

MIDNIGHT

PROGENY OF LIGHT SCOURGE
OF SHADOW



Every Legend Has a Beginning...



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This work is dedicated to my ragtag band of friends with which I have had the honor of enjoying role-playing since 1979 and to all other avid role-players wherever and whatever you might be.

Pierre "Irmgaal" Charbonneau
"Insanity is Relative"

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Introduction

...leader of the woodland Etheldar-born, heed my call for thine doom is not thine own. Although I am young thine time is all but spent and the wound will spread until I shall fall into shadow...

Aradil's Journals "Conversations with Aryth"

The Awakening

Thousands of years ago the dark God Izrador fell to Aryth and tore the skies apart. His fall to the earth came as a cataclysm of enormous proportions. The Etheldar, for the most part vanished and the remaining changed forever. On that moment, the world awoke, as would a sleeping maiden to whom a dagger would have been forced between her ribs.

The collective thoughts and souls of the spirits of the world cried in pain and for a moment they acted as the awakening consciousness of vast range and power. In this brief emergence Aryth realized what had happened and had a glimpse of what was to come in the future. In a few thousands of years, a speck of time as far as planets are concerned, this infected wound in its northern regions was going to spread. The infection was to span Eredane from north to south and would consume everything in its path. The world will become black and Aryth would literally die.

In that time of brief consciousness it was also decided to try and counter that infection. Several beings that were to come, when times were right, would be infused with Aryth's "gifts" that would enable each and every one of them to become leaders amongst their race. Champions of the earth itself, destined to face the Shadow in Aryth's most dire moment. At the middle of this plan was the future ruler of the elves, most fair and wise, friend of creatures and all that Aryth cherished, Aradil. In that vision of what has not yet come to pass, Aryth saw that Queen amongst the Etheldar's fairest children and decided to leave her the clear message of what Aryth saw in its brief foresight. Hidden in the

Great Tree of the elves did Aryth place this thought, message to Aradil to be revealed when the time was right for her to be granted this boon of information.

Then Aryth's pain seemed to subside and the spirits of all the lands stopped their screaming, the land stopped its shaking, the skies cleared and Aryth went back to sleep. The dark God was nestled in the north and already the resistance to his plans was starting. Only to be unfolded thousands of years later.

The Command

Aradil was aware of the shadow all too well and far before Aryth had the kindness of revealing her sight through the Great Tree. The Queen was struck with the words of Aryth near the end of the third age, about five years before the forces of Izrador finally broke the walls like a black wave of dark shadowy waters that flooded Eredane. Aradil was aware that the Shadow's forces had a good chance of finally winning as the old alliances were weak and the hope of sustaining another full-fledged attack was next to none. She decided to heed Aryth's words and sent out agents to prepare the way for the promised ones.

It was a great ordeal trying to decipher locations for the Children of Aryth as the newly born consciousness had but rudimentary language and expressed itself cryptically often in the forms of music, songs and shapes, much like the first language of the Gods of old when they were but fledgling entities at the arm of the creator. Years passed and Izrador finally broke out of his prison. Aradil was not surprised but very saddened to see the humans fail in their resistance, being slaughtered by the tens of thousands. At that time, came a young elf by the name of Perythilion whose mind seemed to be able to see things far beyond the scope of what anyone could grasp. Aradil caught the glimpse of this boy when his father Perythilian submitted his son to the Academy due to his strange gift and keen mind. Aradil fostered this young elf and soon realized that the light that shone in him came from a different source of

what the elves are usually blessed with. It became clear to the Witch-Queen that Perythilion was the first Children of Aryth. With Perythilion's great mystic sight, supplemented by the Queen's arcane and terrible powers, were finally able to decipher Aryth's words and thus, with this information, she could then plant the seeds of manipulation across Eredane in order to lure these Children of Aryth to Erethor where they could all be fastened under a single banner.

The Black Tidal Wave

The Shadow's forces swept over Eredane like a black tidal wave, much stronger and furious than anyone had anticipated. The kingships of men were destroyed and the race of Dorns and Halflings lay now broken and without hope. In Izrador's terrible sweep on the land the victims were countless as the seemingly infinite hordes of orc hacked their way with furious steel. Many of these victims were, unfortunately, the envoys of Aradil sent to aid the Children of Aryth make their way to her. Although the Elven Queen could now do nothing about it, not all of them were destroyed and now all hopes rest on the shoulders of those who survived.

The Birth of Hope

At this point, the visions of Aryth had come true and the world was now suffering under the infection of a spreading evil. Aryth, while still in its eternal sleep, kept her promise to the Elven Queen and started to birth other individuals with great potential to the world. She released them hoping that Aradil had understood her and that she would use them well, for her fate, and the fate of all others now laid in this single, desperate endeavor.

How to Use This Adventure

This adventure is at base designed to form a streamlined campaign but can be broken down to form separate independent adventures. You will find the event-based structure of this work useful if you want to achieve this. Event-based structure has proven many times in the past to be the best way to forge a scenario in my campaign group. More than twenty years of role-playing has tested more than one way to address this issue and at all times the versatility of this system has proven adequate to put in check the most chaotic-minded players whose sole goal is to stomp the GM into feats of improvisations.

This scenario is calibrated for 2 to 4 Player Characters all beginning at first level *Commoner*. If you wish to adapt the encounters for parties of different classes and higher levels, only a quick modification to the number of antagonists would do the trick but in itself, being higher level can pose a problem as far as the storyline is concerned... As for DC's and general difficulty of the events, either calculate through normal monster progression charts or just put what you seem would be appropriate.

As for the Characters themselves, it is highly recommended that you use the Characters supplied in this work, although you can easily switch the identities and associate your own brew of Characters. Just pinpoint the ones you think resembles the most to the supplied Character and have him/her live the events prepared for that particular character. All characters must be commoners but all can have secrets that would indicate their destinies in life, such as a boy who has budding magical powers, not yet controlled but useful in certain conditions until he meets the key NPC's in the adventure who can deploy these abilities further.

Some of the supplied Characters have certain heroic paths that are essential to some events. Like Perythilion, if one of your Player Character has already the Seer Heroic Path, you might have a problem. Perythilion is essential, but, if he should die, the other seer could take his place as the gift of detecting other Children of Aryth could be transferred upon the time of death. The PC's will learn quickly that their primary concern is to stay alive, but also as important is the life of Perythilion whose abilities to detect other is a cornerstone of the resistance effort. But hey, no one lives forever and a critical strike always happens all too fast sometimes and Perythilion may die as a result of either player carelessness or pure dumb bad luck. In that case, the search for other Children of Aryth may present itself as being more daunting than anticipated, but still, not impossible to do.

All experience earned is accounted for in each event. This is where my style of GM'ing splits from the general population. Personally I don't feel that hacking creatures is what makes people grow in power and experience and therefore all XP are accounted more on efficient resolution of events (through all kinds of solutions) and player performance in his/her role-playing. Good-ideas and resourcefulness are awarded immediately and are not accounted in the totals offered. Feel free though to use the standard way of awarding XP, in the end it's a matter of personal choice. I just wanted you to know what the numbers meant at the end of each event.

GM'S Advice: Mastery

Read the whole scenario before starting play. All the information required to have the whole picture in mind of what actually is going on and why, can sometimes be collected through the various chapters of this book. Relationships between events can sometimes link from past or future chapters and event and if you don't know of them beforehand, they in themselves might seem unimportant and/or irrelevant...

The Flexibility of the GM is essential. Be ready for your players by reading and taking the whole of the campaign before you start playing. My personal experience tells that PC's are unpredictable and in order to adapt and keep the campaign flowing without coercing your players in going in a certain direction, you have to know the area by heart and continuously make modifications on the spot.

If it means that your players just bounce off all preparations by going into a different direction than the scenario suggests (as they often do), well you can bend the scenario to adapt or you can improvise by making them live certain events of your own brew. Always have a side dish ready is what I always say. An added recommendation, if you do not use the provided NPC's you should have one character with the Seer, Dragonblooded, Naturefriend and Chanceborn Heroic paths.

Important

It is understood that all players and NPC's start at the first level of the Commoner class, since there is a total lack of knowledge transmission (accentuated by the lack of experienced people to properly teach). There should not be any experience accounting until the end of the event: Secrets unlocked, secrets revealed at page 19 when, from there, normal experience progression can resume and experience points amounts be offered at the end of the events as well as retroactive experience awards for past events.

Overview

The goal of this adventure is not to bring down the Shadow, nor to destroy anything in particular. The main goal of the expedition is to find and bring back other

“gifted” individuals to Erethor which is, in itself, probably almost as dangerous. The adventure will begin in the northern Grasslands of Eredane, where once flourished the great kingdoms of the Dorns. From there, the party will be led by clues and even pushed by a friendly contact in direction of the elven forest to the west.

The forces of Izrador will slowly become aware of the “gifted” ones and as the adventure progresses, the incapacity of the lowly legates to capture them will attract even more unwanted attention from bigger, higher placed agents. There is also several factors that will inject the forces of the Shadow directly into the party's path, namely family members of the Characters and NPC's who have already turned to Izrador and who have done quite a name for themselves, will angrily put themselves (and their resources) against the players as they threaten their name in the ranks of the Shadow. Furthermore there are even individuals found in the would-be safe havens of the elves that would betray the party as desperation and dark thoughts cloud the elven minds of late, some people are on the brink of total and complete breakdown and may reveal themselves to be foes where the PC's will expect the less.

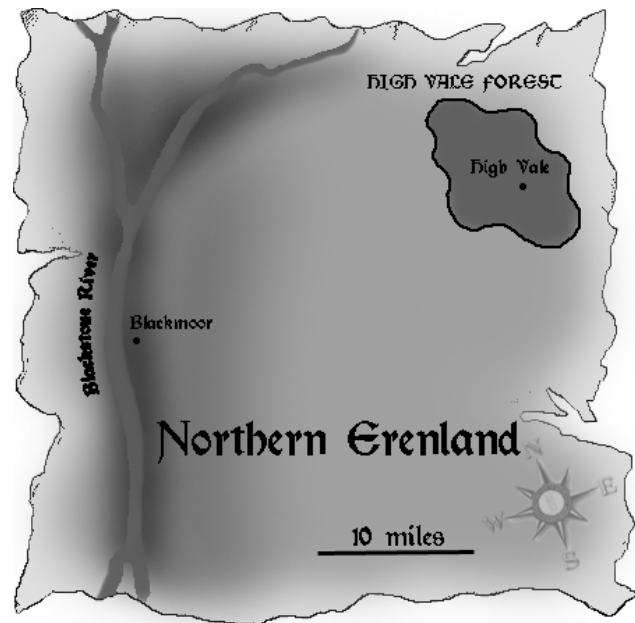
The campaign begins where the players have absolutely nothing. Clothes on their backs, maybe a shaped club made of pine deeply hidden within the family dwelling. It is important to instill a sensation of poverty, hunger and oppression where the Shadow has bled their lands dry and hope of ever having a decent life is fading rapidly. The preludes provided in the events and description boxes will help you create that tone, but you are greatly encouraged to add your personal touch to everything. Whether it be a crucified mother while several children cry at her feet or other dismal thoughts of pain and suffering is greatly encouraged as it provides descriptive strength and offers temptations and motivations for players to interact with their surroundings.

GM's Advice: Interaction

Rule of thumb: “There can never be too many opportunities for interactions. Create enough and soon players will begin to do the work for you...” Old Chinese proverb ☺

The NPC's

It is very important that you familiarize yourself with the Non-Player Characters (NPC's) who will be an enormous part of the adventure's feel and tone. All NPC's descriptions, history and personalities can be taken as is, but you can modify them at your leisure, without however changing their nature completely. It is important that their personality's remains roughly similar and background has to remain almost untouched. It is again strongly recommended that you use the provided NPC's or have most of your players become Quelos Family members as the adventure takes off because of that family's fate. I strongly advise against starting this adventure as elves or any other kind of fey, but if you can arrange it or your players can provide a good explanation then it is acceptable only if you feel it appropriate.





Chapter 1

Roots Unearthed

“What must I do...?”

*There is nothing thou can do to prevent the wound.
Thou must look for tidings of the ones who would be my
children, only they shall be able to stop the wound’s
spreading.*

*“Will these “children” be able to heal you
completely?”*

(Silence)... No.

Aradil’s Journals “Conversations with Aryth”

Background and Information

Before anything starts you have to gather the background of all the forces in motion in the area. The forces of the Shadow are everywhere but most are still further south and west in order to subdue the elven people. The Cold Plains do have a good number of occupying forces but since the human population is already subdued, this force is nothing in comparison to what is gathered east of Erethor and on the Kaladrum mountains.

The Legate in power is named Treshan. Stereotypically evil and brooding he is the bane of all who live in the area. He is vain, paranoid and quick to anger. All qualities as far as Izrador is concerned... Although he is not overly cautious about a rebellion from the population, he does however have sharp qualms about his superiors as being stuck in the middle of nowhere goes against his aspirations and wonders if he didn’t fall prey to some foul plan.

This city is where the scenario begins as the Quelos family will discover that they are destined for other things than slavery. They will be somewhat pushed to flee Blackmoor as unfortunate events will unfold. Added to the Quelos family could be all the other NPC’s and players in your group that doesn’t match the

Quelos type but still could be relations or friends of the Quelos boys or Ulthielle.

The reason why this village is still standing aside the fact that it can produce a reasonable amount of grain is the fact that the Shadow had a glimpse of a probable event of some kind that is supposed to happen. Since the nature of the event is still unknown, the higher powers of the Shadow preferred to put a legate on the premises to act as a watcher. Treshan has been here for now five years and knows that something funny is about to happen. He also had to deal with what he calls “organized disappearances” as some 50 villagers went missing over the last few years.

The Quelos Lineage

The Quelos family is not particularly influential but holds a reputation of having some of the most beautiful women as members. To this fact Elyssia Quelos is very aware and tries to shelter her daughters as best she can. She interdicts her daughters to leave the family home and reflects the danger of an orc wanting them as pleasure slaves or even worse. This was enough to convince Llyssia and Alirielle, but Ulthielle and her rebel nature prevailed against her mother and continuously steps out of her home to join her “boys” when the sun is down in order to perpetrate mischief. Contrarily to the rest of the Quelos, Ulthielle does not follow authority very well (most probably because of her father’s deeds) and will defy anyone. This is an opportunity to bring in outsiders into the Quelos fold as they very well might be one of Ulthielle mischief partners or simpler yet, meet Ulthielle during one of her midnight roams. The final decision on how all party members are finally brought together is up to you to.

However it should be clear that before you start event number one “The underground catacombs” that all PC’s should at least know each other by one way or another. It’s a good idea to improvise some role-playing in Blackmoor in parallel with everyone’s background prior to launching event number one.

Blackmoor

Population: 524 (65% Erenlanders, 35% Dorns)

Ruler: Legate Treshan

Armed Forces: 70 orc soldiers, 15 Uruk Soldiers, 20 Goblin scouts and sniffers.

Main product: Wheat, Pottery, Farming tools.

Blackmoor is where it all starts; it's a village in the easternmost grasslands in Northern Erenland. It is somewhat moderately populated (almost 300 people live in the area) and does have some good farming capabilities. The Shadow's forces in place, consisting of 1 Soldier Legate and approximately 80 orcs soldiers and 20 Goblins have a good hold on the dwellers and pushes the production of grain to its maximum. The Legate in charge has the tendency to allow men of fighting age to work the fields making for better harvests but this carries the added danger of armed conflicts as the workers are provided with tools that can be used as weapons. Although in Blackmoor, the oppressed people have adopted the popular way of dealing with things: Do not upset the forces in presence, and best go unnoticed and maintain an appearance of loyalty to the Legate. Otherwise Blackmoor is an ancient village by all accounts. It once housed many Dorn families who, in some part in history, became fierce defenders of the Dornish Kingships. While nothing is left of this era, there still can be some minute testaments of past glory such as covered ruins of shrines and other small details of past glory.

Map key

1- Blacksmith

Treshan allows the blacksmith to operate under orc supervision. The wheat quotas are very high and the workers need equipment in good shape in order to deliver them. The blacksmith's name is Kel Durgon and is probably (aside the Quelos family) the biggest threat the Shadow has in this small village. Durgon has lulled the village in believing that he is a hard-working simpleton and therefore incapable of even thinking about violence, much less having the knowledge of weapon crafting. Kel purposefully makes errors in his art and therefore he is not regarded as being good at what he does. However, when the orc guards are not looking (usually a few times a week and for some period of time), Kel continues to craft blades for the Quelos which he has been told long ago by an elven spy, that they will be the beginning of the true resistance against Izrador. He will craft the weapons (choose a few of them high in metal/silver) and will arrange it to deliver them when he feels the time is right (preferably just before they leave for the eastern forest).

2- Mill

The mill is operated by an old man going by the name of Lorn. This man cares for nothing much else working and getting by, thinking that since he works the only mill that provides the transformation of the wheat, that he is important and therefore not likely to be killed. Lorn is selfish and all around grumpy and not likeable. He will, in a split second, tell the orcs or even Treshan about any suspicious activities.

3- Old Inn

Not much of an Inn now with all Blackmoor impoverished such as it is now. But the Inn now mostly serves as a Tavern. Since wheat is the major product, the Inn Keeper makes good wheat-based ale and other products the Shadow may allow. It didn't take much convincing for the orcs to allow alcohol making. The Inn Keeper is named Jerell Kotagan. Jerell is not on the Shadow's side but tends to keep off illegitimate business since he gets relatively good treatment from Treshan and the orcs who let him do his activities almost unhampered (but that peace comes at a hefty cost in goods and ale). Jerell maintains a front of loyalty to the people, even hiring hands to do things around the premises in exchange for payment in goods. But he will secretly betray anyone if it means keeping what he has.

4-Tavern

Where the depressed men of Blackmoor go to exchange the few things they have left for Kotagan's alcohol. It is a place of ill repute, often fostering fights and other shady dealings. The orcs are often seen at this place enjoying the only thing that keeps Kotagan alive.

5- Stables

The only properly kept stables in Blackmoor. They are currently the property of Kotagan and house Treshan's Charger for the night. The stables are always heavily guarded by Oruks and while the horse is in the stables anyone approaching the stables gets attacked on sight.

6- General Store

With next to nothing to barter with, the general store is pretty much abandoned. It is now a place where people meet to repair salvaged items and to get a good appraisal.

10- Quelos Family Home

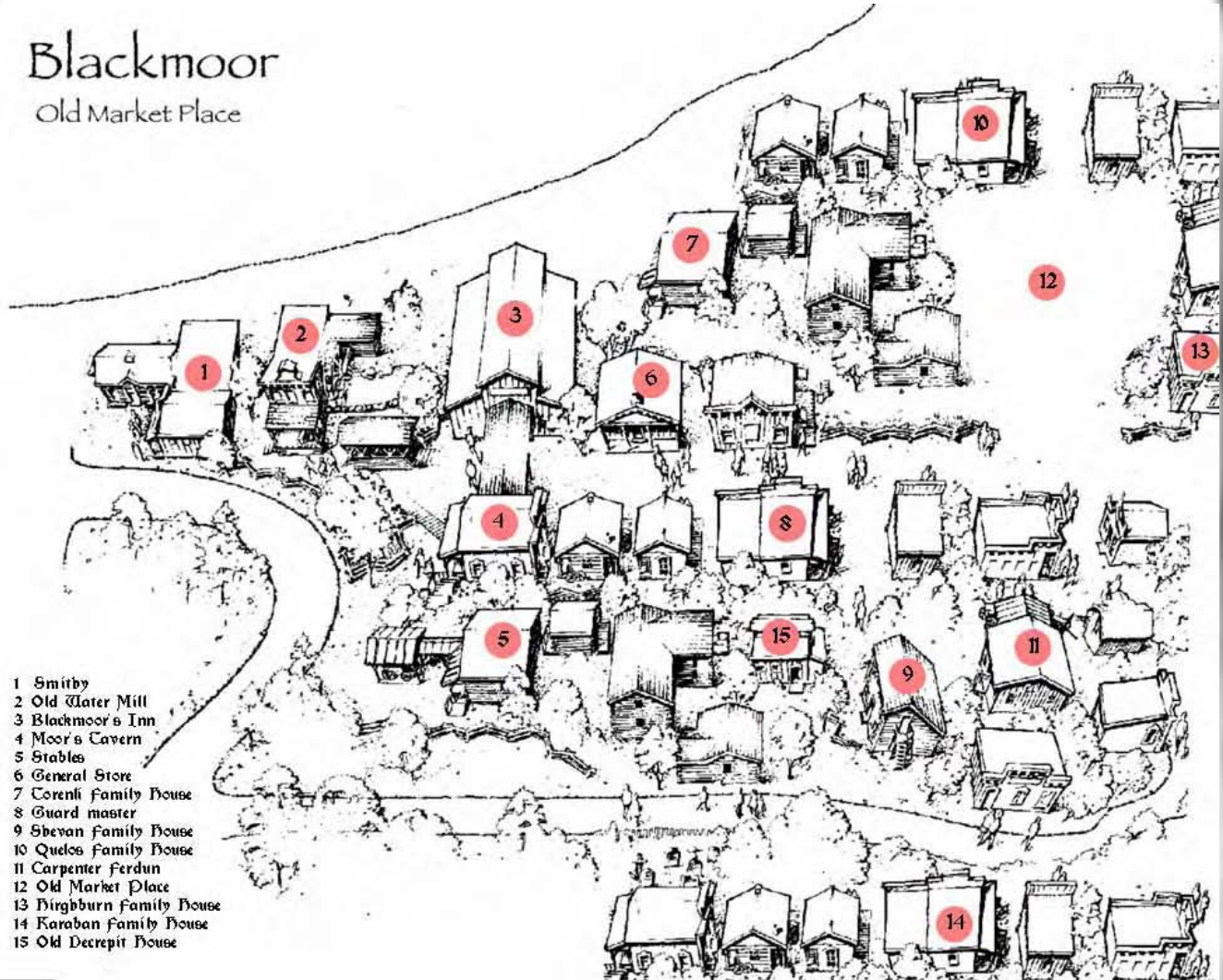
This small dwelling is home to the Quelos family. There is nothing out of the ordinary about this home other than the fact that it is shelter of an entire line of Children of Aryth.

15- Ancient House

A ruined decrepit house. In its underground crypt holds a sleeping Undead old of many centuries.

Blackmoor

Old Market Place



- 1 Smitby
- 2 Old Water Mill
- 3 Blackmoor's Inn
- 4 Moor's Cavern
- 5 Stables
- 6 General Store
- 7 Corelli Family House
- 8 Guard master
- 9 Shevan Family House
- 10 Quelos Family House
- 11 Carpenter Ferdun
- 12 Old Market Place
- 13 Highburn Family House
- 14 Karaban Family House
- 15 Old Decrepid House

Underground Catacombs

Found by Ulthielle Quelos and her motley band of street boys, a secret entrance to an ancient burial catacomb is unearthed from loose boards in an abandoned house near the old marketplace. Only those brave enough to enter it will start the dangerous task of rediscovering part of the Dorn history and seeing sepultures of the generations of old. Ulthielle will gather the PC's at her home and tell of her discovery, saying that despite the danger of being caught, she will go with some of her friends to see what's down there. It is obvious she is getting into trouble but the rewards of finding some goods that will help everyone to survive the coming winter should be presented in order to muster courage amongst the starving characters.

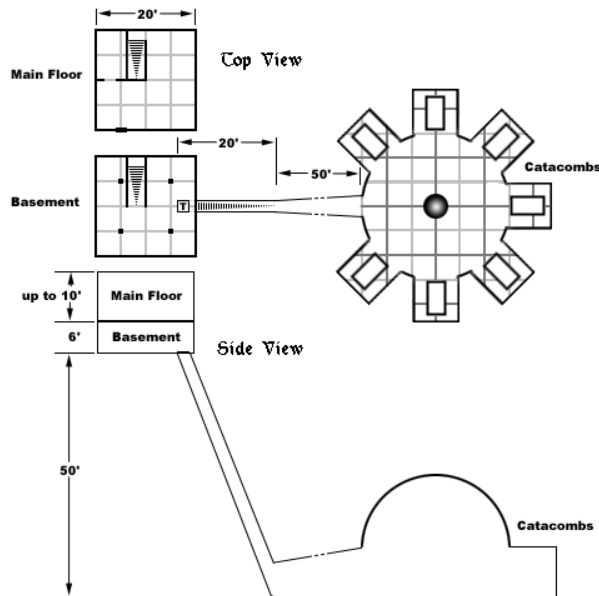
If questioned about what she saw Ulthielle will only say the following:

"We didn't have time to go deep before Clyde Keredran began to cry. He's not coming tonight. But I saw a staircase of stone. And it went pretty deep. I'm sure Treshan doesn't know about it because the dust looks like its been untouched for ages. I don't know about you guys, but I'm going in, tonight!"

Read the following when the party approaches the old house.

The old house that unsteadily rests in the middle of the market area of Blackmoor is subject to the effect of years of neglect. Its walls partly crumbled and the roof is obviously broken and now sits in the middle of the main room. The thick glass that once made its windows is shattered, leaving only scarce evidence of their existence. Heavy leafless bushes and rogue plants have randomly flourished and cloak partially the entrance and the holes in the walls. A strange feeling of dread and desolation hangs about this place, as if some evil would linger about.

The house effectively hangs by a thread. Forcefully ramming a wall with one's shoulder will topple the whole thing onto whoever is in at the time. The interior is damp and slippery, with multiple evidence of salvaging. There is nothing of interest in the house.



The Main Room

This room is the recipient of years of decrepitude endured by the house and is full of debris. The tiles that once were the shelter of the roof are now scattered and broken about its entirety. Debris and refuse now litter the floor as evidence of frequent squatting by unknown individuals can be clearly seen about. Only a stone staircase leading down a few feet in a gloomy basement can be seen under the piles of rotting, wet wood and other rubbish.

The Basement

The wet stones of the stairs lead a few feet downward to an unlit chamber underground. The sound of dripping water can be heard as the foundation are cracked and seeping the last rainfall. The debris here is less abundant but still present nonetheless the stench of putrefied corpses of small animals heaves your heart. On the floor lie several planks of wood nailed together and weighed down by rocks. Ulthielle smiles and nods saying: "this is the place".

The rocks on the trap door are not much of an obstacle and can be moved quickly. At this point any NPC will inquire as to the thought of having some sort of light source as the way is sure to be cast in utter darkness. If the party goes in without light they will see absolutely nothing (unless there is fey in the group). The staircase

is made of stone and goes down in an uncomfortable angle, dropping a good fifty feet for only twenty forward. It leads directly into a family crypt of good size holding fifteen stone coffins. The area can be lit by the untouched torches on the walls. The advanced age of these will cut their burning time to only a few minutes however.

Read the following as the party reaches the crypt.

The crackling of your torch echoes faintly as you make your way down the ancient stone stairs. The dampness of the area makes the way treacherous as the rock's soft edges promptly encourage you to slip. As you finally reach the base of the stairs you are confronted with a cobwebbed hall of about ten feet in diameter by almost seven in height. The walls are unevenly shaped and the ceiling seems to hang precariously. As you make your way through the web the walls begin to show some ancient relief sculptures and the floor becomes smooth and even. The ceiling soon gives more berth and the claustrophobic feeling eases somewhat. The corridor soon offers a view few of you has even seen. The walls give way to a circular room with a central dais where a statue of a powerful man lies. At the feet of the statue lie various dust-covered objects and some chests. The wood of the chests seem to have held over the years but still show signs of advanced age.

Several sconces holding torches can be seen on the walls. When lighted or when someone starts to investigate further in the room, read the following.

As the light eats away the darkness it reveals that the room is somewhat deeper than expected as several openings in the walls holds great coffins of stone each closed with a heavy slab of carefully cut rock. Carvings of an ancient form of writing can be clearly seen on their surface but unfortunately, none of you seem to be able to decipher its meaning. On the floor in front of each coffin lie dried flowers and pouches of what was certainly odorant material. Now victim of old age have lost all qualities. There is a surreal silence about however, and as your torchlight travels about the room, the statue seems to follow your movement.

Ancient artifacts (Non-Magical)

In the catacombs, several artifacts of the old times are found. Old scrolls of past family knowledge, metallic heirlooms and some weapons can be found. Most are too old and decrepit to be of some use, but most of the metal can be melted and reformed into useful items. Some weapons however (choose two or three of any

kind) can still be used, but consider them on the brink of snapping (Hardness 1 HP 1). It will become evident that the coffins themselves have a greater chance of holding anything of value and Ulthielle and her companions will begin to open them.

Read the following before the opening of coffins.

After salvaging what can be found on the floor and next to the statue, Ulthielle looks to the coffins. "There should be interesting stuff in them I bet. Come on guys, let's open these up."

Even if the PC's protest she will order others to help her start the uncovering of the tombs. The process should be long and tiresome and a weight should be placed upon the fact that the coffins are probable centuries old. What they find in them should be somewhat similar to a few metallic objects and a lot of perishable stuff that crumbles of old age upon touching.

Ancient Sleep Disturbed

Preferably coinciding with the end of the age-old torches life, an unlucky lad will open a tomb containing a long-dead fell trapped in the stone crypt. The fell immediately attacks and kills whoever is in its way. It does not take long for the other kids to haul themselves out screaming bloody murder.

Read the following when your party reaches the coffin of your choice.

The torches on the wall start to die in the same order that they have been lit. Their old age giving them a vulnerability to the fire, plunging the crypt into an uneasy darkness almost as soon as the slab of rock of the coffin you were working on falls to the floor. The crashing sound of the stone seems to be louder when the light has gone and the echo of your deeds travels the length of the corridor. Everything returns to silence as the dust slowly settles allowing you to peek at the coffin's content. Suddenly a gauntleted hand reaches from the tomb and grasps the throat of one of Ulthielle's friend. The poor boy clasps his hands onto the gauntlet iron grip and starts to suffocate, his face twisted in pain and fear. At almost the same time the corpse inside the tomb begins to rise as two yellow eyes, lit by some infernal power opens to gazes at you, its left hand lifting a metallic shaft attached to several chains bound to spiked balls of metal.

At this point all the boys and Ulthielle start to scream in stupor. After the first glance of reaction by the PC's read the following.

The choking boy's desperation culminates as he starts to futilely strike the gauntleted arm with his fists in a frantic hope to release the cold grip from his throat. The corpse rises strangely upon its feet in the coffin, lifting the boy a few feet in the air as if he weighted nothing. In a swift clasp of its hand the neck of the boy snaps. His arms fall lifeless alongside his body as he stops to wiggle and gag as all the while the armored corpse never lost sight of you. Fixed is its gaze upon you as he drops from the coffin, loosening his grip upon the dead boy who disappears behind the coffin, the sound of his body falling to the ground deafened by the metallic cacophony of the corpse's armor as it hits the floor.

This undead is an ancient Fell twisted by old magics and deadly curses and is somewhat different than the usual Fell and at this point it only wants to kill other living beings and will start with the host of youngsters in its midst. The PC's really have two choices, fight or flee. The Undead will follow them out of the crypt if they flee (wise choice) or fight them if they dare to take it on. If the PC's try to fight it, have it miss once and read the following.

Ancient fell

Undead Dorn; *medium Undead; CR5; HD 5d12; HP42; Init +0; Spd 20; AC18 (+2 Natural +8 Armor, -2 Dex), 10 touch, 18 flat footed; Atk +9 melee Flail (1d6+4); SQ Natural Armor, undead; AL CE; SV Fort +, Ref+, Will+; Str 18, Dex 7, Con-, Int 11, Wis11, Cha 3.*
Skills: Intimidate +8,
Feats: Cleave, Power Attack
Possessions: Rusted Full Plate Armor, Flail

The walking dead reaches far behind and swings his flail towards you. The spiked balls of steel pass over your heads with a deafening whooshing sound and hit the statue at the center of the crypt. Half of the stone statue explodes in a myriad of debris and a blinding cloud of grey dust. The undead start to laugh with a raspy voice as it pauses a moment, looking at its hands as if not believing their power.

If that description does not convince the PC's to start running then maybe nothing will and maybe they deserve to be mutilated by the fell. In any case, Ulthielle will start to run and all of her buddies will follow closely. Attempts to trap the undead in the staircase will only temporarily succeed, as the fell will relentlessly batter the trap door until it is destroyed.

GM's Advice: Alternate Demise

The boy can rise as a fell and can make for good horror-based Role-Playing since he can pretend that he played dead to get out of the Undead's grip etc... customize it as you see fit, the important thing being: Scary moment. If by any deeds of extreme chance (or very resourceful thinking) the players does manage to defeat the Fell on their own, then for the next event: The Interest of Treshan in Llyssia Quelos, simply have Llyssia be noticed by Treshan while standing in a window of the Quelos home. Treshan often makes round about Blackmoor and will notice her as she changes for the night.

Horror in Blackmoor

The fell will escape from the catacomb and start hacking its way into the village. The orc forces will put it down eventually but not after a dozen people have been killed. Due to the age and power of that undead, they will all raise the same night as fell and perpetuate the cycle until Legate Treshan deals with it personally, which will happen during the second invasion.

When the Fell reaches the outside read the following.

The undead emerges from the old house and immediately walks to a home on the other side of the street. The carnage that ensues can only be guessed by the horrific screams of the family victim to the hungry fell. The undead kills and feasts upon the flesh of anyone he can get its hands on. Ulthielle looks at you with a panicked expression.
"What are we going to do?!!!"

At this point, the party will have unleashed an evil upon Blackmoor that will ravage the inhabitants until it is destroyed. What they choose to do in front of this eventuality is their choice but alerting the orcs would be a good idea. The first priority is to destroy it. Explaining why they were out after curfew can come after. Lying about the real reason of their outing would then again be a good idea. The orcs will believe almost

anything as they will be happy to have fought something.

The party can still choose to fight it, in the open they can try to destroy it using improvised ranged weapons or any clever way that they can think of. The undead is powerful but somewhat slow, if it realizes that it cannot fend off its ranged opponents it will enter houses instead, needing to feed upon the living and drawing its foes in close quarters combat if they dare.

After ten to twelve minutes of fighting and chaos, the orcs will come into the scene. About ten orcs armed to the teeth will enter the house and shred the undead to pieces with little to no casualties. Then they will interrogate whoever stood by after they are done. Hopefully all the PC's will have fled by then if not, they will have to explain the situation. As said earlier the orcs will have enjoyed their fight and will only bully the remaining people into their homes.

Back at the Quelos home, the family can display what they have stolen from the crypt and wonder about their usage (and face an intense scolding by Llyssia. They must also take care not to display these items to other townsfolk as there is a chance that they will be betrayed to the authorities. Everything must still be hidden and kept a "family secret".

Unknown to most PC's as their characters will be in the relative safety of their homes (unless they risked a second outing) the families killed by the undead will raise as undead themselves. They will start to rampage in the town, killing other townspeople until the orcs and this time Legate Treshan will put a definitive halt to the outbreak. The chaos should not come to the Quelos home but be heard by many of the still awake members. Ulthielle will go see what this is about and thus sending her sister to look for her with dire results.

