't stack with any other cold damage the weapon deals.

APPENDIX 3: THE LAWS OF THE VISCOUNTY

The Laws of Verbobonc are designed to maintain the status quo, protecting the nobility at the expense of the common man. Commoners – including all player PCs – have very few rights. If they break the law, they will be punished.

HIGH CRIMES AND LOW CRIMES

All crimes in the Viscounty are classified as either high crimes or low crimes.

Commoners can be accused of any crime by any agent of law enforcement or any noble at any time, so long as the accusing authority is within his jurisdiction.

Nobles cannot be accused of low crimes. They can be accused of high crimes, but only by individuals with the Right of High Justice.

LEGAL AUTHORITY: THE RIGHT OF JUSTICE

All legal authority in Verbobonc is divided into two distinct categories: High Justice and Low Justice.

Representatives of the law imbued with the Right of Low Justice are involved in the prosecution of ‘day-to-day’ law enforcement and may charge and arrest any non-noble offender for any crime. A PC that bears the Right of Low Justice may only arrest another PC if he either witnesses a crime being committed or if a criminal confesses to committing a crime. Arresting agents cannot fine other player PCs TU and gold, nor can they remove PCs from play. The DM adjudicates the penalties for breaking the law.

The Right of High Justice is held by the Viscount, the heads of noble houses, and their most highly appointed representatives. Anyone with the Right of High Justice may charge, arrest, investigate, try, and sentence any offender for any crime. Only those with High Justice may charge a noble with breaking the law, and only for high crimes. Nobles are immune to prosecution for low crimes. No player PC in Verbobonc has the right of High Justice, unless he has specific regional documentation to that effect.

See the **Table 1** below for more details on authority and jurisdiction of various Metaorganizations.

LAWS IN THE GAME

Laws are enforced by the Dungeon Master when the need arises. Before the arrest and adjudication of a player PC happens, the DM should warn the player that he is about to commit a crime. If the player decides to act criminally, the DM must decide if there

is any way for the authorities to know what has transpired. If so, he should inform the player that his actions will have consequences and that they will be adjudicated after the play session. If the player continues to commit crimes, the DM should adjudicate it immediately and remove the PC from the play session for the time being.

Once play has finished, the DM should make a final determination of all of the penalties that the PC will receive, using **Table 2** below for guidance. Any crimes for which the punishment is Death or Exile, must be adjudicated by a member of the Verbobonc Triad. All other crimes may be adjudicated by the judge at the table.

If the player of a convicted PC wishes to appeal the judge's ruling, he should contact the Verbobonc Triad.

ILLEGAL GOODS

The following items are illegal in the Viscounty: *Assassin's dagger*, *Dagger of venom*, *Darkskull*, drugs, *Dust of disappearance*, flesh golems and *Flesh golem manuals*, *Gal-garan*, *Hand of glory*, *Hand of the mage*, holy symbols to evil gods, *Life-drinker*, *Nine lives stealer*, poisons, *Robe of bones*, slaves, *Slaying arrow*, *Sword of life stealing*, thieves' tools, thinuan weapons, and *Unholy* weapons.

Additionally, scrolls and wands of spells with the [Evil] descriptor and any item that radiates an aura of evil, requires an evil creator, bestows curses, summons or commands elementals, demons, or devils, or animates the dead are likewise outlawed.

This list is not exhaustive, and Dungeon Masters should exercise their judgment.

