

VER1-04

# How Greenway Was My Valley

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK®

Verbobonc Regional Adventure

Version 1

Round 1

by Rick Bruner

Gnome raiders are striking against the southern holding of Lord Galans. He is in need of a group of adventurers to stop the raids and restore order to his lands. And adventure for characters level 1-6.

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This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

## **Preparation**

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least four players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than seven players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rule books during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players,

while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

## **Scoring**

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM score the game. The RPGA has three ways to score its games. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use for this scenario:

1. No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

When using voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities. It's a good idea to have the players vote while you determine treasure and experience awards for the scenario.

After voting, give the Scoring Packet to your event coordinator.

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a Living™ adventure, it is expected that players will bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, a character sheet, and a LIVING GREYHAWK log sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Gazetteer*.

## **LIVING GREYHAWK Tier Structure**

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK campaigns, this adventure is tiered. Basically, the challenges in this adventure are proportioned to the average character level of the characters participating in the adventure. To determine the tier that you will use to run this adventure, add the character levels of all the characters. In addition, add the levels of any cohorts or animals according to the values on their certificates. Cross-reference the total and the number of players participating in the game using the chart below to determine the tier used for this adventure.

<u>4 players</u>	<u>5 players</u>	<u>6 players</u>	<u>7 players</u>	<u>Lvl Cap</u>
T1: 4-12	5-13	6-14	7-15	4 <sup>th</sup>
T2: 13-22	14-24	15-26	16-28	6 <sup>th</sup>
T3: 23-32	25-35	27-38	29-41	8 <sup>th</sup>

The level cap indicated is the highest level of character allowed to play this adventure. Characters of levels higher than the highest level shown for the highest tier cannot be played.

## **Is it a Full Moon?**

Since the hazards of lycanthropy are a current part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign, it may be necessary to determine if this adventure takes place during a full moon. For game purposes, the full moon lasts three days of each month. For a given scenario that does not state the phase of the moon, roll 1d10 before play begins. On a result of 1, the first day of the scenario is a night of the full moon (roll 1d3 to determine where in the sequence of three nights it falls).

## **Lifestyle**

At the beginning of every scenario, each PC is required to pay upkeep costs matching the level of lifestyle they wish to maintain. The lifestyles, and the effects that each has on play, are:

**Destitute:** You have no living space, and must carry all your gear everywhere. You eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, your only change of clothes.

**Poor:** You sleep in poor accommodations, and eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, and have two sets of clothing.

**Common:** You have common lodgings, and eat common quality food. You have normal clothing for your profession (adventuring); nothing fancy. You probably have two or three sets of clothing.

**High:** You stay in good quality lodgings, and eat good quality food. You wear anything in value up to courtier's outfits, and generally buy a new set of clothing every two weeks.

**Luxury:** You have luxurious accommodations (twice the cost of good accommodations), and you eat excellent foods. You can throw a banquet for your friends every day, and frequently do. You wear clothing up to the value of noble's outfit, and buy a new set of clothes every week.

Lifestyles come with bonuses or penalties to Diplomacy, Intimidate, Disguise, and Bluff skill checks. These penalties, shown below, should be applied at the DM's discretion, and can sometimes backfire—for example, a PC with a poor lifestyle would not have a penalty when talking to a beggar, but would when talking to a city official. A PC with a high lifestyle should have a penalty when dealing with a group of street thugs, where a PC with a destitute lifestyle might not.

DMs are encouraged to role-play these reactions whenever possible.

Lifestyle	Cost	Skill Modifier
Destitute	14 sp	-2
Poor	43 sp	-1
Common	10 gp	0
High	125 gp	+1
Luxury	250 gp	+2

## **Adventure Summary and Background**

Approximately 15 years ago, Verbobonc nobles, with the tacit blessing of the Viscount Fenward Lefthanded, seized a number of mines belonging to the Gnomes of the Kron Hills. This usurping of traditional gnome power led to a split between the gnomes and the Viscounty. From this conflict arose the Free Alliance of Kron Hill Gnomes, comprised of some 20,000 gnomes living in the Kron Hills.

The current Viscount, Langard of the Gnarly Border, is working to correct the oversights of his predecessor and to bring a peaceful alliance between the Viscounty and the Free Alliance. The gnomes remain adamant in their distrust of the Viscount and are unwilling to negotiate unless certain conditions are first met. Balanced against the efforts of the Viscount are those whose interests might best be served by continuing or even escalating the conflict, after all, war is business to some.

Recently, the Viscount's efforts have been hampered by a series of raids apparently conducted by both gnomes and humans along the uneasy border. Although there have been no casualties, there has been considerable damage. These raids are making the situation less tenuous. Nobles with holdings along the border

are recruiting men-at-arms practiced in all forms of conflict to protect their property and to supplement their cadre in the event that a war breaks out.

Lords influenced by the greed of a war economy and a desire to garner additional power is sponsoring the current series of raids. If the raids are successful, the gnomes will be farther pushed from the negotiation table and the folk of the Viscounty will increase their suspicions of those from the Kron.

The greatest concentration of raids are suspected to be gnomes harassing Lord Galan's holdings three days ride southeast of Verbobonc City bordering the holdings of Lord Milinous to the east, the Kron Hills to the south and holdings of the Viscount to the west and north. The raids seem to be targeted at disruption of Galans' farming and ranching operations leaving the mining operation unscathed. ***This adventure takes place a week after the full moon.***

### **Encounter One**

The PCs are enjoying a late breakfast in the Tavern of the Four Trails. The Tavern has always been a source of rumor and leads to opportunity. A crier announces that Lord Galans' is seeking men-at-arms.

### **Encounter Two**

Answering the summons, Lord Galans' seneschal is dispatching small groups to various holdings. The PCs are interviewed and directed to report to Esquire Gloomwing at Far Downs. Lord Galans' holding that is located 4 miles east of deChutes Ford along the deChutes Ford-Haverdale Road. These holdings are two days southeast of Verbobonc City bordering the Kron Hills and Lord Milinous' holdings.

### **Encounter Three**

The PCs note that parties of armed men are viewed with suspicion and in some cases fear. The land seems tense and expectant. Road guards will challenge the party on the road. The weather is clear and unseasonably warm and they arrive at the ruins of a burned inn. As they create a camp a patrol of Borderers pass and question them on their purpose for being in this area.

### **Encounter Four:**

Just before sundown, right before the party begins to sleep, they are attacked by giant insets. This occurs just before bedding down for the night after preparing for sleep.

### **Encounter Five**

The party arrives in deChutes Ford late on the third day of travel. This thorp is active these days with all the increases in traffic of men-at-arms.

The party can continue on to Far Downs or spend the night in deChutes Ford and interact with various mercenaries of from a far off land in the service of Lord deChutes and men-at-arms from Lord Milinous' camp. There is a possibility that there may be an altercation between the mercenaries and the party. The local sheriff will handle things if [when] they get out of hand.

### **Encounter Six**

Arriving at Far Downs, once a prosperous farm, is now an armed camp. The party is watched with suspicion. After a meal, the party meets with Jensen and Gloomwing to outline a mission that will capture the raiders.

