

AGLA1-6

TWISTED ROOTS RUN DEEP

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING* *FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

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In Old Velprintalar, where those neglected and forgotten by society live and die in squalor, power can be had by a strong arm, a few coins, or powerful influence. Cutthroats, thugs, and thieves thrive here - but to what purpose? Plans once thought put to rest now have new life. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Aglarond for characters levels 11-14. This adventure a continuation of the major quest *Something Smells in Veltalar*, begun in AGLA1-3 *The Worst of all Snares*.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Andy Collins, Rob Heinsoo, and James Wyatt.

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By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First, it is an official game, tracked under your play history. Second, DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DM REWARDS program. DMing this adventure is worth one (1) point.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2012.

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PREPARING FOR PLAY

In order to play this adventure, you'll need copies of the following D&D 4th Edition rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. Any other rules referenced in this adventure will be noted in the **New Rules Items** section at the end of the adventure.

Throughout this adventure, text in bold italics provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your organizer directly after play.

READING MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

Most of the information should be easy to understand, as it mirrors the information presented in the *Monster Manual*. Attacks may have a letter next to them designating the type: M for melee, R for ranged, C for close, and A for area. A lower-case letter (used only in some melee and ranged attacks) denotes that the attack can be used as a basic attack.

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

As the DM of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You take the words on these pages and make them come alive. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- **You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure.** This is especially important and applicable outside of combat encounters, but feel free to use the "scaling the encounter" advice (usually for adjusting to different-sized groups) to adjust combat encounters for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time in an adventure.
- **Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group.** Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a "chance to shine."
- **Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately.** Watch for stalling, as play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish the adventure too early; provide them with a full play experience. *Living Forgotten Realms* adventures are designed to be played within 3.5 - 4 hours; try to be very aware

of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.

- **Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to interact with their environment.** Players should always know when enemies are affected by conditions and are bloodied. They should be given clues about how to interact with their surroundings so they can tackle skill challenges, combats, and puzzles without getting too frustrated over lack of information. This helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out a good choice from a clue.

In short, being the DM for a *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure isn't about following the adventure's text word-for-word; it's about creating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* are filled with good information about being a DM for a D&D game.

APPROPRIATE CHARACTER LEVELS

This adventure is designed for player characters (PCs) levels 11 - 14. Characters that fall outside of the level range may not participate in the adventure. Make certain to check the levels of the PCs before beginning play to ensure that they are the proper level.

Each adventure has a low-level version and a high-level version. The low level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the lower levels of the adventure's level spread. The high level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the higher levels of the adventure's level spread.

A group may decide to play the high level when their levels are more suited to the low level if everyone in the group agrees to do so; however, some of the rewards may not be available to them. Conversely, a group may decide to play the low level when their levels are more suited to the high level if everyone in the group agrees; however, some of the rewards may be less than what they'd ideally want from the adventure.

Reading the Numbers: Each encounter has a level and sometimes other values (such as XP or skill check DCs) listed with two numbers divided by a slash. The number before the slash is always the value for the low-level version of the adventure; the number after the slash is the value for the high-level version of the adventure.

FAILING TO DEFEAT AN ENCOUNTER

If a group fails to defeat an encounter - that is, if they have to flee from a combat because it's too tough or they reach the predetermined number of failures in a skill challenge before reaching success - they are only awarded half experience points (round down) for the encounter. If they manage to tackle the encounter later and defeat it, award them the other half of the experience points for the encounter.

CHARACTER DEATH

If a PC dies during the course of the adventure, the player of that character and the rest of the group have two options, provided that they have access to the Raise Dead ritual (either a PC has it and can use it or the characters return to civilization), they have access to the body, and it is possible to return the dead PC to life.

- **Pay the component cost for the ritual.** If the group chooses this option, the cost should be divided evenly among the group (500 gp for heroic tier, 5,000 gp for paragon tier, and 50,000 gp for epic tier). Using a source outside the group to cast the ritual costs 20% more than the component cost. Total cost when using an outside source is 600 gp for heroic tier, 6,000 gp for paragon tier, and 60,000 gp for epic tier. A PC that dies and chooses this method of return gains full (or half, if the party was defeated) experience points from the encounter in which the character died, but no experience points for any encounters that were missed while the character was dead. If there are encounters remaining, the PC continues to earn experience as normal, and receives a normal cut of the rewards at the end of the adventure.
- **Invoke the Death Charity clause.** If the group cannot afford to pay for the ritual (or doesn't desire to do so), the PC can choose to return to life at the end of the adventure. Doing so forfeits all rewards (including treasure and story rewards) earned for the adventure except experience points gained prior to the character's death (the character receives the experience point award for the encounter in which they died). The PC cannot participate in the same adventure a second time.

MILESTONES

No matter if the characters succeed or fail in an encounter, they reach a milestone if it is the second encounter they've had since the start of the adventure or their last extended rest. **Encounters that do not give**

out experience points do not count for purposes of reaching a milestone. Make certain to mention this information to the players when applicable, as it gives each PC another action point and affects how some magic item powers are used.

LASTING EFFECTS

Sometimes a PC suffers a lasting effect that isn't easily resolved before the end of the adventure. The two most common lasting effects are the death penalty and diseases.

Death Penalty: When a character dies and is brought back to life by the Raise Dead ritual, that character suffers a -1 penalty to all attack rolls, skill checks, saving throws, and ability checks until they have reached three milestones. The player should simply record the adventure where the character died on their adventure log, and then keep a running tally of milestones reached. Once the PC has reached the third milestone since coming back to life, they no longer suffer the penalty.

Diseases: Diseases take hold of a character and last until they are cured or they reach their final state. Normally, a PC makes an Endurance check after each extended rest to see if the disease improves, worsens, or maintains its current condition. At the end of the adventure, any character suffering from a disease must resolve the disease to either its cure or final state, using the necessary number of extended rests to do so. Other characters adventuring with the PC may decide to aid the afflicted character during this time. If a disease reaches its final state and the PC can get a Cure Disease ritual cast (and pay the appropriate costs), they may do so.

Other Lasting Effects: Other effects that last beyond the scope of the adventure should be resolved at the DM's discretion. Any effects that last for a specific period of time (that end after a certain number of days or a certain number of extended rests) should be resolved at the end of the adventure in which the effect was obtained (unless otherwise specified). Effects that use some sort of adventuring benchmark of unknown duration (such as milestones) should be recorded on the character's logsheet and tracked across adventures.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Aglarond is ruled by a council of spellcasters called Simbarchs. They meet in the old Palace of the Simbul, a mansion of pale green stone built upon a rise overlooking the city. The council mainly focuses on the internal politics of Veltalar, Aglarond's capital city and chief port, which was formerly called Velprintalar. The

retreat of the Sea of Fallen Stars left behind the older, narrower, rotting buildings of what is now called Old Velprintalar. The Council mostly leaves Old Velprintalar to govern itself.

The squalor and poverty of Old Velprintalar has swelled the ranks of the Stone Bears thieves' guild with many new members. The guild is rapidly expanding its power and influence, all the while spreading its prejudice against arcane spellcaster, elves, and half-elves. The guild believes that these "elite" citizens of Aglarond are given special privileges, leaving little for those in the slums.

In AGLA 1-3 *The Worst of All Snares*, the PCs might have met a sage named Leander and some of his apprentices. Leander, a resident of Old Velprintalar, is troubled by the ease with which the Stone Bears are gaining power. Leander has been covertly watching the Stone Bears, and he believes it would be impossible to do this quickly without some political help. He hired adventurers to confirm his suspicions and hamper the organization. These adventurers successfully interrupted an alchemical production facility, and confirmed Leander's suspicions, but at the same time gained the attention of the Stone Bears.

Vummos Poe, a member of the Simbarch Council, has reason to believe that the Stone Bears have been getting help from within the Council itself, and he wishes to hire the adventurers to aid his agenda. However, Vummos cannot be seen taking direct action against the Stone Bears, for if the Council has indeed been infiltrated, he would be putting himself at great risk. So, he has decided to work through Leander. Leander has his own reasons for wanting to see the menace of the Stone Bears removed, so he is happy to participate in Vummos's plan.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

Before you start the adventure, check to see whether or not any of the players have participated in AGLA1-3 *The Worst of all Snares* and/or AGLA1-2 *At the Foot of the Lighthouse*. Players that have played in AGLA1-3 and received Story Award **AGLA05 *Something Smells in Veltalar*** get a personal letter requesting help from the old sage Leander. PCs that have no history with Leander can be recruited by other characters or Leander seeks out those worthy for the mission. Players that have played in AGLA1-2 and received Story Award **AGLA03 *Protector of the Fang Light*** can use that favor in this adventure to get information on the Stone Bears and potential hideouts.

This is an urban adventure, and committing murder in the city streets is probably a bad idea. Remind the

players of the “Knocking Creatures Unconscious” rule (PH 295), which works with any form of attack. However, if the PCs do end up killing one or more of the NPCs in this adventure, there are no serious consequences. The slums see little of the Simbarch Council’s law enforcement that keeps the rest of the city from falling into chaos.

At first, this adventure might not seem like it deals with a topic that is worthy of the attention of Paragon tier characters. Investigating the activities of a gang in the slums of Old Velprintalar would normally be more suited to lower-level PCs. However, because of the potential for uncovering corruption that rises to the highest levels of power in Aglarond, this is not a task that Vummos and Leander can afford to entrust to adventurers of lesser stature or experience. If you notice during the adventure that the players seem to be wondering why their higher-level characters are being asked to go on this adventure, emphasize the magnitude of what it would mean to Aglarond if indeed there is someone on the ruling Simbarch Council who is funneling money and influence to organized crime.

PLAYER’S INTRODUCTION

The adventure is set in Old Velprintalar, a dilapidated, run down section of Veltalar that was left behind when the Sea of Fallen Stars withdrew a century ago. The PCs will first visit the old sage Leander, who asks them to unravel the mystery of the Stone Bears and garner evidence of any support the gang might be receiving from members of the Simbarch Council. Leander and Vummos Poe need to know the truth and they ask the PCs to take down the Stone Bears and discover if a Simbarch is backing the guild. The PCs can either attempt to investigate the Stone Bears, or they can opt for a more direct approach, as they see fit.

PCs who have previously met Leander should be given Handout 1. Read or paraphrase the following to the players who receive the letter from Leander.

The adventurer’s life can take one many places, but there are few more beautiful than Veltalar in Aglarond. Its majestic views emphasize the beauty of the region near the Sea of Fallen Stars. Today is a dazzling, warm afternoon.

You’ve been drawn here by a summons; a note from the Sage Leander.

Read or paraphrase the following to the players who did not receive the letter from Leander:

Your travels have brought you to Veltalar. Whether you meant to travel the sea, make a bit of coin, or are just passing through, Veltalar is a place where adventure can find you just as easily as you can find it. An old half-elf in a fine robe with mud on the bottom is eyeing you up and down, as if measuring your value as adventurers.

“Might you be <Insert PC or AC Name>? I have heard some remarkable things about your heroics of late. I am Leander the Sage, and I am in need of some stout heroes to help me with a most important task. If you are willing and able, follow me to where we can discuss this more privately.”

With that, the half-elf sets off at a determined pace.

As long as the PCs follow, they are led to Leander’s workshop. If they do not follow, the opportunity for grand adventure is missed.

ENCOUNTER 1: CLOAK AND SHADOW

SETUP

Important NPCs:

Leander, Male Half-Elf Sage

Vummos Poe, Male Eladrin Simbarch

The meeting is held at Leander's home. Read the following:

The narrow, filthy alleys of Old Velprintalar twist and wind in all directions. You pass a seemingly endless succession of dilapidated hovels and slog through streets choked with debris on your way to Leander's residence.

The aging half-elf ushers you into his home. A cloaked figure greets you as you enter the residence. This unannounced additional guest pulls off his hood, revealing the handsome features of a middle-aged eladrin.

Leander does most of the talking in this encounter. He recognizes anyone who has worked with him in the past (particularly AGLA1-3) and directs his comments more towards these characters. Leander introduces the cloaked man as Vummos Poe. Vummos is an eladrin male of middle age. He is one of fifteen spellcasters that make up the Simbarch Council of Aglarond.

The PCs might know the following information about Vummos, or obtain it through asking questions:

- **History or Streetwise DC 19:** Vummos Poe is considered a progressive on the Simbarch Council. He is known for his wisdom, stoic patience, and concern for the overall good of the nation and its people.
- Vummos Poe prefers to work behind the scenes, subtly guiding people in the right direction. He believes it's best to handle political problems out of the public eye. What the people don't know won't hurt them.
- If the PCs question his identity, Vummos shows the PCs his personal seal, which resembles a griffon holding a book. The PCs can double-check this using rituals or by gathering information later in the adventure, if they wish. Vummos really is who he claims to be.
- Vummos speaks in a quiet but firm voice of authority. He requests the PCs not mention his name, or that they have ever met.