GM's Advice: Consequences

Possible epilogue: The family of the dead boy will be fed information by the other scared teens about what actually happened and they may want reparations and/or tell Treshan about the Quelos's blatant non-respect for his rule. They are in grief, so they will exaggerate.

Treshan Meets Llyssia Quelos

During the chaos of the second fell attack, an unfortunate event will take place. Fearing for her sister (and probable following brothers and/or friends), Llyssia Quelos will leave the relative protection of the family house and search for them; she will meet Legate Treshan who will immediately fall under her spell. After dealing with the fell, the face of Llyssia will haunt Treshan who will soon become obsessed with her.

If the fell has already been destroyed without further chaos, then explain (if asked) how Treshan noticed Llyssia as discussed in the Notes found in the event named Ancient Sleep Disturbed.

The Uneasy Courting

The day after, agents of Treshan will search Blackmoor in order to find where Llyssia dwells.

Read the following when you feel the party will be in the vicinity of the Quelos Home.

A group of orc warriors led by a human in rich cloaks roams about the town inquisitively inspecting several houses. The orcs look nonchalant and carry a great chest. Each time the human exits with nothing, his search leading him eventually to the Quelos home where you know outlawed items are hidden.

Any Quelos family members seeing this will dart back home to warn the family about the eventual visit. Elyssia Quelos will be out of the home to work at the tavern and will not be warned until the delegate has already reached her home.

Read the following if some PC's are present at the Quelos home when the delegate arrives.

There is a powerful knock at the door. Lorkan signals everybody to stay as he walks up to the entrance and opens the door. The old wooden boards reveal a man, dressed in black cloaks peering into the house with small, beady eyes. His face is long but narrow and his expression is one of suspicion.

"Yes?" Lorkan asks.

"I am looking for someone..." says the envoy. "... Someone who was out last night, beyond curfew I might add. Now let me in!" he commands.

Lorkan looking beyond the man notices the orc guard and decides it would be better to let the small man enter. The arched human slithers in the home and begins to inspect the residents. Looking carefully at each in the eye he then stops upon the face of Llyssia. His eyes open in awe as his jaw opens. Without looking he signals an orc to come in and the lumbering beast obeys.

"That's her!" he lustfully whispers to the orc, pointing his bony finger to Llyssia. The Quelos daughter closes her eyes as she thinks of what happened the night before, and realizes the extent of her mistake. The envoy starts to rub his hands together and ask Llyssia her name.

"Llyssia Quelos, daughter of Elyssia and Greggyk Quelos." She answers proudly, her voice captivating the emissary and even catching the outside orc's attention. "I must apologize for my breaking of the curfew but with the attacks..." The emissary shakes his head rapidly and smiles.

"Bah! No need to worry child! Lord Treshan understands completely your lack of obedience. It is normal to protect one's own family against such threats." He says, dismissively waving his right hand over his shoulder. "However, this is not exactly why I am here." He adds.

Outside the orcs begin to grunt and speak as Elyssia Quelos tries to hastily to enter her house despite the orcs blocking the way. "Let me in!" she yells. The orcs, amused finally lets her inside but not before giving her a shove that nearly throws her off her feet. Lorkan seeing his mother being mistreated started to move but is quickly stopped by Caranthir.

"What is going on!" she asks Llyssia while recovering from her near fall. "Why are these people here..." she adds with a panicked tone to her voice. The delegate turns his gaze to Llyssia's mother and smiles.

"There is no need to be alarmed Miss Quelos" he hisses with a grin. "In fact this is a good day for you. But more so for your daughter." Obviously not understanding the situation Elyssia looks at the man with incredulity. "Lord Treshan wishes your family to accept these mere gifts." He added while snapping his fingers. The orcs outside catching on as to what the human seems to want, enter the home carrying the huge chest. They transport it in the middle of the room and loudly drop it.

“With the compliments of our Lord and Master” proudly displays the man. Gazing back to Llyssia is then smiles again. “I hope you make good use of these gifts.” Before Elyssia could ask what was the meaning all this, the emissary turns and exits, followed by his orcish escort. Elyssia look at them leave and looks back at Llyssia who closes her eyes once more, not wanting to face her mother’s angry stare.

At this point the PC’s will be able to explain to Elyssia what actually happened. If Ulthielle is painted as being the cause of all this, Elyssia will forcefully punish her starting by a good hand strike to the face and yelling at her for not having the brains to think about her family’s safety. Ulthielle will retreat to the girl’s bedroom and barricade herself. Anyone trying to help her go through that experience will get yelled off, especially non-family members, men in particular.

When the content of the chest is revealed it will hold food, clothing and some objects that are clearly for Llyssia’s use such as fine silk dresses and robes, a mirror, and a good provision of soap and perfumes. Elyssia will immediately distribute the food but will have reserves as to the other items. The PC’s can take their pick as to what they want from the chest’s content, but they know full well that any show of luxury and even decent clothes would be looked upon with distrust and suspicion by other townsfolk.

After successfully finding the Quelos family and Llyssia, Treshan will then begin a clumsy courting, taking form as other gifts, relaxation of laws and statutes for her family. This has some unwelcomed ramifications: The rest of the population will begin to feel that the Quelos’s had a special status, therefore *must* be collaborators. Immediately all Quelos friends and contacts will dry up and family members will be shunned and insulted. This is a process that will span several days culminating when Treshan will actually summon Llyssia to his manor in the northern woods of Blackmoor. Have the players live some days normally in Blackmoor in order to have them taste the true effects of Treshan’s interest in the Quelos daughter.

If some, more paranoid PC’s suggest to leave Blackmoor as they feel danger may yet come, the Quelos family will refuse. They are still very attached to Blackmoor and most of all; fear the troops and goblin sniffers that may catch them if they intend to travel outside the limits of the village.

The Price of Peace

Treshan’s patience is less than legendary; he will meet Llyssia in the family house within a few days and tell her that all the gifts and privilege they enjoy will turn into a nightmare if she does not follow him back to his residence.

Read the following after a few days pass and the population starts to think the Quelos are collaborators to the Shadow and when most of the PC’s are in the Quelos home.

The door resounds again with the sound of forceful knocks. As it opens you see Lord Treshan on the porch. His face shows definite signs of hate and his eyes look upon whoever opened the door with almost unsaid violence. His black armor gleams in the sunlight and his dark and elaborate sword hangs menacingly at his side. Again Elyssia is missing and Llyssia as the current head of the family walks towards the door and stands before the dark Lord. His face seems to change expression as his cold gaze finally comes upon her and he wondrously tilts his head slightly as if he was pondering something marvelous but yet elusive.

“Llyssia Quelos, long have you benefited from my grace. Now is the time to come through with my intentions. I require you to come to my mansion tomorrow at noon, alone preferably. We will discuss important matters involving your station and the status of your family.” He snarls. “If by any reason you happen to be late, you will discover that what you gained in prestige and material comforts can be stripped and even reversed.” He adds lifting his head defiantly. “Don’t be late...” Upon this he turns away and leaves for his horse waiting in front, escorted by a dozen orc warriors.

A family debate will ensue; Ulthielle will plan to assassinate Treshan while Elyssia thinks that the family protection is what is to be best considered. The PC’s will be involved actively in the debate as Quelos family members will ask them if they have any idea what to do. What comes out of this matter not as Llyssia will opt for the more pacific approach and prepares to leave for the Treshan estate despite what others will try to say.

At this point the Quelos family, including Llyssia, will begin to think that their safety may be in jeopardy and some of them (particularly Caranthir and Ulthielle) will begin to wonder if fleeing would be better than to go through with all of this. Elyssia and Llyssia as well as Alirielle and Lorkan will still be against fleeing as they fear yet the Shadow’s ability to catch up with them. It

would take an incredible feat of persuasion at this point to convince the Quelos family to leave. But it's not impossible. Have your PC's try if they want, but do not let them simply roll a diplomacy roll, make them work for it, and then roll. Give them bonuses or minuses depending on their arguments but the DC should be hard (around the ranges of 18 to 22) depending on how the board the subject. If they do manage to convince the family, then skip directly to the event named "The Escape to High Vale Forest" The escape to the eastern forest.

The Rebellion of Ulthielle

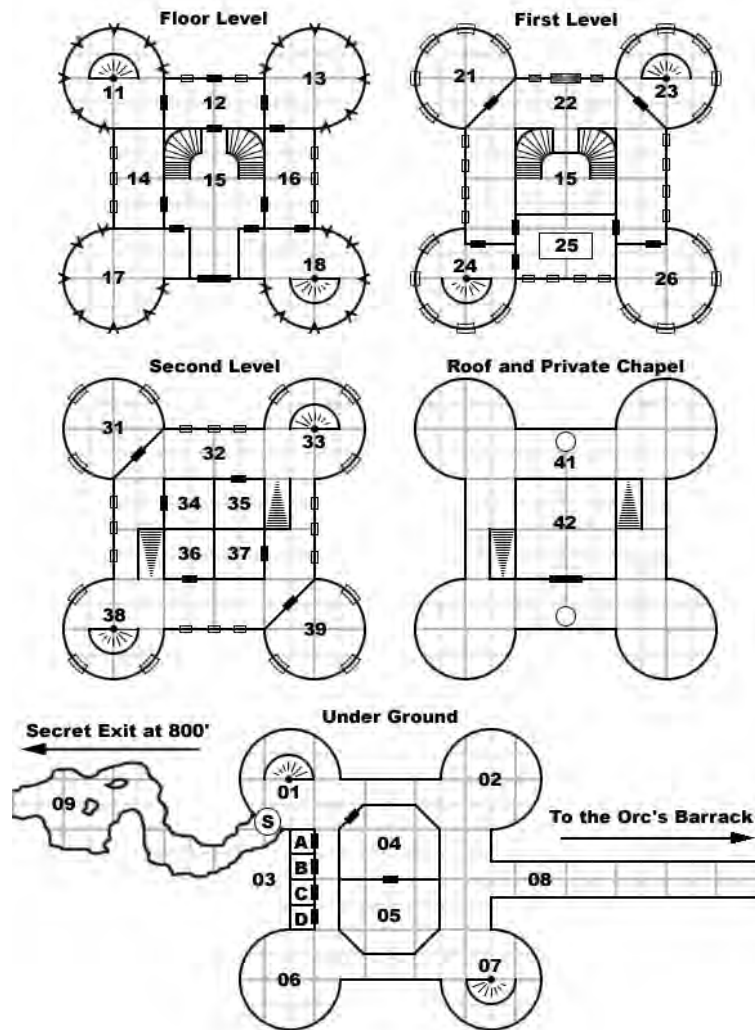
Ulthielle will not stand still and let her family honor be so savagely trampled. She intends to go forth with her project to assassinate Treshan. Ulthielle will sneak to Treshan's estate during the night and try to assassinate him. This will abominably fail. The PC's can follow her if they wish and even try to stop or help her. This should make for good role-playing, but ultimately Ulthielle will go forth with her plan.

Ultimately, Ulthielle will not warn the PC's unless she has had some kind of bond between her and a PC. What I mean by bond is some time where the two could have talked and exchanged ideas or even had fun in some way. Ulthielle is very rebel and puts up a brave and irrepressible front, but deep inside she is deeply insecure and will want connection to one individual, not several, just one who she can (after denying it many times) put her trust in him and maybe call him a friend. This will not be easy on the man she has chosen and he may be required to endure her venom-filled personality.

However if no one has bonded with her than Ulthielle will go on her own. She will leave the Quelos home on that very night and head for Treshan's estate. On the other hand, if you want your PC's to follow, have one of them notice a small sound and maybe see a dark form slithering through the houses at night so that your party may have a chance of following her. If you feel that your PC's are better off just living the dreadful result of her nightly expedition then have them wake up to the sound of heavy metallic alarm bells (description box number two) and skip to event "The escape to High Vale Forest"

The paranoid nature of Treshan has led him over the years to protect all entries (even the chimney) with magical glyphs to alert him of intruders. The magical spells used to achieve this are a mix of Glyph of Warding and a clerical version of alarm. Although the result of these spells are important, how Treshan got to discover them is inconsequential but as soon as Ulthielle (or any other hostile

to Treshan) passes either a door or a window the alarm will go off in the form of huge gong sounds. It will not take long for orcs to arrive and identify the interlopers and some of them will go back and inform Treshan of this fact. With Ulthielle and possibly others with her in his mansion or the area; Treshan will go into a murderous fury and will have them pursued out of his home. A contingent of orcs will also be present and will add to the dangers Ulthielle and her companions will have to deal with. The mission is a failure and Ulthielle has spelled her family's doom. The only thing left to do now for the Quelos family will be to run.



Note: Since Treshan's estate plans are not described until Chapter 5 "Vindication" just take a minute or two to think about what is actually in the room they are trying to enter. But since the alarm will go off and that the party will have to run for their lives, this is inconsequential.

GM's Advice: flow of Battle

The way it should normally play out is; Ulthielle will sneak up to Treshan's estate and try to get into his bedroom window in the dead of night. Although her plan would have been perfect in its simplicity against most targets, in the case of a legate who has to pray at midnight it could reveal itself to be a problem. Unless anyone in the group (if the PC's came with her) has knowledge of this, then Ulthielle will trigger a glyph as soon as her foot touches the ground of the bedroom (or any other common entry points for that matter).

Read the following if the party is with Ulthielle in the entry point or near it.

Small arcs of lightning shimmer upon the first foot that touches the ground in the estate. An eerie glow appears a few feet from your position and from it, earsplitting sounds of gongs begins to blare.

You only have a moment to realize what just happened that added to the sound of the alarm, you hear the addition of a multitude of orc guards scurrying about your entry point, frantically trying to make their way to you as fast as possible. There is but only a few seconds to act or think before they barge in your area.

Read the following if the party is outside Treshan's estate or in Blackmoor.

Suddenly you are surprised with the blaring sounds of huge gongs ringing in the distance. The sound comes from Lord Treshan's estate. Upon looking at the estate's area you can see several lights lighting and some shouts in the Black Tongue from afar. Several houses in Blackmoor are also awoken by that infernal sounds, but more so because most know that nothing like that sounds like good news.

Treshan will be nowhere near any entry points because at that time as he will be praying to Izrador in his

private chapel. Upon the sound of alarm he will be troubled in his prayer. Torn between the will to confront the intruders and his devotion to his dark god, Treshan will choose not to insult his Dark Lord and will finish his prayers. Although deep into his pious traditions and tenets, he will however, release his Astirax minion and his human depute to investigate and order a full-scale response to this threat.

If the PC's do not retreat swiftly, they will have to personally deal with ten orc guards as well as one or two Oruks. Treshan's Astirax named Krellyx will stand in the distance and watch what is going on. If he ever sees the party he will only bother following and observing. He will then report to his master when he knows Treshan will be out of his prayer duties.

As for the human depute, he will try to order the orcs around but a measly human has no authority over them and the orcs will just do as they see fit. Krellyx will see that, and will have him slain, framing the death on the intruders and thus ridding himself of a potential threat to Treshan's attention and favors. Treshan will be all the more enraged by the death of his only real link to the population.

The Escape to High Vale Forest

Treshan will not be able to pursue the company for a while. His prayer duties will keep him occupied for at least half an hour more. Added to this time will be the few minutes of donning his armor and saddling his horse. Added the fact that maybe his horse may have been either set free/killed and/or saddle sabotaged by Ulthielle or the PC's. Add the time it will take Treshan's forces to find the Quelos trail, the Quelos family and its allies will have some time to leave, but not that much. Treshan's handicap will orbit around one hour.

The Quelos family will not have a ton of choices when the time to flee will come. The west is blocked by a wide and strong river and along the shore to the north and south; the orcs have taken there their strongest position in order to control waterborne traffic. The east on the other hand is slightly guarded and furthermore holds the only cover for miles around: the High Vale Forest. Situated a half day's walk away from town, it is the party's best hope to elude the Shadow's forces.

The travel to High Vale forest will be a perilous one. The orcs at the village have been alerted of the treason and some of them will be mobilized to intercept the PC's. The first batch that actually managed to

immediately follow the group will be minutes away from the party and fully visible in the distance. This constant pace will take a huge toll on Alirielle's health and she will significantly slow the whole company down. On the other hand, the running-trained Orcs will close down on the group regardless of PC's speed. The group will have to face these orcs; they are significantly less than the group and want to slow them down in order for Treshan to catch up. The only horse in Blackmoor will be Treshan's. This horse is a charger who will not let itself be ridden by anyone else. This sad fact will force the party to travel on foot.

At this point, violent PC's may regard Ulthielle as a worthless blight on everyone's safety. In a sense they may be right and Ulthielle will finally realize that, again, her attitude has spun wet another web of danger for herself and her family. Not to mention all other who may be willing to travel with the Quelos. But although she has yet plunged her own family into a disastrous fate, she is the catalyst that starts the whole destiny that the Children of Aryth are bound to live. Were her actions her own? Or were they coaxed by some ancient power? It is up to you to decide. Despite all of this however, the Quelos may scream their lungs out to Ulthielle about their anger and fear of the unknown, they nonetheless love Ulthielle for who she is and will not treat her too badly for what she has done. Especially not Alirielle, her little sister who will comfort her and tell her family diplomatic quelling things such as:

"It matters not that we are now destined to run, a life of slavery even in our own homes is no life at all. I am glad, even if my body will bear it badly, that you pushed us to do what we were, to my feeling, better off doing anyway."

Role-Playing Tip

Lorkan will be inspired by her little sister's words and will keep an eye on anyone who would do Ulthielle harm. He will help Alirielle bear the travel as best he can, even if it means carrying her on his shoulders.

There is a six hours walk/jog from Blackmoor to the High Vale Forest. Although everything would seem to favor the pursuers (higher rate of movement, Quelos have weak family members) for once, the Shadow's grip on fate will slip momentarily. The elements will strangely favor the Quelos as high winds will hide their smell from the orcs, the nearly frozen ground will purposefully not remember their tracks etc. This is

Aradil's doing. Some ancient sheltering spells still hangs about the area and favors the fate of Aryth's children and will allow them to arrive at the forest moments before Treshan catches up to them with the mainstay of available orcs.

GM's Advice: Encounters

Do not dismiss random encounter checks in the area; Aradil's protective spells cannot encompass haphazard meetings with wildlife. Nor can it contend with all contingencies.

With this in mind, your players don't have a significant chance of being caught by Treshan, but it is important to make them feel that he is always near them, just under the horizon, just behind that hill. His presence should be felt by the Party by the media of unchained weather in the distance, rolling thunder and lightning where Blackmoor used to appear.

Read the following when the party finally sees the forest in the distance.

The sounds of hellish weather over the grounds that was once your home has somewhat diminishes as the constant resounding of your own blood rushing to your head, the unfortunate result of near-exhaustion, supersede all other sounds. Although your flight seems unending, and Treshan's advance imminent, the features of the endless plains before you seem to change. The distant tree tops of large coniferous break the monotony and rise in the expanse as a definite sign of your salvation. This is High Vale Forest, and you are nearing your goal.

Welcome!

The forest is already the home of human refugees. And those men and women do not want others to know of their hidden settlement. This is largely due to the fact that these refugees have been smuggled from Blackmoor and know that Treshan might be on their trail and that anyone not "scheduled" to be welcomed as refugees pose a real security threat to them. With this in mind, they regularly patrol the Forest's borders to kill anyone foolish or unfortunate enough to come close. Unfortunately for the Quelos, forward positioned scouts have spotted their advance for some time, and will fire on them whenever they get within range. Not

wanting any witnesses of any kind they will shoot to kill.

Read the following when your party reaches Bow range.

The comforting sight of the forest soon reaches the left and right horizon as your flight draws you closer to the edge. The green depths of the trees almost seem to invite you. As your heart begins to fill with hope that you will indeed make it to the perimeter, several flickers of white detach themselves from the dense foliage, rising through the air as would daring birds determined to reach the skies. The spots of white hang in the air as their ascent suddenly stop, seemingly hovering in mid-air like a dance of exotic white butterflies but as the sound of the wind gives way to a strange whistling the white spots begin their descent towards you in a hail of murderous arrows.

The scouts (20 Wildlanders 2-3rd level) will unleash about three to four volleys starting at about 220 feet. They intend to do as much damage as possible before charging to eradicate the interlopers. The Party will have two choices, either to charge or try to parley. The party should be damaged, but never should anyone die from these attacks. This scene is meant to infuse a feeling of being unwelcome and should be used to that sense. Have a dramatic flair when describing how one of the women suddenly gets hit by an arrow and screams in pain as she topples over to the ground half conscious. This should get the macho blood boiling in your party. In either case as soon as the confusion of being attacked as been resolved, skip to the next event.

Alliance of Fortune

Another squad of orcs who have been following the first (but saw the corpses) suddenly appears over the hill near the Quelos and interrupts whatever has been going on at the time. The humans realize that their cover is blown whatever happens and the scouts then move their fire onto the orcs choosing to help the lesser of two evils.

Read the following when the orcs arrive.

Death rains from above as the ground around you begins to turn white from the arrows fired upon you. Their screams whistling past your ears as the occasional shaft cruelly injures the unwary of the unfortunate. In the corner of your eyes, you look for escape but only find woe as you witness yet another group of orcs rising from the hill next to you. As soon as they see sign of

battle, they charge into your midst with furious anger and hatred.

The battle on the edge of the forest will be tough but not without hope. After a few rounds (Up to your discretion, if you see that they are doing well it may be longer, if they are getting beaten up then sooner) the party will be reinforced with enough people from the forest to take the victory within seconds. The task to hide the bodies will then start while Elyssia and Arielle care for the wounded. The party is then taken into the forest's relative security to meet with the settlement's leader just in time before Treshan appears on top of the hill in the distance. Treshan is no fool however and knows that the Quelos have gained access to the refugees in that forest. A village of refugees he was planning to assault in the weeks to come, when the reinforcements from his superior finally arrives. Treshan will linger a few moments at the forest's edge and turn back to Blackmoor soon after his detachment of forty orcs behind him.

The Wildlanders will have seen the party's usefulness as their healing skills are impressive (especially mother Elyssia Quelos). They will allow them to live but will strip them of all weapons and escort them to the relative safety of the High Vale settlement. None of the scouts will answer questions and will keep to themselves. Although unhappy that they might have given away their position, they know of their master's will to inspect all who successfully come to High Vale according to some ancient tradition or prophecy they are not sure.

The Hidden Settlement of High Vale

High Vale

Population: 218 (85% Erenlanders, 15% Dorns)

Ruler: Teramilil Joreden

Armed Forces: 110, 1st lvl Fighters, 40, 2nd lvl Fighters, 30 2nd lvl Wildlanders.

Main product: Bows, Arrows, Training & Woodcraft.

The coming of the Quelos family and its allies, in fact the first Children of Aryth, in High Vale Forest is the fulfillment of the first part of what has been told to Aradil by the ancient spirit of Aryth. Hidden for many years in that forest is one of the Witch Queen precious envoys sent to aid the prophesized individuals when the time became right and the elf's name is Teramilil of the Joreden house. This male elf has been chosen

personally by Aradil (as all other envoys) and has miraculously survived the black tidal wave by hiding cleverly in this patch of woods.

With the grip of the Shadow tightening, the people sought refuge in High Vale, but were not expecting to encounter such a phenomenal person. Quickly a small compound was etched in the fledgling forest and the birth of a small community of survivors was born. Teramilil's teachings on survival, nature, elven customs and knowledge as well as crafts and warfare have proven to be quite useful as the camp became more of a hidden village. Even if the forest is not made of millennia-old Homewood trees, the settlement does rest of the branches of thick pines, definitely brought there and held by elven craft and building techniques as well as more direct and invasive human ideas and methods. All around, if no one is on the ground to give away the secret, the broad and thick pine branches will effectively conceal the dwellings against anyone walking through the village's position. Although anyone with some woodland experience will notice, the orcs have not such keen eyes for detail, perhaps goblin sniffers however may.

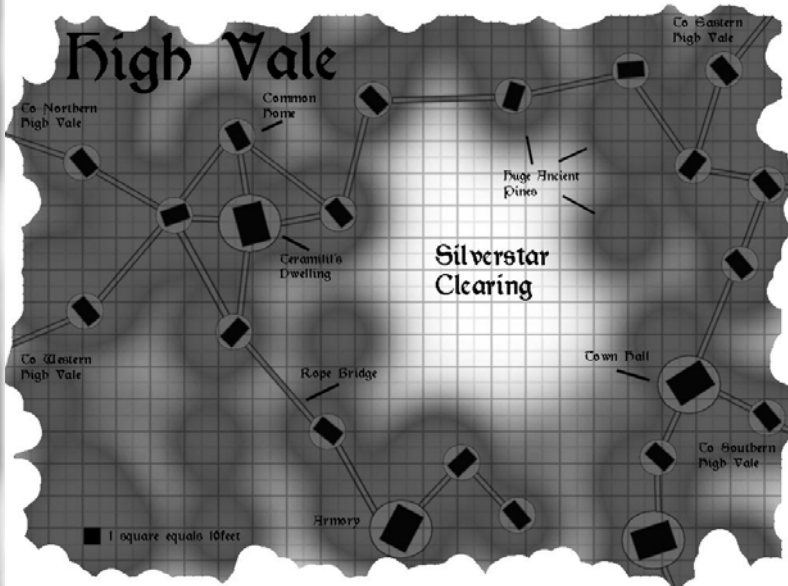
Since the beginning of the Last Age, several individuals have organized several operations to liberate people from Blackmoor. Each time these operations were carefully planned and were objects of great scrutiny by all in the village for the secrecy of the area was always

accidentally or purposefully revealed. Little do they know that the Legate in charge of the area; Legate Treshan, already know of the settlement and is secretly preparing for its eradication.

It is a sad fact indeed that Treshan knows about High Vale, but more disturbing even is his restraint of attacking immediately. Not wanting to send individuals fleeing in the fear of an impending attack, he prefers to leave the forest untouched and unthreatened so that one day, he can come and kill everyone in one swift stroke. To aid him, he has made it possible over the years of his reign to arrange the "liberation" of one of his closest acolyte. The community of High Vale being infiltrated in this fashion, Treshan will have the opportunity to strike from within when the time will come.

Since the forest isn't that big, the settlement is about an hour's walk from the outskirts. By the time the party approaches the borders, a delegation of children and curious people appears from nowhere and starts to escort the newly arrived. Most of them curious, but some of them have very angry traits and some of the party members are the victims of stones. People will stare at the party, obviously not wanting them in their woodland village.

Read the following when the Party reaches the outskirts of the High Vale settlement.



paramount to all other endeavors, including rescue and liberations missions. Unscheduled "arrivals" were always regarded as being security risks, and any curious and/or non-humans snooping around the forest were always made to "disappear". The Quelos will be considered as lucky ones; trespassers who have been allowed to live, but who must never be allowed to leave else the secret of the High Vale Forest may be

Your progression into High Vale Forest continues as the pines and other coniferous trees shelter you from the light with their lush and green branches. The shadowy underbrush is streaked with beams of light coming from above, and your feet softly sink somewhat in the cushioned layer of pine needles. As the surrounding becomes familiar, you begin to see shapes in the distance. A soft whisper of people talking to each other quietly begins to echo as you begin to pass by what seems to be survivors and escapees of Blackmoor. The inhabitants of this place look at you with a mix of surprise and anger at first, and as you follow the scouts even deeper amongst the people, the whisper abruptly change to yells of resentment and statements of your impromptu arrival. The scouts try to calm

the populace as you finally make your way into a clearing sheltered by huge and ancient coniferous trees but the situation seems to degenerate as Alirielle is suddenly struck by a thrown rock. The frail body of the youngest Quelos slumps to the ground as her face suddenly bloodies itself. At this point the scouts unsheathe their swords and quickly prevent the

situation from escalating to a full-fledged stoning. As Elyssia tends to her child, Lorkan and Caranthir look at each other with anger in their heart and clasp their teeth together, as if trying to calm themselves down by relieving their sight from the crowd and their injured sister.

The crowd will cease their attack on the Quelos and their allies at this point. Not knowing what they represent, they are looked upon as mere risk of discovery and most will hate them and fear them. This however is about to change as Teramilil is hurrying to the site, having heard of many people having gained entrance to High Vale on their own, a sign that they are possible the ones Queen Aradil has told him about.

At this time, tensions must be really high amongst everybody and if some hot-tempered players want to duke it out with one or two villagers for injuring who is probably one of the most gentle and caring people left on Aryth then let them do so. If they are unsure of what they must do, then let Ulthielle jump in the face of a man who just threw an insult to her family, then have Caranthir and Lorkan join the fray. The Scouts will try to calm the situation but nothing will truly be accomplished until Teramilil arrives. No combat should be lethal as only fists and feet are available to anyone. Do not forget Elyssia's and Llyssia's pleas to stop the fighting as well as Ulthielle's cursing and yelling as she tears the man's face to shreds with her fingernails. Blood, violence and cries of women... A true testament of what the Shadow has spread all over Eredane.

Teramilil Joreden.

Teramilil will arrive at the scene; chaos and violence are spreading like a plague and people are fighting each other. All too familiar with this sight Teramilil will distract the attention and quell burning spirits with a display of magic. The fighting will stop, and a decent conversation can then be initiated.

Read the following when Teramilil reaches the scene.

The wails of assault resonate throughout the clearing as if the forest was invaded by enemies but the battle that rage is more in the order of a standard bar fight than real actual combat. Ulthielle is clamped on a man's back, clawing and biting the poor soul in the neck, his screams of pain as well as his futile attempts to shake her off seem inefficient. On her left Caranthir is wrestling with two middle-aged farmers as Lorkan is being assaulted by four men in their prime. The latter does not even seem bothered by the collective weight and only tries to fend off his attackers instead of actually breaking their arms as he could easily do. Elyssia

shouts reproaches to the crowd as she helps her youngest recover to her feet, her forehead still patted with blood and pine needles as Llyssia boldly stands before her mother and sister trying to persuade the angry mob to subside.

Suddenly there is a flash of white and blue light that encompasses the entirety of the clearing. The shouts and sounds of melee combat immediately gives way to frightened screams of women and consternation of others. When the light disappears all begin to see their surroundings again and all eyes are wide-opened and dismayed of what just happened. The battle thus ends abruptly in its fiercest moment.

"Calm down everyone!" says a silky voice behind the mob. The voice almost trickles as would a gentle spring stream upon a bed of smooth rocks. None of you ever heard this texture or tone of voice before, soft but yet commanding and assured. As you turn around to see who spoke in such a manner, your eyes behold a sight none of you had ever imagined. Before you stand a man dressed in clothing tailored in fine leathers, the designs of leaves and trees can be seen on his jacket as well as his pants. His face is smooth and angular and his eyes are wide and clear. His long brown hair is neatly tied in a ponytail as two braids hang each side of his head, partly concealing a pair of pointy ears.

The man walks confidently amongst the ragtag agglomeration of refugee and approaches you until he is but a few feet. Calmly and gracefully he looks about at everyone.

"This behavior will stop immediately. I will not tolerate brothers of the same race fighting each other out of fear and ignorance!" he snaps, his tone of voice as sharp as a whip. "Now recover your dignity and offer peace to these guests!" he adds.

The population of the settlement reacts to his words promptly and all fighting parties let go of their grasps and a feeling of tensed hushed emotions fill the air. Despite all that is going on, the elf looks upon you in wonder and smiles. Offering his hand to Elyssia Quelos he then efficiently starts to aid your family to rise to its feet.

"I am so sorry for what just happened in my sanctuary, these men and women are still much under the taint of the Shadow's touch and fear is still present in their hearts." He says smiling while looking about as the population disperses. Looking back at you he then smiles warmly and bows generously.

"Please let me introduce myself, I am Teramilil of the Erethorian house of Joreden. It is very possible that it is the first time that you see one such as me, so let me

assure you, I am in no way tied to the darkness that afflicts us all. In fact, I am here in order to fight it as best I can. I welcome you into our midst.”

From this point the party will have the peace they require in order to rest and tell Teramilil what they wish. Teramilil will explain to them the nature of this settlement and why in short, the people here are such paranoid persons. Here are a few topics on which Teramilil will answer on the spot.

If asked about the elves.

My race is called elf, elves if spoken in plural terms. We are an ancient race of beings indigenous to the great forest in the west known as Erethor. When your people, the humans, first set foot upon the southern coasts of Eredane, we were already roaming the land for many years. Since it is reasonable to think that you do not know how to count, look upon the stars in the nightly heavens, and each star would represent a year.

At base we are a peaceful people and highly advanced in knowledge and craft, but the coming of Izrador changed all that. Now, like your people did a few years ago, we stand before the armies of the Dark Lord, fighting the orcs and hanging on the brink of destruction.

If asked about the settlement.

Long ago, I was sent here for a specific task. Since my arrival, the Shadow in the north was unbound and ravaged the continent from north to south. I was then cutoff from my people and forces to elect permanent residence here in the relative secrecy of this forest. Along the years I have opened my home to these people in dire need of help and shelter. Do not take their intentions wrongly, they are profoundly good people, just trying to savagely protect what they have learned to call home. It is true however that this settlement boldly lives close to Blackmoor and its Legate.

If asked about the shadow.

The Shadow is a term we, defenders of our homelands use loosely to define the Dark God Izrador’s forces and even the will of the Dark God itself. It is a general term and to be used in secrecy.

If asked about Treshan.

Treshan still does not know about this place; however I do not underestimate his intellectual capacities. He is bound to discover it sooner or later and I just hope that my task is completed before it is the case.

If asked about his task.

My task is very simple in design, but extremely complicated to perform. I cannot talk about such matters right now, for I have still things I must be certain of, before I resolve myself into explaining it fully. I will tell you if the proper opportunity comes.

Although Teramilil is open to discussion and generally well mannered and diplomatic, he will remain tightlipped as to his real mission here in High Vale. He knows that the descriptions given to him by Aradil strangely resemble the newcomers, but mistakes and false hopes in the past have made him

GM’s Advice: Information

Intelligent group members will ask if they can see houses and such other dwellings. Just tell them that strangely there is not a single dwelling in the area and that they must be located further into the forest. If asked, Teramilil will not respond yet, this is purposefully done to keep some level of security.

wary of entertaining such premature assumptions. He will accommodate the group by giving them temporary shelter on the ground in a manner of tents and fire. At this point, the group will still not be aware that the real settlement is indeed in the trees right above them. The ways to reach the settlement are not in view of the clearing and the population will still avoid the Quelos and their allies and will not volunteer any information on that topic.

The group will be left alone to rest for the rest of the day; Caranthir will stay awake during the night, having heard noises in the trees and having seen strange lights amongst the branches. He will not tell anyone as he wants everyone to rest comfortably, without the added stress of the unknown above them.

The next morning, Teramilil will have his answers and will joyfully (although he will remain calm and graceful) greet the Quelos and the others. At this point you may declare a time warp, where role-playing can be meta-gamed. Here are some small events you may want to arrange at your will:

Teramilil officially welcomes the Quelos and their allies as friends of High Vale, thus part of the community. The announcement should be well taken by

the others. Yet there may be others who could not be happy with that.