### **Encounter Seven**

Jensen rouses the PCs before sun up and takes them to the wooded camp 2 hours away under the cover of night. A cluster of dim lights some 7 or 8 miles off to the north is Far Downs' main house. Jensen will suggest that the PCs carefully scout the road down the hill on foot, but warn them to be as discrete as possible. Now they wait.

### **Encounter Eight**

On the second night, during the hour after midnight, the raid is on and the PCs have several things to do. Watch the retreating raiders and determine how to best intercept.

### **Encounter 9**

The chase ends at a small gnome thorp. The gnome elder is incensed that gnomes are being accused of raiding. Telling them the raiders sounded the alarm causes the elder to question all adult gnomes of the thorp. All adults are present but none says they sounded the alarm, but two children are missing. The gnomes grow more vocal and somewhat angry, when two, very excited, gnome children rush to the elder and whisper in his ear. The children just saw a group of gnome riders turn into tall folk in a clearing to the southwest. A scout leads the PCs to the clearing.

## **Introduction**

His Noble Lordship Viscount Langard, Defender of the Faithful, is attempting to negotiate with the Gnomes of the Free Alliance of the Kron Hills in an effort to bring peace and well being to the folk of Verbobonc and the Kron Hills. The gnomes remain adamant in their distrust of the Viscount and are unwilling to negotiate. Balanced against the efforts of the Viscount are reports of increased hostility along the Kron Hills border. A series of raids are further hampering these efforts and causing distrust between man and gnome. Although there have been no casualties,

there has been considerable damage. Nobles with holdings along the border are recruiting men-at-arms to protect their property and to supplement their cadre in the event that a war breaks out.

## **Encounter 1: Breakfast and Rumor**

The PCs are enjoying a late breakfast in the Tavern of the Four Trails. The Tavern caters to travelers on the road or river. With the heavy traffic that pours through Verbobonc City traveling to Dyvers or Greyhawk City to the east or Veluna to the west, the place is always lively. Cascius Weldon, owner of the Four Trails, keeps an eye on his clientele from behind the polished duskwood bar.

Cascius is a benevolent soul whose origins lie in mystery. He heartily greets both regulars and newcomers alike and never fails to astound one and all by always recognizing a former customer. While the conversation occasionally turns hot and loud, brawls in the Four Trails are very rare, as the price of brawling is a lifetime ban from the tavern.

Cascius is also a font of knowledge about Verbobonc City and the surrounding area. Which he dispenses along with ale, wine and beer from behind the bar. He knows who is hiring, where weapons and supplies maybe procured. He knows what vessels are due in and when caravans will be leaving.

Merchants and caravan guards rub shoulders with boatmen and wayward adventurers. News of possible employment, bandit and pirate activities flow back and forth across the common room. While the constant din makes private conversations a determined task, a veritable flood of information concerning the entire Flanaess rewards the careful listener.

You find yourself in the friendly confines of the Four Trails Inn. The common room is quite large, with a high-beamed ceiling, a long, polished duskwood bar at one end of the room and a massive hearth dominating the far end. Above the main floor, a wide balcony circles the entire room. Patrons seeking relief from the press and din below or a quieter place to hold a private conversation, lounge in booths that look down upon the common room.

Not only does Cascius set an impressive breakfast buffet but also the inn is always abuzz with news, rumor and gossip not only of Verbobonc City and the countryside, but the entire Flanaess. The Four Trails is crowded and normal conversation is difficult. Looking about, you see a colorful array of boatmen, caravan guards, men-at-arms, merchants and adventurers. Rumors fly back and forth across the room so fast that the originator might hear his own tale repeated to him the moment he has finished speaking.

Cascius will instantly recognize any PC who has been a customer and will greet them by name. The Bill of Fare is written on a large slate behind the bar. This morning it merely reads, Breakfast Buffet 5 common.

Long tables are set in front of the hearth, laden with cheeses, breads, and fruit. Serving girls rush into the kitchen carrying used dishes and cutlery and emerge moments later bearing platters of fried potatoes, scrambled eggs, and sizzling sausages. Patrons are helping themselves to the bounty of food. At the north end of the room is a large keg that dispenses Cascius' "Morning Beer".

Allow the PCs to interact with the each other and the tavern patrons. Those with the skills gather knowledge or listen, upon a successful check (DC12), overhear one or more of the following: (for each 2 points over 12, provide one of the following pieces of information)

Two men, a young caravan driver and an older man, converse at a nearby table. Young driver, "Its cuz of them blasted gnomes that no traffic runs along the Land Road anymore. Someone should clean the vermin out of them hills." Older man, "Ah ya young fool! Few men care to take the Land Road cuz of the beasties! They've plagued that road for years. It ain't the gnomes at all."

Langard is a puppet of the nobles! If the nobles want war with the gnomes, then war there will be!

Pirates hit Tanny McWayne. We see'd his boat adrift and aburnin'. Stay away from the east channel as ya pass the isle at the mouth of the Imredy's Run.

Lord Milinous is pushing the Viscount to name him Knight Commander of the Borderers.

Folks along the border are abandoning their farms and moving north because of all the talk about war with the Kron Hills.

Somebody burned down the old Bustling Inn. It was the only place to stay between here and DeChutes Ford. I hear Bustleburr is looking for some fool to invest in rebuilding the place.

Hear tell that Lady Asbury has herself a pet dwarf. Got him chained to his anvil turning out swords and weapons and such. Somebody better keep an eye on that wench.

Some of the nobles are putting more men under arms. I think something is going to happen soon.

The PCs breakfast is interrupted by the appearance of a crier.

***“Be it known the Esteemed, Roland Galans, Master of the House of Galans is hiring experienced men-at-arms to serve against the brigands plaguing his southern holdings. Interested parties should seek an audience with Arthur Middendale, Seneschal of House Galans in the courtyard of Jylee’s Inn between high sun and sunset.”***

Knowledge (nobility) or Bardic Knowledge will reveal the following:

- (DC10) Lord Roland Galans, of House Galans, has wide holdings within the Viscounty. In addition to his riverboats and carters, he has an extensive holding in the south of the Viscounty.
- (DC15+) There have been rumors of trouble in Far Downs. Far Downs is a portion of Lord Galans’ holdings that extends a goodly distance into the Kron Hills but is mostly wild and underdeveloped. It is primarily known for its agricultural products but might yield substantial mineral wealth if the hostilities with the gnomes were brought to a conclusion.
- (DC20+) Lord Galans is not a strong supporter of Viscount Langard’s efforts to bring peace to the Kron Hills or the cliché of nobles that would prefer a more drastic solution to the “gnomish problem”. He is primarily concerned with developing his holding and might rely on his own methods to that end.

PCs questioning the crier will find he knows nothing beyond what he has been told to say. He can direct PCs to Jylee’s Inn and will be happy to do so...if asked.