Leander and Vummos explain what they would like the PCs to do and then answer what questions they can. The following information should come out during this encounter:

- Leander and Vummos believe that the Stone Bears Thieves' Guild is much more than a simple group of thugs. The guild is very violent and resilient to infiltration and investigation. Word on the street is that the Stone Bears are planning something big, but no one seems to know exactly what that means.
- Vummos is convinced that the Stone Bears have been getting assistance from someone very highly placed within the government of Aglarond. He specifically asks the PCs to gather any evidence that would prove the Stone Bears have a relationship with someone on the Simbarch Council. This is a very serious accusation, but Vummos stands behind it.
- Leander wants the Stone Bears to be taken down and eliminated for good. His concern is less about the Simbarchs and more about the safety of the residents of Old Velprintalar. The gang's violent tendencies are a threat to everyone in the slums.
- Leander gives the PCs **Handout 2** and says that the note was found on a murdered half-elf girl named Trinket. She appeared in AGLA1-3 *The Worst of all Snares* where she played "friendly games" with the PCs for information. Trinket was found dead with her ears cut off.
- The paw print on the message is that of a bear.
- Vummos asks the PCs to undertake this mission for the good of Aglarond. If the subject of payment is broached, however, Vummos shakes a gem-filled bag and suggests that any reward will be performance-based.
- Leander does not know where the Stone Bears have their main base of operations. The PCs will need to figure that out if they are going to take down the guild. Leander believes the Berronar's Haven Orphanage would be a good place to start investigating because the Stone Bears have been seen recruiting there.
- Vummos warns the PCs that there are many factions operating within the Simbarch Council. He stresses it would be wise to only have dealings with those of his faction if the need should arise. Vummos suggests that if the PCs are owed a favor by the Simbarch Guard (such as from AGLA1-2) that now might be a good time to cash it in.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once Leander and Vummos are finished explaining the mission, while the players are contemplating payment and what to do next, Vummos hands the bag to Leander, pulls his cloak on to once again cover his face, and takes his leave.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

The PCs only get a promise of payment at this time.

ENCOUNTER 2: DELVING DEEP

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 8/10, COMPLEXITY 2 (700 / 1000 XP)

This skill challenge is a free-form investigation. The PCs can pursue various options as they see fit. First, they need to gather information about the activities of the Stone Bears. Then they need to pursue and determine some likely locations for the gang's hideout. There are a variety of ways for the PCs to learn more about the Stone Bears. Successes can be earned by staging a confrontation, trying to tail a member of the gang, capturing someone and interrogating him, talking to the locals who have been shaken down by the gang, various rituals, and whatever other means the players might devise. If it is clever or makes sense, go with it.

Completing the overall skill challenge requires the PCs to achieve a total of six successes in the various scenes before they accumulate three failures. However, this mechanic should not be made obvious to the players. Treat this like an extended roleplaying encounter, calling for skill checks where appropriate. You can award bonuses, penalties, or even automatic successes or failures, at your discretion. Even if the PCs reach three failures very quickly, you should run this encounter to its natural conclusion, with the PCs eventually learning what they need to know.

RUNNING THE SKILL CHALLENGE

You may need to adjust or add details while role-playing a scene or improvise entirely new scenes based on PC actions. Encourage the players to devise alternative ways to employ their skills in order to get all the players involved.

If you wish, call for random Perception checks, as the PCs are feeling more watched than usual. Everyone is watching them, but they never catch a glimpse of anything suspicious.

At some point the adventurers probably trigger a fight with the gang; when you feel they have poked around enough run Encounter 3B, placing the PCs in Start Area B.

If the PCs return to a scene they already have encountered, they see a few men asking questions about them. The men are wary, and lead the PCs into an ambush. This places the PCs in a bad situation. Run Encounter 3B with the Streets Map, and place the PCs in Start Area A.

SCENE: THE SIMBARCH'S GUARD

It is not possible to get an audience with the Simbarch Council at this time. The PCs are able to get on a list, but the list is to be put under consideration to be put on the council's agenda.

However, one of the guards on duty is a member of Vummos' political faction and might know of the PCs by deeds done in AGLA1-2. Players that have the story award *AGLA03 Protector of the Fang Light* can use that favor to obtain access to the intelligence officer and gather information on the Stone Bears and potential hideouts. If they choose to use the favor, it counts as one automatic success in the overall skill challenge.

- Harn is one of the Simbarch Guards on duty.
- He knows of the PCs and would be happy to return the favor.
- Harn gets off in a few hours, and then he can arrange for the PC who uses the favor to see the Intelligence Officer.

Perception DC 15: Harn's Simbarch Guard badge matches the one Vummos showed you earlier of a griffon holding a book.

If a PC is willing to take advantage of this story award, they are asked to come back when Harn gets off duty. Use several other scenes to fill out the skill challenge, and then Harn gets off duty. Harn meets the PCs when he is off duty as promised.

"Sorry, but your friends have to wait here. I am also sorry but the blindfold is necessary. Don't worry, I won't run you into anything."

- Harn leads the PC to a warm room deep in his faction's area of the palace.
- Taking off the blindfold reveals a room with paper everywhere and a small weasel-faced man skittering back and forth looking over the papers.
- The weasel-faced man tosses a rolled parchment to the PC.

"I am entrusting you with this information on Harn's word. I wonder if you won't keep the writer of that letter in mind. It seems she has not checked in for awhile."

- Give the players Handout 3.
- The parchment given to the PC is a copy of a letter from one of Vummos' trusted spies with the location to the Fake Storefront as well as several locations the Stone Bears frequent such as the Brothel and Orphanage.

- The PC is blindfolded once more and escorted back to the waiting party.

If the PCs move quickly with this information, it should be fairly obvious to the Stone Bears that the PCs are onto something. After the PCs arrive at the plaza, run Encounter 3B with the PCs beginning in Start Area B.

SCENE: BERRONAR'S HAVEN ORPHANAGE

The orphanage is little more than an old warehouse. Painted over the entryway is the picture of a home overlaid by two linked silver rings.

The unmistakable sound of untamed children fills your ears. Amongst the unruly children is the only adult you can see. She is an older, tired looking woman with a habitual melancholy scowl on her.

Religion DC 10: The linked silver rings are the symbol of Berronar Truesilver, goddess of family. (This does not count as part of the skill challenge.)

Berronar's Haven Orphanage is run by Gertrude, an old human woman. She has been taking care of orphans for many years, ever since her husband died. In recent years the number of orphans has swelled dramatically, as fathers and mothers go off to war with Thay and never come home.

Gertrude is harried by the overwhelming needs of her children as she has no one to help her. She is willing to answer questions if several PCs can provide her some help (taking some laundry upstairs, entertaining the kids etc.) As long as some PCs help Gertrude then she can answer questions. The information is freely given.

Upstairs is a small child drawing on the walls. Beside him are a few papers on the floor. The child coos at you and points at his work.

The crude drawings on the wall and papers appear to be significant. **Religion (DC 19/21):** the symbols are very crude and hard to make out, but they certainly look like symbols of Hoar and even one of Bane.

Gertrude knows the following information:

- Gertrude does not know where the Stone Bears reside, but they cannot be far as they always seem to be around.
- The Stone Bears have been recruiting new members from her orphanage. She tries to convince the orphans it is not as glamorous and easy as they make it sound. But the draw of some

type of family and the promises of being truly taken care of in a powerful gang is too much to overcome.

- Many of the younger children went down to the docks with a storyteller but were expected back by now.
- Some of the older children who were especially adept at lying to her face have been hanging out with some new street performers over on Squatters Row.
- If asked about the symbols upstairs she rushes upstairs and scolds the child, but does not know what they mean.

SCENE: SQUATTERS ROW

Some street performers are trying to entertain the poor and bring some joy to their lives. The troupe is doing some kind of show involving challenging jumping and back flips as you approach.

The troupe leader is a younger woman by the name of Kara. She has a tender heart and cannot stand to see the common folk suffer so. Her troupe is not as enamored with the idea of performing under these circumstances. A few in particular see the adventurers and try to get them to participate in the show.

Primary Skills: Acrobatics, Athletics (DC 19/21, maximum 2 successes in this scene)

Success: The troupe is impressed with the PCs' feats of strength and agility. As the show winds to a close, they pull the PCs aside and share what they know.

- They have seen a man talking with the orphans and taking a few things from them, and then giving them back.
- The man has a crooked nose, walks with the grace of a street performer, and disappears quickly when noticed.

Failure: The troupe plays up to the crowd mocking how badly the PCs are at simply walking. They imitate the PCs stumbling and tripping as the crowd roars with laughter.

After the PCs try to join in the performance, Perception is opened up as a skill.

Perception (DC 24/26, 1 success maximum): While the PCs are distracted, an orphan who is apprenticing as a Stone Bear cutpurse tries to make a quick name for himself. He has the talent, if not the brains. He tries to

take something of value off one of the PCs that he thinks the Stone Bears would appreciate, preferably a pouch or small magic item. The Stone Bears preach hatred toward spellcasters, elves, and half-elves, and thus he targets these characters preferentially, hoping to get a reward for this action.

Success: The little thief is caught and the item returned. Interrogation reveals the following information:

- The orphan only knows what he has been told, that he must earn his keep so that he receives training and gets rewarded accordingly.
- He is not a Stone Bear yet, as he needs to prove himself.
- The man training him has a crooked nose, and a mean stare. He seems very quick and he can take things even when you are watching him!
- He does not know of any hideout, the Stone Bears seem to move around a lot.
- He does know that the Stone Bears have asked a few of the orphans to come to a secret meeting in a few weeks to be trained and initiated.
- The orphan has a painted symbol on his arm: a black glove holding a coin.

Religion (DC 19/21): The black glove holding a coin is a symbol of Hoar, exarch of Bane. Hoar's sphere is that of revenge. His portfolio is that of retribution and poetic justice. He is often worshipped by assassins, fighters, and rogues.

Failure: Someone in the crowd notices the little thief and points him out to the PCs before he gets too far. He drops the item and vanishes into the alleys. The troupe once again incorporates the PCs' failure into their act.

SCENE: RITUAL ME THIS

It is possible for the PCs to use various rituals that could garner some useful information such as Seek Rumor. Use your judgment and the guidelines for the ritual and give them the information that would result. Successful and intelligent usage of rituals should be rewarded with automatic successes towards the overall skill challenge. When ritual skill-check results need to be compared to DCs (such as Seek Rumor) use DC 24/26.

SCENE: WORD ON THE STREET

Primary Skills: Diplomacy, Perception, Streetwise (DC 19/21, maximum 2 successes in this scene)

- **Diplomacy:** The common folk are not really interested in getting involved. They seem scared

when you mention the Stone Bears. But one person mentions it's a shame that the Sultry Sin Brothel is allowed to remain open.

- **Perception:** A street vendor who is closing up his shop gives a quick motion toward the PCs. He has been shaken down more than usual lately, and if anyone can do something about it, these armed strangers could. He mentions the Stone Bears normally start coming around near dusk, and that they are never alone. Maybe following them or chasing them down is something armed adventurers could do.
- **Streetwise:** An old beggar, for a few coins, suggests the PCs try the taverns where fences hang out. The coins are for his dry throat, and he will show them personally.

SCENE: THE SULTRY SIN

This building is one of the better looking structures in the area. It needs no advertisement, as it seems the oldest profession is something everyone knows where to find.

Mistress Pietra is the owner of the establishment. She approaches the PCs as they enter and asks if they are in need of rest and relaxation. This is first and foremost a luxury bathhouse, and it has fine liquors, scented baths, private rooms, and other fine fare. Payment is expected up front and negotiable for all services except for consumables. Pietra prides herself on her negotiation skills and her personal entertainment comes from getting the better of nearly every customer.

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Streetwise (DC 19/21, maximum 2 successes in this scene):

- Working Pietra for information is a game to her, she wants someone to play this game and entertain her for the information.

Success: Pietra is entertained by the PCs' wit and charm. She gives the information after she tires of her coy little game.

Failure: Pietra is bored by the PC, and charges them 50 gold pieces for each tidbit of information.

Mistress Pietra is paying the Stone Bears protection money, and sees no harm sending the PCs into a trap and possibly making some money while doing it.

Insight (DC 19/21): Pietra is being honest, but she is conflicted and holding back something, but does not reveal what it is.

Pietra sent a eunuch boy with a message warning Sherett of the PCs' arrival, confident that the PCs would not leave her establishment too quickly. If the PCs are alert for such tactics then they might intercept this message, giving them additional leverage in their negotiations with Pietra, and certainly enabling them to learn Sherett's location.

- She knows the Stone Bears are indeed clients, but none that she knows of are in at the moment.
- A gnome fence named Sherett is one of the better fences used by the Stone Bears, and he is a shrewd little man.
- Sherett can be found at the Coughing Beggar Tavern in Old Velprintalar. Pietra gives directions to the tavern.

Allow the players to be creative in this scene, but please remember who is at the table and keep everything age-appropriate. It would be difficult to determine if any of the current clientele may be Stone Bears, as most services are done behind closed doors.

Getting information out of the workers here is impossible as they are too scared to talk. No bribery or intimidation works on them. The working folk of the establishment are no fools.

SCENE: TO CATCH A THIEF

If the PCs want to try and follow or chase one of the Stone Bears, they can do so, but it will only result in part of the necessary information for the skill challenge. This is a mini skill challenge within the overall skill challenge. This outcome yields 1 success or failure towards the overall skill challenge.

Rounding a corner you catch part of an argument between two men. The man yelling at a vendor is dressed as a beggar, and he takes a bag from the vendor and strolls away at a brisk pace.

The PCs have the chance to tail the Stone Bear, or run him down and to try and interrogate him. Either of these options would be resolved with a quick Complexity 1 skill challenge (4 successes before 3 failures).

If the PCs attempt to tail the Stone Bear surreptitiously:

Stealth (DC 19/21): The PCs attempt to tail a gang member's movements. Use the lowest stealth result of the group attempting to trail the thief.

Perception (DC 19/21): The Stone Bear periodically turns and looks around for pursuit. The PCs make a perception check to notice and halt their movement.

Note: The use of an action point can cancel a failure, as the PCs use a burst of speed to duck out of view.

Success: The PCs are quite stealthy, they follow the thief to a sewer entrance, and see the Stone Bear drop down out of sight. Run Encounter 3B with the PCs beginning combat in Start Area B, as the PCs are too close for comfort for the Stone Bears. The PCs are on equal footing, and not at a disadvantage.

Failure: The Stone Bear is tipped off; he leads the PCs into an ambush. Run encounter 3B with the PCs begging combat in Start Area A and the Stone Bears all get a +10 initiative bonus. This effect is cumulative with failing the overall skill challenge.