One player is approached by the opposite sex as interest towards true survivors grows. Romantic involvement may happen. In all the small events and life you can create from this halt in this relative haven of peace away from the clutches of the Shadow, one thing is certain, soon the party will be revealed their destinies and all will realize that they must depart. Although this fact may be disconcerting, it must be accepted as an eventuality.

Role-Playing Tip

The bonds that your players may create with the people in High Vale may become drama inspiring as the time for departure will come and furthermore, since Treshan is scheduled to raid the settlement in about two months, these relationships may very well become source of tragedy. All good role-playing if you ask me.

Secrets unlocked, secrets revealed

Teramilil's mission is about to fulfill itself. His mission objectives were very clear:

- Identify the Children of Aryth
- Train them in order to survive
- Escort them to Erethor through the northern

Approach, the snow elves are aware of the prophecy and since they are used to aiding rogue humans, they will know what to do to send you south to the city of Shaliduul where, the other elven Children of Aryth will arrive.

Answering these orders, Teramilil will offer what knowledge he has in order to train anyone who would become a fighter/Channeler/Rogue and Wildlander.

At this point none of the player should have been given the opportunity to collect experience points and raise levels. This opportunity gives them the right to scrub their level as a commoner and raise themselves to second level in a class of their choice effectively. When this is done, it is my understanding of the experience

that should have been given to raise them to half the required experience to access to the 3rd level.

The whole process of training will be done in the two months of time-warp. If you want to micro-manage this training period, go for it. There may be some other challenges and/or events you may want to cook up by yourself then this would be a good chance to do so. Be sure to describe the activities done in training to acquire feats as well as magical knowledge and abilities for this texture makes for excellent player to character bonding. Furthermore, Teramilil will educate the players in different skills such as geography, history and language skills. Refer to Teramilil's character sheet in the annex in order to determine what is available.

Early in the training (about the second day or third day) Teramilil will explain the various facets of the now darkened world of Aryth. His speech will go as follows:

When the world was young, the creatures roamed upon Aryth in harmony and grace. The greatest as well as the minutest of beings co-existed peacefully. The gods above nurtured and cultivated the races that they implanted upon the face of the lands. But a war broke out between the gods; Izrador the god of evil and darkness had been plotting and harvesting incalculable strength and power to defeat his brothers and sisters in the celestial realm. The war ravaged the skies and the world of Aryth was the victim of its repercussions. Izrador would have won the war, if it weren't up until all the other gods allied each other against him. The collective might of all the gods of good and neutrality proved too powerful for Izrador who was beaten, his material form shredded into cosmic dust. His spiritual being was cast out of the heavens and dropped on Aryth like the carcass of a dead beast. Although vanquished, Izrador had enough power left to do one last thing. When his spirit was being cast down onto the mortal realm to die he used whatever dark magic left in him to corrupt all godly magic. This had as effect to lift a veil of darkness between the gods and Aryth, condemning the world to a godless existence. The gods, unable to contact, much even less reach the world of Aryth helplessly looked upon their victory with bitterness and hoped that the mortals would find a way to save themselves...

The veil had numerous unfortunate consequences for Aryth: Izrador, even weak and unable to do anything but slumber for many, many generations, had become the only god able to intervene in Aryth. This rendered the existing priest powerless and became known as the abandoned. Another dismal consequence was for the dead. From now on, the spirit of the newly dead could not travel to the heavens to be collected by the gods of their faith. Instead they remain, tethered to their decaying body. Some of them, confused and angry,

return as the Fell while very dead, the power of the spirits haunting the corpse would return and animate the body, enabling it to search for the only substance they know could ease their suffering: the taste of living flesh. This was however not entirely to Izrador's benefit, for the forces of the dead attack indiscriminately; they do not make the difference between good and evil. However, the legates of Izrador soon harvested the power of the dead and yet transformed the effects of the veil to Izrador's advantage.

When Izrador fell on Aryth, great cataclysms occurred. The earth split and the winds howled, mountains sprung from the ground and fires ravaged the lands for generations. When the great sundering finally blew over, the face of Aryth was changed forever. The animals had become feral, and most of the ancient humanoid races either perished or changed. The elves, dwarves Halflings and unfortunately the orcs were born from the remnants of those races, born under an unfamiliar and unforgiving world.

Many generations passed and Izrador regained some of its strength. Having invested the orcs as being a race suitable for his needs, he tried to conquer Aryth but was repelled by the joined forces of Elves, Dwarves and the newly arrived humans.

It took Izrador Three times before his orcish armies finally broke the back of the alliance and poured over Aryth like spilled black ink. His armies, almost unchallenged by the broken humans split the continent in two forcing the elves to retreat to Erethor their magical and most holy grounds, and forced the dwarves back into their underground holdfasts, built many generations ago by their forefathers.

Now the forces of Izrador control the majority of Aryth, crushing the humans to an existence of slavery and misery, the Halflings from the central plains have all but been exterminated. The gnomes strangely enjoy none of those miseries and freely aid the Shadow by transporting its troops and supplies thus aiding the war effort greatly. Its is indeed a dark time, a time of darkness, a time the elven record-keepers have named, The Last Age.

Gone are the kings of old, destroyed are their cities and killed are its heroes. The Legates are systematically eradicating magic from the land. Izrador has loosened his Night Kings upon Aryth. Born of treachery and evil, these four Lords of darkness are Izrador's foremost dark hands and ears. They command dreadful powers and lead the armies of the Shadow to victory after victory. None have stood against them and lived, and their reign is organized and terrible. Like the extensions of the dark god himself, they only aspire to destroy the

land of the living, squeezing its very lifeblood in order to feed an ever-hungering god.

Teramilil smiles: "That's where you come in".

The great Witch-Queen of the elves, Aradil, has foreseen the coming of certain bloodlines that would eventually hinder the Shadow in its plans of domination and conquest, and you my dear friends are part of those bloodlines. I have been sent here many years in advance in order to prepare for your coming. Most of these beings were to be humans. But you are not alone to have been chosen by fate, most are still unknown to us and even to them remaining hidden, unaware of the role that they must play. Most ancient sages have speculated that the very earth of Aryth has reacted to the Shadow's contagion and like the body of a feverish man, has started to fight back. The response from Aryth was you, infused with special abilities that make each of you unique; you are the children of a dying world, the last hope of Aryth and all its living creatures and beings. Spirits of nature have been singing your coming for many winters, their songs have sometimes deafened the whispering forest of Erethor and to some, these bloodlines represent the only salvation possible. Even in these desperate times, there is still the flickering light of hope amongst the crushing darkness, and these lights are you. Although Aradil has foreseen your births, she could not determine how you could ever defeat Izrador. That, she said, is up for you to discover.

Having said that, it is quite possible that your Players will ask specific questions about the Shadow and its activities. Teramilil, having been away from Erethor for so long, will not have current things to say about any of the Shadow's actions and will try to answer, but answers but be vague and slightly accurate at best.

Finish the training period with a feast and some insight as to what each character's heroic paths means and may represent in the future. Do not give away the surprise of discovering the paths, but some cryptic story about one's deeds and powers could do the trick.

The Betrayal and the Assault on High Vale

It all crashes down on one fateful night. Treshan will have done his homework and assembled a host of 300 orc soldiers, mostly recruits but nonetheless dangerous. His Astirax minion will have previously warned Treshan's insider of the troop's deployment and so when the spy informed Treshan about the feast and the temporary diminution of the patrol, he felt the time was right to unleash the Shadow's powers upon these rebels.

During the night, using the orc's ability to see in darkness, Treshan summoned a night with no moon to obscure is troop's movement and surrounded the forest on three fronts. He then sent 20 of his best orc scouts and warrior to wait on the far side of the forest for refugees trying to flee.

Upon the first sign of midnight, he orders the march into High Vale in order to use the gifted sight of the orcs to gain an advantage over the human rebels.

The few scouts remaining on the rounds will soon find orcs closing in on all sides at a frightening pace, the clear coniferous woods slowing them little as they light up the trees with savage torches, starting fires where they can. This has for instance of creating a huge forest fire which is then used to interdict victims to flee past the orcs. There is only one way out: The east.

Although the scouts have been warned and the forest fire lit, the orcs will arrive minutes after the scouts were able to warn the people of what is about to happen. Knowing that the sole solution is to flee, but not having the time to do it pushes all the warriors in the settlement to stand their ground on the forest floor and try to cover the non-combatant's retreat as best they can. The onslaught will be terrible and the healing powers of Elyssia as well as Alirielle's will be put to the test.

Adding to the already brutal and overwhelming evil plan, the spy culminated her years-long infiltration with the assassination of Teramilil during the night following the feast and just before Treshan's order of assault. After months of courting, Teramilil, knowing that the Children of Aryth indeed existed and that his faith in hope was not in vain he finally succumbed to the human women's charm. They did have a night of earthly pleasures until the appearance of the midnight hour when she plunges a poisoned blade in her relaxed and unsuspecting lover's back; the poison inflicts paralysis as well as death within the hour of exposure.

Read the following when the PC's have begun to sleep

The soft wind enters your room and gently rocks the drapes in the window. You are awoken by the strange smell of burning wood. As soon as you begin to rise from your beds, the sound of yelling as well as screaming begins to fill the air. Suddenly a scout crashes into your dwelling, the man is covered in soot and has his sword readied.

"The orcs are coming! They will be here within minutes, the forest is burning! We must hold them off while the women and children flee outside High Vale!" Upon saying this he then storms out of your house, leaving you to prepare for what's heading your way.

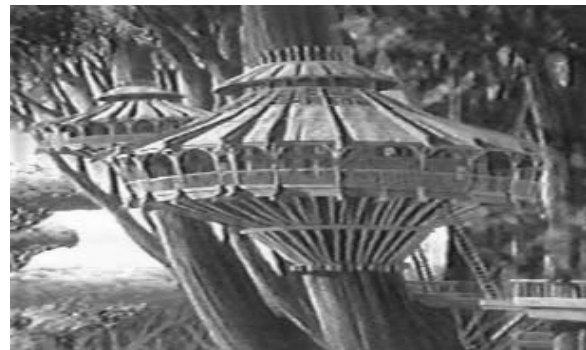
Basically, the orcs will be in High Vale in a matter of minutes. In addition to the surprise raid, the orcs have all been briefed on the village and its location and the fact that it is above ground. A line of archers will set fire to the trees as soon as they are in range, forcing everyone to evacuate to the ground where the mainstay of orc will be waiting.

There is actually no hope of avoiding the confrontation and I hope your players will have the sense to get to the ground as fast as possible in order to get some defenses ready. There are tree trunks and several objects that can offer cover and can be used to avoid being totally surrounded.

GM's Advice: Danger

This is a great time to unveil Elyssia's healing powers to its maximum to keep everyone alive, Alirielle will contribute also but since her ability to heal is limited by the amount of Non-Lethal damage she can take, she will be somewhat of little help.

The orcs will have to get past the elven-trained Wildlanders as well as a host of warriors and volunteers already positioned in certain areas near of in the clearing and they will at least keep some forces busy as the flow of orcs that do get through, collide with the PC's. The party will have to face a total of 25 orc recruits in successive waves of 5 or 6. This daunting task cannot be done with mindless toe-to-toe fighting and some teamwork will have to be used. The fact that some Quelos women are Rogues can make a good combination with the fighters, supplemented by the mages and Elyssia's healing. The orcs are powerful creatures and with Vardachs they can inflict tremendous amounts of damage and therefore even if they are dispatched quickly due to small amount of Hit Points, one good hit can mean death for some.



Role-Playing Tip

Always watch out for the flow of combat and the level of swarming your players are in. The players are supposed to win this fight, but give them hell and make them work for it. Include dramatic combat effects and situations like describing how the Vardach blow Lorkan just suffered sent a splash of his blood amongst the group, or maybe an orc can be killed just as it was about to place a perfect strike etc.

Bottom line, this is the climactic event of this chapter. The important thing is to have fun describing and letting your imagination run loose on what could actually happen in a combat like this.

Read the following when the host of orc has been destroyed.

After the last kill, the ambient noises of battle seem to diminish. Looking around, you see that amongst the spread corpses of orcs a few humans have survived. Splashed from head to toe in orc and human blood, they too look around groggily as if surprised to have lived through this ordeal at all. Fires set in various trees burn with impeded fury as the green and wet wood slowly chokes the flames. Although the fires seem to be lessening in intensity, the light it produces helps you see your surroundings more clearly.

Far within the forest to the north, almost out of sight range, you see the armored figure of Treshan comfortably sitting on a dark horse, his cape weakly floating at his side due to the hot air displaced by the blazes. Seeing you in the distance, he raises his bloodied mace defiantly and his mount rises on its rear hooves in a display of equine power and grace. Upon heavily landing on the ground Treshan turns his steed around and while sheathing his weapon to his side, picks up a woman in light silk night gowns. You hear her laughter as the two vanish in the billowing smokes of the distant forest fires.

The woman Treshan just picked up is the spy that stabbed Teramilil in the back. Treshan will gallop out

of High Vale as the forest fires slowly wane and will circle the forest in order to give special instructions to his elite orcs waiting on the other side. He will then ride back to Blackmoor in order to gather his reinforcements and finish the job with yet another 200 orcs.

It is true that Treshan did not expect such a powerful and organized resistance, being used to bullying submissive people got to his wits. A mistake he will never again make

Experience Allocation (per Character)

Surviving the Battle	750
Good Battle Strategy	150
Good Role-playing	50

Total Potential XP	950 xp
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The Last Command

As the smoke begins to thicken, the fires set to the forest are getting near but are getting weaker; the thick wet foliage of the trees slowly smothering the advance of the flames.

The battle is freshly over and most NPC's realize that they have not seen Teramilil during the battle. Fearing the worst they rush to his cabin only to see him face down, a dagger fiercely stabbed into his back. The poisoned blade has already made its intended effect and Teramilil has but only a few seconds to live. He will use those words to say the following:

"First of all I want you to not despair. I always had some doubt as the eventuality of my death (cough). The Shadow is strong and widespread. Even within my closest of friends I found my doom. So shall you keep a lesson out of this until the Shadow is gone, I hope. You salvation lies in your abilities (cough), and therefore you must find worthy teachers. Unfortunately, such help is so rare that even searching for it is a waste of precious short human years. My advice is to go west to the elven forest of Erethor (cough), the shadow there is strong but the snow elves are keeping them busy. They should greet you kindly if you kill some orc with them (laughing cough). Most elves do nothing but wage war against the Shadow's armies, and now, for about one hundred years, they know nothing else (cough). These elves are the easiest to reach for the glacial forest of the Veradeen is one of the worst battle zones for the orcs and the snow elves or the Erunsil, patrol these areas with impunity (cough). They should be able to help you. Give them this note and they shall know exactly what to do (cough)."

He will then give his sword, his armor his shield, bow and arrows and his Lorebook to the PC's and commands them to leave before the flame prevents them from doing so. If stalling then Teramilil will become angry and will start to cast but will fall dead before completing his spell.

All weapons are non-magical but are nonetheless masterwork items. There is nothing else to salvage aside clothing and a few days worth of food. The note Teramilil gave the player reads as follows (provided someone knows how to read elven):

Greetings elven brothers,

What our great Queen Aradil foretold so many years ago has finally come to pass. The bearers of this note are indeed the chosen that were prophesized by the spirits of the earth. Please forward their advance towards the guardian city of Shaliduil, for Eyes of Aradil await there and the hope of salvation may yet live with them.

With Honor

Teramilil Joreden

Since the fires are extinguishing by themselves, the Quelos will propose to finish the night's rest in order to give Alirielle a chance to recover and regain her

magical abilities (this means another 8 hours of sleep/rest). While most men in the group as well as Ulthielle will have no reason to go back to sleep just yet, they will help the survivors salvage what they can for the inevitable departure on the next day. The mood of all is despair and fear, for without the guidance of Teramilil, they do not know what to do. But one thing in certain, Treshan will come back.

Read the following when the party settles to rest for the night.

With Treshan gone and the orcs still burning in piles around the battlefield, there is little rest anyone can have during the night that follows. Teramilil's last will pushes you westward to the frozen wastes of Aryth. For some of you the unknown awaits, for others you know of the inevitability of such a travel. The air still smelling of burnt flesh and boiling blood, you lay awake thinking about what is waiting for you and the rest of your group.

Experience Allocation (per Character)

Helping the survivors	50 to 75xp
Give Teramilil a proper burial	100xp
Good Role-playing	50xp
<hr/> Total Potential XP	<hr/> 225xp





Chapter 2

Destinies of Blood

...Legate Treshan of Blackmoor reports that the rebel village of High Vale has been destroyed. However, the interrogation of survivors has revealed that some individuals may have survived and fled to the west. The ones tortured told that the elf referred to them as the "Children of Aryth". Treshan indicates in his report that he is giving chase.

(Laughter) "Still clinging to that futile prophecy is she? (Pause) Alert the Black Claw Clan and tell Jaraag to get his dirty hide out of Bastion with enough troops to kill them all. Also, bring me Greggyk Quelos; he has some explaining to do..."

Excerpt from a conversation between High Legate Oltirin of Bastion and a lower Legate.

Background and Information

Treshan's informers were right; High Vale was indeed the center of a conspiracy. But to Treshan, the amplitude of this conspiracy is far beyond the petty squabbles that usually circled about in his midst. Convinced that he is in front of an opportunity that will make his career and bring him great renown, he will make sure that High Vale is completely destroyed, and set his course to give chase to the Quelos. Blackmoor will remain in the care of an appointed Orc of agreeable intelligence and shoved behind with glee by the legate like a bad dream.

Word has reached Bastion of the strange events that took place in Blackmoor and High Vale. The legate in power in that city, High Legate Oltirin, has ordered the destruction of the renegade cell in fearful anticipation that something larger may arise from it. Now that tidings has come that some survivors, individuals going by the names of "Children of Aryth" no less, have escaped the grip of Treshan and going west, Oltirin is beginning to wonder if these escapees should be dealt with more care. It took half a second for Oltirin to consider the consequences of letting key resistance humans slip through his fingers and ordered the Black Claw clan to go north and intercept the humans.

Jaraag Black Claw, leader of the clan, is to coordinate the interception effort with Treshan as well as the dragon Thermatraxx. It will not take long for the centuries-old wyrm to sniff the trail of the inexperienced humans and bring the two fronts of Shadow together in a deadly and efficient trap.

Greggyk Quelos, the father of the Quelos family has been forging himself quite a name in the Shadow's ranks as a ruthless and efficient leader of troops as well as a sturdy and dependable tower of strength in the midst of battle. The sudden emergence of his past will embarrass him greatly. What troubles Oltirin the most is the fact that the whole family of this rising human leader is dedicated against the shadow, and furthermore, part of an ancient elven prophecy. Oltirin has made clear to Greggyk that the destruction of the Quelos will act as both reparations to his honor and a show of faith that his allegiance to Izrador is true.

Greggyk departed with the Black Claw in the hour that followed, determined to end his wife's folly and erase this smudge on his name.

Treshan will be following the Quelos about a day behind and will not be overly concerned about losing the trail. His contingent will consist of about 200 orcs, 50 Oruks and 20 goblin sniffers mounted on trained wolves of unnatural size. The goblins and wolves will keep a steady track upon the party and Treshan will close the distance slowly. He knows that they are all inexperienced travelers, and the winter that is soon to fall will slow them down.

Several visits from Thermatraxx will however modify Treshan's understanding of his role to play in all of this. Knowing now that Bastion decided to empty itself of the Black Claw, he begins to think that maybe Oltirin is perhaps trying to steal the prize from him, thus eclipsing him from the glory he is entitled to have when this is over. Treshan however will never know that it is not Oltirin who subterfuges against them, but someone else.

Managing this Chapter

It is quite easy to see where this chapter is going: Capture. Although to some, this may be a directing and frustrating condition, taken in relativity it is a pivotal event in the whole campaign. This capture is in no way the end of the adventure. It is an eventuality designed to do three things: To give the Shadow a false feeling of victory, Create dramatic interaction with key NPC's, and multiply personal goals as well as fuel the fire of hate towards Izrador and his minions.

The actual capture period will be quite brief and rich in information. The Chanceborn character in the party will play a central role in the group's fate. If there is no Chanceborn character in your group, then select a character that could fit the bill and let him/her live the events foreseen for the latter.

Added to this, there will be death in the NPCs, which will augment the dramatic payload of this event. With chance, your players will have forged some ties with these characters and will all the more grieve and their hearts moved when these events come to pass.

The Departure

Read the following when the party is about to leave the forest.

On that morning, the skies are grey. Filled with surreal anger as if the clouds themselves were about to attack you. Distant thunder rolls across the countryside like menacing waves. You silently leave the remains of the once beautiful High Vale village, a place where so many lives were lost, and for little in appearance. The village is now burned and destroyed, its waning life and fantastic elven energy draining away like spilled water. The trees seem weaker and sickly as you tread to the edge of the forest. The omnipresence of silence amongst the group suggests that everyone is filled with dread and know deep in their hearts that the future looks quite grim.

The trees dim in numbers as you near the cold plains. The smell of death and burned flesh still hangs around you, impregnated in your clothes and on your skin. The wind outside the forest howls like a feral beast, forcing the high grass to bend, as the waves would to a mad ocean, while in the distance a storm gathers its black clouds.

The party leaves High Vale forest with an orc detail trailing them. The orcs will not try to catch up with them at first, contenting themselves only to track them through the snow. The party's tracks are obvious and the wind carries human smell for miles. They will try to surprise

the party during their sleep on the second night. The orc detail consists of 10 orc soldiers and a low-level commander. They will use standard ambush & retreat tactics where half of the squad actually drops on the campsite then quickly retreat to the others where a line of archers will wait for pursuers. A full charge will then follow. These orcs were ordered to not come back without the heads of the dissidents and Llyssia Quelos unharmed. When the party kills the last orc, snow begins to fall and the dreaded winter finally arrives.

Experience Allocation (per Character)

Fighting away the ambush	200xp
Good role-playing	100xp
Total Potential XP	300xp

The Snow Storm

A horrendous snow storm will engulf the party, cutting the night's rest short. Little or no cover may be found on the cold plains as the grass sea becomes white and rigid. Travel becomes even more difficult.

Elyssia and Alirielle will be particularly affected by the sudden cold weather, while Elyssia will be sturdier, the youngest of the sisters will develop pneumonia very quickly. Her incessant coughing will become worse if not protected by either additional clothing or spells. Penalties for hypothermia will apply to anyone not perfectly protected.

Role-Playing Tip

Ulthielle will strangely find Xanathar (or the chanceborn character in your party) to be particularly comforting but she will never allow herself to show any signs of interest.

Read the following when the snow begins to fall.

Once inconspicuous flakes falling intermittently, now your sight is veiled by a white moving wall as snow begins to fall heavily. The storm having reached your position, the winds flings the snow in

every direction, filling every cavity of your face with its chilling payload. The temperature drops sharply and your breath now forms ice around the edge of your hoods. It is now very clear that without some sort of cover and fire, there is little chance in getting out of that storm alive

GM's Advice: Environment & Mood

It is important that your group finds cover. However let them suffer the pain of frost and lingering threat of hypothermia for a while, as this natural enemy is key to inspire a feeling of helplessness. Be sure to include the feeling that Izrador himself seems to manipulate the elements against them in order to slow them down. When they see the abandoned mill, they will jump at the occasion.



Experience Allocation (per Character)

Keeping away from the effects of frostbites and spreading the technique to others.	200xp
Good role-playing (Encouraging others etc...)	150xp

Total Potential XP	350xp
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False Haven

A mirage in the snow? No it's an abandoned and ruined mill. The roof of the building is all but gone and the walls are crumbling but it should suffice in helping the party get the required cover to get warmer. A fire is also possible and could greatly help in that matter. However, hidden under the still soft, unfrozen earth, the legacy of an ancient curse awaits. The product of an evil that now has little to do with Izrador anymore, but in a way is as evil and deep in its horror.

The party will have entered the outskirts of a doomed land. A land plagued by a creature that once sacrificed everything, and everyone, in a desperate attempt to resist the onslaught of the Shadow but was ultimately defeated. That creature now calls itself the Lich-Druid, and in its diabolical and eternal quest to resist the Shadow, it has fallen, despite its best efforts, into evil and madness, making him inadvertently and unknowingly, a creature he originally sworn to seek and destroy.

Hidden in the soil of the mill's surroundings are the remnants of the mill's occupants and workers as well as a few individuals present at the last visit of the Lich-Druid's diabolical beasts. All are mindless fell today and since no one has passed through this desolate mill for ages, it will take some time for them to awake and free themselves from the layers of accumulated dirt and earth.

The fell were the victims of the fell beasts of the Lich-Druid. These living-dead beasts hunt and kill all living creatures; they spread disease and kidnap the young and weak, bringing them to their master to keep his soul sane. These beasts will not attack the party just yet, but the already buried fell await just this kind of opportunity. They will awake, and attack the party with diabolical need and resolve.

As the party approaches the location of the mill, read the following.

At first your snow-ridden eyes detects a fleeting shadow of a distant form. Your feet treading through the snow detect a faint slope and the once even white carpet seems to depress revealing the covered proof that there was some kind of path or road where you are now. After a few other paces, the shadow dissipates a bit and the mirage of a structure appears in the distance.

Upon closer inspection, the walls of the wind-beaten structures seem to be in poor shape, but standing. The roof however is another matter. The

giant wheel at its side suggests that once, long ago, this structure might have been a water-powered mill. That would explain the path in the snow as the dried riverbed is leading directly to it. A few dead trees keeps the mill company in the white sea, having to bare their own charge of snow, they seem on the verge of breaking. Vestigial remains of a fence can be seen around the old mill. Like an oasis in a white sea of cold, you see this old structure as a blessing, the promise of some shelter from this merciless weather.

When inside the mill and when the party is able to start a fire read the following.

The wind howls against the shattered widow sills of the old mill. The fire in the room flickers and diminishes as the menacing storm endeavors to extinguish it. The roof's boards shake and clank together, holding for dear life against the powerful gusts. Snow in the campsite begins to melt, its water trickling downwards, finally to drain in a hole in the floor. Ripped and mottled drapes hover to the moods of the winds, billowing and clapping against the walls casting moving shadows upon them.

The air is still murderously cold, although battled intensely by your campfire. The heat dispensed by your struggling hearth is almost as soon drowned and killed by the elements outside; only a fraction can actually warm your bodies. Shivers and numbness, although lessened, continuously threaten to overcome you as soon if you distance yourself from the flames.

Read the following when you wish the Fell to finally attack.

Suddenly the wind stops howling and the drapes fall motionless. The sounds that were deafening you abruptly cease. The snow does not pour into the mill anymore. Nothing can be heard aside the crackling fire and your surprised breathing.

As you peek outside to see what is going on, you are startled to see that the sky has changed completely, the clouds that were rolling above you have been replaced with a surreal opaque and even ceiling of black. The area bathing in a soft moonless light, the last flying snowflakes settles leaving a glittering moonlit white sea as far as the eyes can see. A few seconds pass as you take in the view, then the snow begins to bulge and move in several locations. The snow rises and cracks falling to the side revealing the twisted humanoid bodies of humans dressed in age old rags rising to their feet. In a brown mixture of earth and snow, the forms turn and gaze at you for a moment, their yellow eyes piercing the relative darkness, gaze ablaze with hunger and hatred, limbs starting to free themselves totally in order to get to you...

Experience Allocation (per Character)

Defeating the Fell	300xp
No casualty bonus	75xp
Total Potential XP	375xp

The Doomed Village

The village of Geleth was a vibrant Dorn village before the Shadow's invasion nearly one hundred years ago. It's agricultural as well as cattle products were renowned in the area for their mass and quality. This was all due to the fact that there was a bond between the villagers and a Druid who elected residence in the area. The Druid taught the villagers how to get the most of the earth while respecting it and keeping destruction to its lowest. The druid in return, helped keep the soils fertile and the animals healthy that provided bountiful harvests every year.

One fateful day the Druid heard the call of the nature's spirits warning that something terrible was about to happen; Izrador was breaking free from his northern prison. The druid panicked, deep within him he remembered the prophecy of the Black Tidal Wave and started to despair. When the Shadow did eventually wash over this part of the Northern Plains in the late part of the Third Age, there was nothing that he could do. He fought valiantly and unleashed terrible magics but at the end of the day, he was pinned to an ancient oak by a Blackspears. These dark and dreadful weapons attack directly the soul of the victim by cursing it and corrupting it, effectively transforming its target into a horrific version of its former self.

The Blackspears did its work and the druid's soul became black. As his body died, he did not pass into darkness like all living creatures are supposed to do, but instead, he *became* darkness. The oak was infused with the Druid's soul as the tip of the blackspears still remained deeply set in its trunk, and too became darkness. It tainted the earth through its roots, poisoning the surrounding forest until it became as bleak and lifeless as the druid himself. Creatures within the forest mutated and became as dark and twisted as their new master. The land eroded and in came the waters of a nearby river that flooded the forest. The thigh-deep waters are now corrupt and filled with disease and various unnamable organisms.

Geleth

Population: 128 (60% Erenlanders, 40% Dorns)

Ruler: None

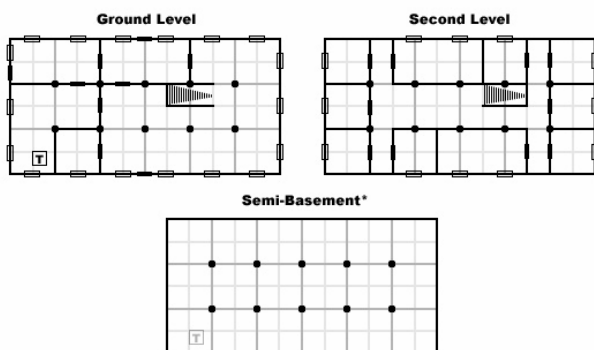
Armed Forces: None

Main product: Leather Goods, Pottery, Salted meats and various leatherworks.

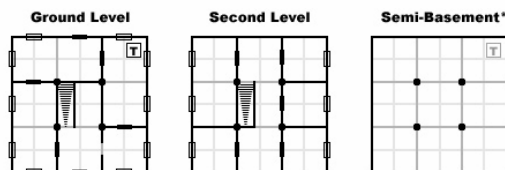
Note: Consult the appendices for Geleth's complete Map.

At the center of this Black Mire (As the villagers now call it) lies a mound where remains the decaying body of the once-proud and good druid. Still standing staked to the old oak, the corpse serves as a black symbol of the Shadow's power and effect upon the land.

Typical Large House



Typical Small House



*The semi-basements are the underground house foundation and can be used as a concealment place items and/or persons. Notes that those underground rooms are never taller than 3 feet.

A few hours march to the east lays the village of Geleth. Or what is left of it. Most of the men are dead, missing or dying. A strange plague is ravaging the population, an illness that takes years to develop and leaves the host weak and helpless. Not enough to die, but just frail enough to be collected by the druid's beasts.

After generations of exposure to this illness, the villagers have resorted to freely offer the ones suffering the

terminal effects of the disease to the beasts as they come into the village. This way the villagers can escape the beast's wrath and avoid unnecessary violence. Since the villagers cannot defend themselves, this custom is now accepted and done with regularity.

The village now suffers from obvious depression as well as palpable despair and all of its inhabitants view their lives as finite and without hope. As all villagers get infected by the disease one day or another, it is hard for them to think otherwise. All who try to flee the village are either dragged back to the town's square by the beasts or hung from trees in the nearby woods by the druid himself. Dire consequences as where the druid went rampaging into the village after each escape attempts have destroyed further will to do so. No one dares to touch those who are hanged and their swinging corpses serve as grim reminders to this day.

The party will reach the outskirts of this village on the next day following the night at the old mill. Although they are not forced to stay and investigate, perhaps the lack of food and proper winter clothing will indeed suggest they pay a visit.

Once they reach the outskirts of the Village, read the following.

The snowy desert gives way to rocks as the scenery seems to somewhat change. Hills and small woods appear in the distance as well as the promise of shelter and perhaps food. Your fingers and toes are frozen and numbness has given way to outright lack of feeling as the cold weather bites even harder onto you, as if not wanting the sight of hope to actually soothe your anguish.

As the snow loudly crunches under your feet you begin to tread further towards the little wood. Your gaze scanning left and right for signs of danger you notice, deeply buried under the snow, several ruins of wooden dwellings of some kind. As if long abandoned, these houses are now nothing but collapsing masses of debris and frozen refuse. There obviously used to be a village here, long ago.

The advance of the group is being watched by a young villager. This boy cannot believe what he is seeing and wants to lead the characters into the village in order to determine if they can help them. He will wait a few minutes and after a while he will make himself be seen.

When this happens, read the following.

Suddenly Caranthir signals the party to stop whatever they are doing. His gaze is locked in a deeper part of the forest and invites the group to look in that direction...

Standing next to a ruined dwelling is a small boy. Dressed in typical Dornish winter garments, he looks upon you. When it is obvious that he has been seen, he turns around and darts into the woods behind him.

The characters are free to decide what they want to do, but if curiosity, or plain need for supplies, pushes the party in the boy's direction, as soon as they enter the woods where the boy vanished, they will be entering Geleth's midst and will be able to see the various victims of the druid as well as all the hanged would-be escapees. Elyssia will immediately be able to tell that strangulation was responsible for the deaths but that there seem to be something else at play, nothing she can put her finger on because of the level of decomposition of the bodies, but the ropes were not the only reason for the deaths. Alirielle will also shiver, as the usual auras and "feel" of nature seems to be perverted in some manner.

The tracks left by the boy in the snow will lead the party to Geleth. The welcome at the village will be cold even by Blackmoor's standard as the few people who are actually outside will gaze at the group with a stare bordering fear and stupefaction.

Basically, the people of Geleth will not know what to do about the strangers and have no idea if their presence is tolerated by the Druid or not and are hesitant to give any kind of help. The Shadow's forces per se have not been in this part of the land in almost a century and they are not knowledgeable about them. What matters to them is the Druid, and the beasts that surrounds him. They do not know that both are intimately connected, but at the same time, so far apart.

When the party emerges in Geleth's inner area, read the following:

The white cover of snow corrupts to a brownish mesh of hundreds of footsteps as you make your way in the inner area of a village. Built on a gentle slope, the houses surpass each other as would seats in an amphitheater. Networking paths between the houses can clearly be seen as brown lines of earth. The trees in and around the village appears sickly and dark, giving a chilling mood to this otherwise respectable agglomeration of dwellings. As your figures emerge from the surrounding woods, some villagers notice you and freeze. Their faces harbor expressions of fear and surprise. It is obvious that they have not seen strangers for some time.

If the party tries to communicate with the villagers, they will immediately flee and barricade themselves into their houses. The reason for this is simple: Since going outside of Geleth is punishable by death, people coming from the outside are dangerous. Although this may seem illogical, to the villagers, their experience under the Druid's despotism have taught them to think as such.