## Encounter 2: Service and Duty

Approaching Jylee’s Inn, the party may know that as a courtesy, the Inn raises the banner of any noble who is in residence at Jylee’s Inn. The PCs may identify with a Knowledge (Verbobonc) check [DC10] the following House Arms flying: Lord Deleveu, Knight Marshall of the Verbobonc Borderers (Verbobonc – a white stag on a green field); Worthy Sir Harold Viscoy, Knight Companion of the Shield (Veluna); Sir Robert Townsend, Knight of the Hart (Furyondy); His Worship, Olan Deloit, Emissary of Rao (Veluna); Lord Simon Milinous, Master of House Milinous (Verbobonc - this shield is a black griffon on a field of azure) and Lord Galans (Verbobonc – silver field with a three brown hounds with heads to the right).

Answering the summons the PCs will find a fair number of adventurers seeking service to Lord Galans. The seneschal is accepting small groups of four to seven and dispatching them to various destinations.

Arthur Middendale is a tall, dour man. He stands in the center of the courtyard with his thumbs hooked under the top of his wide leather girdle and fingers drumming a cadence as he watches the PCs approach. A young scribe sits hovering over his ledger at a portable desk set just behind the seneschal, his nib poised as he listens to what appears to be a small party of fighting men.

***“Step forward, step forward! Let me have a look at you!”***

As the PCs move toward the seneschal, his eyes note every detail of the PCs weapons and equipment. Arthur will demand name and experience from each of the PCs.

The PCs should give their names in turn and recite any experience that they might have. Any service to one of Verbobonc’s nobility will be especially noted.

The pay is 50 spire a week and whatever loot may fall the PCs way, long as it hasn’t been stolen from Lord Galans or his liegemen. The PCs are able to draw and advance of half their first weeks pay as they give their names to the scribe Brian. Brian has each PC sign a ledger for the advance and issues a warrant that names the PC as in service to Lord Galans. The PCs are instructed to report to Esquire Gloomwing at Far Downs located 4 miles east of deChutes Ford along the DeChutes Ford-Haverdale Road.

PCs can bargain the pay up 10sp per week, but should be able to provide ample evidence that they are worth the extra fee. If the PCs ignore their duty to report to Far Downs, their names will be posted as petty thieves. Give the PCs some time to assemble whatever additional equipment they need but they should be on the road by morning.

## Encounter 3: On the Road Again

After the first day’s travels, the PCs will note that on their journey south, parties of armed men are viewed with suspicion and in some cases, fear. The land seems tense and expectant as Borderer Patrols challenge the PCs. The trip requires three days by horse, six by wagon and twelve by walking.

The land south of Verbobonc City shows signs of heavy activity. Farmers are tending crops and livestock. Wagons rumble along the rutted road in large groups, as if seeking protection in the greater numbers. The drivers eye your party with

uneasy stairs and keep their long bows and axes close.

Talking to the farmers, the PCs are eyed with suspicion. Farmers say, 'you can't be too careful these days.' The PCs may gather information (DC10) from the rumor charts below. The farmers are not gossips and will answer with short replies on simple matters. Mix up the rumors to different PCs.

The harvest will be good.

Something has been digging in the fields, digging holes it looks like.

There's a land shark around these parts.

There is a shortage of tools and parts for harness and wagons. Things have been this way since the gnomes stopped shipping goods to the Viscounty.

Several parties of armed men have been spotted moving south.

There is a need to increase the Road Patrols.

None of these farmers have had any trouble, but they have all heard that others have.

Rumor is somebody burned down the Bustling Inn intentionally.

The weather is clear and unseasonably warm and you feel a sense of relief when the sun begins to fall toward the horizon. Ahead you see the ruins of what was a large stone and timber building. The place was destroyed by fire. A sign beside the lane leading to the building reads, 'Bustling Inn.' Over this someone has painted hastily, Closed for Renovations...Looters will be hanged.

A huge stone chimney rises out of a jumble of charred beams. Two outbuildings were also destroyed. No doubt the fire spread to them before it could be contained. There are no other inns along this stretch of road and deChutes Ford is still some miles away. However, there is a stand of trees between the road and the ruins and the well appears to be undamaged.

The PCs have few options other than to camp out alongside the road, camp along the tree line or find a farmer willing to allow them to sleep in the barn. Finding a friendly farm will require Search (DC15), 2 hours and a Diplomacy check (DC15) with 2 spires for the use of the barn.

Pitching camp along side the burned inn or nearer the tree line, the PCs notice a Borderers Patrol approach. The patrol of six 6 riders advancing up the road from the south. The riders wear scale mail and are heavily armed, each carry lance and long sword. Colorful pennants flutter from the points of their lances. They pause, arraying themselves in a loose line facing you as one rider advances.

Knowledge (Verbobonc) (DC10) identifies them as Borderers, the military of Verbobonc. They will ask the PCs their business and if presented with Lord Galans' warrant will wish

the PCs well and be on their way, with a warning about possible brigands on the road preying on the farmers.

Questioning the Road Patrol gathers the following information (DC10). Information is given in quick concise answers in the style of a military or police report. Mix up the reports by different questions.

The fire at the Bustling Inn was apparently the result of a guest's carelessness.

No one was seriously injured although Rafe Bustleburrr, the owner, received some minor burns while making sure all of his guests escaped the blaze.

Winds whipped the flames and the stable and summer kitchen also caught fire, five horses and two cows were lost when the stables went up.

The current uneasiness along the border has many land-men packing up and moved north to safer areas.

Looting the empty houses is considered a crime in the Viscounty as any abandoned property in the township reverts to the Lord who holds the granted title.

No caravans have gone east, beyond deChutes Ford in years, most travel north to Verbobonc City before turning toward Dyvers again along the River Road or they turn south to Hommlet and brave the old Forest Road through Nulb.

The number of caravans coming in or out of the Greenway Valley these days is few.

Let the PCs settle in for the night, posting whatever watch they feel necessary.

Searching the ruins of the inn, the PC must make three Climb or Balance checks (DC15) or fall, collapse or otherwise risk injury. Failing a climb check results in fall for 1d4 pts damage and failed Balance check requires a Reflex save (DC15) or suffer a fall. A successful Search (DC18) reveals a hidden compartment in the fireplace holding a masterwork ivory smoking pipe (50 sheafs).

## Encounter 4: The Party's the Picnic

Allow the PCs to set a watch and prepare for the night. Just before sun down, they will be attacked by a local menace that has just moved into the area. Depending on the Party Tier, the will be lunch for several giant soldier ants or Ankhegs.

Camping out, the menace will come at the party from the field side of the inn or tree line. Have the PC on watch make a Listen or spot check

(DC 15) to detect the beginning of the attack. At the farmhouse, the attack will come from behind the barn. Have the PC on watch make a Listen check (DC 15) to detect the beginning of the attack. A failed check results in attackers gaining surprise on the PCs. The Attackers and unsurprised PCs have a partial action the first round of actions while the surprised PCs are flatfooted until their initiative the second round of actions.

### **Tier 1: (EL 3)**

Ankheg (1); hp 25; see *Monster Manual* page 18.