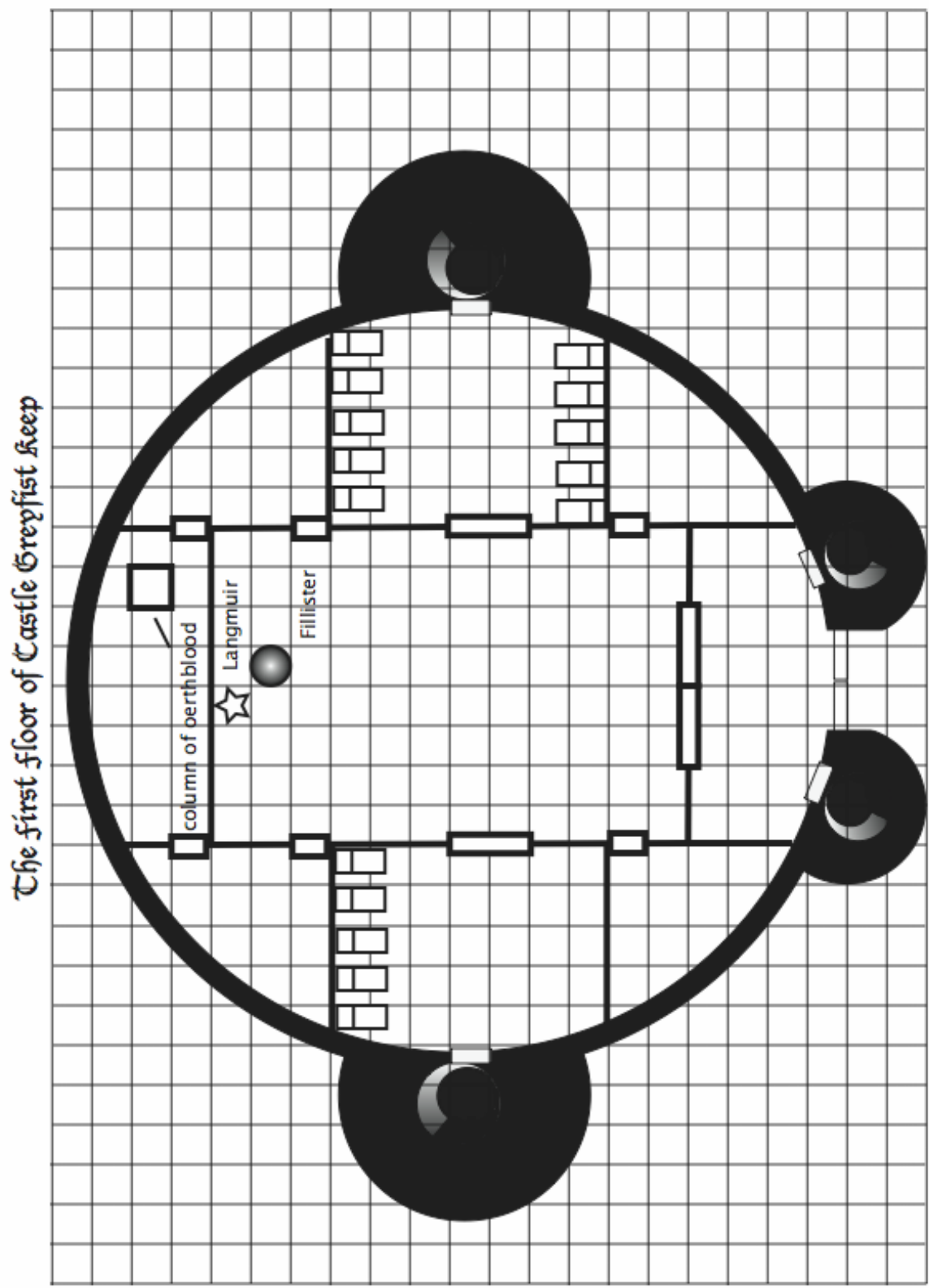
More detailed information on Verbobonc's laws, legal system, and methods of law enforcement can be found in the *Laws of the Viscounty* document, available for download at www.verbobonc.net.