If the PCs try to chase the Stone Bear in plain sight:

The Stone Bear makes a break for it. The PCs have 4 rounds to catch up before he reaches his friends and triggers an ambush. Since this may separate the party, keep in mind how far apart the party is and adjust accordingly. Unless the PCs try to sneak up, the thief has a good head start, and anyone running toward him starts him running.

Athletics DC 19/21: To attempt to catch up the PCs must avoid obstacles or climb a building.

Streetwise 19/21: The PCs are told by a concerned citizen which way the Stone Bear ran, or shows them a shortcut that helps the PCs cut the distance.

Perception 19/21: The PCs must keep up with the thief's movements to keep up the chase. Going to the rooftops for a bird's eye view is not a bad option.

A PC can use a power to move faster if they wish. Using a movement/speed power counts as one success for the mini skill challenge. PCs can also use action points to move faster. An action point used counts as one success for the mini skill challenge.

Success: The PCs catch the thief.

- The caught thief has a bag of fine food and his gear.

- He knows he is to drop the bag at the storefront.
- He holds out with this information to ensure the other Stone Bears have time to make preparations. Run Encounter 3B with PCs beginning the combat in Start Area B.
- The PCs have time to get together in one group before running the combat.

Failure: The PCs are led into an ambush. Run encounter 3B with PCs beginning in Start Area A. In addition the Stone Bears all get a +10 Initiative bonus. This effect is cumulative with failing the overall skill challenge. If the stealthy PCs are separated from the main group, keep to the tactics and make sure the lurkers wait for the rest of the party.

SCENE: COUGHING BEGGAR TAVERN

This building is in much better shape than the other buildings around it. That is, it is not about to fall down. The sign shows a disheveled coughing man and the smell of alcohol is strong even from outside.

The tavern is busy and only one table has room for you to sit at. A gnome is sitting alone in the corner of the Tavern, and smiles at you knowingly.

Sherett is expecting trouble, and several of the patrons are Stone Bears waiting for a confrontation. The other patrons know better than to interfere, but do their best to hide the Stone Bears. It is possible the PCs just want a fight by this point; if that is so, give it to them. Sherett hides under the table, and only comes out when the combat is over.

Primary Skills: Diplomacy or Intimidate (DC 19/21, maximum 2 successes in this scene):

Success: Sherett gives the PCs the storefront location and time the Stone Bears have set to give some items to him. Run Encounter 3B on the Streets map with PCs beginning the combat in Start Area B.

Failure: Sherett is openly hostile, and orders the PCs to leave. He nods to someone and the Stone Bears are ready. Sherett hides under the table, and only comes out when the combat is over. Run Encounter 3A with the Tavern map.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The Skill Challenge can last as long as the PCs want to investigate, but try and keep it under 40 minutes. The PCs should accumulate enough successes or failures after a few scenes. The goal is to find the location and

any information about the Stone Bear activities of late. If they don't trigger a fight, when you feel it is a good time, you can run Encounter 3 with the Streets Map having the PCs begin in Start Area B.

Success: The PCs are subtle and gather more than enough information about the Stone Bear activities and the type of people as to not be put at a disadvantage. The Stone Bears are not sufficiently tipped off. No additional reinforcements are called in.

Failure: The PCs are not very skillful in the art of investigation. The Stone Bears have time to call in another assassin. Add one assassin to Encounter 3.

One purpose of the "challenge" portion of this skill challenge is to determine how successful the PCs are at gathering information regarding the Stone Bears without drawing unnecessary attention to themselves. Take everything that happened during this encounter into account when adjudicating the gang's actions and preparations later in the adventure when the PCs storm their hideout.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 140 / 200 experience points for successfully completing the skill challenge.

TREASURE

There is no treasure for this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 3A: LOOK WHAT THE BEAR DRAGGED IN

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 12/14 (3500/5000 XP)

SETUP

Run this encounter if the PCs pick a fight at the tavern.

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- Sherett (Non-combatant) (N)
- 2 Stone Bear Streetfighters (F)
- 1 Stone Bear Groveler (G)
- 1 Stone Bear Assassin (A)
- 2 Stone Bear Scrabblers (S)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- Sherett (Non-combatant) (N)
- 2 Stone Bear Streetfighters (Level 15) (F)
- 1 Stone Bear Groveler (Level 15) (G)
- 1 Stone Bear Assassin (Level 14) (A)
- 2 Stone Bear Scrabblers (S)

A few patrons see the commotion and move out of the way, while a few others continue to drink and just watch. Some of the customers have a more sinister purpose, and they pull weapons and advance on you.

The PCs may think this is a normal bar fight, but the patrons want no part of it. There are some Stone Bears in the bar, and they have orders to protect Sherett, and to take any meddlers out permanently.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The bar has normal illumination; it has some smoke in the room from a fireplace and several light sources, with ample shadows in the corners.

Terrain Feature: The tavern has chairs, and tables. It is cheap furniture and is easily broken (any targeted attack or Strength DC 15).

Tables: The tables can be tipped over as a move action to provide cover from ranged attacks.

Barrels: The barrels are full of rain water. They are blocking terrain.

TACTICS

The Stone Bears are trained to act as a coordinated team. Spellcasters, elves, and half-elves are their preferred targets due to the guild's prejudices.

The streetfighters occupy as many targets as possible using *cheap shot* and *streetfighter flourish* whenever they can. The scrabblers try to blend in with the patrons and wait to let the PCs think there are no other threats. They throw *jolt flasks* to start, and then they throw shurikens and try to focus fire on anyone they have combat advantage against.

Each scrawler carries a *jolt flask* in addition to his listed equipment. Add the following attack:

A Jolt Flask (standard; at-will) ♦ Consumable Requires jolt flask; area burst 1 within 10; +16 vs Fortitude; on a hit, the target is dazed until the end of the Scrawler's next turn.

The assassin(s) start with a *swift hand strike* focusing on priority targets and moving into flank on the streetfighters' targets. The groveler uses *cringe* while blending in with the common folk and marks targets to his advantage. He hangs out by the bar waiting for an ally to attack. He then uses his *covert attack*, and joins the combat.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove one Stone Bear Assassin.

Six PCs: Add another Stone Bear Assassin.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The defeated Stone Bears are willing to talk, but do not like to be threatened. A payment of 100 gp in order to start a new life encourages the Stone Bears to point out the storefront location then leave the city.

Sherett is hiding under the table, and if unharmed sings like a songbird. He saw how the PCs managed to take down the Stone Bears and reasons it would be best if he tells them what he knows. Sherett knows the storefront where the Stone Bears have him pick up merchandise.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 700/1,000 XP each for defeating the Stone Bears.

TREASURE

One of the assassins has a *flying hook*.

ENCOUNTER 3B: LOOK WHAT THE BEAR DRAGGED IN

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 12/14 (3500/5000 XP)

SETUP

Run this encounter if the PCs go where Sherett tells them of the store, or once the PCs complete the skill challenge, or if you feel it is appropriate.

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 2 Stone Bear Streetfighters (F)
- 1 Stone Bear Groveler (G)
- 1 Stone Bear Assassin (A)
- 2 Stone Bear Scrabblers (S)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 2 Stone Bear Streetfighters (Level 15) (F)
- 1 Stone Bear Groveler (Level 15) (G)
- 1 Stone Bear Assassin (Level 14) (A)
- 2 Stone Bear Scrabblers (S)

The shop you are looking for is a squat little building with a large window.

Passive Perception DC 25/26:

You notice some subtle movements in the dark alleyways all around you. A few beggars emerge from the shadows and draw weapons. You catch a glimpse of more movement on the rooftops above.

The beggars are actually higher ranking Stone Bears sent to deal with the meddling adventurers. They banter with the PCs during combat. They taunt, goad, and enrage the PCs with hostile remarks toward hated foes and even comment on the tactics the PCs use.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The alleys are dark and provide ample shadows for hiding. The plaza has ample light.

Carriages, Fruit Cart, and Tents: All of these objects are treated as blocking terrain, and can provide cover.

Fountain: The crumbling fountain squares are treated as difficult terrain.

Sewer Covers: These lead down into the sewers, and to the hideout nearby.

Barrels, Benches, and Crates: These squares are treated as difficult terrain.

Houses: The houses are 15 feet tall. The walls may be scaled with an Athletics DC 20.

TACTICS

The Stone Bears are trained to act as a coordinated team. Spellcasters, elves, and half-elves are their preferred targets due to the guild's prejudices.

The streetfighters occupy as many targets as possible using *cheap shot* and *streetfighter flourish* whenever they can. The scrabblers try to blend in with the patrons and wait to let the PCs think there are no other threats. They throw *jolt flasks* to start, and then they throw shurikens and try to focus fire on anyone they have combat advantage against.

Each scrabblers carries a *jolt flask* in addition to his listed equipment. Add the following attack:

A Jolt Flask (standard; at-will) ♦ **Consumable**
Requires jolt flask; area burst 1 within 10;
+16 vs Fortitude; on a hit, the target is dazed until the end of the Scrabblers' next turn.

The assassin(s) start with a *swift hand strike* focusing on priority targets and moving into flank on the streetfighters' targets. The groveler uses *cringe* while blending in with the common folk and marks targets to his advantage. He hangs out by the bar waiting for an ally to attack. He then uses his *covert attack*, and joins the combat.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove one Stone Bear Assassin.

Six PCs: Add another Stone Bear Assassin.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The defeated Stone Bears are willing to talk, but do not like to be threatened. A payment of 100 gp in order to start a new life encourages the Stone Bears to point out the storefront location then leave the city.

The Storefront is in the plaza, and is the location Sherett gave the PCs.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 700/1,000 XP each for defeating the Stone Bears.

TREASURE

One of the streetfighters has a *flying hook*.

ENCOUNTER 3: LOOK WHAT THE BEAR DRAGGED IN (LOW LEVEL)

Stone Bear Streetfighter		Level 13 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid, human		
Initiative +12		Senses Perception +9
HP 128; Bloodied 64		
AC 29; Fortitude 26, Reflex 25, Will 24		
Speed 6		
m Katar (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+20 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage (crit 18 + 2d6), and the target is slowed until the end of the streetfighter's next turn.		
r Shuriken (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Ranged 6/12; +19 vs. AC; 2d4 + 4 damage.		
Cheap Shot (immediate interrupt; usable when a slowed target leaves an adjacent square; requires katar; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+20 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage, and the target's movement ends.		
C Streetfighter Flourish (standard; requires katar; recharge 5-6)		
Close burst 1; target enemies; +19 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Bluff +13, Intimidate +13, Stealth +15		
Str 21 (+11)	Dex 19 (+10)	Wis 17 (+9)
Con 16 (+9)	Int 11(+6)	Cha 10 (+6)
Equipment chainmail, katar, shuriken x 10		

Stone Bear Groveler		Level 13 Lurker
Medium natural humanoid, human		
Initiative +14		Senses Perception +9
HP 103; Bloodied 51		
AC 27; Fortitude 24, Reflex 26, Will 25		
+2 to all defenses against marked enemies		
Speed 7		
m Katar (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+18 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage (crit 18 + 2d6).		
r Shuriken (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Ranged 6/12; +18 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage.		
Covert Attack (immediate reaction; when an ally attacks an enemy the ally has marked because of <i>cringe</i> ; requires katar or shuriken; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Targets the enemy the triggering ally attacked; the groveler makes a katar attack against an adjacent enemy or a shuriken attack against a nonadjacent enemy.		
Hit: 4d6 +6 damage (with katar, crit 30 + 2d6).		
Cringe (standard; requires an ally in the area; at-will)		
Close burst 10; the groveler chooses up to one ally in the area per enemy in the area. The enemy is considered to be marked by the chosen ally until the end of the groveler's next turn. Each ally can mark only one enemy in this way. The groveler gains +2 to all defenses against marked enemies.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Bluff +16, Stealth +15		
Str 12 (+7)	Dex 22 (+12)	Wis 17 (+9)
Con 19 (+10)	Int 12 (+7)	Cha 20 (+11)
Equipment leather armor, katar, shuriken x 10		

Stone Bear Scrabbler		Level 13 Minion
Medium natural humanoid, human		
Initiative +12		Senses Perception +9
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		
AC 27; Fortitude 24, Reflex 27, Will 24		
Speed 6		
m Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+18 vs. AC; 8 damage, and the scrabbler can shift 2 squares, ignoring difficult terrain.		
r Shuriken (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Ranged 6/12; +18 vs. AC; 7 damage.		
Combat Advantage		
The scrabbler deals an extra 5 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common
Skills Bluff +10, Stealth +15		
Str 19 (+10)	Dex 18 (+10)	Wis 16 (+9)
Con 14 (+8)	Int 10 (+6)	Cha 8 (+5)
Equipment chainmail, short sword, shuriken x 10		

Stone Bear Assassin		Level 12 Lurker
Medium natural humanoid, human		
Initiative +16		Senses Perception +12
HP 91; Bloodied 45		
AC 26; Fortitude 23, Reflex 26, Will 21		
Speed 6		
m Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon		
+17 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage, and the assassin makes a secondary attack against the same target. <i>Secondary Attack</i> +15 vs. Fortitude; see death blade for effect.		
M Swift Hand Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Poison, Weapon		
The assassin makes a melee basic attack, makes a dagger attack, and can shift 1, in any order. Both attacks cannot target the same creature.		
r Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon		
Ranged 5/10; +17 vs. AC; 1d4 + 7 damage, and the human assassin makes a secondary attack against the same target. <i>Secondary attack</i> +15 vs. Fortitude; see death blade for effect.		
Combat Advantage		
The assassin deals 2d6 extra damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.		
Death Blade ♦ Poison		
A creature hit by a weapon coated in death blade is blinded (save ends). <i>Aftereffect</i> : The target takes 10 poison damage.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common
Skills Stealth +17		
Str 18 (+10)	Dex 23 (+12)	Wis 12 (+7)
Con 13 (+7)	Int 14 (+8)	Cha 8 (+5)
Equipment leather armor, short sword*, 4 daggers*		
*These weapons are coated with death blade poison.		