### **Tier 2: (EL 4)**

Ankheg (2); hp 25; see *Monster Manual* page 18.

### **Tier 3: (EL 5)**

Ankheg, advanced (2); CR4; Large Beast; HD 4d10+12; hp 33; Init +0; Speed: 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.; AC: 18 (–1 size, +9 natural); Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.; Atks: +7 melee (2d6+7, bite); SA Improved grab, acid, spit acid; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +2.

Str 21, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +5

Special Qualities: Tremorsense

### **Augmented Tier**

Ankheg, advanced (2); CR5; Large Beast; HD 5d10+12; hp 41; Init +0; Speed: 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.; AC: 17 (–2 size, +9 natural); Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.; Atks: +8 melee (2d6+7, bite); SA Improved grab, acid, spit acid; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +2.

Str 21, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +6

**Special Attacks—Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, the ankheg must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it deals automatic bite damage each round the hold is maintained. If the ankheg is damaged after grabbing its prey, it retreats backward down its tunnel at burrowing speed, dragging the victim with it.

**Acid (Ex):** Each round that an ankheg maintains a hold on an opponent the victim takes 1d4 points of acid damage.

**Spit Acid (Ex):** An ankheg will only use this ability when desperate or frustrated. An ankheg can spit a stream of acid 5 ft high, 5 ft wide, 30 ft long for 4d4 points of damage (Reflex – DC14). Use of this ability depletes the ankheg's acid supply for 6 hours so that it may not spit or add acid damage to a hold during this period.

**Special Qualities—Tremorsense (Ex):** An ankheg can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 ft that is in contact with the ground.

**Tactics:** The ankhegs lie in burrow 5 to 10 feet below the surface within 10 ft of the PCs, it then

burrows up to attack (treat as a charge) seeking to seize a character and drag him back into their burrows.

Clusters of ankhegs share the same territory but do not cooperate. If several attack, each tries to grab a different foe. If there aren't enough targets, two might grab the same creature in a tug of war.

## **Encounter 5:**

### **Are We There Yet?**

*Nearing late sun you are in finally cross Nilb's Run at deChutes Ford. Entering the outskirts of the village of deChutes; the homes that you pass show little activity other than smoke from the chimneys and the slight movements of curtains. The folk of deChutes are inordinately interested and wary of strangers passing by. The signpost outside the village leans drunkenly.*

The road here shows moderate use. The sign indicates that deChutes Ford lies just to the east across the ford, the village of Haverdale lies to the west and Hommlet to the south. Far Downs also lies some 5 miles southeast from the crossroads.

It is now late afternoon, the PCs may press on to Far Downs or stop in deChutes Ford. If they press on, go to Encounter 6.

DeChutes Ford is a small village nestled in a gentle slopping valley on the banks of Nilb's Run. The village of DeChutes Ford appears prosperous enough. Farm carts line the streets and people seem to be moving briskly about their business. There is a large, manor house situated on the east side of the road, overlooking Nilb's Run. Armed men, wearing the liveries of several lords patrol the streets and guard the manor house.

Knowledge (Verbobonc) check (DC10) reveals the following:

DeChutes Ford gets its name from the noble family that seized the only good river crossing in the area and charged dearly for its use.

A minor noble named Herve DeChutes owns the lands around DeChutes Ford, a young man who inherited the title when his father was tragically killed while on a hunting trip in the Ironwood.

The men-at-arms walking the streets of DeChutes Ford display a verity of liveries. A Knowledge (Nobility) or (Verbobonc) check (DC 10) can recognize the livery of the men-at-arms in service to Lord DeChutes (Green Stag on a golden field) and Lord Milinous (Black Griffon on an azure field). A third livery is seen on several warriors, a white shield with red flame crossed by a saber. A Knowledge (Local) (DC20) identify these men as



part of a mercenary group called the Scarlet Flame.

DeChutes Ford finest inn is the Tumble Downs, albeit somewhat crowded these days. The common room is a lively place with free flowing drink and conversation. As the PCs crowd into an empty table, they will be approached by a young man wearing the livery of Lord deChutes and backed up by 5 members of the Scarlet Flame. He will inquire as to the PCs business in deChutes Ford.

Cyril Holdforth, a young flamboyant warrior in the service of Lord deChutes approaches your table dressed in a scarlet tabard and wearing a rapier. Flanking him are five men-at-arms wearing scale mail and carrying heavy clubs. Each of the five wears a red shield device featuring a saber crossed by a mailed fist. Cyril greets the PCs warmly with an open smile.

***“Well met friends! Just a trifling bit of formality before you set to enjoying your stay in our little community. I am Cyril Holdforth, in the service of Lord deChutes. What is the nature of your business here in deChutes Ford?”***

This is a potentially dangerous encounter. The Scarlet Flame mercenaries are a tough lot and if the PCs are not careful in presenting themselves as being on lawful business they could be in serious trouble. In addition to the five men accompanying Cyril, there is a patrolling squad of eight (use appropriate stats for PC tier) more mercenaries ready to respond to any disturbance within the village. If the PCs press a fight, see Appendix A.

**Cyril Holdforth:** Male human Rog4.

**Scarlet Flame Mercenaries:** Male human Ftr6.

**Scarlet Flame Mercenaries Patrol:** Male human Ftr6 (8) and Male human Clr6.

The mercenaries subdue the PCs if a fight breaks out and haul them off to the local jail. Where upon the warrants will be discovered and Cyril will summon Esquire Gloomwing in the morning. Esquire Gloomwing will pay the PCs fines (20sp for brawling) if necessary and escort them to Far Downs. Any fines paid by Esquire Gloomwing will be deducted from the PCs wages.

If the PCs show their warrants, Cyril will smile and welcome them to DeChutes Ford. He will tell them the sight of valiant fighting men joining Lord Galans and the cause against the vermin that infest the Hills heartens him. He will order the innkeeper to give the party a round of drinks on him, wish the PCs well, and then with his escort fade back into the crowd.

Rumors that can be gathered by successful Gather Information check will garner the following information [the PCs should not be

permitted a take 20 on this due to the nature of the information that can be gathered]:

- (DC10) Gnomes have been killing livestock and burning crop fields.
- (DC15) Far Downs has become an armed camp and has been unable to capture any of the raiders.
- (DC20) There was a half-orc from Nulb in a few days past that got too drunk and ended up in the jail after tangling with the Scarlet Fame and he was ranting about some sorcerer that would change them all into gnomes if he wasn't let go. He slept the drunk off and was told not to return. No other information is available on him.

## Encounter 6:

### Down on the Farm

Far Downs, once a prosperous farm, is now an armed camp. There are guards at the gate who watch you with suspicion as you approach. If the party has avoided being arrested, they challenge they approach the main gate asking about their purpose for being in the area.

The Lord Galans' warrant will provide admittance to the farm. The mood within the camp is tense and the PCs are greeted with a mixture of relief and disdain. Any demi-human party members will be viewed with disdain.