Table 1: Legal Jurisdiction of Verbobonc Metaorganizations

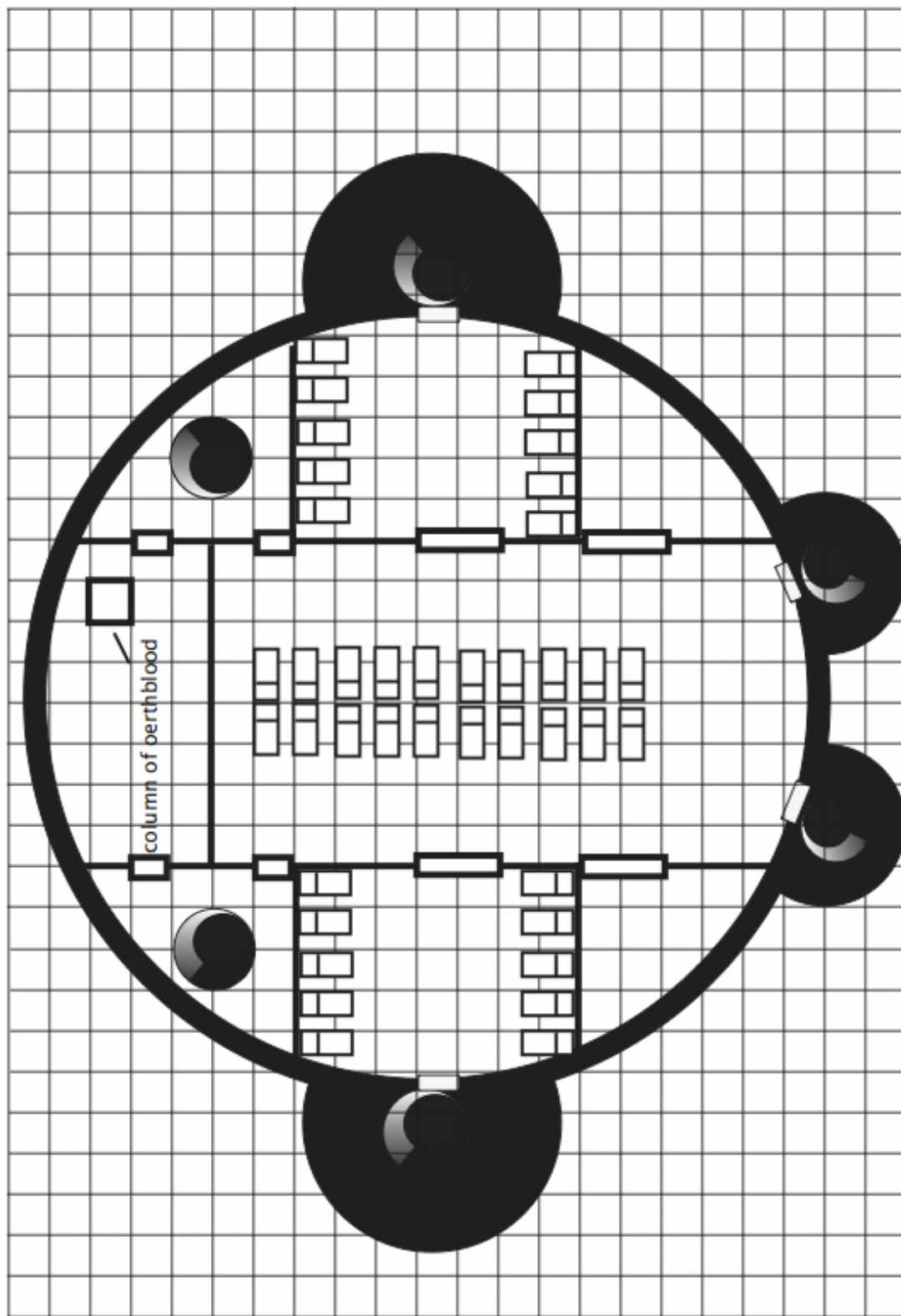
Organization	Authority	Jurisdiction
Knights of the Faithful Defender	High Justice	All Verbobonc
Mounted Borderers	Low Justice	All lands within Verbobonc except Verbobonc City.
Gentlemen of the Watch	Low Justice	Verbobonc City
Gnarley Rangers	Low Justice	Gnarley Forest
Noble House Guards	Low Justice	Appropriate Noble Lands
Mayors, Sheriffs, and Constables	Low Justice	The local settlement they have been appointed to