ENCOUNTER 3: LOOK WHAT THE BEAR DRAGGED IN (HIGH LEVEL)

Stone Bear Streetfighter (Level 15)	Level 15 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 1200
Initiative +13 Senses Perception +10	
HP 144; Bloodied 72	
AC 31; Fortitude 28, Reflex 27, Will 26	
Speed 6	
m Katar (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+22 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage (crit 19 + 2d6), and the target is slowed until the end of the streetfighter's next turn.	
r Shuriken (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 6/12; +21 vs. AC; 2d4 + 5 damage.	
Cheap Shot (immediate interrupt; usable when a slowed target leaves an adjacent square; requires katar; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+22 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage, and the target's movement ends.	
C Streetfighter Flourish (standard; requires katar; recharge 5-6)	
Close burst 1; target enemies; +21 vs AC; 2d6 + 7 damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Bluff +14, Intimidate +14, Stealth +16	
Str 21 (+12)	Dex 19 (+11) Wis 17 (+10)
Con 16 (+10)	Int 11 (+7) Cha 10 (+7)
Equipment chainmail, katar, shuriken x 10	

Stone Bear Groveler (Level 15)	Level 15 Lurker
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 1200
Initiative +15 Senses Perception +10	
HP 115; Bloodied 57	
AC 29; Fortitude 26, Reflex 28, Will 27	
+2 to all defenses against marked enemies	
Speed 7	
m Katar (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+20 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage (crit 19 + 2d6).	
r Shuriken (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 6/12; +20 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage.	
Covert Attack (immediate reaction; when an ally attacks an enemy the ally has marked because of <i>cringe</i> ; requires katar or shuriken; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Targets the enemy the triggering ally attacked; the groveler makes a katar attack against an adjacent enemy or a shuriken attack against a nonadjacent enemy.	
Hit: 4d6 + 7 damage (with katar, crit 31 + 2d6).	
Cringe (standard; requires an ally in the area; at-will)	
Close burst 10; the groveler chooses up to one ally in the area per enemy in the area. The enemy is considered to be marked by the chosen ally until the end of the groveler's next turn. Each ally can mark only one enemy in this way. The groveler gains +2 to all defenses against marked enemies.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Bluff +17, Stealth +16	
Str 12 (+8)	Dex 22 (+13) Wis 17 (+10)
Con 19 (+11)	Int 12 (+8) Cha 20 (+12)
Equipment leather armor, katar, shuriken x 10	

Stone Bear Scrabbler	Level 13 Minion
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 200
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +9	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 27; Fortitude 24, Reflex 27, Will 24	
Speed 6	
m Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+18 vs. AC; 8 damage, and the scrabbler can shift 2 squares, ignoring difficult terrain.	
r Shuriken (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 6/12; +18 vs. AC; 7 damage.	
Combat Advantage	
The scrabbler deals an extra 5 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Bluff +10, Stealth +15	
Str 19 (+10)	Dex 18 (+10) Wis 16 (+9)
Con 14 (+8)	Int 10 (+6) Cha 8 (+5)
Equipment chainmail, short sword, shuriken x 10	

Stone Bear Assassin (Level 14)	Level 14 Lurker
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 1000
Initiative +17 Senses Perception +13	
HP 103; Bloodied 51	
AC 28; Fortitude 25, Reflex 28, Will 23	
Speed 6	
m Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon	
+19 vs. AC; 1d6 + 7 damage, and the assassin makes a secondary attack against the same target. <i>Secondary Attack</i> +17 vs. Fortitude; see death blade for effect.	
M Swift Hand Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Poison, Weapon	
The assassin makes a melee basic attack, makes a dagger attack, and can shift 1, in any order. Both attacks cannot target the same creature.	
r Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon	
Ranged 5/10; +19 vs. AC; 1d4 + 8 damage, and the human assassin makes a secondary attack against the same target. <i>Secondary attack</i> +17 vs. Fortitude; see death blade for effect.	
Combat Advantage	
The assassin deals 2d6 extra damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Death Blade ♦ Poison	
A creature hit by a weapon coated in death blade is blinded (save ends). <i>Aftereffect</i> : The target takes 10 poison damage.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Stealth +18	
Str 18 (+11)	Dex 23 (+13) Wis 12 (+8)
Con 13 (+8)	Int 14 (+9) Cha 8 (+6)
Equipment leather armor, short sword*, 4 daggers*	
*These weapons are coated with death blade poison.	

ENCOUNTER 3A: LOOK WHAT THE BEAR DRAGGED IN TAVERN MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Arcane Towers

Fane of the Forgotten Gods x4 (extra sets for the tables and chairs only)

Hall of the Giant Kings x2

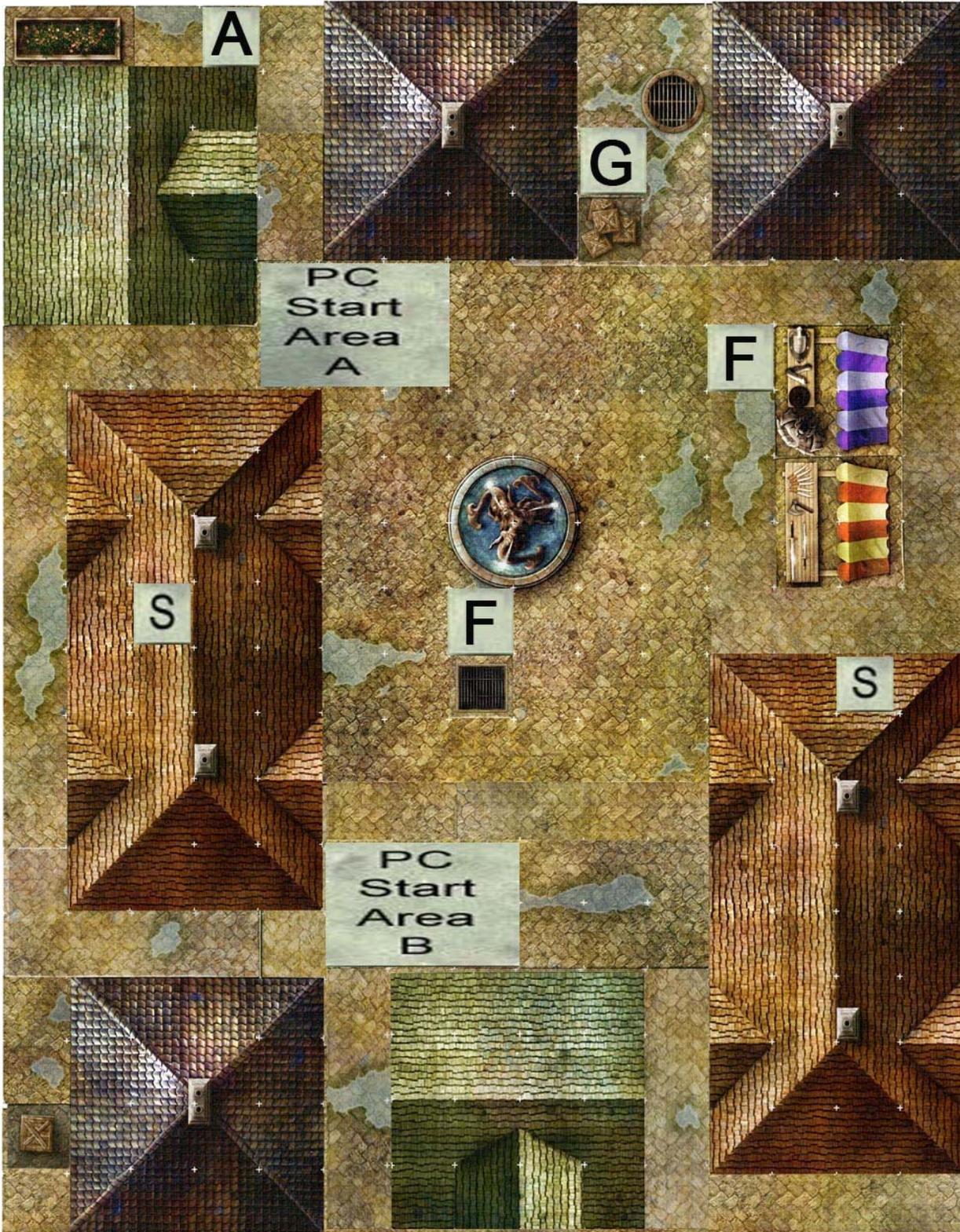
Streets of Shadow



ENCOUNTER 3B: LOOK WHAT THE BEAR DRAGGED IN STREETS MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Streets of Shadow x2



ENCOUNTER 4A: STOREFRONT

The PCs find the faux storefront is just an entrance to the Stone Bears' hideout and must try to get in. The fake storefront is a simple shop, but in the back room is a trapdoor that leads into the sewers. As the adventurers enter the area, read:

This store is very plain. It does not seem to be selling anything, however it does have a clerk on duty. The clerk is busy carrying something into the back room as you enter the store.

The Stone Bear on duty is nervous to see armed adventurers walk in. He is only expecting drop offs and the occasional pick up. The clerk takes an empty bag to the back room and immediately goes down into the sewers via the trapdoor. He does not go to the hideout as he is not aware of where it is; instead he heads to a safe house nearby and sends a warning to those in the hideout by pigeon.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The store has ample light from hanging lamps. Use the map of the small shop that leads into the sewers as a starting point.

TACTICS

When the Stone Bear clerk sees armed adventurers entering the store he motions to the PCs that he will be right with them. He takes the bag to the back room and attempts to flee into the sewers. He does not fight back if his way is blocked.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The PCs might want to act and kill the clerk; he has no weapons or armor. The trap door in the storage room leads into the sewers. Run the sewer encounter 4B.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive no XP for killing the clerk. The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

There is no treasure for this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 4B: SECRET LAIR

The PCs find the sewer entrance to the Stone Bears' hideout and try to get in without alerting the inhabitants. The Stone Bears have prepared a bit of a surprise for any uninvited guests who try to enter their base of operations.

The sewers running underneath the streets are a labyrinth of twists and turns. After a few moments of searching, the PCs find something odd. There is new construction in the sewers that includes a portcullis and a new column. It leads into the Stone Bears hideout; however it is warded with the ritual Eye of Alarm. The ritual uses a focus that is concealed within a recess in the sewage. It is worth 100gp if found. Use the sewer map, and use the Overview map of the Thieves Guild as a reference.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

The sewers certainly never disappoint with the full range of expected smells and sights. There is recent construction in the form of a portcullis and a new column that stands out from the older masonry down here. Beyond the portcullis is a ladder leading up.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The sewers are dark and light consists of whatever the PCs bring.

Terrain Feature: Flowing sewage and little stone walkways that lead up to the entrance to the Stone Bears hideout.

Portcullis: The portcullis is made of iron and requires a Strength check (DC 15) to open.

Column: The black circle on the map is the column. The column has 3 eyes looking down each path of travel. The noise it makes when triggered is more than enough to alert those inside of visitors.

Eye of Alarm: The column has 3 eyes that have darkvision. The ritual is set to emit a loud bear roar when triggered. Only human males who are not wearing heavy armor will not set it off.

TACTICS

The ritual automatically alerts those inside. The portcullis being raised also alerts the Stone Bears to visitors as it is designed to make enough noise for those inside to hear as well. When raised, the portcullis goes into the ceiling and bells chime loudly within the hideout. This alerts the Archers that someone is coming. The rituals' roaring is enough for everyone to hear.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs get past the portcullis, they are standing at a ladder. The ladder goes up into the Stone Bears' hideout and leads to the Hallway.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

There is no treasure for this encounter.