The situation may be dealt with by multiple means; from negotiations shouted through a closed oak door to actually breaking into a home in search for answers, the choice remain at the player's discretion. Alirielle and Elyssia as well as Llyssia will suggest peaceful ways to get information and supplies, opposed to Caranthir and Ulthielle who want immediate results. Lorkan will feel indifferent, not knowing if the fact of pushing for more is right to begin with.

It matters not the means the players choose, as long as it makes for good role-playing. After a while, some villagers may either warm-up to the party or submit to them. In either case when this is done exchanges of goods vs. services may be initiated. Elyssia will offer medicinal herbs and her healing expertise as well as limited alchemical knowledge to try and soothe the illness that seems rampant amongst the villagers.

Role-Playing Tip

Note: It will be quite justified for the party to wonder if they are infected by that disease. Elyssia will be able to determine that the illness is not natural and must be arcane in origin.

In any case, the party will be unaffected by the disease as it is in fact an obscure and ancient curse spawned by the Black Spear and is doomed to seed only those who the Druid once sheltered and helped.

When questioned about their village the people of Geleth will be hesitant to tell them about the Druid, but if pressed even slightly to answer, the submissive nature of the villagers will make them talk.

Here are some examples of information that could be dispensed:

About the village:

“This village here is being called Geleth. T’is been here for ages, and if we still had our old folks, they sure could tell ya all kinds of stories about this place. According to them, when I was but a youngin’, about a hundred years ago, Geleth was a good place to be. Now, there be those beasts around and the earth isn’t much good for anything nowadays. Still, we do make a living out of livestock and hunting. Not that the animals we catch are prize winners, but they do get us fed.

About the dead around the village:

“They are the folk who tried to leave Geleth. Mind you they were good people, but the Druid didn’t take much fancy about them fleeing these here parts, so he caught them and hung them around the village to tell us to never do that again.

It worked, I’m not trying that folly, but there is always a poor soul that attempts to flee once in a while. They all end up in the trees, poor folks.

About the Druid:

“We call it the Druid because our fathers and mothers used to call it like that. But if you ask me, that... thing looks more like a beast from hell than anything else. He is the one keeping us in our misery. He’s the one responsible for turning our woods and everything in it into bleak and sickly versions of what they are supposed to be. Like this place, our fathers told us that he too used to be different.

About the disease:

We do not know where this plague comes from or how to treat it. Our forefathers told us it was spread by the Druid to keep us weak. Every new moon his beasts creep into Geleth, waiting for us to deliver the ones too weak to move. Everyone in Geleth has given a family member to the beasts, they drag them into the forest and we never see them again. It’s better to give them the weak, by doing this; we don’t get killed before our time.

About the beasts:

Those beasts are the worst. They look like huge wolves, but they are all mottled and scarred. Their eyes glow yellow in the night. I’ve seen one tear apart a fully grown man who decided to resist. Awful sight. They seem to be the pets of the Druid and they obey him at his every move.

About Izrador and his forces:

Who? Orcs? What’s that...?

About the surroundings:

None of us have had the guts to venture further than Geleth’s woods, but there is a Mire ‘round here somewhere. The Druid comes from there and so does his beasts. There always been some story that the Druid’s lair held some kind of sacred place. A place where it is said the soul of the forest has gone. That’s why Geleth is such a forlorn place.

The party will eventually be welcomed after some exchanges either of information or goods and Geleth’s inhabitants will begin to gather in order to see the strangers. This will have some repercussions:

- Some people will be inspired by the promise of freedom that came with the outsiders and talk of escape will begin again.
- Some people will want to tag along with the group.

The situation, although bleak at first, will soon become less tense and a glint of happiness, even hope, will appear upon the villager’s faces when they interact with the party. The Quelos women will do everything they can to help ease the pain of others while the men of the village will gather the rest of the party and begin talk to exodus. Even if hardly cautioned by the party that it is not advisable, even more dangerous to leave Geleth, most of the residents are too far gone in the anguish of living in this prison to think of anything else than escape. The party thus serves as the catalyst for the uprising of Geleth.

Although there is hope stirring in Geleth, the Druid is ever watchful and has done well to put spies and agents around the village to keep a vigilant eye upon his “flock”. Since Geleth is both his curse and salvation, he does not want his only source of sanity to flee and disperse for the Shadow to decimate. Warned by the sundered birds and critters of what has happened in the village, he brews his anger towards the ones who would dare to destroy the peace he has worked so hard to build in Geleth. And those villagers who are brewing unrest, those ungrateful peasants... all shall pay dearly for defiling his will and endangering his fate.

Little does he know that Treshan and his host of orcs and Oruks are trailing behind the group and are about to reach Geleth. If this was known to him he may have wanted to side with the Quelos instead of plotting their deaths for if Treshan would have been led to follow their tracks outside Geleth, the Shadow would not threaten to enter the village. But it is not as such, and the banners of Izrador will enter Geleth upon the following morning.

Experience Allocation (per Character)

Decision to follow the boy	100xp
Party initiates peaceful relations	100xp
Helping the sick	50xp
Getting most of the information	50xp
Good Role-playing	150xp
<hr/> Total Potential XP	<hr/> 450xp



Feral Predators

The Lich Druid will wait the cover of darkness to unleash his wrath upon the village of Geleth. The party as well as the villagers will not expect the Druid and his beasts to come as all of his appearances were made upon the new moon, and it is not until several days before the moon changes anew. The several families will invite the group to settle in the warm and comfortable homesteads in order to get rest and healing from the cold. The treatment of the villagers towards the party will quickly improve and before the night comes, they will be considered as close friends. Younger women of the village will even take romantic interest in some of the sturdiest of the party's men such as Lorkan or any other PC with a good constitution and strength score.

GM's Advice: Consequences

Any reaction to these advances may be given, although careful considerations of emotional ties must be observed and dealt as you see fit. This could be an opportunity for extra NPC's to join the party.

When all has gone to sleep and (hopefully) guard rounds have started read the following:

The night falls upon the village of Geleth. The forest is slowly smothered in a black veil. The sounds of the household die down only to be replaced by the crackling of the central hearth. Snow falls gently in front of the glass windows to add a fresh new layer upon the small hamlet. Suddenly there is a sound. Like a loud thump coming from above. Something has landed on the roof of the dwelling you have elected to sleep in. Its rapid and multiple steps suggest it to be a four legged creature. The people in the home all awake in chaotic dread.

"The beasts! They are here! But it isn't the new moon yet!"

All arise and begin to fortify the doors and windows as several other thumps are heard on the roof.

The pets of the Druid have located and besieged the house where the party dwells. Although they were instructed to guard the house and await the arrival of the Druid, they will pounce and try to kill whoever comes out.

Role-Playing Tip

The important thing is to instill fear. Whether it is the panicked reactions of the villagers or glanced sightings of the beasts lurking around the house, growling and clawing at the door and windows, you choose what would be best to set the tone.

Furthermore, add a spot check or hearing check based on the move silently check + range penalty of where the creatures are when they spot the players (if visible at all)

If they succeed, you can always offer some description in the lines of:

You notice a motion at the corner of your eyes and when you turn to look more carefully, you see nothing.

This should significantly add to their stress and help you set the tone.

The Druid should not be long behind his pets and when he reaches the village read the following:

The feral growls and violent clawing finally subsides and the air around you suddenly chills to a level you have experienced only in the direst of moments in the cold plains. The villagers whine and moans in utter dread at the impending doom they imagine for themselves.

A mist rises around the house and all the windows veil themselves in white, blocking your sight to the outside. Screams of pain resound from the outside as if someone was being ripped apart. The screams multiply as seemingly more than one person shares that doom. The echoing pleads for mercy followed by inhumanly horrific shrieks and fear-ridden yelps assault your ears with impunity, sending chills down your spine as to what is actually done to the ones caught. Alirielle slumps to the ground and begins to shake.

"There is something dark out there..." she softly whispers staring in front of her. "Like a dark light, it drinks from all life around it"

The situation for the party became much more complicated. Will they stay in and protect themselves against the assailants? Will they respond to the screams of the mutilated villagers and exit in order to meet the Druid head on? The actual choice remains theirs but my experience shows me that there is a strong possibility that since the players are heroes and added the fact that the screams are actually turning everyone crazy with anger, most parties will exit.

If they don't, then the mutilation will linger on for a few minutes more, then the Druid will warp the door out of its hinges and the confrontation between the party and the Druid will ensue.

If this is the case, read the following:

The front door emits a loud bang and its planks begin to warp, the wood protesting and creaking as its length twists and break. The hinges explode as the nails that once held them in place snap and burst. The door finally falls heavily to the ground, letting the white fog gush from the opening like the water of a dam that just vanished. The sound of heavy footsteps climbing the nearest wooden stairs resonate as would the slow stride of a giant upon the ground and amidst the fog appears a dark form. Its body clad in various pelts and leathers, its head adorned with the twisted antlers of a sundered deer, its eyes glowing yellow as its peers into the house, sending a wave of evil and death upon all who look at it.

If they wish to exit, then read the following:

When you open the door, the fog smothers you and your eyes peer at nothing. The growls of the beasts echo dangerously close to you whether it is in front, at the sides and even above you. The mystical cloud suddenly thins and the stairs leading on the ground reappears displaying a human-looking form waiting at its base. Its body clad in various pelts and leathers, its head adorned with the twisted antlers of a sundered deer, its eyes glowing yellow as its peers onto you, sending a wave of evil and death upon all who look at it.



The Druid will look at the party and will point a menacing finger on the leader. Then read the following:

The dark figure look upon you with its glowing stare and the faint sight of a snarl appears from the darkness that engulfs its face.

“How dare you come here and sow the seeds of discord. You will regret you deeds I assure you.” With a guttural growl from the Druid, the beasts that were impatiently waiting in the distance finally jump towards you, fangs drooling in anticipation as the Druid carefully steps back.

Corrupted Worgs

Worg (4); *medium-sized Magical Beast; CR2; HD 4d10; HP30; Init +2(Dex); Spd 50; AC14 (+2 Natural,+2 Dex; Atk +7 melee Bite (1d6+4); SA Trip, Disease; SQ Scent; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref+6, Will+3,; Str 17, Dex 15, Con15, Int 6, Wis14, Cha 10. Skills: Hide+7, Listen +9, Move Silently +7, Spot +9 Feats: Alertness*

The Corrupted Worgs will try their best to rend the players, but logically the party should emerge victorious. When the party dispatches the last beast read the following:

The Black Druid watches carefully as his beasts die one after the other. A low growl of hate permeates his raspy breathing as his gaze flares in anger. “By the lost gods, I shall see you routed.” he whispers under his breath as he unsheathes a black scimitar from under his cloaks. The black blade reflects no light and cuts the air and fog with a resonating hum.

The Lich Druid is undoubtedly overwhelmingly more powerful than the PC. However the scene should play out as follow:

The battle should break out normally and the Druid should take some damage. However his sundered Nature magics should prove powerful. The battle should be set to a very challenging setting and adjust the results of your dices accordingly. You should include displays of power such as his scimitar slicing through organic matter such as a tree with disconcerting ease or his spells uprooting trees and sundering the earth around the target... All spells should have a dark and corrupted feel to them. Twist their effects as you like.

When your party is about below half to a third of their HP, maybe with some party members already out for the count, Llyssia will start to call for help from the villagers. Her Charismatic Heroic Path will kick in at this point and within one or two combat rounds, the Druid will have a full-fledged uprising on his hands. Not willing to destroy his only source of sanity and power, he will retreat.

When this happens read the following:

Llyssia's supplication for help suddenly bares fruit. House doors open and people start to come out of hiding armed with whatever they could find. Obviously inspired by Llyssia's words and the dead beasts they come out by the dozens slowly and carefully advancing on your position. The Dark Druid at first throws but a quick glance at them, not wanting to be distracted from the battle in front of him, but after a few seconds the villagers start to quicken their pace, their weapons held high and their combined voice shouting their insurrection.

At this point the Druid understands what is happening and will start to fight defensively while pondering quickly what he will do.

When he is completely surrounded by villagers read the following:

The Sundered Druid howls in anger as the weapons of the crowd begin to violently pound on him. Obviously torn between the will to tear them all apart and a thought that restrain him to do so, he hesitates. His eyes peer at you and you see the profound evil tainting them, as if the disease that plagues the village seemed to originate from his very soul. His teeth grit as his body is being shoved and beaten and at last he utters a sentence in a tongue unknown to you and transform into a huge crow of tattered feathers and blotchy talons and beak. His wings quickly spread and he darts into the air. The screech heard from the black bird almost sounded as a threat as it flies through the branches and disappears from sight.

Seeing the Druid flee is almost a miracle for the villagers who collectively shout their victory as they help you recover from the battle. Calm soon regains control over Geleth as the people start to tow the dead corpses of beasts and men away from the area.

The Lich-Druid will retreat to his lair to ponder what just happened and what to do next. His years of easy plundering are over. Seeing Alirielle and the light that came forth from her made him remember what life was like before the shadow and thus, lost in mournful melancholy, he will not try to harm anyone for some time.

Little does he know that Treshan will enter Geleth the next morning, destroying the rest of his precious flock. The Druid will witness the ashes and the Shadow will count one more enemy. But for now, the characters are safe and can finish the night undisturbed. Those who can sleep that is...

Experience Allocation (per Character)

Exit to help the mutilated	150xp
Defeat the Sundered beasts	300xp
Drive the Druid out of Geleth	200xp
No casualty bonus	100xp
<hr/> Total Potential XP	<hr/> 750xp

The Black Mire

If the party thinks that their misery in the area is over they are about to have that conception shattered. Following their tracks are an advanced scout party of orcs and goblin sniffers and trackers. The fresh trail leading directly to their position, the orcs will identify the party and report back to Treshan treading a few kilometers behind.

Role-Playing Tip

If the party did not go to Geleth to begin with, the orcs will gain upon the characters during the night and achieve the same result. They are faster, sturdier, unaffected by the cold etc...

Basically the way it should play out whether they are in Geleth or not, is that Caranthir will encounter an orc scout during the night. Since he likes to roam around during nighttime, his fortunate encounter will warn him of the impending danger. The combat should be quick and to Caranthir's advantage. All other orcs/goblins will retreat immediately to warn Treshan of their discovery.

If Caranthir is an NPC then have him come to the party early in the morning and drop an orc head at the feet of his brothers saying something along the lines of: "We gotta go... now!" or "Get your things... We're leaving..." In any case, the characters should get the picture quite rapidly.

When the news will reach the villagers that the orcs are coming, panic will strike them. Since they have been plagued by the Druid and not the Shadow's forces per se, they will not know what to expect. Have the characters swarmed by questions and fearful villagers. Some will want to accompany the party and some will want to go their separate ways, it's all good, the players should choose what to do depending on what they want. Account the consequences of having untrained personnel if they choose to let them tag along.

Ultimately the party should leave the devastated town to push forward to their destination. If they wait to actually see the size of the orc forces against them, they should be served with a dreadful display of orcish military power as Treshan invades Geleth with almost 400 troops. Horns, banners, fire spreading from torches to the dwellings... the raid should begin as soon as the first orc steps out of the surrounding woods.



Although Treshan is a military mind, he will not wait to surround the town before invading, thus coming in from the south and east. This is a critical error that will allow the group to evade him and flee to the west, but in reality, it is far from being a mistake. Treshan's orders are to push the party westward and force them to retreat to the banks of the Gallerion River. This large and temperamental river is only crossable at a certain point and will serve as the bottleneck used to capture the Quelos and their allies. So unless the party decides to confront Treshan in an insane attempt of vindication, they will have little choice of retreat. The choices open to them are either west or north. In both cases, this direction will send them in the Black Mire.

The Black Mire is an ancient forest flooded by black waters and putrid smells. The decomposing flesh of nameless creatures lay rotting in the shallow waters. This is the sanctum of the Sundered Druid. There, the spirits and life have been twisted and corrupted by the rise of Izrador, but more particularly the slow poisoning and corruption of the Blackspears. Many have fallen to the Mire's disease-ridden waters and the party will find itself knee-deep in it. The Mire stretches for miles in all

directions with a small dry island in the middle where the Sundered Druid's lair is located.

In an instant, most of the weakest members of the party will show first signs of the black sickness. Alirielle will be of course the worst affected. She will enter a state of feverish ranting, seeing things and speaking nonsense. The black sickness is basically a condition indigenous to life in the Black Mire's vicinity. It is neither a fatal nor a permanently degenerative disease but does sap the strength of anyone not strong enough to resist its effect. Distinctive black spots appear on the skin hence the name. Much a relative to the plague found in Geleth, this disease is a great deal more potent and acts a hundred times quicker showing its effects within a few hours. Everyone venturing in the Black Mire and being in contact with the air or water must make Fortitude save DC15 or be affected. Affected characters lose 1d4 Str and -2 on all skills for as long as they are in the Mire as well as headaches, fever and any other nasty symptoms you may want to add.

Treshan will push the party into the Mire in order for them to reach the Gallerion. Once in the Mire, the orcs will find it difficult to progress and the distance between them and the party will remain the same until they all reach firm ground. It should take two full days for anyone to cross the Black Mire from one end to the other and a dry, elevated spot must be found in order to do so. The mound in the middle of the Black Mire should prove ideal, if it wasn't the lair of the Druid that is. The party as well as Treshan's and his host will have to burn the midnight oil and pull through without rest.

The Black Sickness

Incubation period: 12 hours.

Saving Throw: Fortitude DC 15

Damage: 1d4 str plus fever (-2 to skills)

Effects lasts 1d3 hours after exposure to the Black Mire.

Usually, life in the Black Mire is rare and if found, it is twisted and corrupt. Not much organisms can live an extended period in this freezing swamp. Having said that, the real challenge remains in the crossing by itself and avoiding getting caught by the orcs behind. Furthermore, Thermatraxx has elected to follow the progress of the Quelos from within the corrupted waters of the swamp. He will allow himself to be seen as a huge mass flowing rapidly underwater with his tail occasionally splashing heavily to confirm his presence. This is basically only to intimidate the party and to keep them from straying too far north and away from Treshan's reach as well as to

keep tabs on the Quelos's position. Although the combined forces of the dragon and Treshan may look as they are directing the group into a direction, they will try to make it look as if they were unable to catch up with them, thus concealing their true intent. Thermatraxx will use this opportunity to study further the Quelos and their allies and determine if they could play a part in his long-term scheme.

In this period of observation, Thermatraxx will soon discover the Dragonblooded character (Drako Korvack if used) and begins to weave a plan to shelter him from a most unfortunate fate. When the time is right, he will convince High Legate Oltirin to try and turn him to the shadow which to all appearances looks like a simple nudge should do the trick. In any case, Thermatraxx will not approach the group and will not respond to attacks. He will observe only, staying in the deeper waters of the Mire.

When the group exits the woods to enter the Mire's area read the following:

The snow on the ground begins to thin and vanishes as the soil becomes more and more wet. Soon the trees that were sickly to begin with give the impression to take a turn for the worst, as now around you lay a dead forest of grey and broken trunks. All wildlife appears to have vanished. In the distance, black waters on the verge of freezing await. The low haze of humidity still hovering about, the Black Mire stands undisturbed before you like a watery grave waiting to engulf its next victims.

The water in the Mire is near the freezing point and will be extremely cold and uncomfortable. Added to this, the average water level is about 2 to 3 feet deep. It can rise to about six inches and can go down to about twenty feet in the deepest regions.

GM's Advice: Environment

Be sure to be fair and tight as to frostbites and hypothermia damage as well as the affects of the black sickness. This event is primarily a passage and could house several home-brew events of your choice. I personally chose to have Caranthir get the bright idea to split with Sarren and Xanathar to confuse the tracks and lead the orcs on a false trail. They ended up having half of the orcs confused but they had to do some nifty hiding and come up with clever ideas.

Bottom line, this passage into the Black Mire is a vulnerable moment for the Quelos and ideas as well as strategy to give the group any reasonable advantage over the orcs is welcome. Be sure to role-play it and add ambiance with lots of description.

Somewhere along the way if you want to augment the stress level of your players you can always make a statement that the orc forces can be heard in the distance.

Here is a suggestion:

Your difficult progression through the half frozen, slushy black waters is suddenly punctuated by the familiar sound of Treshan's horn blowing in the distance behind you. It is obvious that the orcs are treading in your rear and are slowly gaining.

Experience Allocation (per Character)

Getting through to the Druid's lair	150xp
Good plan to slow Treshan's advance	200xp
Good Role-Playing	100xp
Total Potential XP	450xp

Lair of the Lich-Druid

The mound in the relative middle of the Black Mire is the only true dry place within miles. Its surface is bare save a few bushes and a great, grey oak on top. The elevation is the lair of the Lich-Druid as well as being the place where, long ago, the Druid came to his bitter end at the tip of the Shadow's rare Blackspear.

About a hundred years ago, when Izrador first escaped from the northern walls this was a lush forest with amazingly fertile soil and plentiful game as well as verdant grazing land for cattle. All of that changed when the Druid was brutally pinned to the great oak upon this small hill. The evil and darkness poisoned the Druid's soul and body; it did the same for the oak upon which it was driven. The Druid and oak bled into the earth, slowly turning everything into a ghastly version of itself, poisoning in turn everything in range. The trees died and the roots of the forest dried and snapped causing a massive landslide which flooded the area with the nearby river. Now that river is gone and all that is left is the fog-ridden grey tree cemetery drenched in putrid and corrupted waters. The mound itself, strangely, is a Power Nexus of great strength. Long before the beginning of the last age, in the days of the sundering, amidst the destruction and havoc that occurred upon Izrador's fall to Aryth, a great stone came from the furious skies and landed at this precise area. The rock formation actually comes from the birth of the Kaladrin Mountains where great pressures and exploding volcanoes as well as bursting tectonic plates sent millions of tons of stone flying in the air. Amidst the greatest point of pressure was created this geode that was propelled hundreds of kilometers away from the Kaladrin and landed here. The geode is actually a focus of earth powers and its crystals can be used to create powerful earth-based magic items (see the annex 2 "New Magic" for details and mechanics).

The Druid knew about this Nexus and fortunately, on the day of his death, the Shadow's forces were not looking for nexuses at that time and thus the Druid dragged his secret with him in death. To this day, this geode remains a mystery to all but the Druid but is about to be rediscovered by the party. The geode is hollow and does have an opening. There are magical enhancements performed by the Druid enabling the rock to actually pivot upon its axis and reveal the opening hidden in the earth. When this is done, a great beam of light exits from the geode and pierces the sky like a lance of red and orange. At night this beam of light can be seen rising to the sky for a hundred kilometers radius as well as almost blinding everyone within 100 meters. Medium-sized creatures can then climb down the stairs cut from the geode's crystal to penetrate in its interior.

The Druid's lair is actually inside the Geode where, amongst other things, he crafts his dark magic as well as keeping several nature spirits prisoners inside the biggest crystals. These spirits serve as



additional magical power used to perform rituals and create foul magical items. The central spherical room is about 40 feet radius and contains the accumulated magical wealth of the Druid from his life and existence in undeath.

Upon close investigation of the mound if any, the searching character will unknowingly activate the geode's opening mechanism. Thus revealing the entrance and quite possibly alerting everyone within 100 miles of what just happened.

When approaching the Druid's mound read the following:

The icy and stale black waters of the mire flay at your flesh like a thousand blades as you still make your way through its shadowy and dark mass. In the distance elevates a remarkable sized mound of earth and stone amidst the dead trees and other dead vegetation. Upon the top of the mound a half-dead oak of great height stands in the semi-darkness, its branches twisted and menacing like a wooden beast frozen in mid swing. Deeply set in its side is the black shaft of a spear. Vestiges of old rotten clothing still hangs about its length and the bark where the shaft meets the tree has long turned completely black and seems to bleed unknown ichors of comparable color. The faint winds move the branches and the wood complains, the eerie noise almost sounding like an echoing ghastly moan.

At that time the Undead Druid will be away from his lair, contemplating vengeance upon those who have utterly destroyed Geleth. However seeing the much superior forces proceed through the Black Mire, he will not attack Treshan. Furthermore, his link to Izrador will prevent him from ever attacking Treshan personally. He will try to lead the orcs away from his lair where he understands they are inevitably going. This will delay Treshan and give the party some time to either investigate or rest.

GM's Advice: Blackspear

If the party decides to investigate the remains of the Druid and the Blackspear driven in the old Oak, please refer to the Blackspear's description for background material and game mechanics, effects and consequences if someone would decide to try and pull the spear out of the tree.

If the party searches the mound for unusual things, a search check (DC16) will reveal the evidence of a buried entrance. As soon as more is done to uncover this entrance, the opening magics will trigger and the Whole geode will pivot to let the party inside. This will create a great light effect that will warn the Druid of what just happened as well as probably throw everyone and everything standing on the mound back a few meters. Anyone standing less than ten feet from the waters will be thrown into the Mire unless a tumble check (DC15) is made successfully.

If the entrance is triggered read the following:

The earth around you suddenly begins to tremble and move, the faintly discovered entrance then begins to be uncovered as the whole surface of the mound shifts backwards like a spinning sphere in the mud. The sound of rock grinding and water splashing fills the air as a gaping opening slowly appears from the earth below your feet. The entrance is illuminated by an inner light originating from deep within the cavern-style tunnel, several great crystals of red and yellow can be seen lining the entirety of the tunnel. The crystals vary in size but can reach up to 3 feet in height by 1 foot in

width. The crystalline structures then catches the light from the outside and suddenly your surrounding are filled with a searing and blinding light as a deaf and muffled sound of a great explosion of magical energy is heard.

The great energies deployed by the geode are really the product of the Druid's magical experiments and the focus of his detained nature spirit's powers inside specially crafted crystals. The light blinds everyone for 60 seconds and a save vs. Reflex (DC16) will half this. The beam itself lasts about 10 seconds and after depleting all excess power, it will subside. The interior of the geode will still be uncannily bright.

At this time, the Druid will be aware that his lair has been compromised and will abandon all attempts to delay the orcs and Treshan and dart back to his home to protect his work. Treshan also will have seen the spear of light in the sky and will revel in the idea of discovering yet another prize for his master. Opportunities to advance his prestige and career often are discovered in the wake of these Children of Aryth, and for that Treshan is machiavellically grateful.

If someone enters the geode read the following:

Carved from the crystal wall itself a staircase leads deeper in the heart of this magical and illuminated tunnel. The crystals gleam and shine in the various lights coming from all directions, their faint tinkle echoing to a near symphony of natural crystalline hums. Your feet click on the smooth surface of the stairs and the feeling of power surges on your skin, sending chills up your spine as you reach the spherical room at the center.

Several thousand crystals protrudes from all angles on the walls and ceiling pointing at the center of the small room where all crystalline protrusions seems to have been removed to the ground level in order to provide room to move. The cleared area offers about a forty feet diameter clearing where various tables and tools lay about in chaos. Several scrolls as well as containers holding strange and mysterious liquids and small dead animals abound. At the center of the clearing rises a dais holding several specifically cut and polished crystals held together by a wrought band of crude iron. These crystals pulse with a

powerful light and seem to be the heart and power of this place.

The Children of Aryth have reached the heart of the Druid's lair and have discovered the prison of several natures' spirits. The Druid is about to come back to his domain but the confrontation that will ensue will not be necessarily be lethal. The Shadow is closing in on both Druid and Children of Aryth and perhaps some sort of accord could be reached (if the players try to negotiate) to avoid it.



If the players never actually searches and never find the Geode's entrance, they may take some time to rest on the mound and resume their way to exit the Black Mire through the west. Treshan will have been led astray by

the Druid and will not necessarily find the nexus of power, which, later on can reveal to be an advantage. But the Party will also be deprived components and knowledge found in the lair as well as not gaining the favor and knowledge of the Nature's spirit as described in the next event. If the party never finds the Geode, let them exit the Mire with Treshan trailing about two hours behind with a few less orcs. Thermatraxx will always remain near the party, always observing and calculating his angle of profit in every situation.

Experience Allocation (per Character)

Finding the Geode's entrance	300xp
Determining that the spear is an evil Item	150xp
Getting inside the geode/discovering the Spirits	

200xp	
Total Potential XP	650xp

Nature Spirits Unveiled

Trapped in the central crystals on the dais are several nature spirits whose life energies have been used to fuel the Dark Druid's evil schemes along the years. These spirits are more like cross breeds between actual spirit beings and elementals representing various facets of nature. The naked eyes however can only catch fluidic movement inside the crystals. The true nature of these beings is only apparent to Alirielle Quelos who, for some time now, has been drawn to them unconsciously.

If the party endeavors to try and release the spirits, only the sundering of the crystals will be able to release the spirits from their crystalline prison. The breaking of the crystals provokes no ill effect to the party but the Undead Druid will feel the blow quite sharply and will make even more haste to reach his lair.

If the crystals are broken and the spirits freed, read the following:

Sparks briefly fly from the crystal's sundering, and as the chunks of rock fall to the floor, they explode in countless fragments sent in every direction. The sound of crystalline shattering momentarily fills the air and vanishes.

Seeping from what once was, are shapeless forms of golden and green energy. These forms hover about the remnants of their earthly prison for a moment and after a short while begin to disappear. Alirielle smiles and looks upon you.

"They are happy; they have been freed of the evil magics that were trapping them here. They now will rejoin with the others."

After years of capture, the spirits will have no will to hover about for very long, especially with the certainty of the Druid's return as being imminent. Alirielle will be the only one able to actually communicate with these beings and if the party wishes, she can ask the spirits a few questions.

The spirits know much about the ancient world, especially before the sundering, but they have no actual way of vulgarizing the information that they possess. Depending

of the questions asked, they are comfortable with "yes" or "no" answers anything more extensive than single sentence will drown Alirielle with concepts and alien thinking. When a few minutes have passed, Alirielle will turn to her friends with a weird expression and say that they have left but they have said the following before they did:

"We thank you for rescue and will look with favor the doom of each."

This sentence can be interpreted in many ways but it essentially meant that the spirits will look upon the destinies of each and act favorably when they can. This will only happen in future chapters however.

The reason for the spirit's sudden departure is that they have sensed the arrival of the Dark Druid to his tree therefore making his position right on top of the player's heads. He will know if the spirits have been released and will howl in utter rage. His

blood-freezing bellows will be heard even through the earth and layers of crystal, reaching the ears of the Children of Aryth inside.

At this point the druid knows that Treshan and his army are about to march over his lair and probably discover all the work he has done over the years to try and break the power of the Blackspear. He knows that invaders have penetrated in his inner-sanctum and are probably plundering his secrets. This situation is driving him to the fringes of insanity. What is he to do...? Kill the invaders and provide Treshan with the time he needs to discover everything? Seal his lair and trap whoever is inside in order to fool Treshan in passing his way? But will this doom all his work? Knowing that since the village of Geleth is no more, he will not have the resources to recreate all he has achieved over the years... A solution must be reached, and quickly. A confrontation with the people in his lair looks inevitable, but if only he could get them out and on their way hastily...

This is an awkward situation where the PC's are the invaders and the usual enemies are the victims.



The Undead Druid knows he cannot afford combat; it would risk giving Treshan the time he needs to arrive with his orcs. A combat inside his geode would also put all of his work at the risk of destruction, another fate the Druid cannot conceive of being faced with. Grudgingly, he will have to deal his way out of this situation, and deal hastily.

The players have just finished talking to the spirits and have heard the chilling cries of the Druid, when they make their way up the stairs (or if anyone was already in the stairs as a lookout, read the following:

Loud thumps are heard overhead as a huge mass runs along the crust of the geode being the soft earth of the mound then a loud crash in the water in front of the entrance is heard. Something is waiting for you outside, its raspy breathing and cold yellow eyes emanating from the darkness.

This is the part where the party asks itself if leaving the geode is such a great idea. Some may even initiate combat outright. In any case, if the party hesitates to exit or if any conversation between the Druid and themselves is attempted, read the following:

The black form outside rises fully upon its legs and you recognize the Black Druid you fought in the village of Geleth. His stature seem even more imposing than before as all the blackness and evil that appear to linger about the area converge giving it the appearance of a true creature of abysmal power. The dead trees about him bend and crack, the waters swirl and bubble in his presence, even the earth and crystal in your midst seem to slightly tremble and dust falls from the ceiling. The death seen in the nature about seems to react by the sole power of his gaze and his total dominion over the elements. His eyes flares upon you and without words, his gaze tell you that *you... are in his domain.*

Even in life, this druid was never good with words.

Undeath and seclusion have only worsened this condition and thus, intimidation is what he chose to “negotiate” his way out of this mess. Time is running out though as Treshan is minutes from appearing in the clearing.

Role-Playing Tip

The party at this point may feel threatened (they would be right) but the most wise of the party (like Alirielle) may ask why the druid hasn't attacked yet. This may cause others to ask questions as to the Druid's real intentions

The party can just unleash arrows and storm out with weapons drawn. This will have for effect to send the Druid into a defensive stance, as it will take most of the damage, relying on its Fast Healing to recover but it will not retaliate. It will back up a few paces and talk.

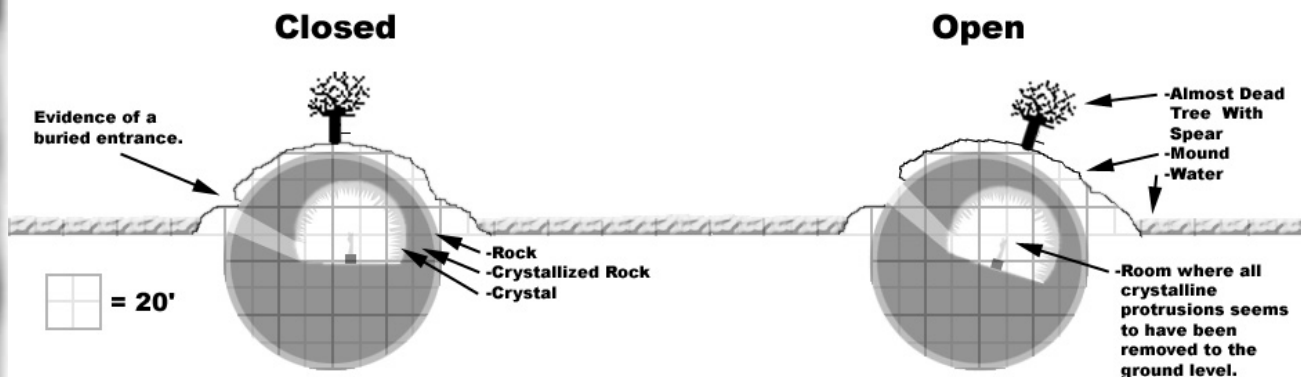
If the party has doubts as to its motives and actions, the Druid will still take a few paces back and talk.

In both cases, when this is done, read the following:

The Dark Druid takes a few steps back and points to the west. Then, with a deep, guttural voice that trembles from the very earth around it, it addresses itself to you:

“Go, now!” it commands. “For the lackey of Izrador is nearly upon you. He comes with a great host of beasts. You cannot fight him nor can you afford to lose time fighting me.” He adds with a forced suppression of anger in his voice. Upon finishing his sentence he takes another step back,

Geode Side View



as if to give you the berth needed to get past him with relative safety. "Hurry mortals, and never come back here, for you too may be tainted with the evil from within this place".