There is a rail fence surrounding the compound. A long, low building, obviously a residence for the farm overseer, is now serving as headquarters for the armed men who are patrolling the fence or loitering around the dusty courtyard. The guard points you to the main building and tells you that the squire is up there. His companions open the gate.

As you approach the house a short, heavy man walks out of the house and stands on the wide porch watching you. His dark eyes regard you cautiously and he inquires.

***“I am Esquire Gloomwing. What brings you to Far Downs?”***

The PCs should explain their mission and show Esquire Gloomwing their warrant. The Esquire reads the warrant and again looks each of you over. A man of medium height and build wearing no armor approaches at the Esquires hand gestures.

***“Stable your horses and Jensen here... will show you to a meal and bunk. Refresh yourselves and report back in an hour. I will tell you your duties then.”***

Jensen wears a long sword and dirk belted around his waist. He moves like a warrior. He leads you toward what appears to have been a tenant house

within the compound fence. The house is in good repair and clean. The PCs will find two bedrooms off the large front room with a hearth at one end that serves as sitting room, dining area and kitchen although the hearth is cold. If PCs ask where to find the kitchen, he will tell them to open the door turn right and follow their noses.

***"This place is yours for now. We've sent most of the families north to Lord Galans' other holding, them that would go. Some of the sturdier folk have stuck...guess they are particular about being chased off their land. Dump your stuff and then head over to the kitchen. You can fill us in on what's going on in the city then go meet with the squire."***

### **Jensen's Rumors and Facts**

Jensen is curious about the PCs and any news they may have about what is taking place throughout the Viscounty. He is happy to trade information but he is a fighter of some ability and will not respond well to arrogant or abusive treatment by the PCs. The GM should weigh the demeanor of the PC who questions Jensen to determine the difficulty level of the gather information check. (Base DC10 +/- judges opinion for friendliness/arrogance.)

The Esquire is fit to be tied; no one knows when or where the raiders will strike next.

The Esquire is a good man and all the men in the compound want to stop the raids so Lord Galans won't get impatient and replace him.

The attackers appear to be gnomes...several of the men have seen them but they have always slunk back into the hills before the men from Far Downs can close with them.

The gnomes ride small ponies, not too fast in the area around the farm but very suited to the rough terrain of the Kron Hills to the south.

Some of the men swear that the gnomes have a wizard helping them.

No one has been harmed but crops have been burned and livestock has been killed or scattered.

Jensen has no idea how the gnomes are armed but they have found crossbow bolts in the slaughtered livestock and the remains of what appear to be oil flasks near the sites of the fires.

The raider's trails always lead into the Kron Hills then disappear.

After the party stows their gear and gets settled in, they can head over to the mess area. This is a roofed shelter, a number of tables and benches. The sides have been hung with fine netting to keep the majority of the flies and other insects

off the men as they eat. There are some twenty men seated at the tables when the PCs arrive. Jensen waves them in and summons a serving girl to bring the party their food. The food is of good quality, and there is plenty of it. In addition, there is a keg of light ale for the diners.

**Note:** if the party was jailed in DeChutes Ford, there will be some good-natured ribbing of the PCs.

During the meal, the other men who have been here for some time will pump the PCs for information about what is happening in Verbobonc City and the rest of the Flanaess. Encourage the PCs to interact with the men at arms.

If the PCs converse with these men they will, with a successful gather knowledge check (DC 10, +1 bonus to the roll for each bit of gossip conveyed by the PCs to the men of Far Downs) learn the following:

The raiders are real pros. They time everything just right, including allowing just enough time to do as much damage as possible and then escape back into the hills before the Far Downs men can mount an effective pursuit.

Their main weapon appears to be light crossbows, which they can use from horseback. They seem to shoot off a lot of quarrels during their raids, almost like it is their calling card.

The quarrels are clearly of gnomish manufacture.

Mira, the serving girl is engaged to Jensen, so leave her alone.

Once we follow them into the hills the trail just vanishes, like their ponies just grew wings and flew away.

The raiders never take anything, just destroy and run.

No one has been hurt, but mostly cuz the farmers hide til the raiders are gone and the Far Downs we have never been able to run them down.

After dinner, the party is summoned to the house for a meeting with Esquire Gloomwing and Jensen.

You are led into a room that is obviously the largest room in the overseer's house, a combination dining hall and audience room. Lord Galans' crest hangs over the large hearth and there is a large table of good quality surrounded by comfortable chairs. The Esquire and Jensen await your arrival. They are at the far end of the table huddled over what appears to be a map.

Gloomwing bids you enter and join them. He is a harried man; the holding has suffered three raids. The raiders, described as gnomes, are well organized, almost military in their precision. The

raids appear to be aimed at the resources of the holding. Crops have been burned and livestock slain. Esquire Gloomwing begins to speak.

***"We are in a quandary. If we sit back and do nothing, these raids will nibble us to death. This estate is rich and wide, yet since the raids have begun it might as well be the middle of the Dust Desert. The men and women who work the land cannot be blamed; they are of sturdy stock and have faced many hardships. But they cannot stand against trained soldiers. My force is small and too scattered to engage the enemy in force, even if we were able to catch them."***

The Esquire looks at you.

***"What we need is to take the initiative from them ... and Jensen and I believe we have a plan."***

The Esquire has decided that he will deploy his men throughout the estate and hold the PCs in reserve at a woodcutting camp further to the south on the brow of a hill overlooking the valley of Far Down. Once the raiders strike, the other men will pursue as best they can and light beacons to show the raiders' line of retreat.

The beacons will be laced with an alchemist's powder that will make them appear bright green, so the PCs will know for sure what they are seeing. The PCs will then intercept the raiders before they can fade back into the hills. The Esquire will provide horses to those PCs that need them.

Let the PCs talk with the Esquire and Jensen, and perhaps add a bit to the basic plan, but the Esquire is firm about this course of action. Jensen will lead the party to the camp in the early hours of the morning, in hopes of avoiding detection.

## **Encounter 7: Into the Night**

Jensen rouses you well before sun up. He stresses the need for quiet and speed. Your horses have been saddled and are waiting in the stable. Once you are mounted, he leads you off toward the Kron Hills.

The ride takes a bit more than three hours, much of it, a hard climb. As the eastern sky begins to show the pale, rose hue of dawn you come upon a small cluster of buildings. Jensen guides his mount to a low shed and dismounts. He motions for you to do the same.

***"This will serve as your stable. Please keep your horses out of sight. There is grain, fodder and water inside, so there will be no need to let them out to graze."***

Entering the building the PCs will find that indeed preparations have been made to care for their mounts. After the horses are attended to, Jensen will lead them to a smaller building.

Accommodations have also been made for the PCs, nothing luxurious, but satisfactory. Jensen points toward a cluster of dim lights some 7 or 8 miles off the north.