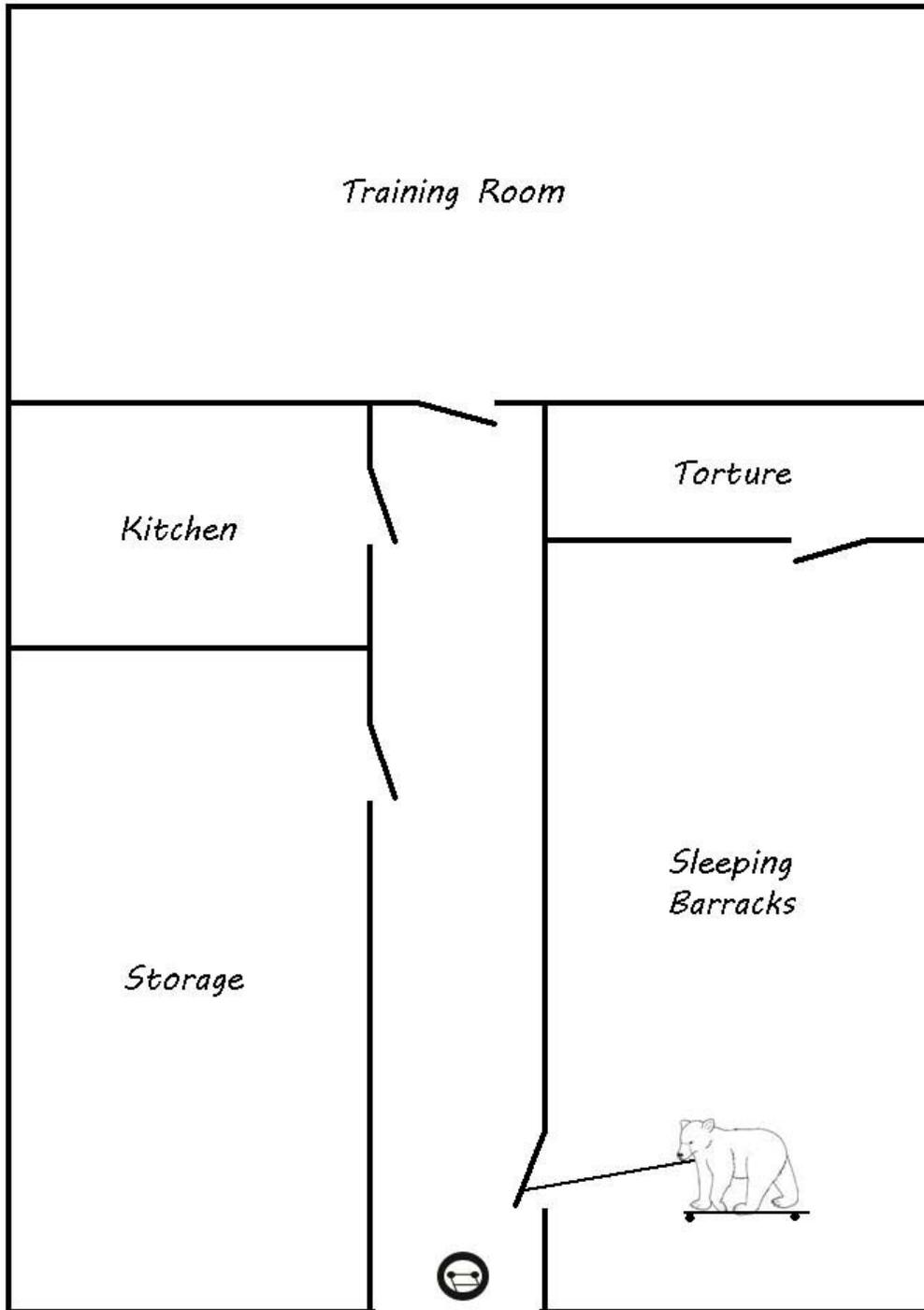
ENCOUNTER 4: STOREFRONT INTO SEWERS MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Dungeon Tiles
Streets of Shadow x2



THIEVES' GUILD OVERVIEW MAP (GROUND FLOOR)



DOWNSTAIRS

AREA 1. HALLWAY

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

The ladder ascends to a hallway with burning torches set in wall sconces. There are several doors in the hallway. Two doors are on the left, one on the right, and one at the far end of the hallway, it is open.

The door on the right is the Barracks. The first door on the left is Storage. The second door on the left is the kitchen. The opening at the end of the hallway is the Training room.

AREA 2. SLEEPING BARRACKS

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

This room is almost totally dark except for a low burning fire in a hearth across the room. Lunging out of the darkness, a large bear charges the open doorway.

This room is where most of the men sleep. It has a large fireplace, and several beds.

- Currently the door is rigged with a Stuffed Dire bear. When the door is pulled opened, the Dire bear “charges”. This was a joke for new recruits.
- By the fireplace, several ritual books have all the pages ripped out. The ritual books’ bindings are still intact. The bindings read: Shadow Walk, Consult Oracle, Phantom Steed and several others.
- There is a closed and locked door off the barracks. Thievery DC 30 opens the door, or the PCs can break it down. This leads to Area 2A, the torture room.

AREA 2A. TORTURE ROOM

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

This room looks like a torture chamber. Blood and several implements adorn the walls of the room and a single chair has a female body in it. In the corner is a pile of belongings, and remains of several others.

The woman tied to the chair is Satal, a spy in the service of the Simbarch Council. **Heal DC 15** determines she is still alive. If any healing is given to her, she revives and is eager to be released.

A DC 15 Perception check reveals she has a badge matching the one Vummos and Harn wear. Satal’s gear is in the corner; it includes *deathcut armor* +3. She gives the PCs her armor as thanks for releasing her.

Satal swears a debt to those that saved her. PCs Earn Story Award **AGLA 11 Thanks of a Spy**. She has been watching the Stone Bears for a few weeks, and decided to try and infiltrate the guild unsuccessfully. Before she was caught she saw important documents in an office upstairs but was unable to read any of them. However, she did see the Simbarch Seal on a few of them.

She quickly gathers herself and exits into the sewers to report back. This sets off the Eye of Alarm ritual unless the PCs disabled it.

AREA 3. KITCHEN

This area is small, well-provisioned kitchen. It contains a wide variety of fine foods. It has food enough for well over a month for several dozen people.

AREA 4. TRAINING ROOM

See Encounter 5 for details.

UPSTAIRS

AREA 5. LOFT

See Encounter 6 for details.

AREA 6. OFFICE

See Encounter 6 for details.

ENCOUNTER 5: TRAINING ROOM

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 12/14 (3500/5000 XP)

The PCs are making their way through the guild house. The only way up is through the training room. The room is filled with various traps that are mostly inactive or disabled. Thick ropes also hang from the ceiling. The ropes help avoid the floor, and also hide the Roper on the ceiling that is dangling its tentacles. The lightning floor trap is off initially. The walls are hollow, and arrow slits overlook the room every few feet. Levers that shut the doors, enable the traps, and turn the lights off and on are also located in the hollow walls.

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures:

Roper (Level 13) (R)

Electrified Floor (E)

Glyph of Warding (Level 6) (T)

3 Stone Bear Archers (Level 15) (A)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

Roper (Level 16) (R)

Electrified Floor (E)

Glyph of Warding (Level 6) (T)

4 Stone Bear Archers (Level 15) (A)

When the PCs enter the room, the far door is closed and locked. The electric floor trap is off. The Stone Bear Archer(s) are in position behind the walls ready to close the door behind the PCs.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

The room is dark. The light from the hallway shows you little but ropes hanging from the ceiling.

With Darkvision or enough light;

- **Perception DC 15:** This room is a training room of some sort. Various traps are obvious, but do not seem to be active.
- **Perception DC 25:** You can make out some sort of table across the room that has a body strapped to it.
- **Perception DC 30:** Those looking up can see something is not quite right. A large mass is hanging from the ceiling with “ropes” hanging from it.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: There is no light in this room initially, it is totally dark. The Archers look for light sources or use the lightning to time turning on the lights. It is well lit when the Archers turn on the lights.

Walls: Arrow Slits cover the walls, these provide superior cover. All attacks made to hit the Stone Bears behind the arrow slits suffer a -5 penalty to the attack roll. The walls are made of thick wood, and a DC 26 Strength check breaks through them. The Walls have AC/Reflex 4; Fortitude 12; hp 40;

Floor: The floor is of smoothed stone. In places, electricity plays across the floor.

Doors: All the doors in the training room are crafted of iron (AC 5/Reflex 5; Fortitude 10; hp 60; Break DC 25) and open outward. The door into the training room has a glyph on it, it activates when the door is closed.

Torture Rack: The torture rack is 5’ high, and is blocking terrain. The body on the torture rack is that of an elf in robes. He is only recently dead. The rack is made of metal, and the square underneath the rack has an electrified floor tile causing the body to move slightly when the trap is on. Anyone touching the body or the table is subject to the electrified floor attack.

Ceiling: The ceiling reaches a height of 25 feet. In many places ropes dangle from the ceiling. A few of the ropes are actually tentacles of the Roper; those in the Ropers’ space are tentacles. An Athletics or Acrobatics DC 15 is required to climb, swing from place to place via the ropes, and fight on the ropes. While actively climbing or holding on while fighting, PCs grant Combat Advantage, and need one hand to hold a rope. This means using two handed weapons, shields, and even aegis will not be possible while climbing.

Switches: The switches operate the doors, lights and traps in the room. In order to flip a switch you must be in the square with it.

- **Switch 1:** Turns the lights off and on.
- **Switch 2:** Opens and closes the entrance door.
- **Switch 3:** Turns the Floor Trap on.
- **Switch 4:** Turns the Dart Trap on; it is in the off position to start. No darts are loaded, but it shoots air out and is noisy if turned on.
- **Switch 5:** Shifts the closest floor trapped square into switch 5’s square subjecting the puller to an attack.
- **Switch 6:** Turns the Pendulum trap on, the trap is currently off, as the trap is damaged.

TACTICS

The archer(s) are in the walls, and they wait until a few of the PCs are in the room to shut the door and turn on the floor trap; this causes the body to move slightly. The doors are made of iron, and they are described in the terrain features above. The glyph trap is located on the door and is activated when the door is closed. The magical glyph only affects the hallway, but it makes the door brittle and easier to break through. (Reduce the hp of the door by 20). If you the DM feel that the party is powerful enough you can have it affect both sides of the door and/or not damage the door. The archers also control the light in the room, and until they are ready, they leave the lights off. Once a few PCs make it into the room, the lights come on and the archers use the arrow slits to harass PCs. They focus on spellcasters, elves, or half-elves, moving on to other targets once they are down. They team up on one target as often as possible, relying on *coordinated shot* to help the other archers.

The roper is rather intelligent and the special ropes that have been recently hung resemble its tentacles. With the darkness in the room and the tangle of ropes it is hard to make out what is on the ceiling. The roper waits until it has two targets to attack. The roper relies upon *double attack* and *reel* to get its meal. It action points when something is close enough to bite. The roper is very hungry and fights to the death; it pursues PCs until it gets a good meal. The roper speaks to the PCs in Primordial while engaged in combat, saying how right the man was about this new lair and how the PCs' items will go well with its collection. The roper has spider climbed to the ceiling and can grab PCs and pull targets vertically. As a monster it breaks rules.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove 2 Stone Bear Archers.

Six PCs: Add 2 Stone Bear Archers or 3 at high tier.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The iron doors exiting the room are very sturdy but can be taken down with some effort. The PCs could get behind the walls and exit into the hallway. The minions know nothing other than the monster has just been brought in recently. The Roper's weight has made the ceiling a bit weak, and the floor in the next encounter reflects this. If the PCs bypass this

encounter, the roper bursts into the loft at the weak point in the floor.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 700/1,000 XP each for overcoming the Stone Bears' training room.

TREASURE

The roper can be cut open to reveal the treasure inside its gullet. Inside the Roper is a *circlet of mental onslaught* (low-level version only), a *ring of perfect grip*, and 6/12 platinum pieces left undigested from past meals. Behind the wall, a pair of *gloves of accuracy* (high tier only) can be found.

ENCOUNTER 5: TRAINING ROOM (LOW LEVEL)

Electrified Floor	Level 10 Obstacle
Trap	
XP 500	
Perception	
<p>◆DC 26: The character can discern if any adjacent squares contain electrified tiles.</p>	
Arcana	
<p>◆DC 22: The character's knowledge provides a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to disable a tile.</p>	
Trigger	
<p>When a creature enters or begins its turn in an electrified square, the trap attacks that creature.</p>	
Attack	
Opportunity Action	Melee 1
<p>Target: Creature in a trapped square.</p>	
<p>Attack: +13 vs. Fortitude</p>	
<p>Hit: 2d10 + 6 lightning damage. On a critical hit, the target is stunned (save ends).</p>	
<p>Miss: Half damage.</p>	
Countermeasures	
<p>◆A character who makes a successful Athletics check (DC 6 or DC 11 without a running start) can jump over a single trapped square.</p>	
<p>◆An adjacent character can disable a tile with a DC 26 Thievery check.</p>	

Glyph of Warding (Level 6)	Level 6 Elite Warder
Trap	
XP 500	
<p>A hidden glyph on the door suddenly glows and explodes as you try to open it.</p>	
<p>Trap: A magical glyph wards the door, ready to explode with arcane fury when the trap is triggered.</p>	
Perception	
<p>◆DC 32: The character notices the glyph.</p>	
Additional Skill: Arcana	
<p>◆DC 28: The character spots the glyph and provides a +2 bonus to Thievery checks made to disable it.</p>	
Trigger	
<p>The trap attacks when a character attempts to open the door, or pass through it.</p>	
Attack	
Immediate Reaction	Close Burst 3
<p>Targets: All creatures in burst.</p>	
<p>Attack: +9 vs. Reflex</p>	
<p>Hit: 4d6 + 4 cold damage and immobilized (save ends)</p>	
<p>Aftereffect: 4d6 + 4 cold damage.</p>	
Countermeasures	
<p>◆An adjacent character can disable the glyph with a DC 32 Thievery check.</p>	

Roper (Level 13)	Level 13 Elite Controller	
Large elemental magical beast (earth)		
XP 1600		
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +9; darkvision	
HP 268; Bloodied 134		
AC 29; Fortitude 28, Reflex 23, Will 25		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 2, climb 2 (spider climb)		
Action Points 1		
m Tentacle (standard; at-will) ◆ Poison		
<p>Reach 10; +16 vs. Reflex; 2d10 + 3 damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape or until the tentacle is hit; see <i>tentacle grab</i>). While the target is grabbed, it is also weakened.</p>		
M Double Attack (standard; at-will) ◆ Poison		
<p>The roper makes two tentacle attacks.</p>		
M Reel (minor 2/round; at-will)		
<p>The roper makes an attack against a creature it has grabbed; +17 vs. Fortitude; on a hit, the target is pulled 5 squares. The roper can use this power only against a grabbed target once per turn.</p>		
M Bite (standard; at-will)		
<p>+18 vs. AC; 2d10 + 9 damage.</p>		
Stony Body		
<p>A roper that does not move, retracts its tentacles, and keeps its eye and mouth closed resembles a jagged rock formation, stalagmite, or stalactite. In this form, the roper can be recognized with a successful DC 30 Perception check.</p>		
Tentacle Grab		
<p>The roper can attack and grab with up to two tentacles at a time. While grabbing an enemy, it can act normally, but it can't use that tentacle for another attack. Enemies can attack the tentacle to make the roper let go of a grabbed creature; the tentacle's defenses are the same as the roper's. An attack that hits the tentacle does not harm the roper but causes it to let go and retract the tentacle.</p>		
Alignment Evil		Languages Primordial
Skills Stealth +12		
Str 19 (+10)	Dex 12 (+7)	Wis 16 (+9)
Con 22 (+12)	Int 11 (+6)	Cha 9 (+5)

Stone Bear Archer (Level 15)	Level 15 Minion	
Medium natural humanoid, human		
XP 300		
Initiative +14	Senses Perception +9	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		
AC 29; Fortitude 25, Reflex 28, Will 26		
Speed 6		
m Dagger (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
<p>+20 vs. AC; 7 damage.</p>		
r Longbow (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
<p>Ranged 20/40; +22 vs. AC; 8 damage.</p>		
Coordinated Shot (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
<p>The stone bear archer makes a basic attack. The next stone bear archer to attack the same target gains a +2 power bonus to the attack roll.</p>		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common
Str 18 (+11)	Dex 24 (+14)	Wis 14 (+9)
Con 15 (+9)	Int 11 (+7)	Cha 12 (+8)
Equipment leather armor, longbow, 20 arrows		

ENCOUNTER 5: TRAINING ROOM (HIGH LEVEL)

Electrified Floor	Level 10 Obstacle
Trap XP 500	
Perception	
◆DC 26: The character can discern if any adjacent squares contain electrified tiles.	
Arcana	
◆DC 22: The character's knowledge provides a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to disable a tile.	
Trigger	
When a creature enters or begins its turn in an electrified square, the trap attacks that creature.	
Attack	
Opportunity Action	Melee 1
Target: Creature in a trapped square.	
Attack: +13 vs. Fortitude	
Hit: 2d10 + 6 lightning damage. On a critical hit, the target is stunned (save ends).	
Miss: Half damage.	
Countermeasures	
◆A character who makes a successful Athletics check (DC 6 or DC 11 without a running start) can jump over a single trapped square.	
◆An adjacent character can disable a tile with a DC 26 Thievery check.	