Table 2: Crimes and Penalties

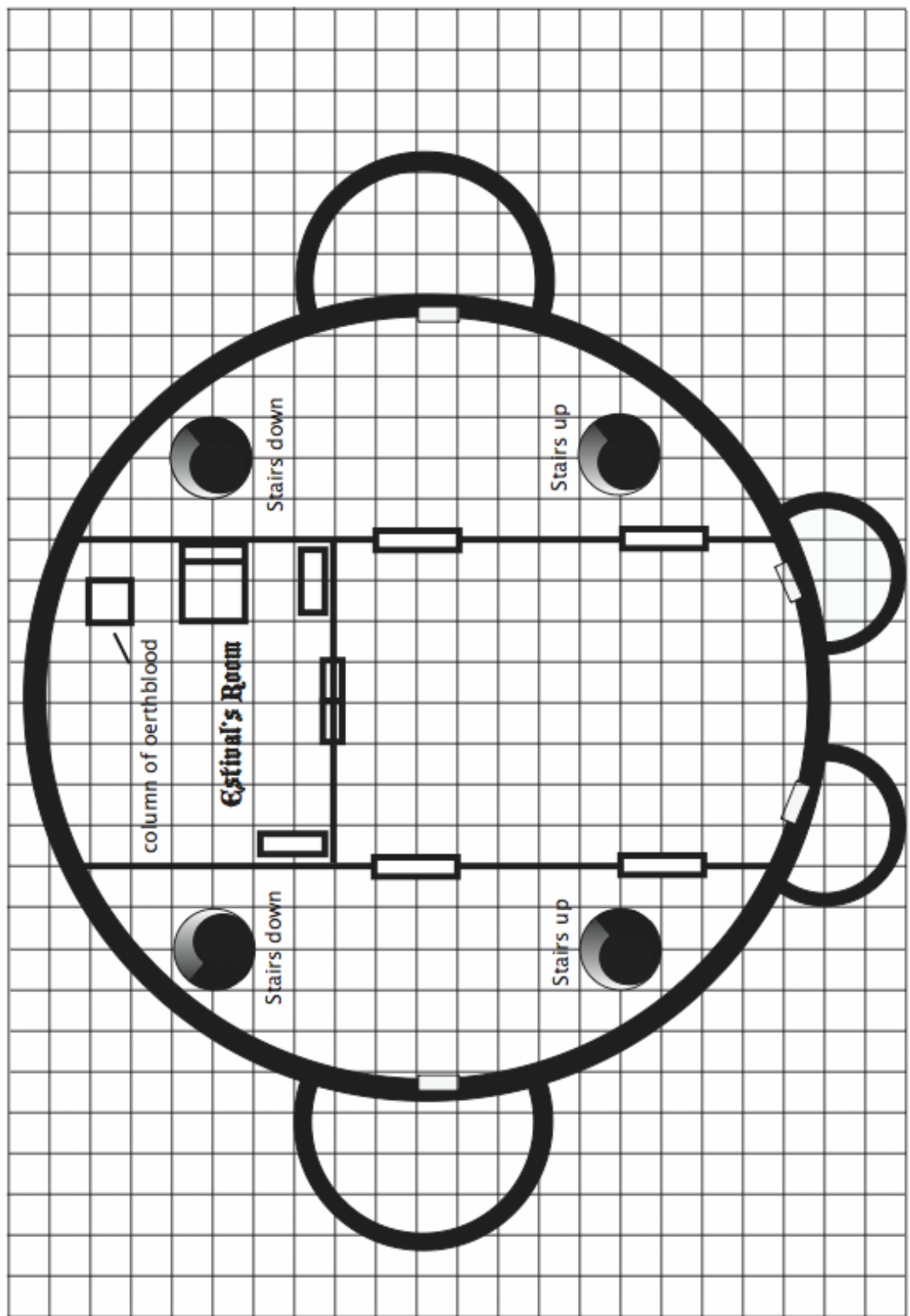
Crime	Class	Penalty
Aiding and Abetting	Low	100 gp OR 500 gp OR 1,000 gp + 4 TU
Arson	High	500 gp +, 1 TU
Assault	Low	50 gp OR 1,000 gp, 2 TU
Banditry	High	Forfeiture of all possessions, 1 TU per 100 gp of stolen goods.
Battery	Low	200 gp OR 2,000 gp, 10 TU
Blackmail	High	90% of wealth, 26 TU
Blasphemy	High	Public whipping
Bribery	Low	Ten times value offered and public whipping OR forfeiture of all gold carried, expulsion from metaorg, and public whipping
Burglary	Low	200 gp, 2 TU OR 1,000 gp, 10 TU
Destruction of Noble's Property	High	Cost of repairs, 1 TU per 1,000 gp of damage
Disturbing the Peace	Low	Up to 450 gp and/or 1 TU
Extortion	High	90% of wealth, 26 TU
Forgery	Low	Confiscation of all possessions, 13 TU, loss of finger
Fraud Against a Noble	High	Forfeiture of all possessions, 26 TU OR death
Grave Robbing	Low	Confiscation of carried goods, 1,000 gp, 5 TU OR confiscation of carried goods, 5,000 gp, 13 TU
Impersonation of a Noble	High	Forfeiture of wealth and all possessions, 52 TU OR death
Interfering with the Representative of a Noble	Low	Up to 300 gp, 4 TU
Kidnapping	High	Confiscation of goods carried, 1,000 gp, 26 TU OR confiscation of goods carried, 10,000 gp fine, 104 TU, and loss of eye and hand.