The Druid will say nothing more and will start to look at the horizon, desperately anticipating Treshan's emergence from the Black Mire.

The party will have choices to make, but as soon as all members of the party has exited the geode, the Druid will utter a phrase in his own strange language and the geode will pivot, sinking the entrance in the earth and mud. Then it will turn to the party and throw them a scroll case with the insignia of the Shadow carved upon its surface. Not awaiting any kind of thanks, the druid will then disappear in the murky waters of the Black Mire, leaving the party alone in the corrupted wilderness, with only the sound of their pounding hearts and the distant rumble of the approaching Shadow's army led by Treshan and Krellyx.

The following is what is written on the scroll given by the druid. This was obviously taken from some courier and still patted with human blood:

Hail Izrador Lord of Darkness,

My Lord, the southern positions have been recalled as well as the western and eastern fronts in order to form the defensive lines you required. Jaraag the Bloody has vastly protested against the recall but complies. Soon the War Band will have reached your designated positions.

I must say that, even though I do not doubt your tactical point of view in this matter that I do not think mobilizing an entire War band of the Black Claw Legion for this is justified. Although Legate Treshan has reassured me that this matter was important, I fail to see the sense of it all. Perhaps that my briefing was lacking and I do not hold all the required information to fully understand the movement of three times a thousand troops for such minor matters.

Although it is my duty to challenge you in your decisions when needed, I do not think that this is a foolhardy quest, but rather a waste of resources.

Respectfully

Commander Grim Lerkos

This letter was a message from the commander in charge of the mission's logistics and second in command beneath Greggyk Quelos. This letter was supposed to inform Treshan that the forces on the other side of the river are in position and the trap is ready to spring. The stage is set,

fate it seems will strike as planned. But fate and destiny can be two warring sisters.

While everything is happening, Thermatraxe rests comfortably at the bottom of the mire, nestled in the expanding mud with only his eyes and the top of his head protruding from the water. In the darkened depths of the Mire he watches the situation unfold with the geode and Dark Druid with exited glee. He has no intention of revealing the location or even the existence of the geode to Treshan. Such knowledge is far too precious to fall to such meddlesome mortal lackeys. Thermatraxe enjoys seeing what will happen next. Since the Children of Aryth are indeed proceeding west, there is no cause for alarm.

The party should head out in the last reaches of the Black Mire as soon as possible. If for some reason they are delayed, have them hear an orc war horn at a reasonable distance. If that doesn't work, Thermatraxe won't believe his eyes and will begin to get nervous. Treshan will finally emerge from the darkness flanked with countless lines of orcs and will charge the mound with resolve and skill. Thermatraxe will reveal his presence and breathe fire in the party's direction if they have lingered too long. The breath won't reach them but it will surely get them moving. Hopefully it won't come to this and the party will have fled a long time ago. The other half of the Black Mire is as bad as the first and it will take some time for the party to actually reach the hard ground of the western plains. After the episode with the Geode and the Druid however, it will be hard for the members of the party to think that all hope is gone for the world. Alirielle will muse that the liberated spirits might have something to do with the fact that the Druid did not attack, others may have their own little theory as to what is actually going on.

In any case, aside the devilish cold and the effects of the Black Mire, the party should make their way out of the Mire within a day, always followed by Treshan who is now dangerously close, it maybe wise to skip a night's rest just to get ahead.

Experience Allocation (per Character)

Liberate the Spirits from the Crystals	100
Get truly useful information from the spirits	75
Avoid unnecessary combat with the Druid	100
Leave the Geode area with great haste	100
Good Role-Playing	150

Total Potential XP	xp 525
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Destinies of Blood

/Note: This chapter is to be GM'd with extreme caution. It deals with something that, in my experience as Game master over the years, has been the No.1 cause for player frustration: Capture.

It is true that players who feel they are being railroaded into a jail can feel angry that there was nothing they could do and that the GM is sadistically trying to make them feel like losers or incompetent even. Although I tend to agree with that fact, I have discovered that, in the Midnight setting, the mindset can be completely different. Since good is not unilaterally supposed to win in the end, GM can make quite interesting variations to themes that in other settings might seem unthinkable. Themes like capture, torture and even death. In this event, we will deal with all three.

First of all, let's face it. What can half a dozen people on foot, with limited or no training can do against 2500 orc troops, 1000 Oruk troops, 3 orc Battle masters, 1 orc Warlord, 4 legates, 1 High Legate and an adult dragon? That being said, its not actually the fact that the party will be captured that is important, but what will that brief moment in captivity will generate for the players. Even if it will look like the world is about to end for most players, the capture is but a climactic and necessary passage that will serve several things:

- 1- It will conclude the party's constant state of pursuit; the legates will be confident that they will have accomplished their mandates and will most likely turn to other matters after this, leaving the surviving Children of Aryth to their fate and relatively free to roam at will.
- 2- It will consolidate and strengthen the player's hate towards the Shadow.
- 3- It will be an opportunity to meet key antagonists and identify them as potential targets in the future.
- 4- Indicate to the players the state of over-confidence the legates have about their own power which can then be used against them in the future.

As you can see, opportunities like these are much more than simple abduction and detainment. It's an opportunity to see your enemy in the eye and swear to do everything you can to send him join his ancestors.

The actual detention part will be quite short but full of life-changing events. People will die and horrors perpetrated upon the undeserving. It is safe to say that it will be brief, but very unpleasant. But isn't it the whole point?

The fact that the legates do not fully know and understand the prophecy of the Children of Aryth can only be made to serve the Quelos and their allies. The High Legate Oltirin has but weak understanding of the elven writings, and will make a fatal error. He will rather send the strong members of the captured as slave to aid the war effort in the city of Steel Hill rather than killing them all outright. This will prove ultimately to be the salvation of the entire elven effort to build a true and effective resistance force.

Wildcard

Even if the dragon Thermatraxx is officially under the Shadow's banner, he has little will to meddle in petty human affairs. While he obeys direct commands from Oltirin, he quite comfortably fills his own private agenda. The coming of the Children of Aryth may be of great use to him somewhere in a distant future and Thermatraxx has a place for them in his draconic age-long schemes. The dragon's crafty nature will be key in the Party's survival and Thermatraxx knows it's up to him to act, when the moment is ripe of course...

/End of Note

When the party actually comes out of the Black Mire, they will enter a long stretch of snowy grass plain as far as the eye can see. Characters who are lucky to have some geographic skills will know that these plains are sundered in two by the great Gallerion river about a half day's march to the west. This river is wide and temperamental and should be crossed by the only available natural crossing named "The Door of the West" which is several miles to the north following against the flow of water. Thermatraxx will follow aloft, and hiding in clouds and will reveal himself if the party should astray.

I recommend placing an encounter of your own brew on the way to the river as a way to flush out tension probably building in the more aggressive players by making them fight. This will be used to throw off the attention from Treshan's pursuit to something else.

Other than the fact that food is probably getting low and long-term exposure to the cold, the travel to the river should be uneventful.

When in the proximity of the river, read the following:

The roar of furious waters suddenly slices the monotony of the plain winds and stops Llyssia's constant flow of words. In the distance, the faint haze of water clouds over a riverbed can clearly be seen. You have reached the great river, and the Door of the West should be close.

Read the following when the party approaches the door to the west:

The river in itself is about fifty yards wide and filled with raging icy water and ice chunks colliding with each other and upon protruding rocks. It is quite unthinkable to cross, especially during winter time. Along a few miles the scenery changes dramatically as a great land slide caused the whole area to depress drastically as if the countryside had been cleaved by a God's axe and the part to the south sank forcing the river to flow through a seemingly natural but spectacular waterfall. The river literally is catapulted in the air as the ground beneath it suddenly vanishes one hundred feet lower. The flow of water is thus propelled in a flow resembling a spout where it crashes down below into a pool and resumes its natural course through the land. The only passage lay under the falling water, through an icy path up to the other side of the river.

Upon approaching the wall of stone that is, in fact, the continuation of the plains, great clouds of steam generated

by the crashing water can be seen from afar. The great billowing clouds disperse and cover everything in a thick layer of slippery ice and concealing the flow of water falling from atop the cliff side.

"This looks about right" says Lorkan. Llyssia doesn't appear as confident as her brother while she looks at all the ice and cold water going about. "Yeah, it looks dangerous if you ask me" replies Ulthielle.

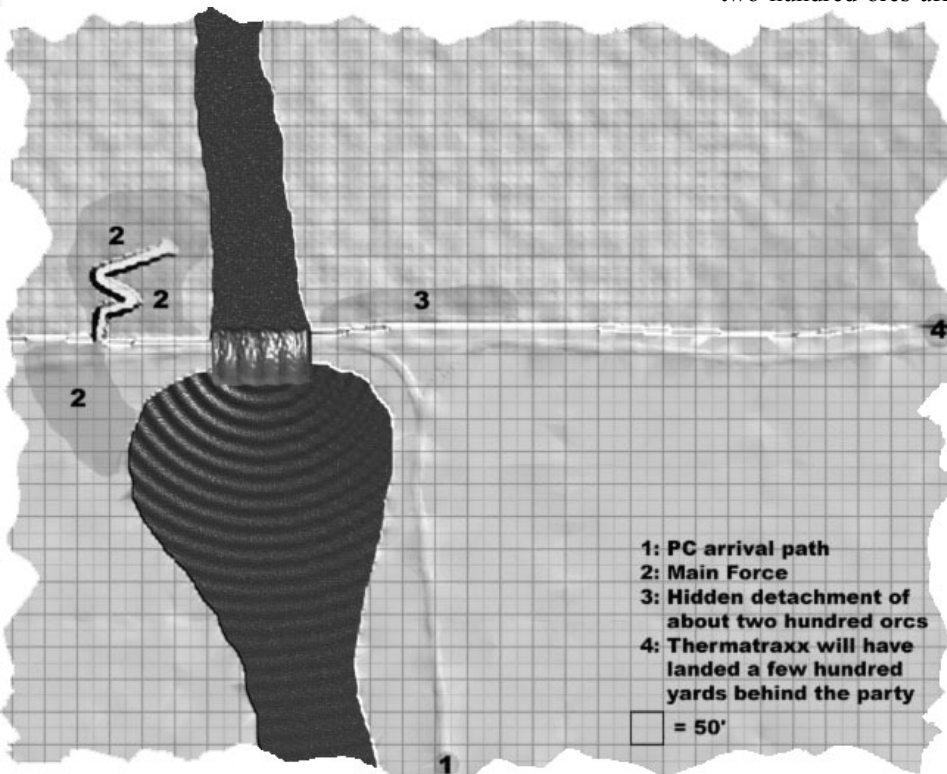
"For once your judgment is right Ulthielle" adds her mother. Ulthielle's face frowns in pain and she dares not start an argument. "We must tread slowly and carefully if we are to succeed this without hurt. Caranthir, you want to do us the honor?"

Caranthir nods and inspects his leather boots and straps whatever equipment he has left tightly, and carefully proceeds into the pass.

From the bottom of the waterfall, the haze of the crashing water clouds completely conceals what stands on the other side and reduces actual sight to 30 feet. It would take a character to climb the rock face to the top to be able to determine what is going on, but the slippery ice that covers everything can make it extremely difficult to climb (DC 20 at least each 10 feet climbed for 100 feet). A character that actually makes it on top of the cliff will come face to face with a detachment of about two hundred orcs affected to that side of the river especially for that reason.

At this point in time, Thermatraxx will have landed a few hundred yards behind the party and aside the lowering rock cliff just in case the party decides not to go through the pass and try to walk along the cliff until the ground is low enough to walk up the hill to the river. They would also encounter the detachment of orcs but Thermatraxx feels scaring them into the pass would be much easier.

While the party tries to determine which way should be best, Treshan, already having been told by the dragon that they had almost reached the



pass, would have pressed on and will be appearing in the distance. This extra motivation will surely expedite the party through the pass.

If the party argues if they should send a scout, Elyssia Quelos will object saying that with the deafening sound of the river and the billowing clouds of vapor the rest of the group will not be able to see if something actually happened and furthermore, if the scout should slip there are good chances that he will end up in the water which is also a bad idea.

When the party or an individual enters the pass, read the following:

The deafening thunder of the waterfall crashing about forty feet away from you shakes your body by its sheer brute force. Everything here is covered with an expansive layer of blue ice shaped as if an artistic ice spirit was trapped here for centuries. Pillars of transparent ice created by leaks from above create the illusion of an artificial ice forest. As if the pillars were actually holding the cliff against the force of the waters passing on it.

The walk along the path under the waterfall is perilous. The clean and smooth ice on the ground makes for a treacherous crossing as your feet slip and find uneasy footing, treading ever so slowly to the other side. The haze about you clings to your body and face and chill you to the bone. In a matter of seconds a layer of ice begins to form on your cloaks and equipment and holding together for stability becomes even more a challenge.

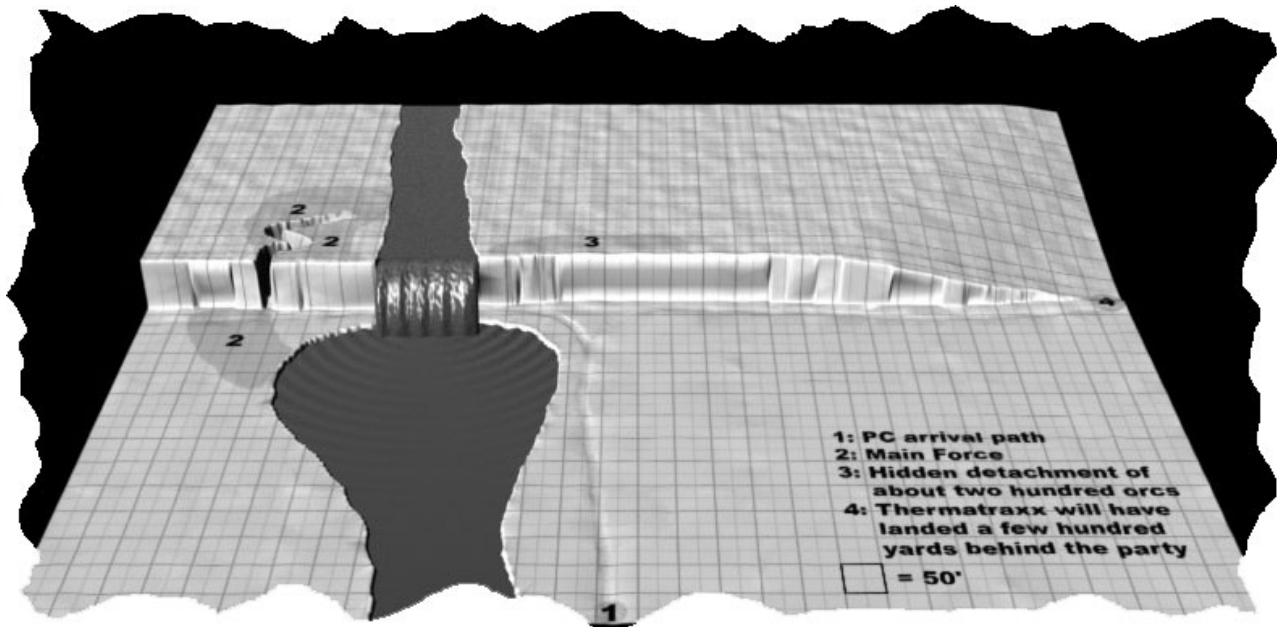
It takes your party at least fifteen minutes to make the fifty yard walk to the other side and when the sound of the crashing waterfall seems to be behind you, another sound

suddenly appears and echoes around you; the sound of an evil laughter.

The trap is sprung. From far above is high legate Oltirin laughing, obviously pleased of his own accomplishments. As soon as the party realizes what is going on, an entire detachment of the Black Claw will pour from the path that leads on top of the Cliffside as well as many other springing from concealed position in the snow/ice and immediately surround the party, snarling and bellowing. At that moment the rest of the company arrives from the path under the waterfall. The trap has successfully tightened itself around the party, but has it really?

Role-Playing Tip

At this moment you can allow a Chanceborn character to instinctively find a safe spot to hide (into some hole between two rocks for example) where the Shadow won't find him. He can then be used as a wildcard to help free the party later on.



GM's Advice: Struggle

If characters try to resist they will be assaulted and pummeled into submission. The process should be quick as many orcs will grab and overthrow anyone foolish enough not to accept defeat. It is important not to undermine efforts to break free. Have all the dices rolled and show sportsmanship by even giving advice as to what would be the best move. Ultimately, that character will be caught and neutralized, but at least the player will have given the orcs their money's worth.

When most of the reaction of the group has passed, read the following:

The orcs flow from the passage in the cliff as well as seemingly every other direction until their number is too many to count. From behind you also appear hundreds of orcs, where did they come from, you have no idea, but one thing is certain, there must be at least a thousand orcs in the immediate vicinity. All confidently striding over the ice as their sharp talon-like toe nails rake the ice and provide sure-footing. From atop the cliff, indiscernible figures clad in armor look down to watch the situation unfold. The laughter of the man is instantly drowned in the numerous orc sounds and your own heart's pounding.

To the left of the men in armor, appearing from the sky, a huge creature with unbelievable wingspan appears from the haze and with a few majestic flaps of its wings and a gut-wrenching scream, it carefully perches itself upon the cliff's edge. Its snake-like body of black scales gleams in the ambient light. Leaning forward, its enormous horned head peers at you with unearthly glowing eyes. It looks at you with interest, but you know that this look is past basic feeding instincts, its cold, calculating stare shows immense intelligence as well as evil intent.

Commands are shouted from within the orc ranks and the first line of orc facing you suddenly lower their pikes and halberds with militaristic synchronicity. To the right of the ranks the orcs nervously step aside to let a human clad in pitch black plate armor go through. The plate armor abounds with carvings and evil designs. The man lifts his visor and a pale visage of a middle-aged man appears. A thin moustache and goatee decorate his slim and angular face. "I suggest you drop whatever weapons you might be having in your possession, it might be difficult to hold them off if you don't" the man sneers as his gaze seem to point to the battle anticipating orcs.

Role-Playing Tip

From this point things could feel somewhat scripted but you should take care not to let the players be hammered by all the narration that will follow. Keep the reactions of the NPC's alive and present, have them interact with your players, have the antagonists make comments at them, have orcs handle and touch the women etc... Provoke them and interact with them, it is vital that you do so in this event, or your players become frustrated and they might lose interest. The players may not have control over what is happening to them, but they should have control over how they react through these events.

Furthermore, don't forget that you have someone who eluded the orcs, and he might want to do something in order to save his/her friends.

If the characters decide to either give them a fight or to surrender completely read the following:

Elyssia grabs her children and huddles them against her as any mother would instinctively do when faced by an imminent threat.

"Stay calm now, we don't want to make them angry. There is no need for any of you to die, just stay close to me." She whispers to her children.

Lorkan is the first to lay down his weapons, followed by Llyssia and Ulthielle. Caranthir had a long pause before he joined his brother. All the while, the legate in black armor was grinning.

"Good... good. Now that you have finally understood that there is nothing you can do against the might of the shadow we will now proceed to the top of the cliff. But before that..." he adds while throwing a load of shackles and chains to the Quelos's feet. "Please put these on."

At the same moment as Lorkan machinally picks up the chain, a commotion suddenly erupts behind the Quelos, in the icy path. Shoving his way through the orcs with his warhorse Treshan makes his entrance. The other legate chuckles at his arrival.

"Well... well. Looks like you are late Treshan, we have complete control of the situation you see." Treshan's lack of appreciation for the comment was obvious and snapped back at him.

“Who do you think pushed and herded these rebels half-way across the cold plains Lerkos? You only had to sit here and wait for them, a huge testament to your abilities I might add... I especially like the fact that it took you three times a thousand troops to do it.”

The statement had the effect of a whip; the other legate obviously stumped took his gaze from Treshan’s. Ordering the orcs to secure your party, the shackles and chains are set to your wrists and ankles. With shoves and hits from the blunt of their weapons, they motivate you to follow the sinuous path in the cliff face up to the main camp, Treshan proudly securing the rear.

Basically the events here will be broken down in three separate parts. It will be up to you to introduce them as you see fit. The orc camp is unremarkable aside the fact that there is a human section to it reserved for the legates and the human hirelings led by Gregyyk Quelos. Here is a breakdown of the principal characters present and their motivations that will explain the events to come:

High Legate Oltirin of Bastion

The only reason why Oltirin is away from the protective walls of Bastion is intimately tied to the elven prophecy. Long have his superiors told him of the Witch-Queen’s writings and he is basically here to end this foolish fearie tale by executing the instigator of the movement, namely Elyssia Quelos. Oltirin cares for one thing, to put this affair behind him, an affair that has blurred his image of prestige and control towards his superiors and his God.

Gregyyk Quelos

The father of the Quelos line has been working for the shadow for a number of years now. His reputation as a ruthless warrior and an excellent tactician has earned him the respect of Oltirin and even to some orc warlords as well. His band of human mercenaries was instrumental in much subjugation of rebel cells throughout the Northern Territories. Now the word that his wife is leading such a rebel cell has permanently smudged his name and he is here to punish his wife and to prove to Oltirin that his loyalty to Izrador is resolute and unchanged.

Lord Treshan

Humiliated by the fact that the elven rebels have been under his nose for so long and frustrated by Llyssia’s rejection, Treshan is here to set his honor back to the level it once was by inflicting punishment onto Llyssia equal to the pain of dishonor he believes he has suffered. Even if Oltirin has assured him that he holds no ill will towards him, his need to inflict pain and vengeance upon the Quelos woman is more issued from pure egocentric male pride than anything else.

The events are therefore broken down in two parts which will take place soon after the prisoners have reached the

high plateau atop the cliff: The execution of Elyssia Quelos, the punishment of Llyssia and the departure to Steel Hill.

The execution of Elyssia is probably the biggest and most disturbing event the Quelos will have faced in their lives. When you feel it is appropriate to proceed with this event, read the following:

Two Oruks suddenly appear from behind you and swiftly grab Elyssia’s chains. The mother of the Quelos family closes here eyes as if deep within her she knew what was going on. She rises to her feet and they escort her about twenty feet from you, where all the orcs have cleared the area of equipment and debris revealing a huge wooden post firmly driven into the earth. The oruks tightly fasten her chains upon the post as well as using generous amounts of rope to secure her body onto the chopped tree trunk.

Moments later a man clad in black armor adorned with a black cloak of great craftsmanship edged with rare furs and embroidered with various evil pictograms appears from the orcish ranks. His metallic armor clanking at each of his steps, and his bald head is hard and seething. His face lined with a carefully shaped beard looks upon the prisoner with hate and spite as he nears Elyssia and stops inches from her face. Elyssia looks at the man who then slaps her face with his gauntleted hand. Her face recoils from the blow as a thin line of blood trickles down her cheek.

“That, is for rising against your rightful Lord, slave!” the man sneered. “Battle Master, she’s all yours.” he adds while taking another second to look upon her.

As the legate turns away and takes his leave of Elyssia, another man emerges from the orc ranks. A tall man with long flowing hair and muscled body adorning scars of numerous battles clad in an aging scale mail and leather clothes. His face is cold and looks upon the woman as if she was the lowest form of life that has walked the earth. All the Quelos children gasp in horror upon the sight of this man.

Ulthielle’s jaw opens in utter disbelief. “Father?” she futilely asks, but her words were too faint to be heard through the orc clamor and various sounds. The man quickly marches towards Elyssia and stops in front of her.

“You have dishonored me for the last time woman! I should have done this a long time ago...” shouts the man before he quickly pivots unsheathing a broad silver sword and with the quickness of lightning but with enormous brute force, the blade

passes through Elyssia's throat sending a spray of warm blood to her side. The blade then forcefully drives itself into the post behind her severing the head completely. The wide blade although impaled in the wood was still wide enough to hold the decapitated neck and as the body of his wife slumps lifelessly held by the rope and chains, the head remained in place, locked in an expression of fear and surprise. As the blood flows over the body of his former spouse, the man looks at the other prisoners. "Do what you want with my daughters Oltirin, and send the others to Steel Hill for all I care. This matter is over!"

GM's Advice: Drama

The Quelos Family should be in a state of shock by now. Their only anchor of support and safety has just been ripped away from them. While the women NPC's will be too weak from the intense mourning, the men however will have violent reactions, which will be equally violently subdued. Have the dramatic situation slide to horror with the insertion of another event.

When you feel the time is right (suggestion would be seconds after the beheading of Elyssia) have the event: The Punishment of Llyssia begin by reading the following:

As the wails of anguish and sorrow of the Quelos echo throughout the cold plains and the orc clamor in festive accomplishment, the legates of Izrador contemplate the scene of horror they have created. Obviously pleased with the results, Oltirin then raises a hand towards Treshan who takes a few steps towards his master and kneels. "You have served me well throughout the years Treshan. You took the Blackmoor mandate with honor and did not falter even if things looked grim. For that, I am empowered by our God, Izrador, into giving you a reward." Oltirin proudly preaches. Treshan looks to his master with evil and hopeful eyes. "And that reward is vengeance." he adds. Treshan's hopeful face transforms to a satisfied grin. Rising to his feet he then orders two Oruks in Blacktongue. The Oruks turn towards the Quelos and grab Llyssia by her ankle chains. The reactions of her brothers are quickly answered by blows and pummeling by the surrounding orcs as the Oruks drag the weeping woman in the open, then left to cry and moan at the center of the clearing. Another orc emerges from the crowd with several spikes and a mottled-looking hammer. With the help of the Oruk the orc drives the spikes into the ground, essentially pinning

Llyssia's chains and forcing her to lie face first on the ground with both hands and feet spread far apart.

"You will pay for refusing me, woman. If I cannot have your beauty than no one shall ever have it, not even you!" Treshan seethed under his breath.

"Begin!" he ordered at his right and two other orcs emerged from behind him armed with foul and cruel-looking whips. These Boro leather whips had small pieces of sharpened metal at the tip of each strand and they softly clanged together menacingly as the orcs approached her, salivating, orgasmically anticipating what they were allowed and about to do.

The first blow ripped Llyssia's clothing on her back in three even spaced paths as the shards of metal sliced through her cloak and flesh like would a warm knife through butter. The pain stopped her breathing, and for a moment she did not move. Her face torn with a sudden and excruciating feeling like nothing she had felt before. Although her mouth and eyes were wide open, not a sound came out of her. Her body trembled and shook with pain as it traveled through the length of her body. She could not scream, she could not cry as if the very wind was robbed of her lungs, she could only feel the pain, and the warmth of her own blood trickling on her side.

Forcefully, the other orc grabbed the torn edges of her cloak and swiftly ripped it apart uncovering everything and leaving Llyssia half naked on the bloodied snow. Upon that moment the air began to flow back into Llyssia's body and she exclaimed such a scream that startled even the orcs. Then both torturers began to whip her body thoroughly. The metal and the strands ripping flesh and gushing blood, Llyssia twisted and howled as her skin was being torn asunder, her inhuman screams of pain superseding the collective clamor of the orcs.

Suddenly the whipping stopped and Llyssia's scream subsided to a desperate series of whimpers and mixed moaning and crying. The orcs looked upon her broken body with satisfaction and started to roll their whips around their arms. Treshan looked at the orcs and threw his helmet to the ground.

"What?! I didn't tell you to stop! Resume the flogging at once!" ordered Treshan. The orcs looked at the legate interrogatively but obeyed nonetheless. Upon that moment Llyssia was flogged with such sadicism and experience that her thought soon disconnected from her corporeal self and she entered a state of shock and trance. The whips flayed at her skin with unrelenting cruelty and her blood, spraying in small quantities began to pat the snow all around her until she was

surrounded by a grim halo of red. It was only when her skin began to turn unrecognizable; as there was no intact parts of it, did Treshan order a halt to the flogging.

The orcs began to take the spikes off of Llyssia's chains but were interrupted by yet another command by the legate.

"The job is only halfway done..." he added while indicating with his hand to flip her over. "Please finish what you have started."

The orcs grinned maliciously as they ripped the last vestiges of Llyssia's clothing and pinned her naked body on her back. Llyssia gasped as the cold snow invaded the wound on her back. Her vision was blurred by speck of blood and chunks of flesh that had flayed off of her body and onto her face. Her limbs convulsed and she uncontrollably shook from head to toe.

The flogging resumed and Llyssia had no strength left to expel her pain. Each stroke of the strands marred her once beautiful body with yet another mark of hate and evil. It was soon that her body released Llyssia from this torture and the woman fell unconscious. All the while the blows of the whips continued and Llyssia's body became a broken, marred and bloodied statue, the shards inexorably plowing the entirety of the visible skin.

Treshan then ordered for the orcs to stop. The orcs immediately obeyed, obviously winded and breathing heavily from the strenuous work. Treshan, still grinning walked up to Llyssia and straddled her bloodied body.

"Curse you Quelos, you will never rise against me again..." he whispered before he unsheathed a vicious-looking dagger. With an almost insane smile he then started to butcher her face, cutting the flesh to the bone. Only after a half-dozen cuts did he let go of her, rose to his feet, and walked away like nothing ever happened, collecting his helmet along the way shouting a last order to the torturers.

"Make sure it scars. And then proceed with her as Master Oltirin has seen fit!"

The world seems to collapse for the Quelos who just lost two of their family members. The height of sorrow seems to be at its highest at this point. It is time to close this chapter of their lives by making the last event happen. The Quelos women are to be separated from the men to serve as either gifts or sacrifices. Here is a breakdown of what will happen per character:

Llyssia Quelos

She is to be sent to Theros Obsidia and given as slave to a sympathizing family.

Ulthielle Quelos

She is to be given to Jaraag Black claw as payment for his services in this mandate.

Alirielle Quelos

She is to be taken to the nearest Corith to serve as sacrifice to Izrador. Her magical prowess makes her the ideal choice for such a fate.

The rest of the party will remain chained and sent to Steel Hill for slave labor. They will spend the night locked in slave carriages.

The orcs and legate, while being in this conquered territory, added to the fact that they are in such great numbers, provide them with a sense of security and overconfidence, while normally warranted, should be a boon for the prisoners. The Chanceborn character should be able (make this difficult but not impossible) to slip by the guards and smuggle himself where he/she could try to free the party at a later time.

It would be folly to open the locks while in the presence of the full regiment of the Black Claw, so the party will have to be patient, and await the coming morning when the encampment will break and the slave caravan leave for Steel Hill. Only then, should the forces be small enough to manage an escape.

GM's Advice: Wildcard

The Chanceborn character could give them food; try to undo some of their bonds in advance, gather their equipment etc... There is plenty an outside man could do in this situation.

In the morning, when the caravan starts its journey to Steel Hill, read the following.

A sleepless night, your mind races as to what actually happened to you and your friends. Elyssia Quelos, the mother of so many can still be seen tied and chained to the post in the middle of the orc camp, her head resting on her husband's blade still. Llyssia's blood still stain the ground but so many orcs have passed upon that place that all remains is a formless change in color, some red, some pink and sightings of her former clothes still remains frozen upon the snow and dirt.

Your Boro-pulled wagon starts to move and shakes as the huge wooden wheels braves the uneven terrain and you unwillingly make your goodbyes to

people who have taken care of you for so long. Mother Quelos's memory will remain in your mind and blazing heart forever, and the memory of her daughters, who have all been taken away from you last night, will also remain as the mystery of their demise will haunt you to no end.

Snuggled against each other for warmth does Lorkan begin to weep as now is the time for grieving and solace. Your paths are now broken, but the goal still remains. The elves are still waiting for you in the west, and unless you can reach them, the life of Elyssia will not be the only one to be wasted in this war against what you know now is pure evil.

Experience Allocation (per Character)

Reaching the Door of the West	200
Good Role-Playing (be demanding)	300-800
Total Potential XP	1000 xp

Dragon fiend err friend?

Thermatraxx is indeed an enigma in this equation. While freely serving Izrador and his minions, and answering his dragon night King he, on the other hand, has other things planned for the future.

In the schemes of things, the Children of Aryth do play a part, and an important part that is. Far from being altruistic, his motives are very well selfish and personal but nonetheless he needs some outside help from time to time.

Now released temporarily from his duties by Oltirin, he roams around, looking for ways to advance his cause. His sights have been set on the party for a long time now, and since he cannot help them all, he will choose to stage the rescue of those caught in the slave caravan.

The reason for this apparent change of allegiance is simple: Thermatraxx needs the Children of Aryth to reach the elves. He knows that if the elven prophecies are to be true, that there is a small chance that Izrador may be at least delayed and the chance for his plans may yet be feasible at that time. He has no particular affection for the Children of Aryth, they are just a human answer to some problems he is currently having...

Knowing that the Children of Aryth are bound to try and escape, especially due to the one Thermatraxx smelled roam around the compound the day before, he also knows that when the caravan will not reach Steel Hill, Oltirin will realize his error and the hunt for the humans will

resume. However, if he could get them close to the elven lines in time, they would have a chance of actually make it to safety.

Thermatraxx is a no-nonsense type of creature. He knows that orcs are not that intelligent so he doesn't have to come up with an elaborate plan to rescue the humans. Getting the humans to cooperate is an entirely different matter. He knows that he has to gain their trust in order to use them later on in their lives. And since humans have a knack of learning things and becoming more and more powerful (those who survive that is...) it may prove to be difficult to gain their support in the years to come if they remember him as being a foul and double-crossing monster and such. So Thermatraxx will play it straightforwardly deceitful.

He will then attack the convoy, ripping to shreds most of the escort and chewing off the wagon's door, allowing the prisoners to exit and fight the remaining orcs with the weapons the outside man should have gotten. If not there will be plenty of weapons to salvage from the dead orcs.

When this is over, Thermatraxx knows there will be lengthy discussions as to the "whyfors" and the "whatnots" as humans always have a tendency to over rationalize what happens to them.

Thermatraxx will tell them what they need to hear in order to get them on his back and away from the Shadow as quickly as possible.

When you feel the moment is right for Thermatraxx to make his entrance, read the following:

Your wagon makes its way and recoils from the occasional bumps in the road. Your escort of forty orcs and four goblin sniffers on Worgs noisily babbles away as they make their way through the western parts of the Cold Plains. Suddenly there is a small shriek, as if a goblin had stub his toe on something and then the monotone white and blue colors of the snow and sky suddenly change to red and orange around the wagon. A wave of sudden heat penetrates the wooden boards and flames start to seep in. Dozens of orcish shrieks can be heard outside as all see to scramble and unsheathe weapons as well as flee in panic. In front of the wagon's door at the end, a huge shadow of a form suddenly falls from the sky and lands forcefully a few feet away in a terrible blow that sends waves of vibrations up to your position. The beasts then let loose a horrible scream and the last few feet of

the wagons are torn to shreds by several rows of enormous and viciously sharp teeth. The wagon bucks at the blow and a wheel falls from its axis. The beasts then, with a sweep of its wings jumps a few meters aside and swallows whole a goblin trying to escape, while ripping two other orcs with its claws.