Glyph of Warding (Level 6)	Level 6 Elite Warder
Trap XP 500	
A hidden glyph on the door suddenly glows and explodes as you try to open it.	
Trap: A magical glyph wards the door, ready to explode with arcane fury when the trap is triggered.	
Perception	
◆DC 32: The character notices the glyph.	
Additional Skill: Arcana	
◆DC 28: The character spots the glyph and provides a +2 bonus to Thievery checks made to disable it.	
Trigger	
The trap attacks when a character attempts to open the door, or pass through it.	
Attack	
Immediate Reaction	Close Burst 3
Targets: All creatures in burst.	
Attack: +9 vs. Reflex	
Hit: 4d6 + 4 cold damage and immobilized (save ends)	
Aftereffect: 4d6 + 4 cold damage.	
Countermeasures	
◆An adjacent character can disable the glyph with a DC 32 Thievery check.	

Roper (Level 16)	Level 16 Elite Controller
Large elemental magical beast (earth) XP 2800	
Initiative +9 Senses Perception +11; darkvision	
HP 316; Bloodied 158	
AC 31; Fortitude 30, Reflex 25, Will 27	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 2, climb 2 (spider climb)	
Action Points 1	
m Tentacle (standard; at-will) ◆ Poison	
Reach 10; +19 vs. Reflex; 2d10 + 5 damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape or until the tentacle is hit; see <i>tentacle grab</i>). While the target is grabbed, it is also weakened.	
M Double Attack (standard; at-will) ◆ Poison	
The roper makes two tentacle attacks.	
M Reel (minor 2/round; at-will)	
The roper makes an attack against a creature it has grabbed; +20 vs. Fortitude; on a hit, the target is pulled 5 squares. The roper can use this power only against a grabbed target once per turn.	
M Bite (standard; at-will)	
+21 vs. AC; 2d10 + 11 damage.	
Stony Body	
A roper that does not move, retracts its tentacles, and keeps its eye and mouth closed resembles a jagged rock formation, stalagmite, or stalactite. In this form, the roper can be recognized with a successful DC 30 Perception check.	
Tentacle Grab	
The roper can attack and grab with up to two tentacles at a time. While grabbing an enemy, it can act normally, but it can't use that tentacle for another attack. Enemies can attack the tentacle to make the roper let go of a grabbed creature; the tentacle's defenses are the same as the roper's. An attack that hits the tentacle does not harm the roper but causes it to let go and retract the tentacle.	
Alignment Evil Languages Primordial	
Skills Stealth +14	
Str 19 (+12)	Dex 12 (+9) Wis 16 (+11)
Con 22 (+14)	Int 11 (+8) Cha 9 (+7)

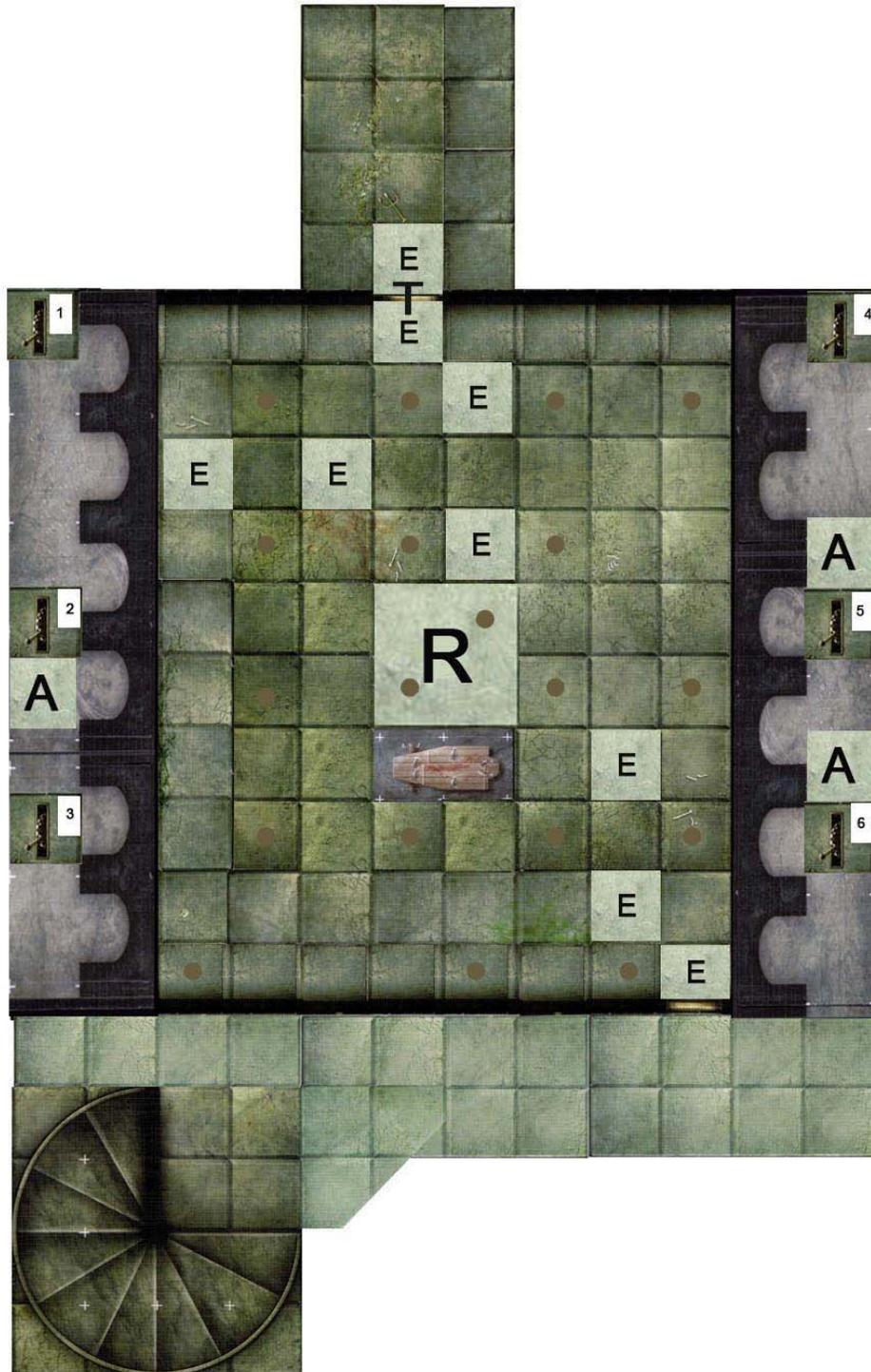
Stone Bear Archer (Level 15)	Level 15 Minion
Medium natural humanoid, human XP 300	
Initiative +14 Senses Perception +9	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 29; Fortitude 25, Reflex 28, Will 26	
Speed 6	
m Dagger (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon	
+20 vs. AC; 7 damage.	
r Longbow (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +22 vs. AC; 8 damage.	
Coordinated Shot (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon	
The stone bear archer makes a basic attack. The next stone bear archer to attack the same target gains a +2 power bonus to the attack roll.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Common	
Str 18 (+11)	Dex 24 (+14) Wis 14 (+9)
Con 15 (+9)	Int 11 (+7) Cha 12 (+8)
Equipment leather armor, longbow, 20 arrows	

ENCOUNTER 5: TRAINING ROOM MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Hall of the Giant Kings

Hidden Crypts x3



ENCOUNTER 6: THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 12/14 (3500/5000 XP)

Ambal, the leader of the Stone Bears, faces off against the party and has a trump card. He has orphans that are staying at the hideout that get in the way during combat. If the combat is not going well, Ambal jumps out a window and tries to escape.

Ambal constantly talks during combat, he knows the PCs names and is especially hostile and arrogant toward hated foes. Ambal is cold and calculating, but shows no remorse for killing, and will coup de grace.

These Stone Bears including Ambal have visible tattoos; History DC 21 reveals the tattoos' origin - they are connected to the Sons of Hoar, a group of aristocrats that feel Aglarond should go back to rule by nobles rather than wizards.

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures:

Ambal (A)

1 Stone Bear Taskmaster (Level 12) (T)

1 Stone Bear Lieutenant (Level 13) (L)

1 Stone Bear Archer (Level 9) (N)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

Ambal (Level 15) (A)

1 Stone Bear Taskmaster (Level 14) (T)

1 Stone Bear Lieutenant (Level 15) (L)

1 Stone Bear Archer (Level 9) (N)

Ambal is wearing a domino mask. The orphans are used to the mask. He is telling the children stories that feature the villains as awful spellcasters, elves, and "half-breeds." It is not possible to discern any distinguishing features other than tattoos on his shoulders. The other Stone Bears have tattoos as well.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

The upstairs loft is a cozy open room with many windows as well as a fireplace providing light. The fireplace, complete with bearskin rug and a broken rickshaw for firewood, warms the room. Several groups of children sit about the room and turn to regard your presence. A at the far end of the room is a

small office. A man near the desk wearing a domino mask sneers at you.

"These are the villains I told you about, sent to take you from us. Watch their actions, they care nothing for you."

He calmly pulls two short swords and motions for his comrades to attack.

The floor in the crumbling area is damaged from the roper hanging from the ceiling. If the PCs bypassed the encounter with the roper, it can burst through the floor here.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: There is ample light in the loft. The many windows let in ambient light. Braziers and a fireplace in the room also shed light and provide warmth.

Floor: Dungeoneering DC 19/21 the floor is weakened from the Roper's weight, but still supports a character's weight (approximately 350 lbs). If two characters are on this section at the same time, the floor falls in, dropping 25 feet to Encounter 5 below.

Brazier: Standing in a square with a brazier causes 5 fire damage, and 5 ongoing fire damage (save ends). The braziers can be overturned causing flaming oil to spill out. An overturned brazier makes an attack into one adjacent square: +13 vs. Reflex; 2d6+7 fire damage.

Partition: The wall partition is a divider and was part of a prison cell that no longer has a door.

Orphans: The orphans are represented by mob counters on the map. Treat each mob as a minion with defenses of 10 and Speed 4. The orphans try to hinder the PCs by jumping on PCs, grabbing their legs etc. They have no attack and do not deal damage, but any PCs starting their turn next to a mob of orphans is slowed until the end of their turn. The kids are loyal to Ambal and the Stone Bears, they have been well taken care of and taught life lessons. The orphans do not hesitate to do whatever the Stone Bears ask.

Crates, broken rickshaw: This area is difficult terrain, and is only a pile for junk and empty containers.

TACTICS

All the Stone Bears target arcane spellcasters, elves and half elves as a priority. The Stone Bears fight together and to the death, except for Ambal. They are aware of the weakened floor and avoid it, but try to get it to collapse with 2 or more PCs on it.

The orphans get in the way, and provide some protection to Ambal and his crew from area attacks. The PCs can still hurt the orphans, but Ambal and his crew taunt the PCs if they hurt an orphan and the other orphans begin to cry hysterically.

The Stone Bear archer hides in the office and gets some of the children to stay around him. He opens up with his *bullseye bolt* and focuses on targets that are arcane casters or helps Ambal. The lieutenant fights alongside Ambal and they work together. The lieutenant pulls PCs close using *come and get it* and attempts to get PCs on the weakened area. The lieutenant tries to keep PCs prone using *sweeping blow* and *spinning sweep* and provide combat advantage for Ambal.

The taskmaster(s) switches targets frequently and tries to keep opponents taking ongoing damage. The taskmaster(s) use *drag around* whenever it recharges, and moves people close to the lieutenant and the unstable floor. The taskmaster(s) save *whip flay* for a soft or bloodied target.