Magical Assault	High	Confiscation of spellbooks, 500 gp, 4 TU OR confiscation of spellbooks and goods carried, 2,000 gp, 13 TU, and loss of ear.
Malicious Mischief	Low	Up to 1,000 gp, up to 4 TU, and full reimbursement of property value
Manslaughter	High	Forfeiture of all equipment, property, and wealth, 52 TU.
Murder	High	Death
Negligent Use of Magic	High	Confiscation of spellbooks, 500 gp, 4 TU OR confiscation of spellbooks and goods carried, 2,000 gp, 13 TU, and loss of ear.
Ownership of Illegal Goods	Low	Varies: Confiscation of the item(s) owned and a warning and fine of 100 to 2,000 gp to exile from the region, as deemed by the item.
Perjury	High	600 gp, 8 TU
Piracy	High	Confiscation of all wealth, 500 gp, 10 TU OR confiscation of all wealth, 2,000 gp, 26 TU, and loss of eye.
Resisting Arrest	Low	300 gp, 2 TU OR 600 gp, 4 TU
Robbery	High	Confiscation of goods carried, 1,000 gp, 10 TU OR confiscation of goods carried, 5,000 gp, 26 TU, loss of hand
Sedition	High	13 TU
Smuggling	High	Confiscation of illegal goods, 2,000 gp, 13 TU, public whipping, loss of a finger. Sometimes exile.
Theft	Low	Confiscation of goods carried, 200 gp, 5 TU OR confiscation of goods carried, 1,000 gp, 12 TU, loss of finger
Treason/Revolt	High	Forfeiture of all possessions, property, and wealth, and death by hanging, draw and quartering, or stoning.
Trespassing	Low	20gp – 500 gp