***"From here you can easily see the compound and there...there...and there...are some of the outlying farms. From here you should be able to sight the signal fires from any quarter of the estate. Over here is the road that was cut when the crews were logging this area. We purposefully avoided it in coming here so that it would show no signs of recent use. It runs straight down the hill and into the valley below and even in the dark, you could possibly make the trip very quickly. Be discrete and scout the area so you don't kill the horses in the pursuit. We need to stop these raiders before they destroy the entire holding."***

Jensen will suggest that the PCs carefully scout the road down the hill on foot, but warn them to be as discrete as possible. Jensen leaves while still under the cover of darkness and is gone moments later. Let the PCs settle in and establish a watch schedule. They can memorize spells or make additional plans to improve their chances of intercepting the raiders.

## **Encounter 8: The Chase**

A day and a night and another day will pass as the party waits for the signal. Finally, on the second night, during the hour after midnight, the PC on watch will see a bright glow to the northeast of the compound.

***It is a dark night, made even blacker by the eerie quiet and a heavy blanket of clouds, there is no call of the whippoorwill or nighthawk to break the stillness. Above the overcast, Luna waxes a beautiful crescent and bright and the aquamarine disk of Celene nears her own fullness as well. Yet none of their light falls upon this valley. Suddenly, across the darkness you see a flicker. Gradually the flicker grows until you are realizing that it is some large structure burning out of control. There is another tongue of flame ...slightly to the east of the first blaze, this one mounts quickly ... and casts a bright, greenish glow.***

This is indeed the first of the signals that the PCs have been waiting for. A few moments later a second beacon springs to life, this one south and west of the first. The PCs now have a hint as to the route the raiders are using for their retreat.

If the PCs begin their trek down the mountain before the second beacon is lit, they will not be able to find the raiders, as they have no indication of the line of retreat. Let them mill around in the dark for some time. Go to Alternate Ending A.

If they wait until the second beacon is lit, they now have the proper bearing. If they race down the hillside, riding checks (DC 12) will be required to maintain their seats (grant a +1 bonus to the roll of any who have scouted the road down the hill). Those who set a moderate pace until they reach the valley will not require a check.

As the PCs move to intercept the raiders they are aware of a glow on the horizon to the northwest. Whatever was fired is burning mightily. In a few moments the fire is directly north of you and you should be nearing your goal.

For a brief instance the clouds part, and in the soft glow of both of Oerth's moons you see movement ahead. A large group of riders is crossing your path about a quarter of a mile ahead.

The Party can spur their mounts in an attempt to close with the raiders, but the light from the moon aids both sides now. The raiders are aware of the PCs and race to reach the safety of the wooded hills. PCs who question the fact that they are not gaining on the raiders may make an Intelligence check (DC 10) to notice that these mounts move faster than normal ponies. Any PC who attempts to disbelieve at this point must make a Will save (DC 19) to see that these are humans imbued with magical aid to make them appear as gnomes and their horses as ponies.

The raiders enter the woods at a full gallop. The party has managed to close to within 100 yards of their quarry. Now the PCs must decide whether to gallop full speed after the raiders or slow their pace to avoid ambush.

### **Exercising Caution**

If the PCs slow to track, they will find the trail easy to follow, even in the dark tracking is not difficult. A Wilderness Lore check (DC10) will allow the PC to note that the tracks are of light horses and not ponies. Success by more than 5 will alert the PC that the weight carried by the horse is 3 or 4 times that of a gnome.

The trail winds into the hills and as the PCs top a small ridge overlooking a shrouded valley, the trail dips down toward the center. An open meadow with an apparently random group of low mounds scattered throughout the small valley.

If the PCs advance, have them roll spot checks opposed by the gnome hide checks. See Gnome stats in Appendix A. Successful spot will allow the PC to alert the party of the gnome ambush.

At the first sign that they have been detected, or once the PCs begin to move forward, the gnomes will spring their ambush. A flight of crossbow bolts and sling bullets is followed by a charge by the gnome ambushers, three are armed

with sword and wear chain shirts, the other gnomes are armed with clubs, farm picks and dressed plainly. It is very apparent the gnomes are poorly armed and unorganized.

### **Tactics for ambush.**

The gnomes are nervous and not well prepared to fight. They will listen if the PCs want to negotiate but will attack if pressed. They will fire crossbow and sling stones before their bravest 3 rush forward with farm tools. A successful Diplomacy check (DC10) will halt the rain of stones and bolts and the brave 3 will advance to hear the PCs out.

If the party negotiates, they will gain entrance to the thorp without any causality. If they fight, they will rout the gnomes that fall back to the thorp green. The gnomes await the PCs for a final battle. Small figures, dressed in nightclothes and wielding old swords, rakes, cudgels, and polearms form a loose square on the village green and await the PCs advance. This group is led by Zurzar Grimthral the Elder of the village.

**Zurzar Grimthral:** Male gnome Ill5/Rog5. See Appendix A.

PCs have the option of parleying or fighting the gnomes. However, if they choose to parley and have killed the ambush party there will be no wavering in the resolve of the gnomes that the PCs leave immediately and return to Far Downs. Go to Alternate Ending C.

If the PCs choose combat, they should have little trouble wiping out this force, and laying waste to Grimthral, which is exactly the mission of the raiders. They laid their trail directly to the peaceful gnome village in hopes of a massacre to escalate tensions between the Viscounty and the Alliance. Complete the battle and inform the party that they cannot find any further trace of the trail of the riders who led them to the village and none of the surviving villagers knows anything about a raiding party. **Go to Alternate Ending D**

Having avoided any killing any ambushers and negotiating with the Elder, Grimthral will listen to the PCs story. The gnomes become angry and defensive if questioned about "gnome raiders". **Go on to Encounter 9.**

### **Caution to the Winds**

In hot pursuit of the raiders the party will crash through the woods, branches whip across their faces and they each must make two Ride checks (DC15) to stay in their saddles.

The PCs will top a ridge and view a gentle slopping valley with a gnome thorp in the center. The burrows are nestled among the trees and natural contours of the valley. The trail winds past a number of burrow houses into a small clearing that appears to serve as the thorp green. Soft light emanates from the small, square

windows of the mounds. Toward the south end of the green is a larger structure that must serve the moot hall. The raiders ride directly into the village, their mount's hooves churning the soft turf of the valley. The seven riders reign up in front of the meeting hall and shout in gnomish,

**"Arise! Arise! The too-talls are attacking."**

With that, the riders streak off in separate directions, disappearing among the burrows, gardens and trellises.

Small figures pour out of the burrows, dressed in nightclothes and wielding old swords, rakes, cudgels, and polearms. They form a loose square on the thorp green and await the advance of the party.

At this point the PCs have the option of attacking or advancing to parley.

If the PCs choose combat, they should have little trouble wiping out this force, and laying waste to Grimthrall, which is exactly the mission of the raiders. They laid their trail directly to the peaceful gnome village in hopes of a massacre to escalate tensions between the Viscounty and the Alliance. Complete the battle and inform the party that they cannot find any further trace of the trail of the riders who led them to the village and none of the surviving villagers knows anything about a raiding party. Go to Alternate Ending D

Having avoided any killing any gnomes and negotiating with the Elder, Grimthrall will listen to the PCs story. The gnomes become angry and defensive if questioned about "gnome raiders". Go on to Encounter 9.