Ambal is a master of the blades; he does extra damage every time he has combat advantage and tries to ensure that he has it. He stays close to the lieutenant to take advantage of the aura and prone condition the lieutenant provides. Ambal is confident and provokes several opportunity attacks to return the favor with *whirling riposte*. Ambal uses *excruciating stab* against someone he has combat advantage against, and then action points to *dual attack*. He uses *excruciating stab* and *whirlwind attack* as often as he can. He uses his *smoke bomb* when an opportunity presents itself, or saves it to escape. When the situation looks dire, Ambal attempts to flee, if below his bloodied value and things look dire, he dives through a window, tumbles safely down to the ground and attempts to run out of sight to a safe house.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove one Stone Bear Taskmaster.

Six PCs: Add another Stone Bear Taskmaster.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Ambal is a smart combatant. He is more than capable of escape, and has various escape routes planned for just such an occasion. If he is below bloodied, and his gang is down or nearly dead, he jumps through a window in an attempt to escape. He ditches his mask at the earliest convenience and blends in with the populace. The PCs don't know what he looks like with

the mask off, so it is a simple matter to take it off and evade capture. Should the PCs take down Ambal and unmask him, the PCs can recognize him with a DC 19/21 Streetwise as a noble and son of a wealthy merchant. It would not be wise to kill him, but depending on what the PCs decide, it may impact the outcome in a future adventure. (For a bit of additional information about Ambal and the Stone Bears, see the "Thieves of Veltalar" sidebar on page 88 of the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide*.)

Once Encounter 6 is over the PCs can explore the office where Ambal conducted his business. They find what they are tasked to find. But they also find much more. On the desk are several interesting documents as well as several books. By the window is a pigeon coup with no pigeons in it.

- Many of the documents are travel passes that allow the bearer to bypass inspections and various check points. All have a Simbarch Seal, but no names.
- Several notes detail plans for shipments. They contain a date, time and specific instructions of what to take, such as: specific individuals, religious articles including an altar, and propaganda against the Simbarch Council.
- Many of the names listed are earmarked as persons that have been appointed to help out the Simbarch Council in various duties.
- One of the books calls for a holy war against those of arcane ability. It is penned in the same handwriting as the earlier documents.
- One document is detailing the Eye of Alarm intruder list; only male humans not wearing heavy armor are not intruders. It bears a Simbarch Seal as well.
- The other book is a religious tome dedicated to Hoar, which has been recently cleaned. It is penned in a different hand.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 700 / 1000 XP each for defeating the Stone Bears.

TREASURE

On the bear skin rug is an absence *amulet* +3, *feystep lacings*, and a +3 *cloaked weapon*.

CONCLUSION A: PROOF IS IN THE SEAL

The party finds evidence of government involvement and report back to Leander with their findings. He is pleased with their work, and rewards them with a bag of gems (600 / 1,000 gp per PC). He can reveal that the tattoo is a Son of Hoar design and he is very disturbed by the report that the Stone Bears were led by someone from the Sons of Hoar. What is more disturbing is that the evidence the party finds proves that at least one of the Simbarch Council members is aiding the Stone Bears and other insurgents to take power within the government.

Leander knows who Ambal is if they reveal him to the sage. He believes that Vummos should know of this, and asks the PCs to take Ambal to Vummos. Leander arranges a meeting where the PCs can meet secretly with Vummos.

If the PCs capture and question Ambal it is obvious that he is very fanatical to his cause. He refuses to talk to anyone that is not human. He reveals nothing beyond that the PCs have made a big mistake, and he tries to recruit them to his cause.

Should the PCs turn Ambal over to Vummos, Vummos is stunned to learn it was Ambal at the head of the Stone Bears. He thanks the PCs and asks if he can call on them in the future. Vummos seems troubled over what to do with Ambal. Politics and nobility are often a dangerous mix and is not an easy game to play.

Vummos listens intently as you describe what you have uncovered. "Thank you for all of your hard work. You have done precisely what I have asked of you, and uncovered more than even I suspected. This confirms my suspicions, but it will be a delicate matter to handle. When the time comes, can I count upon you to see this mess undone?"

One thing is certain, with Hoar involved and someone within the Simbarch Council themselves trying to subvert the council, something truly smells in Veltalar.

The PCs earn the story award **AGLA11** ***Something Truly Smells in Veltalar.***

CONCLUSION B: NO PROOF WITHOUT THE SEAL

Should the party not find the evidence in the office, they can still report back to Leander. He is truly disappointed. He thanks the party for the effort, and pays them accordingly (300 / 500 gp per PC). Despite any revelations they might have uncovered, without proof, Vummos does not wish to see them and does not wish to deal with those he cannot rely on to see a job done properly.

ENCOUNTER 6: THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK (LOW LEVEL)

Ambal	Level 13 Elite Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid, human	
XP 1600	
Initiative +15 Senses Perception +8	
HP 256; Bloodied 128	
AC 30; Fortitude 25, Reflex 29, Will 24	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
m Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+18 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7	
M Dual Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ambal makes two melee basic attacks, and can shift 1 before, between, or after the attacks.	
M Excruciating Stab (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon	
Requires short sword +18 vs. AC; 3d6 + 6 damage, and the target's is stunned (save ends).	
M Whirling Riposte (free; when Ambal's movement draws an opportunity attack; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ambal makes a short sword attack against the triggering attacker.	
C Whirlwind Attack (standard; requires short sword; recharge 4-6)	
Close Burst 1; Ambal makes a short sword attack against each adjacent enemy. He can make a secondary attack with his offhand short sword against any enemy he hits.	
A Smoke Bomb (standard; encounter)	
Area burst 1 within 5; +17 vs. Fortitude; blinded until end of Ambal's next turn. Squares in the area are lightly obscured until the end of the encounter.	
Combat Advantage	
Ambal deals an extra 2d6 damage against any target he has combat advantage against.	
Alignment Evil	
Languages Common, Primordial	
Skills Acrobatics +18, Athletics +15, Stealth +18	
Str 19 (+10)	Dex 24 (+13) Wis 14 (+8)
Con 16 (+9)	Int 13 (+7) Cha 14 (+8)
Equipment hide armor, short sword x 2, dagger x 5, smoke bomb	

Stone Bear Archer (Level 9)	Level 9 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	
XP 400	
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +6	
HP 74; Bloodied 37	
AC 24; Fortitude 20, Reflex 21, Will 19	
Speed 6	
m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+14 vs. AC; 1d6 +3 damage	
R Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Range 15/30; +16 vs. AC; 2d8 +4 damage.	
R Bullseye Bolt (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon	
Range 15/30; +16 vs. AC; 3d8 +4 damage and the target is dazed (save ends).	
Alignment Unaligned	
Languages Common	
Str 14 (+6)	Dex 16 (+7) Wis 12 (+5)
Con 14 (+6)	Int 12 (+5) Cha 13 (+5)
Equipment hide armor, club, crossbow, 20 crossbow bolts.	

Stone Bear Taskmaster (Level 12)	Level 12 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid, human	
XP 700	
Initiative +13 Senses Perception +9	
HP 117; Bloodied 58	
AC 27; Fortitude 24, Reflex 25, Will 24	
Speed 6	
m Barbed Whip (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 1d8 +6 damage, and ongoing 5 damage(save ends).	
M Whip Flay (standard encounter) ♦ Weapon	
Requires barbed whip; Reach 2; +17 vs. AC 3d8 + 9 damage and ongoing 10 damage (save ends).	
M Drag Around (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon	
Requires barbed whip; Reach 2; +15 vs. Fortitude 2d8 + 7 damage and the Stone Bear taskmaster may slide the target 3 squares.	
Combat Advantage	
The Stone Bear taskmaster deals an extra 2d8 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Alignment Evil	
Languages Common	
Skills Intimidate +11, Stealth +16	
Str 16 (+9)	Dex 20 (+11) Wis 16 (+9)
Con 13 (+7)	Int 10 (+6) Cha 10 (+6)
Equipment leather armor, barbed whip	

Stone Bear Lieutenant (Level 13)	Level 13 Brute (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid, human	
XP 800	
Initiative +9 Senses Perception +7	
Gang Leader aura 5; allies in the aura gain +1 bonus to attack rolls. When this creature is bloodied the bonus increases to +2.	
HP 156; Bloodied 78	
AC 27; Fortitude 24, Reflex 24, Will 23	
Speed 5	
m Heavy Flail (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+16 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage (2d6 +8 while bloodied)	
M Spinning Sweep (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon	
Requires Heavy Flail; +16 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage (2d6 +8 while bloodied) and the target is knocked prone.	
C Come and Get It (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
Requires heavy flail; close burst 3; targets enemies.	
<i>Effect</i> the Stone Bear lieutenant pulls each target 2 Squares to a space adjacent to it. The Stone Bear lieutenant cannot pull a target that cannot end adjacent to it. The Stone Bear lieutenant then makes a close burst 1 attack targeting each adjacent enemy.	
<i>Attack</i> +16 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage (2d6 + 8 while bloodied).	
C Sweeping Blow (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
Requires heavy flail; close burst 1; targets enemies; +21 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage (2d6 + 8 while bloodied) and the target is knocked prone.	
Prone Advantage	
The Stone Bear lieutenant deals an extra 3d6 damage against any prone target.	
Alignment Unaligned	
Languages Common	
Skills Intimidate +13, Stealth +14, Streetwise +13	
Str 18 (+10)	Dex 16 (+9) Wis 12 (+7)
Con 16 (+9)	Int 13 (+7) Cha 15 (+8)
Equipment heavy flail, scale armor.	

ENCOUNTER 6: THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK (HIGH LEVEL)

Ambal (Level 15)	Level 15 Elite Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid, human	
XP 2400	
Initiative +16 Senses Perception +9	
HP 288; Bloodied 144	
AC 32; Fortitude 27, Reflex 31, Will 26	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
m Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+20 vs. AC; 2d6 + 8	
M Dual Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ambal makes two melee basic attacks, and can shift 1 before, between, or after the attacks.	
M Excruciating Stab (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon	
Requires Short sword +20 vs. AC; 3d6 + 7 damage, and the target's is stunned (save ends).	
M Whirling Riposte (free; when Ambal's movement draws an opportunity attack; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ambal makes a short sword attack against the triggering attacker.	
C Whirlwind Attack (standard; requires short sword; recharge 4-6)	
Close Burst 1; Ambal makes a short sword attack against each adjacent enemy. He can make a secondary attack with his offhand short sword against any enemy he hits.	
A Smoke Bomb (standard; encounter)	
Area burst 1 within 5; +19 vs. Fortitude; blinded until end of Ambal's next turn. Squares in the area are lightly obscured until the end of the encounter.	
Combat Advantage	
Ambal deals an extra 2d6 damage against any target he has combat advantage against.	
Alignment Evil	
Languages Common, Primordial	
Skills Acrobatics +19, Athletics +16, Stealth +19	
Str 19 (+11) Dex 24 (+14) Wis 14 (+9)	
Con 16 (+10) Int 13(+8) Cha 14 (+9)	
Equipment hide armor, short sword x 2, dagger x 5, smoke bomb	

Stone Bear Archer (Level 9)	Level 9 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	
XP 400	
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +6	
HP 74; Bloodied 37	
AC 24; Fortitude 20, Reflex 21, Will 19	
Speed 6	
m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+14 vs. AC; 1d6 +3 damage	
R Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Range 15/30; +16 vs. AC; 2d8 +4 damage.	
R Bullseye Bolt (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon	
Range 15/30; +16 vs. AC; 3d8 +4 damage and the target is dazed (save ends).	
Alignment Unaligned	
Languages Common	
Str 14 (+6) Dex 16 (+7) Wis 12 (+5)	
Con 14 (+6) Int 12 (+5) Cha 13 (+5)	
Equipment hide armor, club, crossbow, 20 crossbow bolts.	