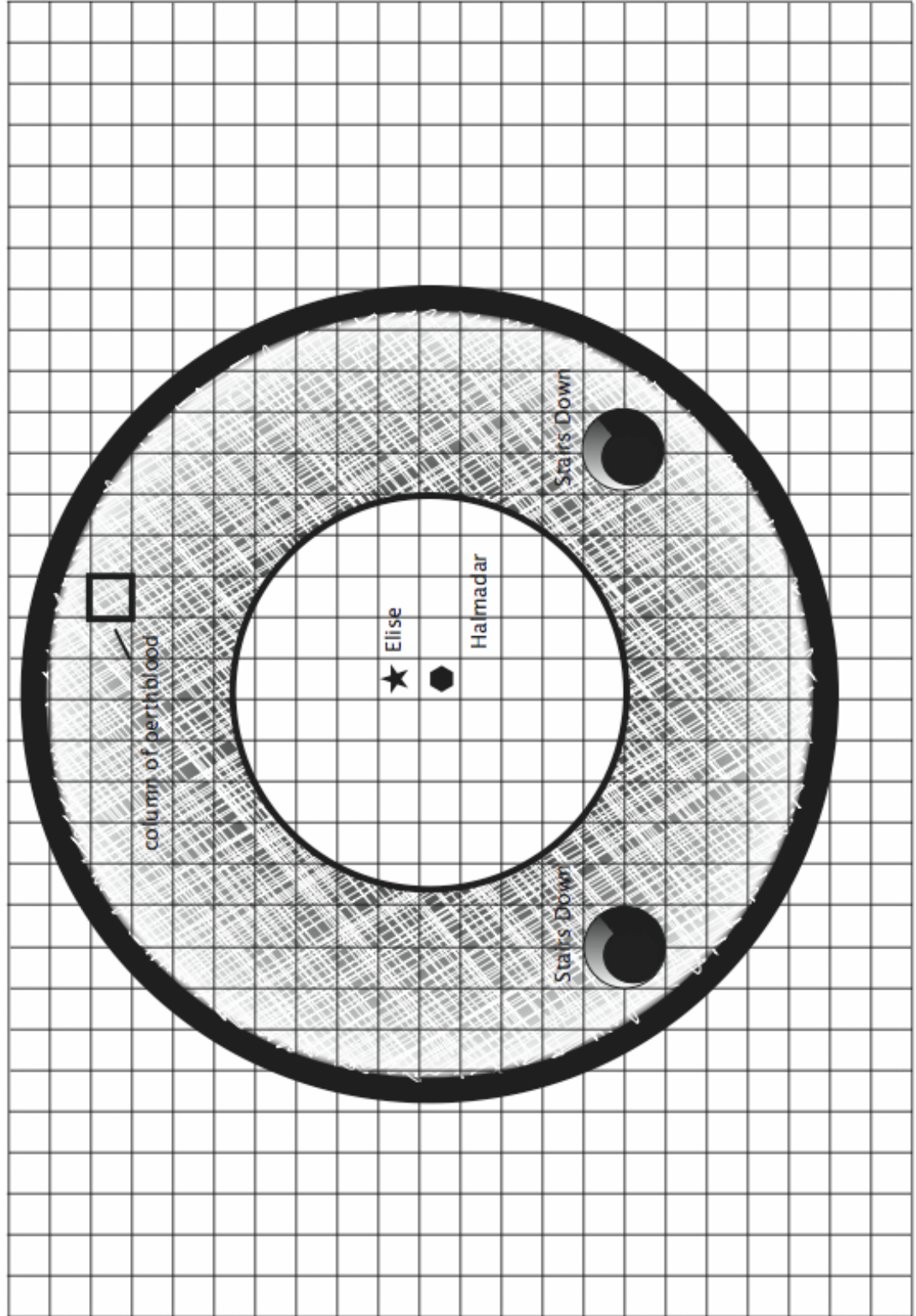
Second floor of Castle Greyfist Keep



Third Floor of Greyfist Keep



Top floor of Castle Greyhawk Keep



MAP OF VERBOBONC CITY

Castle Greyfist is in the center of Verbobonc City.



NON-PLAYER PC PORTRAITS

VISCOUNT LANGARD



LADY ELISE BRANDENBERG



LORD LUDOVIC LANGMUIR



VISCOUNT WELLBORN ESTIVAL