Role-Playing Tip

Have the Chanceborn character (if hidden about the wagon) take 10 points of fire damage from the remnants of the breath weapon used against the mainstay of the orc forces. If the Chanceborn managed to get the party's equipment (not all, but only what could have been carried), then they will have weapons to fight the remaining orcs. If not, then have them spend a round or two searching and equipping weapons for the fight. Several can be found scattered around. There should be about ten to fourteen orcs left from the whole contingent. Thermatraxx knows better than to take them out all alone and knows humans like to pass their rage upon their captors, so he will only prevent the orcs from leaving.

When the battle is won, read the following:

All the orcs have been slain and aside the small crackling fire of what used to be your transporting wagon and pulling beasts the silence of the cold plains slowly creeps back into place.

A few meters to your right now stand this huge beast, the dragon you have seen with the legates and the orcs. It looks upon you with the same fiery intelligence as before, but something seems to have changed; the evil in its eyes has vanished. Only the cold, clinical stare remains and the fangs, and the claws...

A draconic grin appears from the corner of its maw: "I would tell you not to fear me and to trust me, but somehow this choice of words seems futile..." it says in polished Erenlander.

Thermatraxx knows the characters will be wary of doing anything that is; if they don't run away in fear themselves. Thermatraxx hope that a dialog will eventually calm their fears and in due course make them accept his help to reach Erethor. He will accept in answering questions and

will also provide information as to what happened to Alirielle.

If the question is asked about the daughters of Elyssia, read the following:

"The Quelos daughters have paid the price for your freedom and survival. They each have to face a gruesome and painful reality from now on. Llyssia Quelos has been sent south to Theros Obsidia to act as a slave to a Izrador's sympathizing family. Ulthielle Quelos has been given as a gift to Jaraag Blackclaw and Alirielle the sorceress has paid the ultimate price. My estimate is that moments ago she was sacrificed over an altar of Izrador, her soul is now trapped in the infernal mirror and feeds the Dark Lord's lust for power.

While it is true that Alirielle is condemned to die above a Corith, she did not however die at that precise moment. The legates and their escort have yet several hours more of horseback riding to do in order to reach the dark mirror. Thermatraxx does not want the humans to enflame themselves with ideas of rescue as their position is relatively safe and there is no need to advertise to the shadow that they have escaped. Thermatraxx thus made the decision to tell them of her death, before it actually happens. The dragon will tell them that there is a way to save her (destroy the Corith) but that this information will have to come from the elves.

Thermatraxx will then chat with the group, learning from them their abilities and past as well as some motivations before he suggests that they all make for the forest of the elves. If asked about his own motives for rescuing them, Thermatraxx could say the following:

"Let's just say that I have my own reasons to help you. Do not be deceived though, I am not your friend. I am an agent of the shadow, but I am also a dragon and that is way beyond any commitment to any lord of this world.

I help myself by helping you, and even if the results of these actions are not felt in the immediate, in the far future it may produce some interesting repercussions in my favor."

When everything is said, Thermatraxx will invite them to climb upon his back and hold on for dear life. The flight to Erethor will be swift but falling from the scales could prove fatal.

“If you fall, don’t expect me to risk all the other is some insane aerial acrobatics to save you...”

Experience Allocation (per Character)

Escape and fight off the remaining Orc	350
Get much information from the dragon	300
Good Roleplaying	250

Total Potential XP	800 xp
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Flight to Erethor

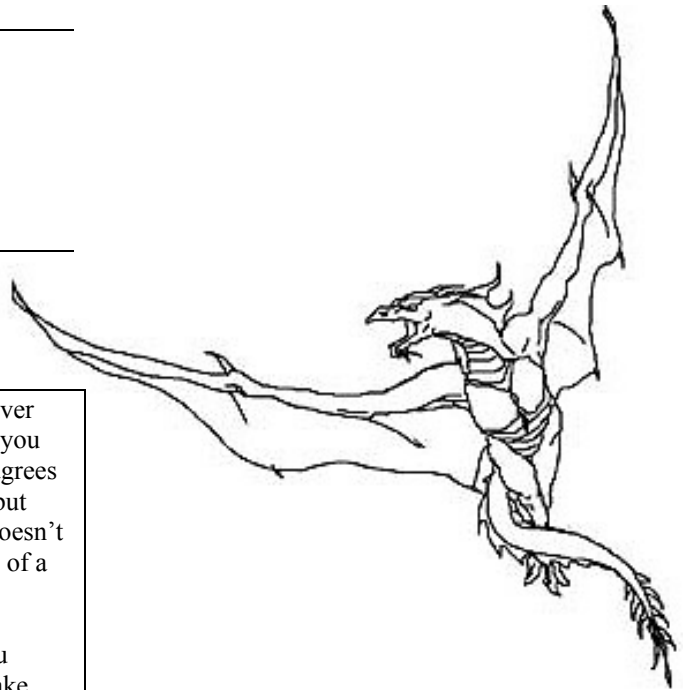
With some directive from the dragon you use whatever ropes are left from the remains of your caravan and you secure yourselves with it. Thermatraxx reluctantly agrees to pass the ropes around his neck to solidify things but you have an instinctive feeling that if he suddenly doesn’t want the ropes to entangle him, they won’t be much of a bother to rip apart.

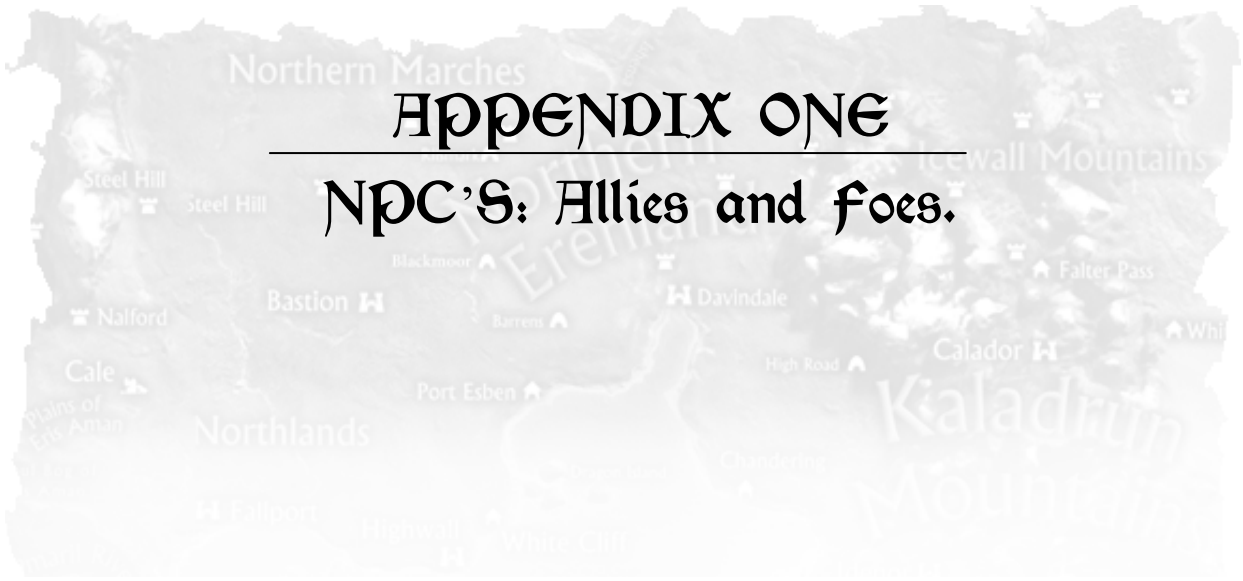
Sitting on the cold and dark scales of the dragon you cannot help but think that this could be a huge mistake, but before you can finish that thought Thermatraxx launches himself in the air and with two flaps of his enormous black wings, you are aloft and feeling the bitter snap of the winter winds. The dragon then chants several words in a strange language and suddenly the chill diminishes and completely subsides. Thermatraxx’s head turn to you and smiles:

“An old trick I learned from an old elven knight” he loudly stated. “The journey will take a day or two at full speeds. Try not to fall off?”

You all scream in terror as the dragon banks violently to the right, setting his sights on the green and lush edges of the elven forest. In the cool evening, you perceive from that great height the troops of the Black Claw going in the direction of Bastion, and further to the west lies a hint of green. As if some celestial painter had stricken but a line of pale green in the distance. This is your goal, on the back of your enemy no less, and aloft will you reach it. But despite this happy and exhilarating moment you cannot escape the thought of the ones you left behind, but you find solace in the hope that you are doing what they probably would want you to do.

In the fainting last glows of the sun your party glides on to the west...





APPENDIX ONE

NPC'S: Allies and Foes.



Lord Treshan Legate of Izrador (NPC Only)



Treshan of Izrador

Male Erenlander Leg6: CR6; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD6d8; hp60; Init +3; Spd 20ft.; AC 21, touch 13, flatfooted 18; Atk +8 melee (by weapon type +4) or +8 ranged; SQ Spellcasting, Rebuke Undead; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +1, Will +1; Str16, Dex14, Con14, Int14, Wis16, Cha15.

Skills: Bluff +5, Climb +8, Concentration +9, Diplomacy +8, Gather Information +10, Handle Animal +8, Heal +6, Intimidate +8, Jump +8, Knowledge Arcana +9, Knowledge Nature +8, Knowledge Local +8, Knowledge Religion +10, Ride +3, Search +5, Spellcraft +10, Spot +6, Swim +8, Use Rope +6, Wilderness Lore +6.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther, Orc, Black Tongue (all literate)

Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Create Magic Weapons & Armor, Maximize spell, Weapon Focus Long sword, Still Spell.

Possessions: Black Legate full Plate armor, Long Sword +1, black cape, belt, large pouch, high hard boots, black leather gloves, Izrador Holy Symbol, 2 days of dried rations.

Background: Treshan was born in Highwall under the blackness of Theros Obsidia. Being from such a prestigious place it was only normal for him to embrace Izrador from birth and was immediately sent under the legate's tutelage. Having potential he climbed the ranks amongst his peers and achieves a reasonable amount of prestige. But something

happened one day, he received order directing him to take possession of an already conquered land up north. The village was called Blackmoor and he was dispatched there to insure that nothing there would disturb the pacified land.

Obeying he went, but never understood why he was sent to such a backwater village in the middle of nowhere. His paranoid nature sent him spiraling in suppositions of conspiracy and he suspected that he was put out of the way by a jealous rival.

Since then, he started to plan his return to Theros Obsidia but he then found out that some villagers were disappearing in a suspicious manner. Thinking that this was in fact a test of his abilities he decided to investigate and found the forest settlement of High vale.

Before he can do anything his fate will mingle with the Quelos family and the start of something huge will happen. His superiors were right. Blackmoor is indeed the birthplace of an elven prophecy.

Treshan is evil; there is absolutely no doubt about that. But cunning, calculating and obsessively paranoid should be added to his description. Izrador is his life and purpose and he will go to any length and sacrifice to achieve his goals. The only weakness Treshan probably has is his lust for Llyssia Quelos which will start the whole prophecy of Aradil.

At base Treshan is a man of war and pious meditation. He is not a ruler and much less a diplomat although he has been trained to be. He will go ruthlessly towards his objective with detailed and clinical preparations sparing no effort or resources or even lives to achieve it.

Krellyx, Treshan's Astirax (NPC Only)



Krellyx

Small-size Magical Beast (Incorporeal) HD5d10+10: hp32; CR6; Init +2; Spd 50ft.; AC 14, touch 14, flatfooted 12; Atk Bite +3 melee; Damage Bite 1d6+1; SA Animal Possession, Drain Spell Energy, Horrid Visage; SQ Incorporeal, Natural Invisibility, Sense Magic, Silver Vulnerability; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +2; Str13, Dex14, Con15, Int16, Wis12, Cha15.

Skills: Hide +5, Knowledge Arcana +5, Listen +7, Search +9, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +6, Spot +7, Knowledge Wilderness +7.

Background: Krellyx is an Astirax in the service of Treshan ever since he was admitted in the Legate Academy in Theros Obsidia. Seeing that the young human had potential and also had the wits to become someone of importance in the ranks of the Shadow, Krellyx has been totally loyal to Treshan.

Krellyx, much as his master, is cunning and incredibly cold and methodical. He usually patrols the area to sniff out anyone trying to escape Blackmoor. Although he can usually detect magical auras for miles, he will fail to notice the Quelos's innate abilities. This will lead him to question himself as a true means of detection. Hoping that Treshan will not notice his failings, he will continue to serve his master without end.

It is understood that Krellyx is evil by nature and wants most of all the approbation and friendship of Treshan who is destined to greatness. Krellyx lusts to bathe in the aura of such great legates and is determined to push Treshan to the boundaries of prestige amongst the Shadow.

Krellyx is not a warrior and even if the possibility of anyone hurting him is very remote, he prefers only to watch and analyze. He will try to determine his foe's weakness through observation and spying, and then report back to Treshan who can then deploy what is needed to remove the threat.

Krellyx more than often prefers to possess the body of a wolf-like creature, but unless told otherwise he always possesses Treshan's horse when his master has mounted it.

Greggyk Quelos (NPC Only)



Greggyk Quelos

Male Erenlander Ftr12: CR12; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD12d10; hp134; Init +6; Spd 20ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flatfooted 16; Atk +16/+11/+6 melee (1d10+4 Greatsword) or +14/+9/+4 ranged; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +5; Str19, Dex14, Con16, Int12, Wis15, Cha15.

Skills: Climb +13, Handle Animal +15, Intimidate +15, Jump +6, Ride +12, Swim +9, Knowledge Northlands +13.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther (all non-literate)

Feats: Power Attack, Improved Initiative, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (G-Sword), Weapon Focus (G-Sword), Combat Reflexes, Blind Fight, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack.

Possessions: Clothes, Splint Mail armor, Great Sword, belt, large pouch, high hard boots, black leather gloves, 2 days of dried rations.

Background: About 15 years ago Greggyk Quelos committed murder on one of his own sons, this culminated the yearlong corruption led by the High Legate Oltirin. Swept by anger and bloodlust he

vanished from Blackmoor and joined Izrador's servants in the city of Bastion. For years he helped the dark god help crush even more the human realms and soon earned himself a position in Oltirin's ranks.

Although respected and powerful, Greggyk was never given a commanding position on the front lines as this responsibility was considered too great to give to a human warlord. So the mandate of crushing the already battered human population became his responsibility.

Still under the influence of Oltirin's corruption, Greggyk has been conditioned to believe that his wife Elyssia Quelos is responsible for making him kill his eldest son. Something he has taken up to himself to rectify now that he has learned that his family has fled Blackmoor and are killing ores in defiance of the Izrador.

Mobilizing the Black Claw Legion under the pretext that the Quelos family has become an official insurgence, Greggyk is determined to crush his entire lineage as a show of loyalty to Izrador.

Thermatraxx (NPC Only)



Thermatraxx

Huge sized Dragon (adult)

Alignment: Neutral

Hit Dice: 23d12+138 (288hp)

Initiative: +0 (Improved Initiative)

Speed: 40 ft (8 squares), fly 250 ft. (clumsy), swim 50 ft;

AC: 30; (-2 size, +0 Dex, +22 Natural), touch 8, flatfooted 30;

Base Attack/Grapple: +23/+41

Attacks: Bite +31 melee (2d8+10);

Full Attack: Bite +31 melee (2d8+10) and 2 claws +26 melee (2d6+5), and Wings +26 melee (1d8+5) and Tail slap +26 melee (2d6+15) or Crush +31 melee (2d8+15);

Face/Reach: 15 ft./10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks: Breath Weapon (Cone of Fire and Line of Concussion), Crush, Frightful presence

Special Qualities: Blind Sense, DR 10/magic, Immunity (Mind Affecting, Fire), Keen Senses, spell-like abilities, Spell resistance 31

Saves: Fort +19, Ref +13, Will +20;

Abilities: Str 31 (+10), Dex 10 (+0), Con 23 (+6), Int 24 (+7), Wis 25 (+7), Cha 24 (+7);

Skills: Appraise +30 (+32 with alchemicals), Bluff +30, Craft (alchemy) +30, Diplomacy +30, Hide +18, Jump +33, Knowledge (arcane) +30, Knowledge (history) +30, Knowledge (local) +30, Knowledge (nature) +30, Listen +30, Search +30, Sense Motive +30, Spellcraft +30, Spot +30;

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Sunder, Snatch, Wingover;

Challenge Rating: 15

Background: Thermatraxx is an adult dragon who survived the advance of Izrador by allying himself to the winning side. He serves Izrador and the Night King's orders but deep down he nurtures his own private agenda. Seeing the success of the Dark Lord he long pondered on the ultimate consequence of the world and decided that ultimately, Izrador will completely destroy this world to get back into the heavens. These consequences Thermatraxx is not willing to suffer.

Although bearing the seed of rebellion in his heart, he cares little for all other non-dragons, seeing them as either inferior or the equivalent of resilient pests. However, a group of these vermin attracted his attention; The Children of Aryth. These promising humanoids have, in the long term, a role to play against Izrador. A pause in Izrador's advance is all that Thermatraxx would require to engage his machination of dragon-liberation. Although this goal may yet come far beyond anyone's lifetime, Thermatraxx is a calculating tactician and political predator and will stop at nothing to place his pawns where they need to be in order to set the stage for events that will occur decades later.

Knowing that the Night King's control over him is strong, Thermatraxx serves loyally and to the letter. But when he gets the chance to further his goals, there is no stopping him.

High Legate Oltirín (NPC Only)



High Legate Kerelius Oltirín

Male Erenlander Leg16: CR16; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD16d8; hp120; Init +3; Spd 20ft.; AC 24, touch 12, flatfooted 21; Atk +14/+9/+4 melee (by weapon type +2) or +14/+9/+4 ranged; SQ Spellcasting, Rebuke Undead; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +13; Str15, Dex15, Con15, Int18, Wis17, Cha16.

Skills: Bluff +19, Climb +8, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +18, Gather Information +13, Handle Animal +8, Heal +6, Intimidate +18, Jump +8, Knowledge Arcana +19, Knowledge Nature +12, Knowledge Local +13, Knowledge Religion +19, Ride +9, Search +5, Spellcraft +16, Spot +8, Swim +8, Use Rope +6, Wilderness Lore +6.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther, Orc, Black Tongue (all literate)

Feats: Craft Magic Weapons & Armor, Maximize spell, Still Spell, Quicken Spell, Forge Ring, Empower Spell.

Possessions: Black Legate full Plate armor +3, Long Sword +1, Ring of Air Elemental Command, black cape, belt, large pouch, high hard boots, black leather gloves, Izrador Holy Symbol, 4 days of dried rations.

Background: Oltirín is the son of a traitorous general of bastion. Having opened the gates to the shadow, the human city fell against the might of Izrador and his horde of orcs. No one ever knew why Jorlen Oltirín betrayed his people, and at first neither did he. The Dark God's influence reached the general and corrupted his mind. This corruption enabled him to do two things; to aid Izrador make short work of the human forces in presence, and pass on to his future sons the seed of evil.

Kerelius was thus born decades later in the year 62 of the last age, son of the first son of Jorlen Oltirín. The last vestiges of true humanity are truly gone with his generation, the taint of Izrador having reached its peak. Kerelius was immediately selected by the Night King Sunulael and therefore sent to the highest schools of indoctrination to become a legate. Oltirín reveled in the Dark God's environment and flourished both in power and in mind, only to become one of Sunulael's most promising students. Years later he was given the honor to oversee Izrador's interests in the Northern Regions and was sent to Bastion where, for years now, his family ruled the city with a steel fist.

The first thing Oltirín did in his first year back home, was to plot the capture of his entire family thus ending future questions about true inheritance and he thus secured power permanently over the city. His first act as true leader of the North was to send all of his family members to bow before Izrador over the black Corith under the main Fortress.

Now Oltirín rules the north and establishes himself as being one of the most efficient and ruthless human-descended leaders in the Shadow's ranks. Sunulael's pupil has done well, but the lich knows all too well that the Witch-Queen's plans and prophecies will put his prized student to the ultimate test.

Jaraag Black Claw (NPC Only)



Jaraag Black Claw

Male Orc Ftr12: CR12; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD12d10; hp145; Init +6; Spd 30ft.; AC 20, touch 12, flatfooted 18; Atk +18/+13/+8 melee (1d10+6 Great Sword) or +14/+9/+4 ranged; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +5; Str22, Dex14, Con19, Int12, Wis14, Cha13.

Skills: Climb +14, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +15, Jump +6, Ride +12, Swim +9, Knowledge Northlands +15.

Languages: Norther, Orcish, Black Tongue (all non-literate)

Feats: Power Attack, Improved Initiative, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (G-Sword), Weapon Focus (G-Sword), Combat Reflexes, Blind Fight, Great Fortitude, Sunder, Improved Bull Rush.

Possessions: Clothes, Plate Mail armor, Great Sword, belt, large pouch, high hard boots, black leather gloves, 2 days of dried rations.

Background: Jaraag Black Claw was originally from the now defunct Dark Moon Tribe, who after many in-warring with other clans became more of a wandering army. Jaraag grew up fighting in the northern front against the Snow Elves since his tribe did not have any prestige left to be considered strong enough to fight alongside the fireline. Jaraag did not believe the other orcs when they dismissed his strength; through battle and glorious victories did he crawl away from these false conceptions, to finally catch the attention of High Legate Oltirin.

Jaraag used the remaining of the Black Moon to gather to him the remains of various armies either decimated from battle or lost one way or another. He gathered them to him and gave them a new purpose, a new goal instead of dishonor and shame.

Jaraag is somewhat charismatic even for an orc, but this feature doesn't lessen his aggressivity or his promptness to violence. His loyalty to Oltirin goes as far as Oltirin's will to respect him as an orc leader and as long as Jaraag can go on campaigns once in a while.; slowly but surely, Jaraag recruits followers to him and soon he will achieve his ultimate goal, fight alongside the great orc heroes at the fireline.

The Lich Druid (NPC Only)



Lich Druid (A.K.A. Black Druid, Fell Druid) Medium-Sized Corrupted Creature

Alignment: Chaotic-Neutral

Hit Dice: 10d12 (107hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex +2)

Speed: 40 ft;

AC: 17(+2 Dex,+5 Natural), touch 12, flatfooted 15;

Base Attack/Grapple: +10/+10

Attacks: Sword +15 melee (1d8+6) + Disease;

Face/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Residual Spell-Casting

Special Qualities: As lich + Disease

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +10;

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 14, Con-, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 6;

Skills: Craft (alchemy) +12, Concentration +12, Hide +7, Jump +10, Knowledge (arcane) +13, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (nature) +13, Listen +5, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +10, Spot +6;

Feats: Craft Wondrous Items, Brew Potions, Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell;

Challenge Rating: 10

Spell Energy: 13

Possessions: Mottled Druid clothing, Black Corrupted Longsword, Twisted Oak Staff, 250 gp worth of furs, crystals, exotic moss and metallic trinkets.

Background: The Lich Druid was once a man called Terelius, but that was a long time ago. In a time coinciding with the final breach of the Northern walls and the final escape of Izrador from his territories. Terelius was the head of a druidic circle named: The Order of Ere which, at that time was a conclave of many druids and followers of nature in the northern territories holding meetings at the Shattered Sky Geode.

The coming of the Black Wave utterly destroyed everything, one by one, the members of the Order of Ere fell in front of the Shadow's armies and operatives. Those that were not killed were captured, only to be later turned into corrupted servants of the dark God. Those who more skillfully stayed hidden waged a guerilla war against the orcs and legates, striking and fading in the woodlands. However brave were the efforts of the rebels, the sheer numbers and resources of Izraador's armies eventually crushed the resistance, leaving Terelius, alone to fight an insurmountable foe.

Aided by powerful magics, Terelius unleashed the powers of nature in a last ditch attempts to drive off the invader. Orcs did die in vast numbers but eventually his own powers ran out and he was overcome.

The leader of the initial wave of destruction in the area, the Night King Jahzir, decided to make this Druid an example to all other dissidents. Jahzir took the Druid by the throat and slammed him against the great Oak from which the Order once held its conclaves. He then drove a terrible weapon through Terelius and deeply into the ancient tree cursing all who have, and will stand against the dark Lord. The power of the spear turned Terelius and miles of land around him, into a dark corrupted version of themselves. A realm of nightmares and disease... such is the legacy of Izrador.

The Lich Druid stayed impaled upon the tree for months, only to emerge changed and insane. For tens of years he roamed the corrupted lands that were now his own, torn between the rage of defeat, culpability and submission to the Dark Lord, that was now speaking to him in his mind.

Determined to find a way to reverse the effects of this curse, the Dark Druid tries to use the ancient powers of the mound where the conclave once was held to craft a magic which, to his hope, will succeed in giving him peace. This has yet to happen...

Lorkan Quelos



Lorkan Quelos (Original)

Male Erenlander Com1: CR1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD1d8; hp12; Init +1; Spd 30ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flatfooted 10; Atk +5 melee (by weapon type +4) or +2 ranged; SA Ironblooded Heroic Path; SQ Incredible Resilience; AL LG; SV Fort +8 (+3 great fort.), Ref +1, Will +1; Str20, Dex12, Con18, Int10, Wis13, Cha10.

Skills: Climb +8, Handle Animal +3, Intimidate +4, Jump +8, Ride +3, Swim +8, Knowledge Northlands +3.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther (all non-literate)

Feats: Power Attack, Great Fortitude.

Possessions: Clothes.

Background: Oldest son of the Quelos family, Lorkan has, in front of his father's failings, taken up the role of provider for the family. Toiling in the fields, he works brutal hours to gain next than nothing. Despite his official pay of mostly cracks of whips and insults from orcs, he manages to smuggle bread and roots from time to time. He does not mind the pain, as long as his mother and brother and sisters can eat and smile.

Much like his father he has broad shoulders and stamina of steel. Towering nearly 7 feet tall he is the tallest of his family. Although the orc infuriate him from time to time, his nature prevents him from

outbursts. He is calm and poised, never letting himself fall to rage like he so often saw his father do. He will do anything to protect his family from harm and will gladly get in the way to prevent it.

Lorkan Quelos (after High Vale Training)

Male Erenlander Ftr2: CR2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD2d12; hp30; Init +6; Spd 30ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flatfooted 10; Atk +5 melee (1d8+4 Blacksmith's Longsword) or +2 ranged; SA Ironblooded Heroic Path; SQ Incredible Resilience, +1 Fort Save; AL LG; SV Fort +9 (+2 great fort.+1 heroic path), Ref +1, Will +1; Str20, Dex12, Con18, Int10, Wis13, Cha10.

Skills: Climb +9, Handle Animal +4, Intimidate +5, Jump +9, Ride +4, Swim +9, Knowledge Northlands +4.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther (all non-literate)

Feats: Power Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Cleave.

Possessions: Clothes, Blacksmith's Longsword.

Ulthielle Quelos (NPC Only)



Ulthielle Quelos

Female Erenlander Com1: CR1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD1d6; hp7; Init +4; Spd 30ft.; AC 14, touch 14, flatfooted 10; Atk +3 melee (by weapon type +2) or +4 ranged; SA Shadow Walker Heroic Path; SQ Night Vision; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +0; Str14, Dex18, Con16, Int14, Wis10, Cha10.

Skills: Climb +5, Handle Animal +3, Jump +5, Move Silently +6, Swim +5, Knowledge Northlands +3.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther (all non-literate)

Feats: Dodge, Point Blank Shot.

Possessions: Clothes, Sling.

Background: Ulthielle is a strong child that has grown without a father. She is bitter and angry. Although she too inherited the charm and beauty of her mother, she voluntarily hides beneath hirsute hair and dirt. Her tomboyish attitude has granted her the right to hang out with the boys and is considered as being their equal, even "bordering dangerous" some might say. She often speaks of her father and the ways that he repeatedly beaten them, and telling her mother that if Gelial has kept his mouth shut something else would have happened anyway. Deep down Ulthielle hates her father and hates her dead brother for standing up to him. She's angry at him for dying and her hate seems to spread to any other non

family member. She will jump anyone who speaks lowly of her family in a heartbeat, often her brothers have to grab her together in order to be able to pry her away from a usual boy victim who thought it was safe to tease her.

Ulthielle is a seed of revolt. She is quick to snap and will fearlessly attack older, bigger men if they look at her the wrong way. Elyssia often tells her that behavior like that will get us all in trouble one day, but to that she responded: "Looks like we were *born* in trouble dear mother!"

Ulthielle Quelos (after High Vale Training)

Female Erenlander Rog2: CR2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD2d8; hp18; Init +8; Spd 30ft.; AC 14, touch 14, flatfooted 10; Atk +3 melee (by weapon type +2) or +4 ranged; SA Shadow Walker Heroic Path, Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ Night Vision, Shadow Veil; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +0; Str14, Dex18, Con16, Int14, Wis10, Cha10.

Skills: Balance +9, Bluff +5, Climb +7, Disable Device +7, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +9, Handle Animal +3, Hide +9, Jump +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +9, Open Locks +9, Search +7, Slight of Hand +9, Spot +5, Swim +7, Use Rope +9, Knowledge Northlands +4.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther (all literate)

Feats: Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Finesse (Dagger), Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Clothes, Sling, Daggers (2)

Llyssia Quelos (NPC Only)



Llyssia Quelos

Female Erenlander Com1: CR1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD1d6; hp6; Init +2; Spd30ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flatfooted 10; Atk+2 melee (by weapon type +2) or +3 ranged; SA Charismatic Heroic Path; SQ Charm Person 1/day; AL NG; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +4 (+2 Iron Will); Str12, Dex14, Con13, Int16, Wis14, Cha18.

Skills: Climb +4, Handle Animal +3, Bluff +5, Jump +4, Intimidate +5, Swim +4, Knowledge Northlands +3.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther (all non-literate).

Feats: Dodge, Iron Will.

Possessions: Clothes, Sling.

Background: Llyssia is the exact replica of her mother. Her eyes, her face, and now that she has become a woman, she looks like a younger Elyssia. Although she is not willing to admit it, she is scared, and the doom of her family disturbs her deeply. She helps her mother keep the ruins of her family home relatively in good condition. Her beauty is clear and she has been courted by several men since her 16th birthday, but none seemed to have penetrated the armor she has woven around her. Mother forbids her

to exit the house for orcs may notice her and spell some foul demise.

Llyssia is strong-willed and opinionated. Her heart may seem hard sometimes but she is a very bright and rational person. She is truly compensating for her mother's and is vigilant, distrustful but caring and honest towards her family. In the absence of her mother she assumes the role of parent toward the other Quelos. Despite her young age, her personality prevails and she gets the respect and obedience she requires, except perhaps from Ulthielle.

Llyssia Quelos (after High Vale Training)

Female Erenlander Rog2: CR2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD2d8; hp16; Init +2; Spd 30ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flatfooted 10; Atk +2 melee (by weapon type +2) or +3 ranged; SA Charismatic Heroic Path, Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ Charm Person 1/day, Hypnotism 1/day; AL NG; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +4; Str12, Dex14, Con13, Int16, Wis14, Cha18.

Skills: Appraise +7, Balance +6, Bluff +8, Climb +5, Diplomacy +8, Forgery +7, Gather Information +8, Handle Animal +3, Jump +4, Listen +6, Search +7, Spot +6, Swim +5, Use Rope +6, Knowledge Northlands +5.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther (all literate)

Feats: Dodge, Iron Will, Inconspicuous, Friendly Agent (AtS p74).

Possessions: Clothes, Sling, Daggers (2)

Alirielle Quelos (NPC Only)



Alirielle Quelos

Female Erenlander Com1: CR1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD1d6; hp4; Init +1; Spd 30ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flatfooted 10; Atk +0 melee (by weapon type -1) or +2 ranged; SA Nature Friend Heroic Path; SQ Calm Animals 1/day; AL LG; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +4; Str8, Dex12, Con8, Int18, Wis18, Cha18.

Skills: Climb +4, Handle Animal +8, Jump +4, Swim +4, Knowledge Northlands +6.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther, Orc (all non-literate)

Feats: Magecraft.

Possessions: Clothes, Pet Mouse.

Background: Alirielle is a free spirit. She is small and frail for her age and is often victim of illness. But her constant smile and refusal to drown in despair seems without end. She lightens up everyone's day by smiling and hugging her mother each morning. Mother always says that her soul is kindred with the fey and she might have been a one in a past life. She is a sponge for knowledge though and mastered the orcish tongue in a matter of days. Often it is because of her that the family knew when not to go out and warning of Goblin slavers through orc conversations were also detected by her. Although she realizes the poverty and difficulty of her family, she refuses to languish and sob. She has truly an inner light that inspire most and bring the best out of everyone.

Alirielle is gentle, good-natured and has an adamantium spirit. Although her health prevents her from making the usual rounds with Blackmoor's street gang, she stays at home and tries to learn everything from her environment. She befriended the local rats and small rodents as well as the other small animals that usually would be a pest to poor families. Instead she talks to them and stunningly sometimes they respond favorably to her soft words.

Alirielle Quelos (after High Vale Training)

Female Erenlander Chn2: CR2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD2d6; hp7; Init +1; Spd 30ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flatfooted 10; Atk +0 melee (by weapon type -1) or +2 ranged; SA Nature Friend Heroic Path; SQ Calm Animals 1/day, Detect Animals/Plants 1/day, Force of Personality; AL LG; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +6; Str8, Dex12, Con8, Int18, Wis18, Cha18.

Skills: Bluff +9, Climb +4, Concentration +4, Diplomacy +9, Handle Animal +9, Heal +9, Jump +4, Knowledge Arcana +9, Knowledge Geography +9, Knowledge History +9, Knowledge Local +9, Knowledge Nature +9, Knowledge Northlands +7 Listen +7, Move Silently +4, Search +7, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +9, Spot +7, Swim +4, Alchemy +9, Animal Empathy +9, Wilderness Lore +7.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther, Orc, Blacktongue (all literate).

Feats: Magecraft, School Universal, School Transmutation, School Enchantment, School Abjuration, School Summoning (lesser).

Spell Energy: 6

Spells: **Cantrips:** Detect Magic, Mage Hand, Daze, Cure Minor Wounds, Create Water. **1st Level:** Animal Friendship, Cure Light Wounds, Goodberry, Obscuring Mist, Charm animal.

Possessions: Clothes, Pet Mouse, Walking Staff.

Caranthir Quelos



Caranthir Quelos

Male Erenlander Com1: CR1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD1d8; hp7; Init +7; Spd 30ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flatfooted 10; Atk +4 melee (1d6+3 Blacksmith's Mace) or +4 ranged (1d8 Longbow); SA Painless Heroic Path; SQ Painless; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1; Str16, Dex16, Con13, Int12, Wis12, Cha10.

Skills: Climb +7, Handle Animal +3, Jump +7, Ride +3, Swim +7, Knowledge Northlands +4.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther (all non-literate)

Feats: Combat Reflex, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Clothes.