## Encounter 9: Children Stories

The PCs have found the thorp of Grimthrall and now speak with the elder Zurzar Grimthrall.

***"Gnome Raiders! How typical of you too talls! Who would gnomes raid? And why? All we want is to be left alone. It is you too talls who invade our lands, seize our mines and fields, kill our people."***

Zurzar is incensed at the notion that gnomes are being accused of raiding Lord Galans' holdings. A successful diplomacy check (DC15) will convince Zurzar that the party did indeed follow a band of raider to his thorp. Modify this check by good arguments from the PCs or by arrogant behavior. A tracking check (DC15) for the raiders will reveal that large horse, not gnome ponies have recently passed through the thorp.

Zurzar Grimthrall speaks to the assembled gnomes and no gnome steps forward. He asks if all gnomes are present and all but two young gnomes, mere children, are present. It is presumed the two children are missing but are

assumed to have sneaked out to play. The elder will turn to you and ask, if the party can identify any of the raiders. The complete thorp is assembled in the green.

The gnomes grow more vocal and somewhat angry, when two, very excited, gnome youths rush onto the green and run up to whisper into Zurzar's ear. He listens and his face grows stony.

***"We may have an answer to your mystery. These children tell me a very strange tale. They have seen several riders, wearing the appearance of gnomes...yet who suddenly become humans in a clearing to the southwest of our warren. There is evil trickery involved here. They are in a small clearing 400 yards southwest of here...seek your answers there."***

Zurzar provides a guide to the clearing but nothing more. His folk are lovers not warriors. The guide will quickly convey the PCs to the spot and then withdraw. The PCs will find 6 figures, obviously larger than gnomes, in the clearing. They are dismounted and are checking harness and gear, obviously intending to depart very soon. As you watch a seventh rider will appear, his companions glance at him and then begin to mount. PCs may attempt to gain surprise on the raiders with opposed Move Silently and, if necessary, Hide checks.

The raiders will fight viciously, although Caidax will try to escape using his Invisibility and Expeditious Retreat spells after a couple of rounds.

**Caidax Nightshade, male human Sor6:** CR 6; medium humanoid; HD 6d4; hp 25; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 Studded Leather); Atks +3 melee (1d4 [x3], dagger), +3 (1d8 [x3], halfstaf), +5 ranged (1d8 [19-20/x2], light crossbow), SA Spell use; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 16

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +10, Knowledge (Arcana) +6, Ride +6, Spot +4; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (Necromancy), and Spell Focus (Enchantment).

**Spells Known (2/3/2/1; base DC = 13 + spell level):** 0—resistance, ray of frost, flare, detect magic, open/close, arcane mark, read magic; 1<sup>st</sup>—expeditious retreat, shield, true strike, cause fear (+2 DC save); 2<sup>nd</sup>—invisibility, scare (+2 DC Save); 3<sup>rd</sup>—hold person (+2 DC save).

**Possessions:** light crossbow with bolt case and 0 bolts, quarterstaff, light war-horse (stolen from Lord Milinous), Quaal's Feather Token (Bird), 8 bolts, dagger, 12 gp.

### Tier 1 (EL 5)

**Raider male human Ftr1 (4):** CR1; medium humanoid; HD 1d10; hp 12 (ea); Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+3 studded leather, +1 shield, +2 Dex); Atks +5 melee (1d10+3 [x3], bastard sword),

+3 ranged (1d8 [19-20/x2], light crossbow); AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0.

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

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +2, Climb +2, Jump +2, Handle Animal +2, Listen +1, Ride +6; Spot +1; Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword), Exotic Weapon (Bastard Sword), Skill Focus (Ride).

Possessions: Studded Leather, small steel shield, bastard sword, light crossbow with bolt case and 0 bolts, 3 gp, 2 sp, horse (stolen from Lord Milinous).

**Raider male Half-Orc Ftr1 (2):** CR1; medium humanoid; HD 1d10; hp 12 hp (ea); Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+3 Hide, +2 Dex); Atks +5 melee (1d12+3 [x3], greataxe), +2 ranged (1d8 [19-20/x2], light crossbow); AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +2, Climb +2, Jump +2, Intimidate +4, Listen +1, Ride +4; Weapon Focus (Great Axe), Skill Focus (Intimidate).

Possessions: hide armor, greataxe, light crossbow with bolt case and 0 bolts, 10 sp, horse (stolen from Lord Milinous).

## **Tier 2 (EL 7)**

**Raider male human Ftr1 (4):** CR1; medium humanoid; HD 1d10; hp 12 (ea); Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+3 studded leather, +1 shield, +2 Dex); Atks +5 melee (1d10+3 [x3], bastard sword), +3 ranged (1d8 [19-20/x2], light crossbow); AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +2, Climb +2, Jump +2, Handle Animal +2, Listen +1, Ride +6; Spot +1; Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword), Exotic Weapon (Bastard Sword), Skill Focus (Ride).

Possessions: Studded Leather, small steel shield, bastard sword, light crossbow with bolt case and 0 bolts, 3 gp, 2 sp, horse (stolen from Lord Milinous).

**Raider male human Ftr2 (2):** CR2; medium humanoid; HD 2d10; hp 20 (ea); Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+3 studded leather, +1 shield, +2 Dex); Atks +6 melee (1d10+3 [x3], bastard sword), +4 ranged (1d8 [19-20/x2], light crossbow); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +2, Climb +2, Jump +2, Handle Animal +2, Listen +2, Ride +7; Spot +1; Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword), Exotic Weapon (Bastard Sword), Skill Focus (Ride).

Possessions: Studded Leather, small steel shield, bastard sword, light crossbow with bolt case and 0 bolts, 3 gp, 2 sp, horse (stolen from Lord Milinous).

**Raider male Half-Orc Ftr2 (2):** CR2; medium humanoid; HD 2d10; hp 20 hp (ea); Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+3 Hide, +2 Dex); Atks +6 melee (1d12+3 [x3], greataxe), +4 ranged (1d8 [19-20/x2], light crossbow); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

20/x2), light crossbow); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0.

Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +2, Climb +2, Jump +2, Intimidate +5, Listen +1, Ride +4; Weapon Focus (Great Axe), Skill Focus (Intimidate).

Possessions: hide armor, greataxe, light crossbow with bolt case and 0 bolts, 10 sp, horse (stolen from Lord Milinous).

## **Tier 3 (EL 9)**

**Raider male human Ftr2 (4):** CR2; medium humanoid; HD 2d10; hp 20 (ea); Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+3 studded leather, +1 shield, +2 Dex); Atks +6 melee (1d10+3 [x3], bastard sword), +4 ranged (1d8 [19-20/x2], light crossbow); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0.

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

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +2, Climb +2, Jump +2, Handle Animal +2, Listen +2, Ride +7; Spot +1; Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword), Exotic Weapon (Bastard Sword), Skill Focus (Ride).

Possessions: Studded Leather, small steel shield, bastard sword, light crossbow with bolt case and 0 bolts, 3 gp, 2 sp, horse (stolen from Lord Milinous).

