

During the third round, two more **hobgoblins** rush to join the attack from a nearby room. One of those hobgoblins carries and will use two *spell scrolls* (see “Treasure” below).

All the hobgoblins are pragmatic professionals. If it looks like the fight is going against them, or if two hobgoblins quickly fall, the survivors ask for quarter.

Treasure. Each hobgoblin has 25 gp and a *potion of healing*. Additionally, one carries a *potion of resistance* (necrotic) and the other carries a *spell scroll of cause fear* and a *spell scroll of blindness/deafness* (if those weren’t used in the fight).

The characters can also take the acid spray gun, and they find a sack holding ten vials of acid near the hobgoblins.

Development. Any NPCs the characters rescued from the dungeon or left in the ruins hide during the combat. Those characters emerge from hiding only when the situation is safe.

If questioned, any surviving hobgoblins proudly admit that they work for Dran Enterprises, and that they were hired to clean up the manor site and prepare it for annexation. The hobgoblins claim (truthfully) to know nothing about what happened to reduce the manor to ruins, or the fate of the missing tiefling from the Fellowship of the Golden Mongoose. They have no connection to the Dran Enterprises insignia scribed among the manor ruins. They can’t say for certain that Dran Enterprises didn’t have some involvement with the incident, but if so, it had nothing to do with them.

CONCLUSION

With their adventures in Phandalin complete, the characters attain 3rd level! More importantly, after clearing the ruins and dungeon of Tresendar Manor, they are able to officially launch their own Acquisitions Incorporated franchise! The characters need to send a message to Omin Dran to report their findings. Not long after, Omin contacts them using magic, congratulating them on their success, telling them to rest up, and informing them that a representative of Acquisitions Incorporated will arrive soon to deliver paperwork and any other information a new franchise needs.

Sure enough, well-known Acquisitions Incorporated operative Viari (see appendix A) arrives the next day to deliver the documents and supplies, and to officially christen the new Acquisitions Incorporated franchise. He has each of the characters sign a contract crammed full of legalese and double-talk. Any character who reads the document and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check can decipher the jargon to learn the following, or Viari can explain the highlights:

- Franchisees pay a monthly fee to Acquisitions Incorporated to maintain their franchise.
- As part of that fee, Acquisitions Incorporated handles parts of the franchise’s operations, including location procurement, staff management, and other benefits.
- The monthly fee paid to Acquisitions Incorporated by a starter franchise covers the salaries of a majordomo, a skilled hireling, and two untrained hirelings.



Franchisees must pay any hirelings employed beyond this number.

- The franchise is licensed to operate in Phandalin and within 5 miles of the town, and is protected against interference in that area from other franchises.
- Acquisitions Incorporated will deal with acquiring the rights to Tresendar Manor from Harbin Wester, as they did for the Fellowship of the Golden Mongoose.

“Franchise Advancement” in chapter 2 has detailed explanations of all these benefits and more.

One of the franchise’s first hires might be right in front of them already. Gilda Duhn, former majordomo for the Company of the Golden Mongoose, is grieving her lost employers and anxious to put her life back together. With previous experience running a franchise (and no fault in that franchise’s destruction), she makes an excellent choice for majordomo, and suggests that role for herself if the characters don’t ask her. The remaining episodes in this adventure assume that the characters selected Gildha Duhn as their franchise’s majordomo. If they chose another NPC to fill that role, simply adjust the text throughout the adventure accordingly.

With the contract signed, the ruins of Tresendar Manor become the franchise’s starter headquarters! One of the benefits of Head Office negotiating with Harbin Wester for the lease to the manor is that the company can drive a much harder bargain than the characters would ever be able to strike. This beneficial deal might have hidden downsides, though, as the thin profit margins of the lease become a point of ongoing conflict between the characters and the corrupt banker.