Background: Caranthir was a joke player, never seeming to understand the gravity of the situation he and his family was in. He joked, played and mischieved his way around the house. Mother and Llyssia did what they could to reason him, but it seems their authority was not good enough. One day everything changed. When father crushed his little brother's throat with a metal gauntlet, his smile vanished and he fell silent. Now communicating only in rare small sentences he has not openly talked since his father left, almost 15 years ago, much less cracked a smile, despite how great the moment was.

Caranthir has obviously fallen into some kind of intense depression. Adding the horror of seeing his brother killed in front of him is the day to day pain of living under the Shadow. Years of despair and shock have left Caranthir emotionless and cold. His senses while acute and precise, have lost their response to the pain he would feel and that of others as well.

Caranthir understands that the Shadow has won and that nothing can be done to repel it. Although this reality weight heavily everyday, he secretly broods a furious anger to do his notch in the Shadow's armor before the inevitability of his death. Caranthir although without feeling and care for anything will lay down his life for his family who he believes are the only last good people on the earth.

Caranthir Quelos (after High Vale Training)

Male Erenlander Wld2: CR2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD2d8; hp18; Init +7; Spd 40ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flatfooted 10; Atk +5 melee (by weapon type +4) or +5 ranged; SA Painless Heroic Path; SQ Painless, Last Grasp 25%, Trait: Forager, Danger Sense; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1; Str16, Dex16, Con13, Int12, Wis12, Cha10.

Skills: Climb +8, Craft: Bowyer/Fletcher +8, Handle Animal +5, Heal +5, Hide +8, Jump +8, Listen +7, Move Silently +7, Ride +6, Search +6, Spot +8, Wilderness Lore +8, Swim +8, Use Rope +6 Knowledge Northlands +3.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther (all non-literate)

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot.

Possessions: Clothes, Longbow, Quiver, 20 Sheaf Arrows, Blacksmith's Mace.

Elyssia Quelos (NPC Only)



Elyssia Quelos

Female Erenlander Com8: CR5; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD8d6; hp35; Init +2; Spd 30ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flatfooted 10; Atk +5 melee (by weapon type) or +5 ranged; SA Healer Heroic Path; SQ Cure Light Wounds 2/day, Cure Mod Wounds 2/day, Delay Poison 1/day, Lesser Restoration 1/day, Cure Serious Wounds 1/day, Remove Blindness/deafness; AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +11; Str10, Dex14, Con12, Int14, Wis14, Cha16.

Skills: Climb +8, Handle Animal +3, Jump +8, Move Silently +6, Swim +8, Knowledge Northlands +3.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther (all non-literate)

Feats: Dodge, Brew Herbal Concoctions, Green Thumb, Iron Will.

Possessions: Clothes.

Background: Elyssia comes from a family of Blackmoor. The daughter of a farmer forced to grow wheat for the orcish armies of the Shadow. She is a quiet and hard-working woman who understood her position in the world. She cares for her children and loves her husband still. She is soft spoken and gentle, always on the lookout for her boys and girls growing

in an inhospitable world where orcs troops and goblin slavers are a constant menace.

The murder of her son Gelial was a terrible blow, but the sight of her other children was enough to remind her that life does go on despite everything. Her husband disappeared after the incident thus leaving the poor family on the brink of destitution. With her daughters too young to work, and unwilling to let them go scavenge in the city, she resorted to a life of begging and prostitution in order to sustain and protect her family.

Elyssia is part of the first generation of Children of Aryth. She knew about her powers from a very young age and never spoke of it to anyone as her own mother has been taken by the Shadow's forces because she had the gift of brewing medicinal concoctions. Elyssia learned the skills from her mother, but most importantly she learned to keep her talents hidden to everyone, even her own children.

To keep the masquerade going, she will go forage roots and herbs and will apply mock medicinal preparations on her children's wounds. While the herbs in themselves do nothing, her healing powers do the trick instead. Seeing her children bearing themselves strange gifts, she has come to understand that there may be something more to this life than the misery offered by Treshan and his orcs. Something is bound to happen, and whether it is to the Quelos's benefit she does not know.

Elyssia Quelos (After High Vale Training)

Female Erenlander Com8: CR5; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD8d6; hp35; Init +2; Spd 30ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flatfooted 10; Atk +5 melee (by weapon type) or +5 ranged; SA Healer Heroic Path; SQ Cure Light Wounds 2/day, Cure Mod Wounds 2/day, Delay Poison 1/day, Lesser Restoration 1/day, Cure Serious Wounds 1/day, Remove Blindness/deafness; AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +11; Str10, Dex14, Con12, Int14, Wis14, Cha16.

Skills: Climb +8, Handle Animal +3, Jump +8, Move Silently +6, Swim +8, Knowledge Northlands +3.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther (all non-literate)

Feats: Dodge, Brew Herbal Concoctions, Green Thumb, Iron Will.

Possessions: Clothes, Great Sling.

Teramilil Joreden (NPC Only)



Teramilil Joreden

Male Elf Chn11: CR11; Medium-size humanoid (Elf, Caransil); HD11d6; hp58; Init +2; Spd 30ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flatfooted 10; Atk +6/+1 melee (by weapon type -1) or +8/+3 ranged; SA Spell casting, SQ Lorebook; AL LG; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +9; Str11, Dex15, Con14, Int19, Wis14, Cha18.

Skills: Bluff +9, Climb +10, Concentration +14, Diplomacy +12, Handle Animal +9, Heal +9, Jump +5, Knowledge Arcana +9, Knowledge Geography +9, Knowledge History +10, Knowledge Local +10, Knowledge Nature +12, Knowledge Northlands +7, Knowledge Erethor +14, Listen +8, Move Silently +4, Search +7, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +14, Spot +7, Swim +4, Alchemy +12, Animal Empathy +9, Wilderness Lore +7.

Languages: Elf (Caransil), Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Norther, Orc, Blacktongue (all literate).

Feats: Magecraft, School Universal, School Transmutation, School Enchantment, School Abjuration, School Summoning (lesser), School Summoning (greater).

Spell Energy: 17

Possessions: Lorebook, elven longsword, short bow, quiver, 30 sheaf arrows and about 450gp of silks, papers, inks, metallic jewelry and leathers.

Background: Teramilil was part of the first envoys of Aradil upon the land after the first echoes of Aryth's were decoded and magics used to somewhat predict where the Children of Aryth would appear.

Leaving Erethor with only a vague idea of the future Teramilil elected his dwelling in a small forest in the Northern Regions of Eredane, there to wait patiently until the prophecies of his Queen came true. What he had instead, was far worse than expected. After Izzador's raids in the northlands, Teramilil saw great numbers of human refugees fleeing the nearby village of Blackmoor and unknowingly residing in the same forest as he. His good heart forced him to aid these humans and he forged the secret community of High Vale.

Teramilil is happy with his achievements in High Vale, but wonders if the prophecies will indeed happen.

Sarren Quelos



Sarren Quelos

Male Erenlander Com1: CR1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD1d4; hp8; Init +8; Spd 30ft.; AC 14, touch 14, flatfooted 10; Atk +4 melee (1d6+4) quarterstaff or +4 ranged (1d6 greater sling); SA Guardian heroic path; SQ none; AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +2; Str18, Dex18, Con16, Int12, Wis11, Cha12.

Skills: Climb +12, Handle Animal +5, Jump +8, Listen +4, craft blacksmith +4

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Colonial, Orcish, Norther (all non-literate)

Feats: Improved Initiative, Dodge.

Possessions: Clothes.

Background: Sarren is one of the Quelos brothers. In a way resembling more to Lorkan physically, his mind however and his heart are ablaze with the fires of freedom and goodness. Deep within his soul rests an energy that Sarren has come to harness, keeping a strong vigil upon all that he loves; he will gladly step in front of any dangers if it means protecting his family or friends.

Sarren has a broad mind and easily takes in the big picture, he is quick to assess dangers and will most of the time, be the one the Quelos will turn for rapid decisions. His mother has come to accept the fact that most of her children have become adults, but Sarren is an exception, no matter what happened in the past, the dark taint of evil and the pressures of

malevolence seem to have no residual effect on his soul. He remains the gleaming, courageous man no matter what the situation. He is well respected by the rest of the Quelos and even Caranthir can be inspired by him.

Sarren however, deep inside remains fearful of the future. Only by keeping his mind in the present may he remain optimist and ambitiously protective, but having seen the amount of despair and evil about him, he wonders if there is truly hope for anyone anymore.

Sarren Quelos (after High Vale Training)

Male Erenlander Def2: CR2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD2d8; hp24; Init +8; Spd 30ft.; AC 15(16 dodge), touch 14, flatfooted 10; Atk +6 melee(+4/+4 flurry of attacks) or +6 ranged; SA Detect evil, Aura of courage Heroic Path; SQ, Trait: none AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +1; Str18, Dex18, Con15, Int12, Wis11, Cha12.

Skills: Climb +9, craft blacksmith +4, Escape artist +6, Hide +9, Jump 11, Listen +5, Move silently +9, Tumble +9, Swim +7

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Colonial, Orcish, Norther (all non-literate)

Feats: Improved Initiative, Dodge, unarmed strike, stunning attack, flurry of attacks.

Possessions: Clothes, greater sling, 20 bullets.

Xanathar



Xanathar

Male Erenlander Com1: CR1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD1d4; hp7; Init +8; Spd 30ft.; AC 14, touch 14, flatfooted 10; Atk +0 melee (by weapon type +2) or +4 ranged; SA Chanceborn Heroic Path; SQ: Resistance 1/day; AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +0; Str14, Dex18, Con16, Int18, Wis10, Cha10.

Skills: Climb +4(+6), Listen +4, Jump +4(+6), Spot +4, Use Rope +4(+8).

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander

Feats: Improve initiative, Combat reflex, Weapon Focus (Dagger).

Possessions: Clothes.

Background: Xanathar Dale comes from a poor family residing in Blackmoor. His father died a few years ago under tragic circumstances and his family never was quite the same again. His mother became bitter and slowly her heart fell to the grim selfishness and evil that has gripped the world since the shadow came and covered the land. His little sister remains however untouched by the malignant aura that permeates around Blackmoor.

None actually know that Kor Dale's murderer was in fact Xanathar himself. Seeing his father abuse his sister sexually he assaulted him with a piece of broken mirror slashing his throat. Xanathar quickly took his sister and hid in a closet. Treshan, who didn't want to deal with this, dismissed the murder on a failed robbery and cleared the hiding children of suspicion. A lucky trait Xanathar seems to have inherited somehow.

Xanathar has many friends in Blackmoor, all of ill repute except for one: Ulthielle Quelos for which Xanathar has had a longtime emotional crush. He

usually follows her around Blackmoor and assists her in all the covert things she may have done and organized throughout the years. Xanathar is a well-known friend of the Quelos Family and is regarded as loyal and good-mannered by Elyssia Quelos.

The role Xanathar will have to play in the future is yet undetermined, but Xanathar knows that his family is bound to fall in the oblivion of selfishness and evil, only his sister may be worth saving and the Quelos family as well. That is why he has decided to follow the Quelos in their path. His sister will have to remain hidden away, even if such a decision imparts a great measure of risk, Xanathar knows that his luck will somehow prevent his sister from becoming a monster like her mother.

Xanathar (after High Vale Training)

Male Erenlander rog1/Chn1: CR2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD2d6; hp17;

Init +8; Spd 30ft.; AC 14, touch 14, flatfooted 10; Atk +0 melee (by

weapon type +2) or +4 ranged; SA Chance Born Heroic Path; SQ Resistance 1/day,

Luck of Hero +1d4 1/Day; AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +2; Str14, Dex18, Con16, Int18, Wis10, Cha10.

Skills: Balance +3(+7), Climb +3(+5), Concentration +2(+5), Disable Device +2(+6), Escape Artiste +3(+7), Hide +5(+9), Jump +3(+5), Knowledge Arcana +5(+9), Listen +5, Move Silently +5(+9), Open Lock +5(+9), Search +5(+9), Slight of Hand +3(+7), Spell Craft +4(+8), Sopt +5, Tumble +5(+9), Use Rope +3(+7)

Rogue Abilities: trapfinding, +1d6 Sneak attack
Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, Orc, Blacktongue (all literate).

Feats: Magecraft, School Universal, School Transmutation, School, Divination, School Abjuration, School Summoning (lesser).

Spell Energy: 5

Spells: Cantrips: Detect Magic, Know Direction, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Resistance. 1st Level: Entangle, True Strike, Detect secret doors.

Possessions: Clothes, Dagger, Thief's tools, Small Bow, 20 arrows, Sling, 20 bullets.

Drako Korvack



Drako Korvack (A.K.A. Drako Valmora)

Male Erenlander Com1: CR1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD1d6; hp4; Init +3; Spd 30ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flatfooted 10; Atk +0 melee (by weapon type -1) or +2 ranged; SA Dragon Blooded Heroic Path; SQ Bonus Spell; AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +2; Str12, Dex16, Con14, Int18, Wis14, Cha10.

Skills: Handle Animal +4, Knowledge Geography +4, Knowledge Nobility & Royalty +4, Profession Innkeeping +4, Spot +2, Survival +4. Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander (all non-literate)
Feats: Magecraft.

Possessions: Clothes.

Background: Drako Korvack is the legitimate son of Ulther Korvack, Traitorous human general and now self-proclaimed ruler of Jerenmaark, a city 6 days north of Blackmoor. Drako was supposed to grow up and ultimately replace his father but Drako lacked the physical stature and combat aggressiveness to become a warrior. His father grew less and less satisfied with his son's lacking and finally decided to sell him to an inn-keeper as a slave. Drako's life of luxury became a nightmarish torment of abuse and pain.

Constantly flogged into submission (which Drako still bears marks all over his body as testimony) he has served as the inn servant and sexual slave for years. It was but in an infernal episode of abuse that Drako did discover that he could somehow manipulate energy in a very weird way.

Unknown to Drako, somewhere in his lineage is a dragon. How a dragon did physically become entangled with the Korvack bloodline is still an obscure thing, but the results of that are apparent in

Drako. Dragon blood runs through his veins allowing him to tap into the magical energies with greater efficiency.

With his meager talents, Drako finally managed to escape Jerenmaark and flee southward without food and water. His dragon blood as his only true possession, he is destined to rise from mediocrity and take his place amongst the great channelers of Aryth, where then he could exact his bloody vengeance upon his father and his entire bloodline.

Drako Korvack (after High Vale Training)

Male Erenlander Chn2: CR2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD2d6; hp12; Init +3; Spd 30ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flatfooted 10; Atk +2 melee (by weapon type -1) or +4 ranged; SA Dragon Blooded Heroic Path; SQ Bonus Spell, Bolster Spell +2 DC; AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +4; Str12, Dex16, Con14, Int18, Wis14, Cha10.

Skills: Appraise +6, Bluff +5, Concentration +7, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +2, Handle Animal +4, Heal +6, Intimidate +5, Knowledge: Arcana +5, Knowledge: Geography +9, Knowledge: History +5, Knowledge: Nobility & Royalty +9, Listen +4, Profession: Innkeeping +8, Search +6, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +9, Spot +4, Survival +7.

Languages: Trader's Tongue, Erenlander, High Elven, Courtier, Colonial, Orc, Blacktongue (all literate).

Feats: Magecraft, School Universal, School Transmutation, School Enchantment, School Abjuration, School Evocation (lesser).

Spell Energy: 6

Spells: Cantrips: Detect Magic, Mage Hand, Daze, Know Direction,
Light. 1st Level: Endure Element, Sleep, Shield, Detect Undead, Mage Armor.

Possessions: Clothes, Dagger, Lore Book.

Orc Recruits

Orc Recruits is the type of orc mostly present in Blackmoor.

Encounter:	Orc Recruits (Orc War1) [CoS]					
STR	18	+4	INIT	+1	Current Init:	
DEX	12	+1	GRP	+5		
CON	16	+3	SAVES		AC	
INT	8	-1	FORT	+5	Normal	16
WIS	10	0	REF	+1	Touch	11
CHA	8	-1	WILL	+0	Flatfooted	15
Melee Attack:	+5 (+6 against dwarves)			Damage:	1d12+4, vardatch	
Ranged Attack:	+2 (+3 against dwarves)			Damage:	1d6+4, javelin	
Skills:	Climb +0, Intimidate +3, Jump +0, Knowledge (Northern Marches) +1, Wilderness Lore +2					
Feats:	Power Attack					
Special Attacks:	+1 attack bonus in groups of 10 or more, +1 attack bonus against dwarves, night fighting					
Special Qual:	+2 bonus to saves against spells, darkvision, light sensitivity, cold resistance 5					
Languages:	Black Tongue, Old Dwarven Pidgin, High Elven Pidgin, Orcish					
Possessions:	Simple clothes of rough cloth and poorly tanned leather (natural colors), heavy hobnail boots, crude scale mail shirt, small wooden shield, wide leather belt, armored greaves, vardatch, large fighting knife, 2 javelins, large belt pouch with 2 man-days of rations					
Appearance:	These orc warriors are wild-eyed with tangled manes, dark grey hides, and yellowing tusks. Their deep voices are thick and rasping and their howls frightening. Each tribe has its own unique markings. They are filthy from countless days in the field and smell of pungent sweat and old blood. Only recruits, they have few kill scars on their arms, but are still unpredictable and savage fighters.					
Current HP:	1:7/	2:7/	3:7/	4:7/	5:7/	
	6:7/	7:7/	8:7/	9:7/	10:7/	

Orc Troopers

Although less in number than the recruits, these orcs serve as the Mainstay of Treshan's forces.



Encounter:		Orc Troopers (Orc Ftr2) [Co5]				
STR	18	+4	INIT	+1	Current Init:	
DEX	12	+1	GRP	6		
CON	16	+3	SAVES		AC	
INT	8	-1	FORT	+6	Normal	17
WIS	10	0	REF	+1	Touch	11
CHA	8	-1	WILL	+0	Flatfooted	16
Melee Attack:		+7 (+8 against dwarves)		Damage:	1d12+4, vardatch	
Ranged Attack:		+3 (+4 against dwarves)		Damage:	1d6+4, javelin	
Skills:		Climb +1, Intimidate +3, Jump +1, Knowledge (Northern Marches) +1, wilderness Lore +2				
Feats:		Power Attack, Cleave, weapon Focus: Vardatch				
Special Attacks:		+1 attack bonus in groups of 10 or more, +1 attack bonus against dwarves, night fighting				
Special Qual:		+2 bonus to saves against spells, darkvision, light sensitivity, cold resistance 5				
Languages:		Black Tongue, Old Dwarven Pidgin, High Elven Pidgin, Orcish				
Possessions:		Simple clothes of rough cloth and poorly tanned leather (natural colors), heavy hobnail boots, crude scale mail shirt, large steel shield, wide leather belt, armored greaves, vardatch, large fighting knife, 4 javelins, large belt pouch with 2 man-days of rations				
Appearance:		These orc warriors are slightly more savvy than their less experienced counterparts and are more likely to use group tactics and fighting retreats. They are every bit as savage, however.				
Current HP:		1:17/	2:17/	3:17/	4:17/	5:17/
		6:17/	7:17/	8:17/	9:17/	10:17/

Goblin Warriors

The Goblins are used primarily as patrol and scouts by Treshan. They are weak but have keen senses and are used to track rebels.



Encounter:		Goblin warrior (Goblin war1) [MM]				
STR	11	0	INIT	+1	Current Init:	
DEX	13	+1	GRP	-3		
CON	12	+1	SAVES		AC	
INT	10	0	FORT	+3	Normal	15
WIS	9	0	REF	+1	Touch	12
CHA	6	-2	WILL	-1	Flatfooted	14
Melee Attack:		+2		Damage:	1d6, morningstar	
Ranged Attack:		+3		Damage:	1d4, javelin	
Skills:		Hide +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Ride +4, Spot +2				
Feats:		Alertness				
Special Attacks:						
Special Qual:		darkvision 60'				
Languages:						
Possessions:		leather armor, light shield, morningstar, javelin (2)				
Appearance:						
Current HP:		1:5/	2:5/	3:5/	4:5/	5:5/
		6:5/	7:5/	8:5/	9:5/	10:5/

Oruk Shock Troops

Oruks are the best that the orc race has to offer in terms of warrior. They are few, but they are a force to be reckoned with.



Encounter:		Oruk Shock Troop (Oruk Ftr1) [MoS]				
STR	21	+5	INIT	+1	Current Init:	
DEX	11	0	GRP	+13		
CON	16	+3	SAVES		AC	
INT	10	0	FORT	+8	Normal	16
WIS	10	0	REF	+1	Touch	9
CHA	4	-3	WILL	+2	Flatfooted	16
Melee Attack:	+9		Damage:	3d6+7, large greataxe		
Ranged Attack:	+3		Damage:	1d8+5, large javelin		
Skills:	Climb +2, Jump +2, Listen +3, Spot +3					
Feats:	Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus: Greataxe					
Special Attacks:						
Special Qual:	light sensitivity, orc/ogre blood					
Languages:	Black Tongue, Orcish					
Possessions:	Half plate, large greataxe, large javelins (3), 4 man-days of rations, 10 gp worth of alcohol, cured meats, and salt					
Appearance:						
Current HP:	1:31/	2:31/	3:31/	4:31/	5:31/	
	6:31/	7:31/	8:31/	9:31/	10:31/	

APPENDIX TWO

New Magic



New Magical Items

Blackspear

Blackspears are horrible weapons of Izrador. The heads of these spears are said to be the shards of the first rocks Izrador has crashed upon when he was banished from the skies thousands of years ago. These weapons are not tainted by the evil and corruption of Izrador, nor they are magic items built to further his will, these spears ARE evil and corruption, born from the clash between the rocks and a power and depth of evil Izrador only wished now he could wield again. These first rocks stopped to be the mineral and physical items they once were and became nexuses of pure darkness themselves.

Izrador immediately realized that part of his godly aura had slipped onto these rocks and after his long sleep he made haste to break these items to sap their power, an energy Izrador needed too greatly to just ignore or use in any other fashion. However, the God of Darkness did save a few of these, knowing that some of his greatest of pawns could use these natural phenomenon to further his goals, reluctantly restraining himself from absorbing the great amount of power that they held.

There are 2 of these spears known to be in circulation around Eredane. They are wielded by only the most profoundly-loyal servants of the Dark Lord as any other would succumb to the spear's powers, much less those who would rise against him would suffer dire consequences, even by just slightly touching it.

The long and straight black shaft gleams in the ambient light. The head of the spear while thin and obviously viciously sharp, is of cruel design. An aura of evil seems to emanate from the strange weapon, kindled by unnatural energies, turning everything suddenly cold as all living things obviously violently reacts to its presence.

A blackspear acts like a +4 magical weapon but inflicts tremendous amounts of damage to any good-aligned creature it touches as the evil and dark powers of Izrador rends and disintegrates the material it touches (treat damage as x2 against good-aligned).

When a non-evil creature (animal, vegetal or other) willingly touches a Blackspear, the shard at its tip immediately tries to sap its life energy and if it is unable to do so, it then tries to corrupt it. (treat effect as: 2 negative level upon failure to save a Fort Save DC21, if successful then another save (Will DC21) or change alignment to evil (with all relevant negative effects).

When an evil but non-Izrador creature willingly touches a Blackspear, the negative level damage still applies upon contact.

When a low-level (10th level or less) Izrador follower touches the spear, the weapon does no harm nor does it confers special powers to use. The spear remains a +4 weapon of evil origin with the good-aligned double damage effect.

When a high-level (11th level or more) follower of Izrador touches the Blackspear it unlocks its full potential and acts as a powerful covenant item. Here are the listed powers:

- 11th Level: Inflicts 2 negative levels upon successful hit (fort save DC21).
- 15th Level: Smite Good (as spell) added to each strike damage.
- 18th Level: Ability to cast Corrupt Life as a 20th level caster (the spear acts as the material component).

Cost: Unknown

Damage: 1d6+4 (+ str Bonus) (x2 vs. good aligned) + possible special

Critical: 18-20/x2

Range: 40feet

Weight: 6lb.

Type: Piercing

Note: Blackspears are not widely known to exist, however in the legate community they are great symbols of power and prestige which the need to possess could be generators of strife, intrigue and even murder in the midst of their ranks.

Power Nexus

Geode of the Shattered Sky

Long before the beginning of the last age, in the days of the sundering, amidst the destruction and havoc that occurred upon Izrador's fall to Aryth, a great stone came from the furious skies and landed in the Northern Plains. The rock formation actually comes from the birth of the Kaladrin Mountains where great pressures and exploding volcanoes as well as bursting tectonic plates sent millions of tons of stone flying in the air. Amidst the greatest point of pressure was this geode that was propelled hundreds of kilometers away from the Kaladrin and landed there. The geode is actually a focus of earth powers and its crystals can be used to create powerful earth-based magic items.

Using the crystals, cutting them with care and skill (craft jewelry skill would be useful) and using them in the enchanting of magic items unleashes the geode's powers by infusing them with the ancient and primordial essence of the world.

Spell Energy- 50

Recovery- 2 per week

Feats Allowed- Craft Wondrous Magic Items

Affinity 2- Only create Earth-based or related Magic Items.

Special- The crystals in the geode are naturally perfect to act as soul and spirit recipients. If there is such energy trapped in these crystals, then augment the recovery to 6 per week.

The Tree of Life

On a fateful day, in the year 99 of the last age, Elyssia Quelos, deemed to be the first Children of Aryth, a possessor of great healing powers and an icon of motherhood qualities for the human race in general was cruelly murdered, beheaded while being tied to a crude wooden post. Aryth's nature spirits wept on that day and a great life was lost.

However, the potency of Elyssia Quelos was such, that her very blood, still very much infused with the power of the earth and spirits seeped into the wooden post and brought the dead trunk of a tree back to life. Within a few weeks, where there was a sight of cruelty and death now stands a sight of life and hope. The post had become a flowing and thriving tree, its bark hard and its leaves wide and gushed with life. At each autumn this tree produced fruits of immense medicinal powers as well as roots of great alchemical value. Deeply rooted into the earth, this tree cannot die by physical means as the supply of life and earthly-based powers seem endless and would re-grow the tree eventually, it could however be corrupted by a Blackspire, or the shadow could harness its powers through a Corith. But no means available by man or orc can spoil this tree, as its blood came from a true child of the earth its power is continuously renewed to bear its life-giving fruits, in hope to keep the flame of freedom and rebellion alive.

Spell Energy- 30

Recovery- Special

Feats Allowed- Craft Potions, Alchemy

Affinity 2- None.

Special- The fruits bared by this tree can be used to make potent healing potions (double potency) when mixed and brewed by a person with the right knowledge (feat). The fruits can also be used raw. The smaller fruits (cherry-sized) can be eaten to restore 3d4 hit points. The bigger fruits (apple-sized) can be eaten to heal back severed limbs, cure diseases and restore negative levels. A mixture of both fruits is necessary for potion brewing and the tree only bares one payload per year. There are about 15 to 25 cherry-sized fruits and 2 – 5 apple-sized fruits. The roots can also be chewed as Gnaw Roots for healing or disease protection (GM's discretion).

Note: Anyone can use the healing fruits, even the Shadow...

New Spells

Corrupt Life

Alteration/Necromancy

Level: 9

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 day

Range: Touch

Area: Special (see below)

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

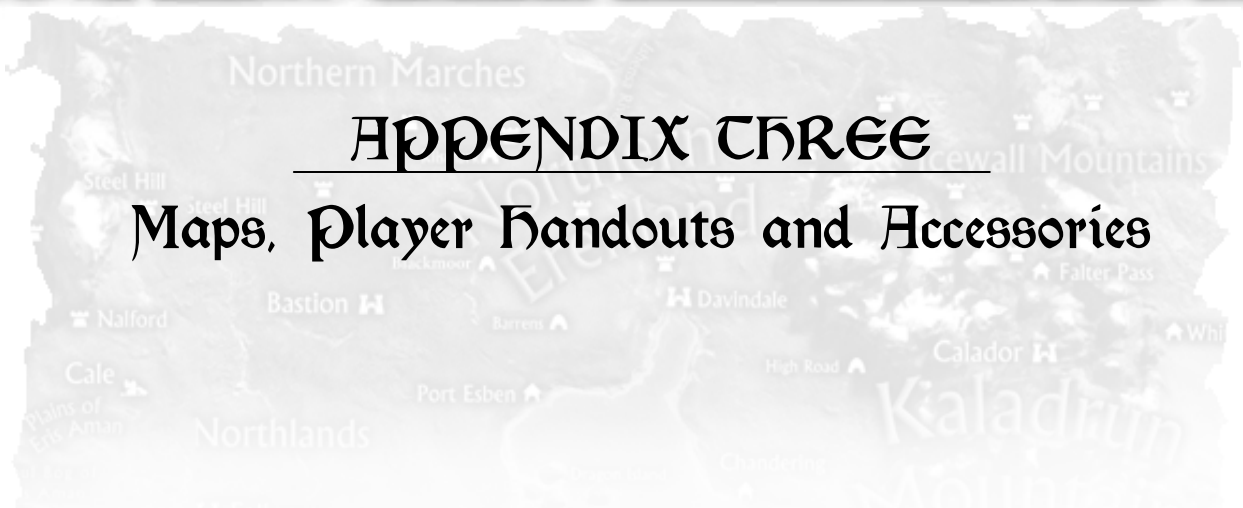
This dreadful spell basically infuses the very essence of Izrador's evil and darkness into an area, effectively corrupting all living things therein. Not a single living thing can escape its blackness and everything must actively battle its constant influence in order to remain unaffected. All non-intelligent life (plant or animal) immediately falls prey to the spell's effect as only the most hardened minds may resist the corruption.

The casters (as this spell requires a three-caster ritual of a full day where all three casters expend 9 spell points) must elect a living host, a single life from which the blackness will erupt. Touching that life must be achieved in order for the spell to function and is the culmination of an entire round of casting. Failure to touch a life at the end of the casting time will result in the spell's failure. The initial victim (who even could be ultimately one of the three casters) must then make a Will save or become completely numb and begins to change for the worst. The horrid transformation to a corrupted form should always be of the most terrible nature, the host finally dies and the expenditure of its life sends forth waves of cascading blackness, corrupting in turn all life within the spell's area of effect. The area depends on the caster's level and the time allotted for the waves to propagate. The maximum reach of the area of effect is equivalent to one kilometer radius per caster's level. The propagation rate is however very slow. The waves of corruption will expand from the point of origin (the first corrupted life), expanding at a rate of 100 meters per day until the maximum area is reached (i.e. 20 kilometers radius for a 20th level caster. The waves would reach the maximum distance in 200 days). Despite its slow propagation rate, Corrupt Life has a number of collateral effects. Until the spell reaches its maximum reach, every living organisms passing through the already corrupted area must make the Will save each day or become twisted, evil and changed. For benign life forms this may well be cosmetic changes but for larger creatures it may yet be more expansive. The GM must determine the exact effect of the corruption, may it be transformation to undead state, applying a fiendish template etc... The obvious effects should twist the creature to a shadow of its former self and its mind torn and shredded to a state of horrific madness. The effects on plant life should also be as dreadful. The GM should add rampant diseases and other blightful details. When the spell reaches its designated maximum range, the Will saves stop, and the state of corruption becomes permanent. At this point casting Dispel Magic and other dispelling effects is useless as the conversion becomes the natural state of the living beings therein and the alteration magic fades and disappears.

The initial creature will however be brought back to an animated state similar to undeath (treat as a spell-less Lich for humanoids or other original GM's creation for others) and it will remain in the spell's area of effect, eternally searching to consume non-corrupted flesh. Its primary role is to safeguard the spell's material component used in its casting during the expansion period. After that, the creature is free to roam as it wishes.

The ways to stop this spell from completely transforming everything in its area of effect is to find the material component used to cast the spell and either cast a Dispel Magic or Greater Dispel Magic or related spells on it or simply removing the component from the spell's area of effect. If done successfully, everything will revert back to its former self aside the initial creature, which will certainly madly attack the interloper. In the case of moving the component, the Guarding creature's link with the item is sure to bring it down to bear on the trespassers.

The material component for this spell is an object directly linked to Izrador of great value that has either great significance to the deity or has great power. It must be used as a weapon against the initial life form. The material component must remain in the spell's area of effect for the entire duration of the spell's propagation. The component is not consumed nor negatively affected by its usage. There is also a cost of 500xp per caster in order to conjure the right amount of energy to summon the essence of the Dark Lord, which is a considerable task.