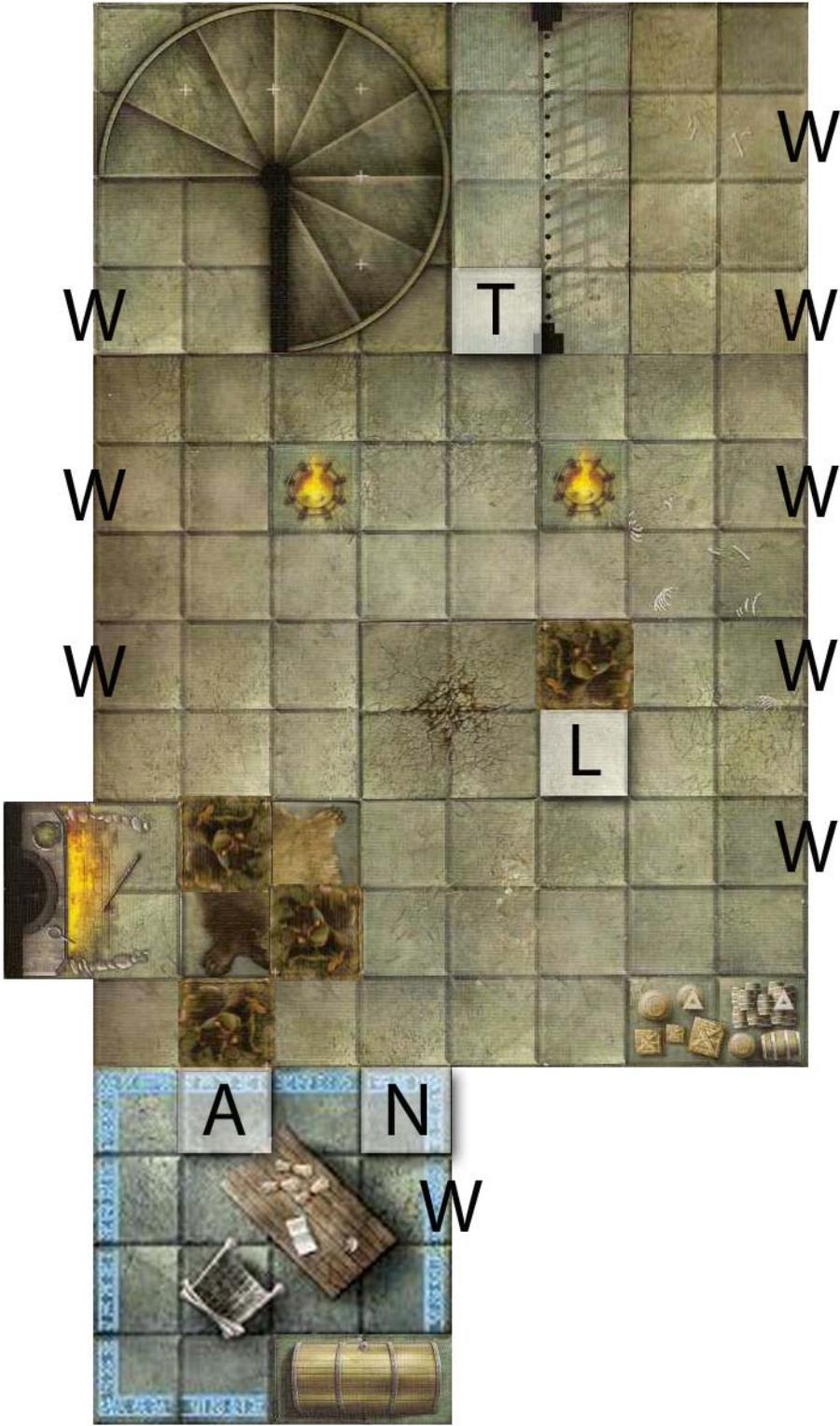
Stone Bear Taskmaster (Level 14)	Level 14 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid, human	
XP 1000	
Initiative +14 Senses Perception +10	
HP 133; Bloodied 66	
AC 28; Fortitude 26, Reflex 27, Will 26	
Speed 6	
m Barbed Whip (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +19 vs. AC; 1d8 +7 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).	
M Whip Flay (standard encounter) ♦ Weapon	
Requires barbed whip; Reach 2; +19 vs. AC 3d8 + 10 damage and ongoing 10 damage (save ends).	
M Drag Around (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon	
Requires barbed whip; Reach 2; +17 vs. Fortitude 2d8 + 8 damage and the Stone Bear taskmaster may slide the target 3 squares.	
Combat Advantage	
The Stone Bear taskmaster deals an extra 2d8 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Alignment Evil	
Languages Common	
Skills Intimidate +12, Stealth +17	
Str 16 (+10) Dex 20 (+12) Wis 16 (+10)	
Con 13 (+8) Int 10 (+7) Cha 10 (+7)	
Equipment leather armor, barbed whip	

Stone Bear Lieutenant (Level 15)	Level 15 Brute (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid, human	
XP 1200	
Initiative +10 Senses Perception +8	
Gang Leader aura 5; allies in the aura gain +1 bonus to attack rolls. When this creature is bloodied the bonus increases to +2.	
HP 176; Bloodied 88	
AC 29; Fortitude 26, Reflex 26, Will 25	
Speed 5	
m Heavy Flail (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+18 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage (2d6 +9 while bloodied)	
M Spinning Sweep (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon	
Requires Heavy Flail; +18 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage (2d6 +9 while bloodied) and the target is knocked prone.	
C Come and Get It (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
Requires heavy flail; close burst 3; targets enemies.	
<i>Effect:</i> the Stone Bear lieutenant pulls each target 2 Squares to a space adjacent to it. The Stone Bear lieutenant cannot pull a target that cannot end adjacent to it. The Stone Bear lieutenant then makes a close burst 1 attack targeting each adjacent enemy.	
<i>Attack:</i> +18 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage (2d6 + 9 while bloodied).	
C Sweeping Blow (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
Requires heavy flail; close burst 1; targets enemies; +21 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage (2d6 + 9 while bloodied) and the target is knocked prone.	
Prone Advantage	
The Stone Bear lieutenant deals an extra 3d6 damage against any prone target.	
Alignment Unaligned	
Languages Common	
Skills Intimidate +14, Stealth +15, Streetwise +14	
Str 18 (+11) Dex 16 (+10) Wis 12 (+8)	
Con 16 (+10) Int 13 (+8) Cha 15 (+9)	
Equipment heavy flail, scale armor.	

ENCOUNTER 6: THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

- Arcane Corridors
- Hall of the Giant Kings
- Streets of Shadow x2



REWARDS SUMMARY

At the conclusion of the adventure, the PCs earn experience points, treasure, and possibly story awards. All totals listed here are per PC. A number before the slash is the low-level value; after the slash is the high-level value.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Give PCs a full award for each encounter they successfully completed, and a half award if they were unsuccessful. Give no award if the characters did not play the encounter at all.

Encounter 2: Delving Deep

140 / 200 XP

Encounter 3: Look What the Bear Dragged In

700 / 1000 XP

Encounter 5: Training Room

700 / 1000 XP

Encounter 6: The Man Behind the Mask

700 / 1000 XP

Total Possible Experience

2240 / 3200 XP

Encounter 5: 600 / 1200 gp

Conclusion A: 600 / 1000 gp

Or

Conclusion B: 300 / 500 gp

Gold per PC

900 or 1,200 gp / 1,700 or 2,200 gp

TREASURE

Each PC receives treasure in the form of gold pieces as well as one share from a treasure bundle. The treasure bundle may give the PC more gold, a magic item, or something else of value. Each player makes one and only one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure bundle. Note that it is possible (and likely) that some characters will not select a bundle for each session of play.

If characters buy or sell magic items or other gear during the adventure (or pay for services) add or subtract that amount from the total gold the PC receives at the end of the adventure. If a player selects an option that gives their character more gold, add that amount to that character's base gold award, and ensure you enter the total amount of gold gained (minus any expenditures) online. It is possible and permissible for a character who spends more gold than he or she earns to

have a negative total for the adventure. PCs receive 20% of the item's market price when they sell any magic item or consumable. They receive 50% of the market price for ritual books and alchemical formulas.

If a player selects a magic weapon or suit of armor for their PC that is not specific on the type of item listed, they must select the exact item at the time they choose that bundle. For example, if a *duelist's weapon +1* is listed as a choice in a bundle, a player selects the form of the weapon amongst the choices possible for that magic item (light blades). If the player selects the item as a *+1 duelist's dagger*, the player writes that information down on the PCs adventure log and the item is forever after that specific weapon.

An asterisk next to a magic item means that it is an item that appears in the **New Rules** section.

EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BUNDLES:

Bundle A: *circlet of mental onslaught* (low-level version only) (11th level; AV)

Found in Encounter #5

Bundle B: *feystep lacings* (12th level; AV)

Found in Encounter 6

Bundle C: *ring of perfect grip* (14th level; AV)

Found in Encounter #5

Bundle D: *flying hook* (15th level; AV)

Found in Encounter 3

Bundle E: *absence amulet +3* (12th level; AV)

Found in Encounter 6

Bundle F: *deathcut armor +3* (15th lvl; PHB)

Found in Encounter 4B for Saving Satal

Bundle G: *cloaked weapon +3* (13th lvl; AV)

Found in Encounter 5

Bundle H: *gloves of accuracy* (16th level; AV) (high-level version only)

Found in Encounter 6

Consumable plus Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add a *cryptspawn potion** plus 300 / 1,100 gp to their rewards from this adventure. The player should write the consumable gained on their adventure log. That character (and only that character) then receives the consumable plus the listed amount of gold (if any) instead of any other treasure bundle.

Consumable items obtained in this fashion do not take up found magic item slots.

More Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add 1,300 / 2,100 gp to their rewards from this adventure. That character (and only that character) receives more gold instead of any other treasure bundle.

STORY AWARDS

Award these if the PC completes the condition for the award in the adventure. Pass out certificates to the players for their story awards.

AGLA11 Something Truly Smells in Veltalar

You have uncovered evidence of plots and machinations that links someone within the Simbarch Council to the Stone Bear thieves' guild. It is far from clear who this person is and why they are helping thieves and thugs. What is clear is that corruption exists at the highest levels of the Aglarond government.

This story object continues the Major Quest that began in *AGLA1-3 The Worst of All Snares*, and will be resolved in a future Aglarond regional adventure.

AGLA12 Thanks of a Spy

You have rescued Satal from certain death. She is very grateful and has vowed to help you in a time of need. You may contact Satal in person any time you are in the city of Veltalar in Aglarond. What assistance she may be able to provide is up to the DM's discretion, but will generally be limited to information-gathering or assistance in gaining access to people or areas not normally available to the general public.

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

Mark the answers to the following adventure questions on the tracking form.

1. Did Ambal get away?

- a. Yes
- b. No

2. If no, what did the PCs do with Ambal?

- a. Killed him
- b. Turned him over to the authorities
- c. Released him
- d. Unmasked him in Public
- e. None of the above

3. Did the PCs use any rituals?

- a. Yes, they used one
- b. Yes, they used more than one
- c. No, they did not have a ritual caster
- d. No, they scoffed at using a ritual
- e. No, they did not have any useful rituals

4. Was Satal Rescued?

- a. Yes
- b. No

NEW RULES

Circlet of Mental Onslaught Level 11

Your mental attacks strike more true while you wear this slender circlet.

Item: Head 9,000 gp

Property: Gain a +1 bonus to Will defense

Power (Daily): Minor Action. Gain a +1 power bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls when making Wisdom, Intelligence, and Charisma attacks until the end of the encounter.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 139.

Feystep Lacings Level 12

Cords spun from enchanted fey wool teleport you out of—or into—harm's way.

Item: Feet 13,000 gp

Property: Gain a +1 bonus to Reflex defense.

Power (At-Will, 5 Charges/Day Teleportation): Move Action. Spend a number of charges to teleport that number of squares.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 129.

Ring of Perfect Grip Level 14

This rough alloy band gives you a grip of steel when you are about to fall.

Item: Ring 21,000 gp

Property: Gain a +5 item bonus to saving throws to catch yourself from falling.

Power (Daily): Immediate Interrupt. Use this power when you would be forced over a precipice or into a pit. You automatically succeed on the saving throw to catch yourself from falling.

If you've reached at least one milestone today, you do not fall prone when you catch yourself from falling

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 159.

Flying Hook Level 15

This grappling hook flies through the air and can latch onto almost anything.

Wondrous Item: 25,000 gp

Power (At-Will): Minor Action. You command the flying hook to fly 10 squares (up to a maximum distance of 20 squares from you) and magically latch onto the surface of any unattended object in your line of sight. Once secured, the flying hook extends a thin rope back to your hands. The rope can be climbed with an Athletics check, or it can be used to pull the object toward you with a Strength check. The hook and rope can support up to 3,000 pounds before the hook detaches from the surface. The rope cannot be tied or knotted in any way, nor can it be used to attack or affect a creature.

Power (At-Will): Minor Action. On your command, the hook detaches from a surface and returns to your hand. This causes the rope to retract.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 172.

Absence Amulet Level 12+

This crystal bauble has no setting and is secured by an unassuming rawhide band.

Lvl 12 +3 13,000 gp Lvl 22 +5 325,000 gp

Lvl 17 +4 65,000 gp Lvl 27 +6 1,625,000 gp

Item Slot: Neck

Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will

Property: Attempts to scry upon you, your location, or objects in your possession fail, as if the target of the attempt did not exist.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 147.

Gloves of Accuracy Level 16

While wearing these fingerless deerskin gloves, your shots bypass obstacles.

Item Slot: Hands 45,000 gp

Power (At-Will): Minor Action. Your ranged attacks ignore concealment and cover (but not total concealment or superior cover) until the end of your turn.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 134.

Cloaked Weapon Level 8+

This naturally invisible weapon becomes visible when it hits.

Lvl 8 +2 3,400 gp Lvl 23 +5 425,000 gp

Lvl 13 +3 17,000 gp Lvl 28 +6 2,125,000 gp

Lvl 18 +4 85,000 gp

Weapon: Any

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

Property: This weapon is invisible to everyone but the creature possessing it. As the wielder of the weapon, you gain combat advantage with melee attacks made using the weapon until you successfully hit, at which point the weapon becomes visible to everyone.

A cloaked weapon turns invisible again after being sheathed for a short rest (5 minutes).

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 66.

Cryptspawn Potion Level 15

This viscous liquid smells faintly of death, yet it invigorates you against diseases and poisons.

Potion 1,000 gp

Power (Consumable): Minor Action. Consume this potion and spend a healing surge. You do not regain hit points as normal. Instead, gain resist 10 necrotic and resist 10 poison until the end of the encounter. You also gain a +5 power bonus to your next Endurance check against any disease of level 15 or lower.

HANDOUT 1: LETTER FROM LEANDER THE SAGE

Heroes of Aglarond,

I once again call upon your skills in dealing with a menace to Aglarond. The Stone Bear thieves' guild has not been thwarted as we had hoped by the setback you delivered. Nay, they have grown in power by leaps and bounds. I have a fear that they are receiving help.

I need you to seek me out at my workshop in Old Velprintalar. The pay will be worth the adventure.

May you always thirst for knowledge,

Leander the Sage

HANDOUT 2: THE MESSAGE



HANDOUT 3: INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Dear Sir,

I have found few reliable individuals to give information on the Stone Bears. The common folk are very scared of them. I have witnessed several unseemly individuals accost street merchants for protection money. I also have reason to believe they killed Bellin, the old Community watchman, and several non-affiliated thieves as well.

They seem to be recruiting orphans from Berronar's Haven and some human mercenaries from the docks.

They spend a great deal of time at the brothel.

I have trailed several of them to a storefront over by Ghost Plaza. They often do not come out, and some that do, never went in. Perhaps I should investigate further.

May your daggers, eyes, and wits stay sharp,

Satal