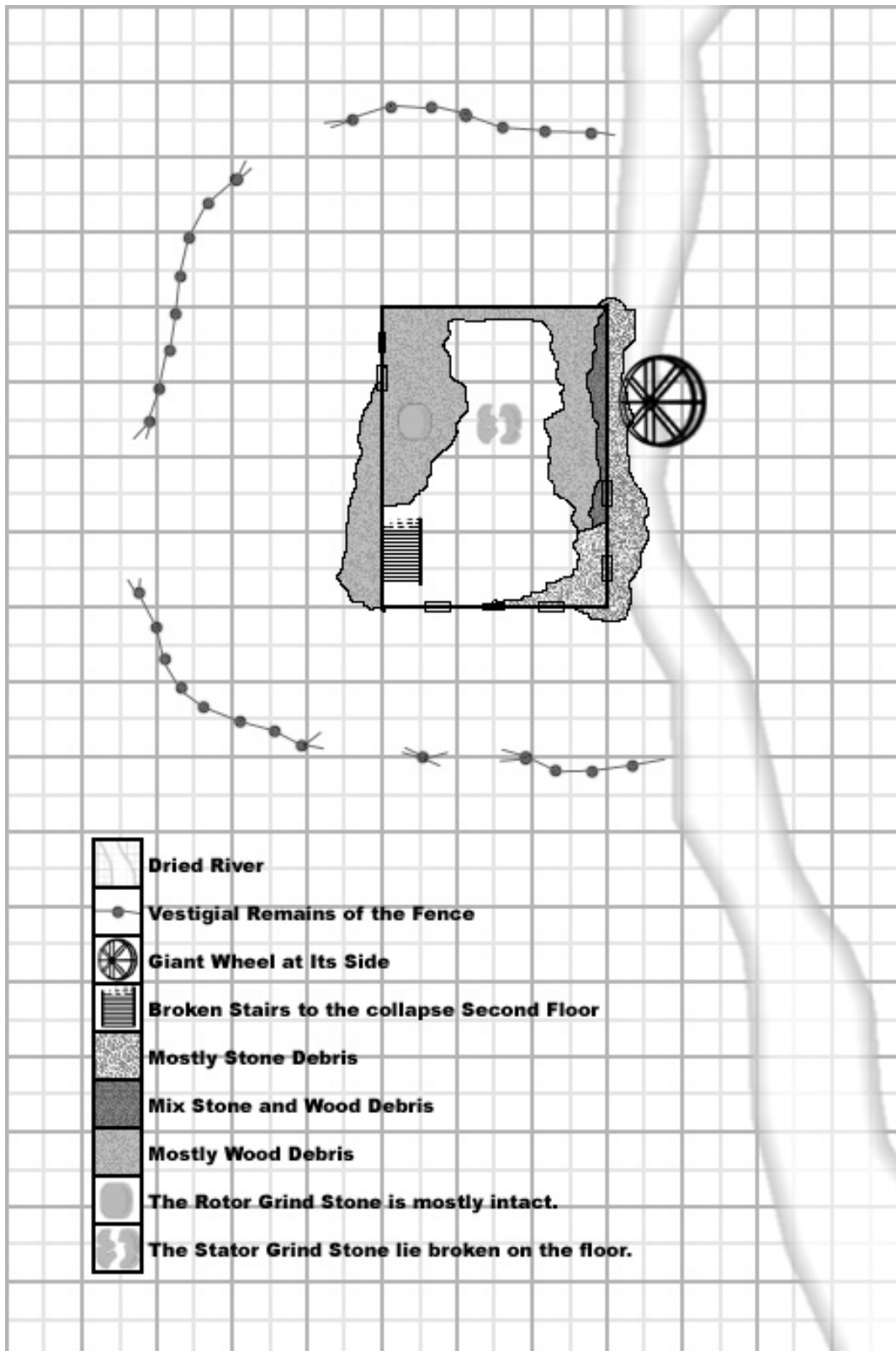


APPENDIX THREE

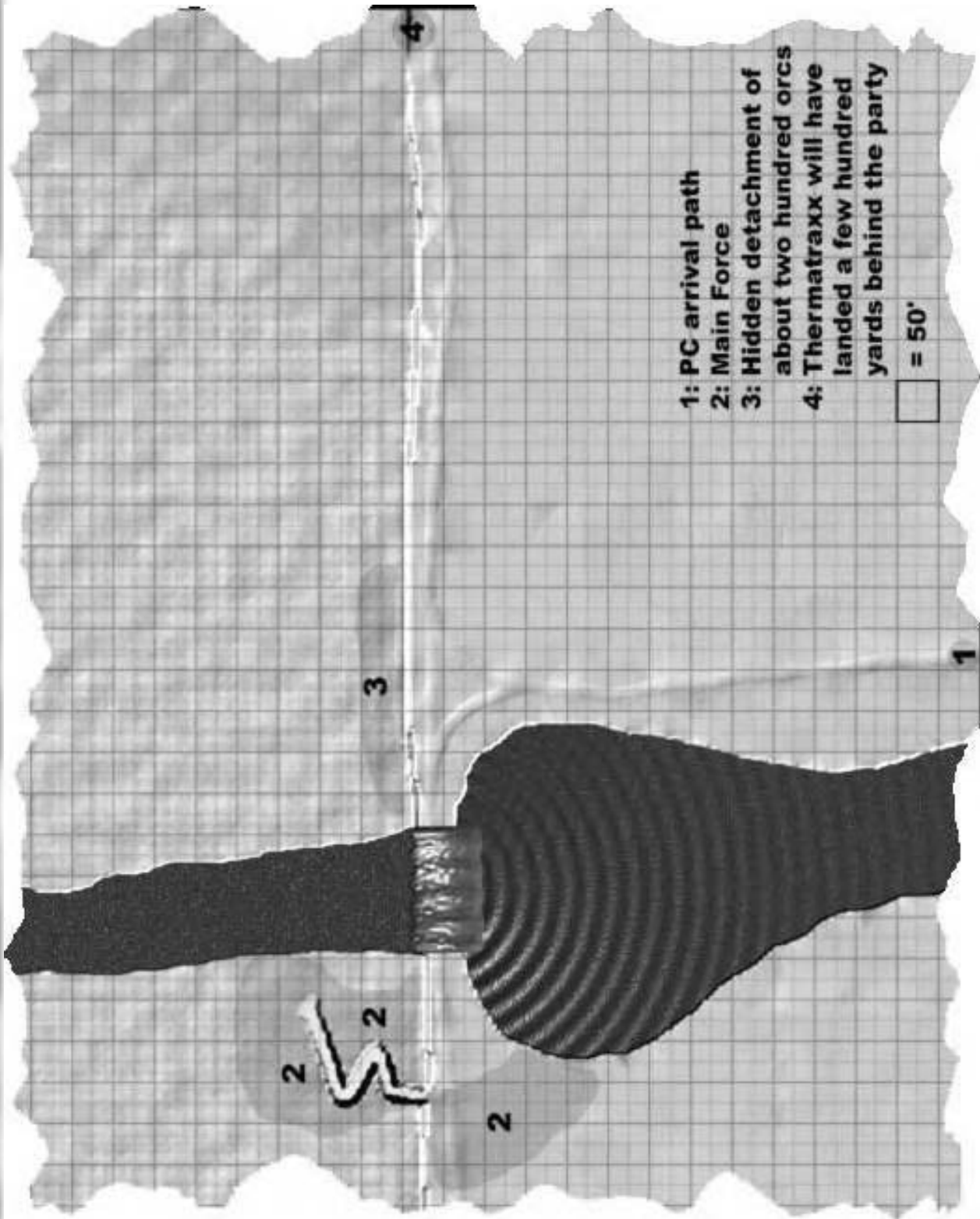
Maps, Player Handouts and Accessories



The Old Mill



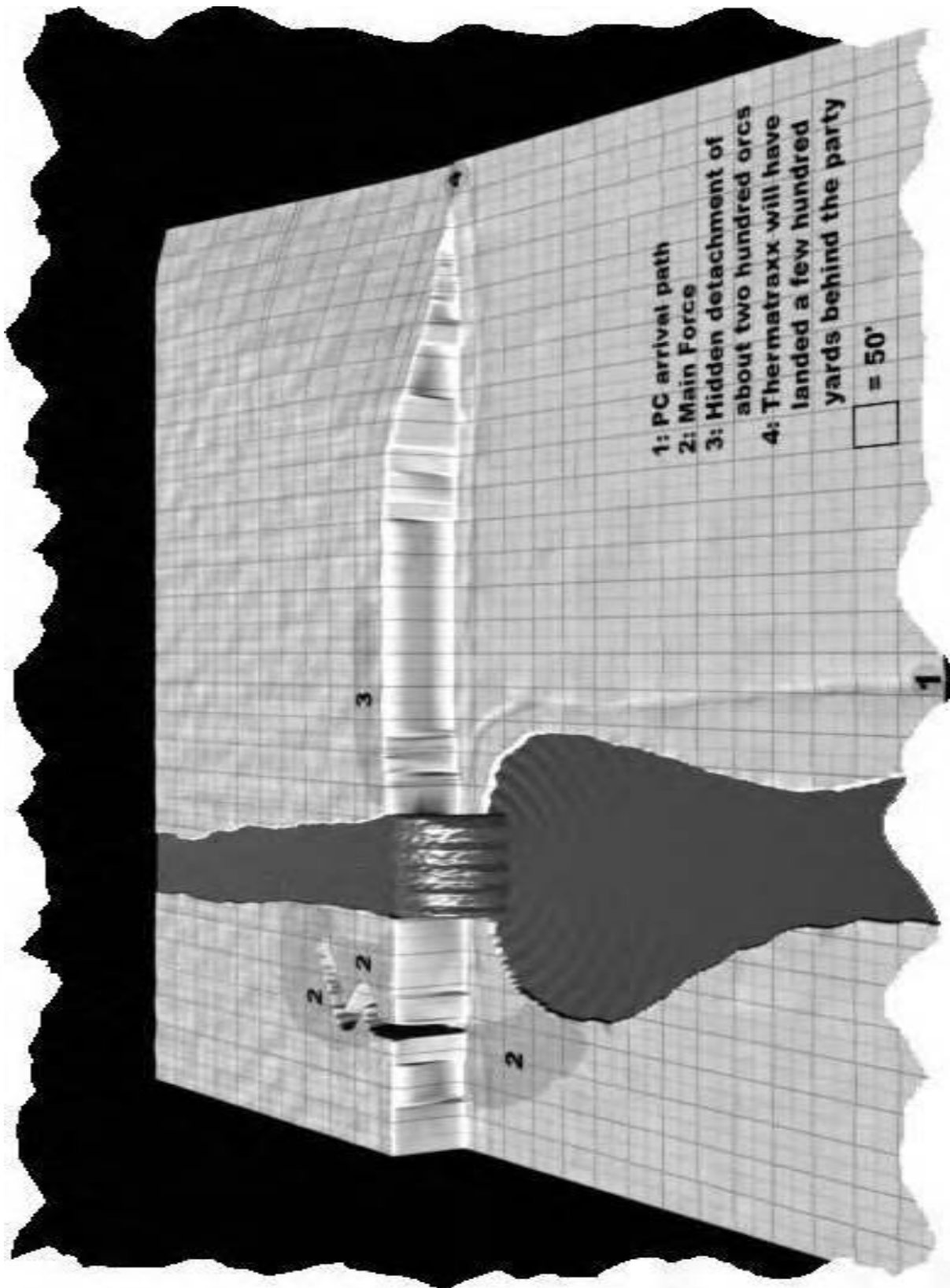
The Door to the West (2D GM's Version)



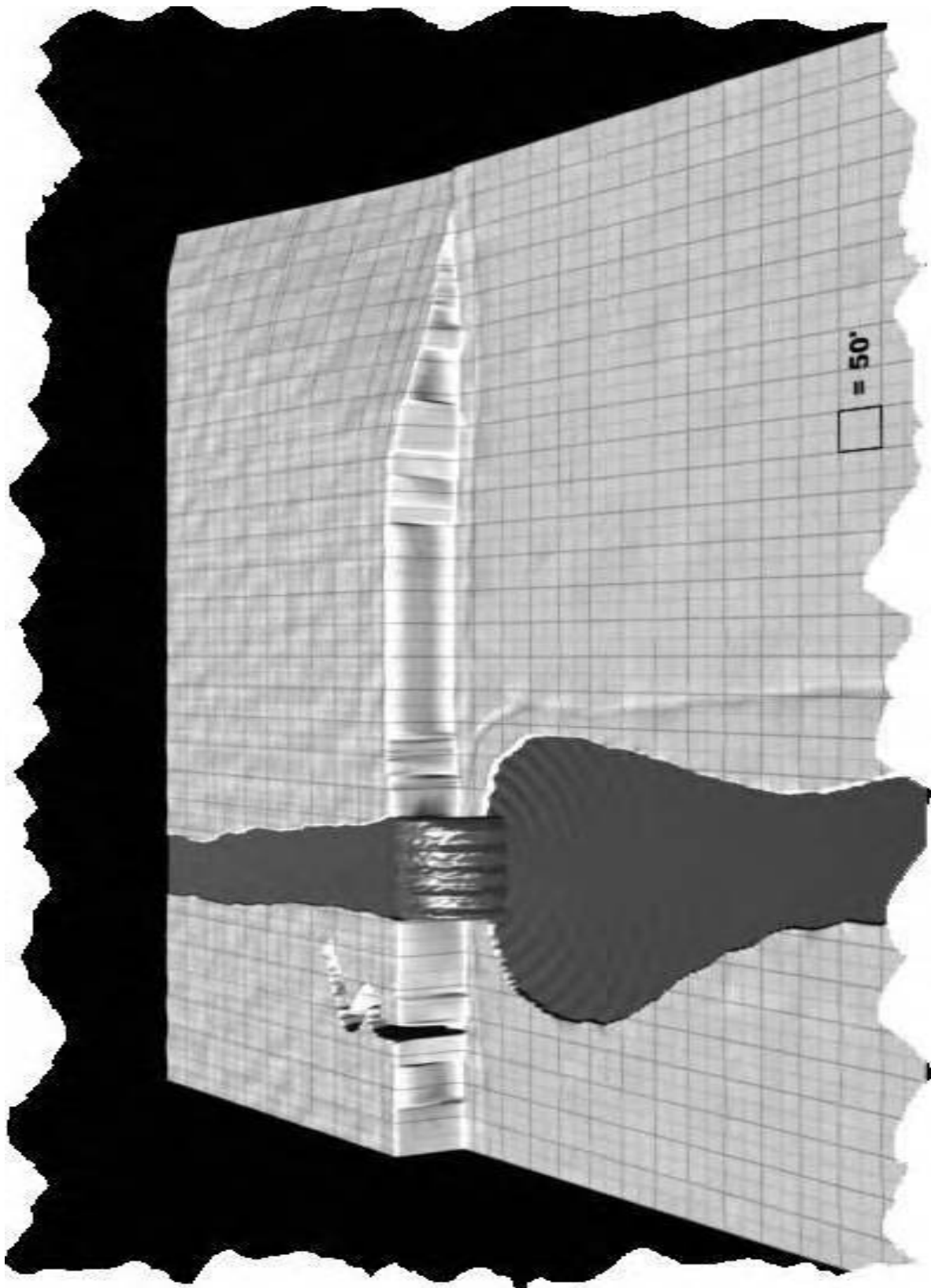
- 1: PC arrival path
- 2: Main Force
- 3: Hidden detachment of about two hundred orcs
- 4: Thermatraxx will have landed a few hundred yards behind the party

= 50'

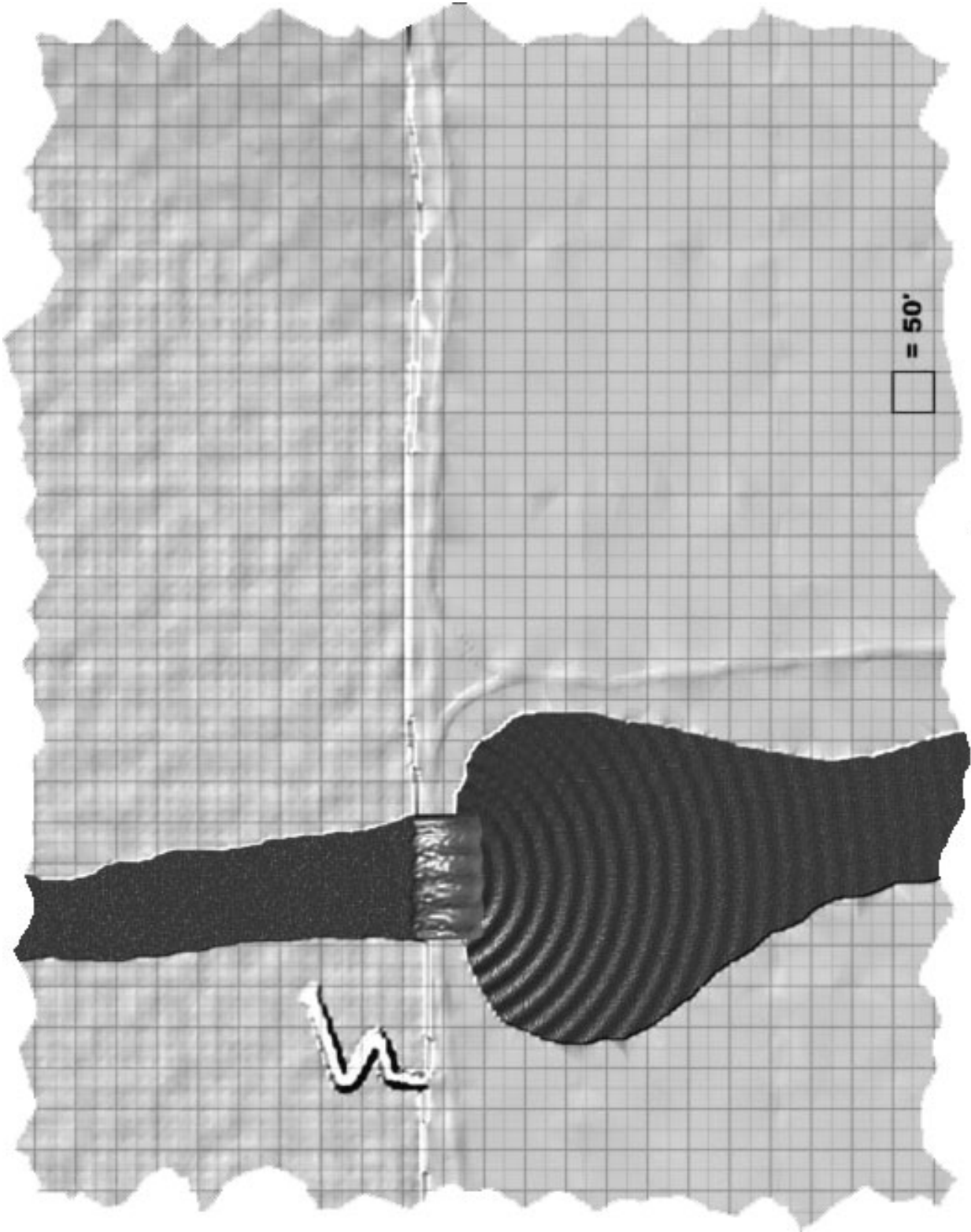
The Door to the West (3D GM's Version)



The Door to the West (Player's 3D Version)



The Door to the West (Player's 2D Version)



Blackmoor: Old House (Stairs to Basement)



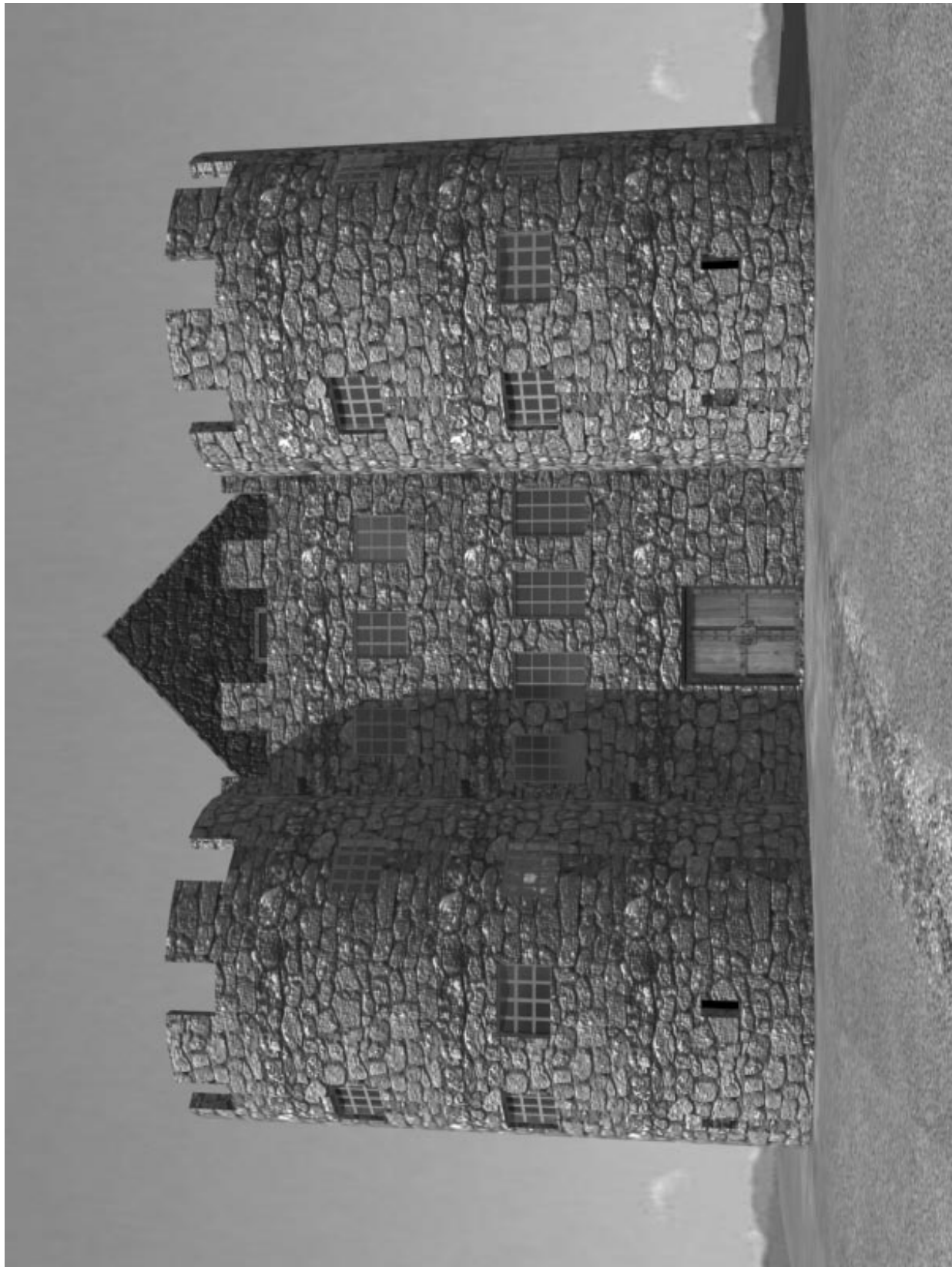
Blackmoor: Old House (Basement w. Door opened)



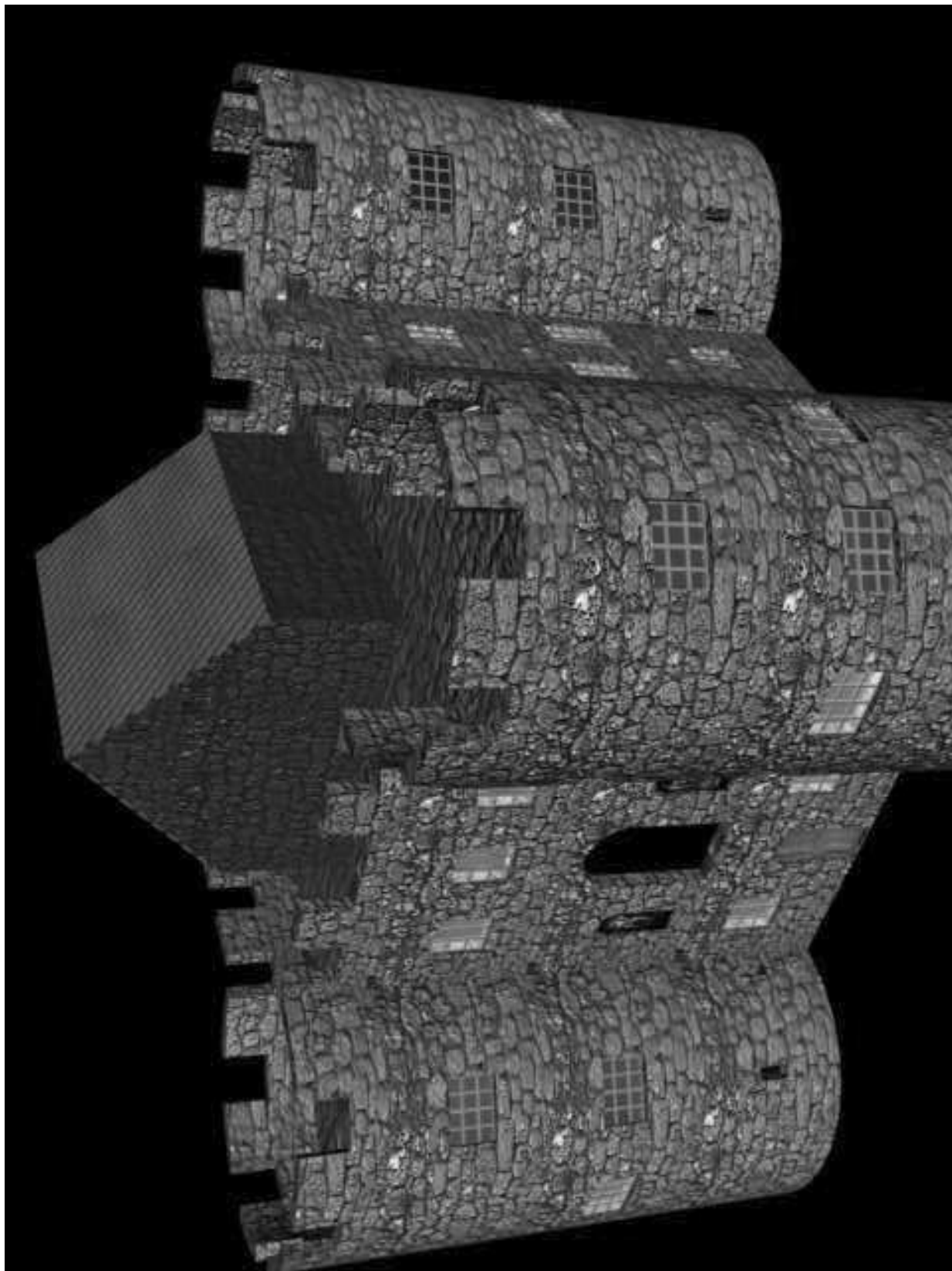
Blackmoor: Old House (Trap Door to Underground)



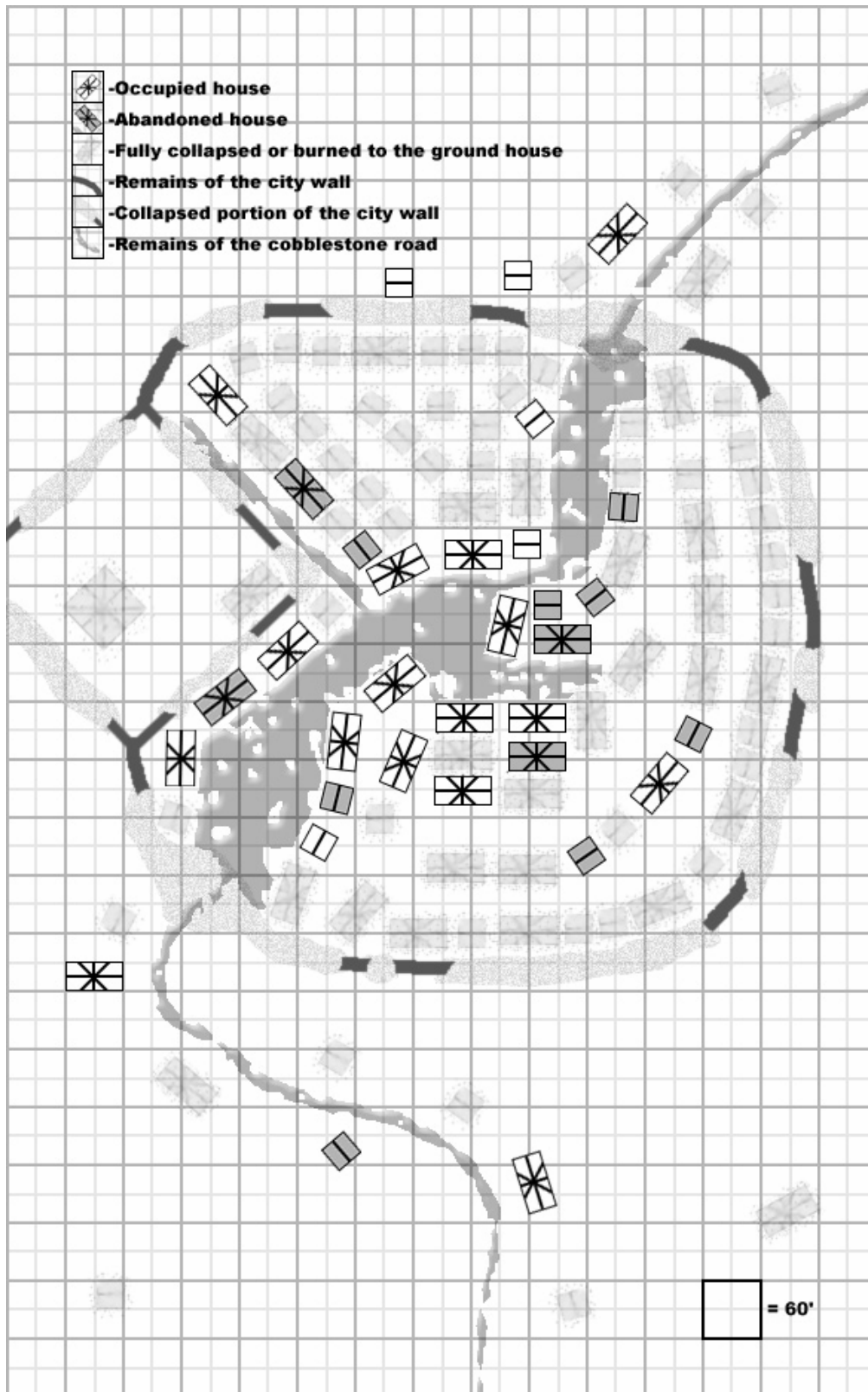
Blackmoor: Treshan's Manor/Garrison



Blackmoor: Treshan's Manor/Garrison (Top View)

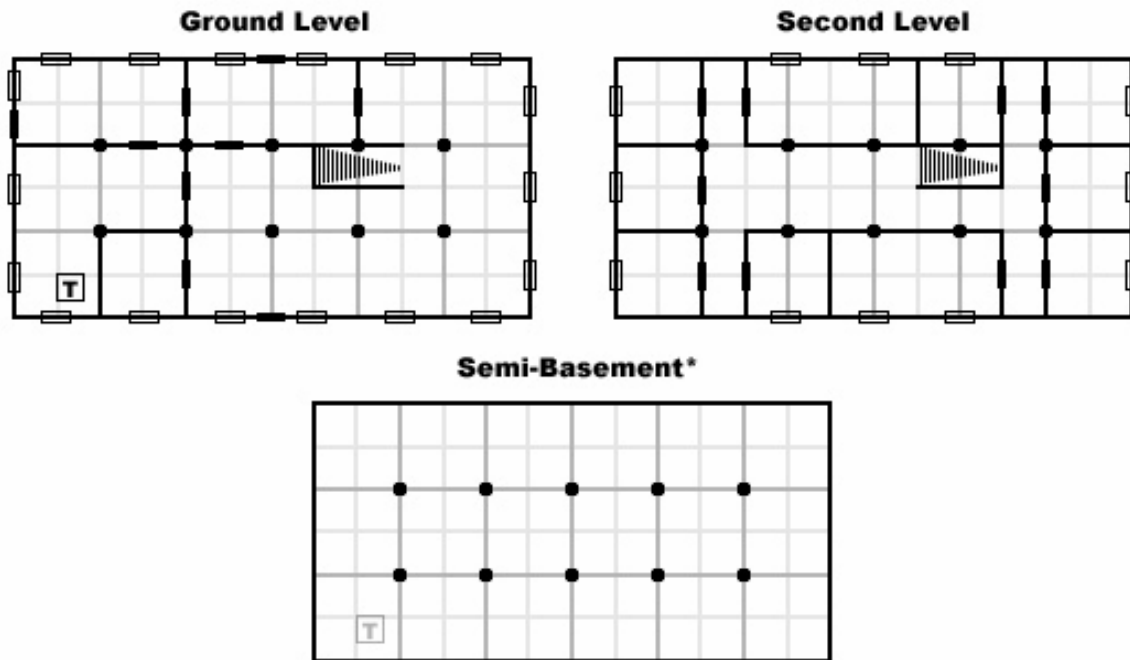


Geleth

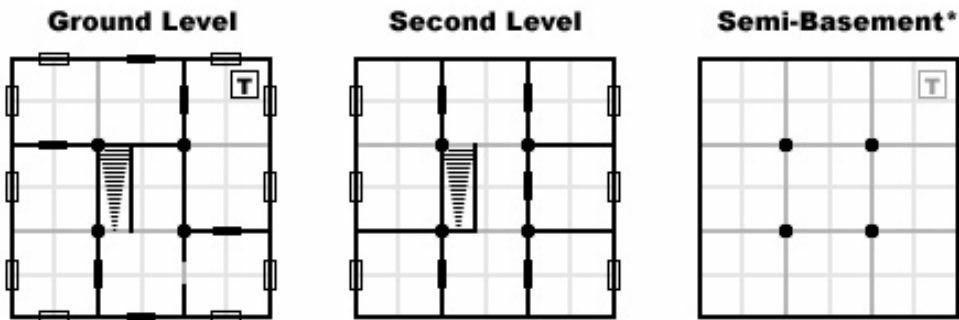


Geleth Typical Houses

Typical Large House



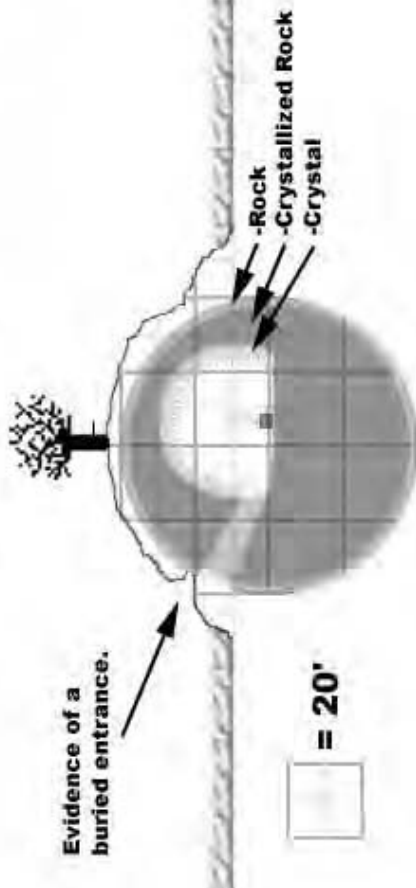
Typical Small House



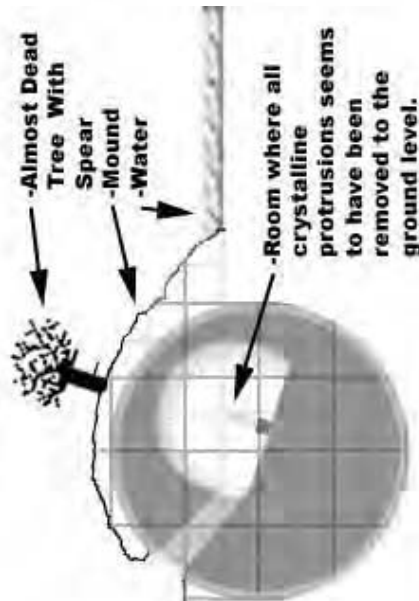
*=The semi-basements are the underground house foundation and can be used has a concealment place items and/or persons. Notes that those underground rooms are never taller then 3 foot.

Geode Side View

Closed



Open



MIDNIGHT™

PROGENY OF LIGHT SCOURGE OF SHADOW

By Pierre Charbonneau

The Dark God Izrador has the known world in a choke hold. His forces have divided the known continent, his orc army is destroying everything in its path. The world of men, elves, dwarves and all other creatures of Eredane lies down in utter agony as the darkness falls upon the land as a symphony of death and suffering.

The earth itself knew from the day of the sundering that the evil in the north would spread like a disease upon its surface and told the elven Witch Queen Aradil of what was to come. As the body of the feverish man fights infection, nature will do the same. From the foundations the earth will emerge individuals with strange and powerful gifts. Powers to fight the Shadow, the ability to restore the light upon a world helplessly cast into darkness. The moment of truth has come as the last vestiges of hope desperately try to regroup.

From the cold plains in the north, to Erethor passing by the Kaladrin Mountains must the Children of Aryth travel in order to seek all their members. Only once they are all gathered in the confines of the elven forest can a true liberation effort be deployed. Can these men and women face up to an angry God? With all that oppose them, are their efforts doomed to fail?

An adventure for 2 to 4 characters that takes them from 1st to 10th level.

Requires the use of the
Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook.
Third Edition, published by Wizards of the Coast®



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