**Raider male human Ftr3 (2):** CR3; medium humanoid; HD 3d10; hp 28 (ea); Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+3 studded leather, +1 shield, +2 Dex); Atks +7 melee (1d10+3 [x3], bastard sword), +5 ranged (1d8 [19-20/x2], light crossbow); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +1.

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

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +2, Climb +2, Jump +2, Handle Animal +2, Listen +2, Ride +7; Spot +1; Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword), Exotic Weapon (Bastard Sword), Skill Focus (Ride).

Possessions: Studded Leather, small steel shield, bastard sword, light crossbow with bolt case and 0 bolts, 3 gp, 2 sp, horse (stolen from Lord Milinous).

**Raider male Half-Orc Ftr3 (2):** CR3; medium humanoid; HD 3d10; hp 28 hp (ea); Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+3 Hide, +2 Dex); Atks +7 melee (1d12+3 [x3], greataxe), +5 ranged (1d8 [19-20/x2], light crossbow); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +1.

Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +2, Climb +2, Jump +2, Intimidate +5, Listen +1, Ride +4; Weapon Focus (Great Axe), Skill Focus (Intimidate).

Possessions: hide armor, greataxe, light crossbow with bolt case and 0 bolts, 10 sp, horse (stolen from Lord Milinous).

## **Augmented Tier**

The augmented tier includes Caidax with full spell capacity of (6/7/6/4) and all raiders at Ftr3.

If the PCs defeat the imposters, especially if they are able to capture Caidax, the gnomes will be

very impressed that the PCs have been able to expose this ruse. Such actions will have a positive effect on the Viscount's attempts to reconcile the differences between the Free Alliance and the Viscounthy. Zurzar Grimthrall gifts the party with a suit of Masterwork Studded Leather Armor.

Go to Alternate ending B.

## Conclusion

### Alternate Ending A

In this ending, the PCs have forgotten the original plan and left the logging camp before they had the information necessary to intercept the raiders. They will mill about looking but finally Jensen will find them and curtly tell them to report to the compound.

Esquire Gloomwing will greet them with disgust and mutter about the lack of good fighting men these days. If the PCs were also arrested in deChutes Ford, they will spend an additional time unit (note on character sheet) mucking out stables and standing night guard at the compound to pay back what the Esquire spent bailing them out. Then he will dismiss them. If the PCs have no debt, they will be dismissed immediately.

### Alternate Ending B

Questioning Caidax will garner the following with a successful opposed Intimidation check or other means.

The raiders could impersonate the gnomes because of the Scroll of Veil, which, through illusion, made them appear to be a party of gnomes.

Our mission was to provoke a massacre, either of humans or gnomes, it didn't matter which.

The group was trained at a camp in a secluded valley far to the east by powerful group of men led by a man named Maris.

We were all blindfolded entering and leaving the valley so we wouldn't be able to reveal its location.

The raiders are from Nulb and Verbobonc City.

The humans are from Verbobonc City. A man named Millard, in a bar called the Braying Ass, recruited them.

Half-orcs are from Nulb. They were recruited in a tavern known as the Virgin Nymph.

Maris has a powerful wizard working for him who created the wand

Information gained from questioning one of the human fighters with a successful opposed intimidation check or other means.

We could impersonate the gnomes because of the scrolls that were read before the raids to make us look like gnomes.

A man named Maris trained us at a camp in a secluded valley far to the east.

We were blindfolded entering and leaving the valley so we wouldn't be able to reveal its location.

A man named Millard, at a dive known as the Braying Ass, recruited us in Verbobonc City.

Information gained from questioning one of the half-orcs with a successful opposed Intimidation check or other means.

Magic paper makes us look like filthy grubbers.

Maris teach us. Him strong...mean

Secret place ... never see door

They tell us in Nulb ... get gold ... kill grubbers.

The gnomes will suggest the party return to Lord Galans' Holding and explain the situation. Esquire Gloomwing, upon hearing the story will send an immediate dispatch to Lord Galans and order the PCs to report to Viscounthy officials in Verbobonc City (taking any prisoners or bodies with them). Esquire will pay them double wages as a reward for their valiant efforts and thank them for ending the raids.

### Alternate Ending C

***"You ride into our village, slay our people, all the while spouting some wild story of "gnome raiders. How dare you! Less then 2 hours have passed since your fellow too-talls attacked us. And now you swoop in to finish the job and complete the murder our people. All the while piously claiming that we are the raiders."***

If one of the PCs points out the tracks that lead into the village as proof that the party was following the raiders, the Elder gnome will spit in disgust, point at the tracks and retort.

***"So you admit it! These are the tracks left by the humans that raided our village earlier this evening. Those are too-tall horses, not gnome ponies. How typical of you greedy too-talls. You seize our mines and lands...but even that is not enough ... you contrive lies to kill our people. Return to you own lands and leave us to deal with these raiders."***

Esquire Gloomwing will be displeased that the PCs were not able to capture or kill the raiders

and the PCs will receive no reward beyond their pay.

Free Alliance considers any gnomes killed at Grimthrall as fallen martyrs. While this will only moderately elevate the tensions between the Alliance and the Viscounty, the PCs will have earned the enmity of the gnomes.

Collect one gnome influence point from any PC that holds one. The influence point will be returned to the clan that gifted it accompanied by an explanation of what happened with the list of dead.

### **Alternate Ending D**

Upon killing the defenders and searching the village, the PCs will find little trace of the raiders. For the most part the gnomes they have been fighting are poorly armed and lack skill at arms. Working amid the wails and sobs of the surviving women and children, the PCs will be unable find anyone who has even the slightest hint of information about a raiding party.

Attempts to pick up the raider's trail will require a tracking check (DC30) due to the torn up ground resulting from the battle and as the raiders are now making a deliberate effort to cover their tracks. Even if the PCs discover the trail, they will not be able to overtake the raiding party.

Upon returning to Far Downs, the news that the PCs were able to follow the raiders and to lay waste to a gnome village will be greeted as a successful conclusion. The raids end, as this was the desired outcome of the operation. Caidax's party return to their base, but they will soon resume their activities, plaguing yet another of the border nobles. The PCs will be rewarded with double their pay and will be free to return to Verbobonc City now that the threat is over.

News of the attack on Grimthrall will spread and while some will point to the end of the raids as proof the gnomes were behind the unrest all along, there are those who would question the need for the PCs assault on Grimthrall. PCs will be considered murderers by the Free Alliance. The effect on relations between the Viscounty and the Alliance will be strongly negative.

Collect one gnome influence point from any PC that holds one. The influence point will be returned to the clan that gifted it accompanied by an explanation of what happened with the list of dead.

### **The End**

## **Experience Point Summary**

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the discretionary roleplaying experience award. The roleplaying award should be given for consistent character portrayal and contribution to the fun of the game. You can award different roleplaying amounts to different characters.

Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

<b>Encounter Four</b>	
Defeat or Drive off the Ankheg	125 xp

<b>Encounter Five</b>	
Avoiding the being Arrested	25 xp

<b>Encounter Seven</b>	
Scouting the Intercept Routes	50 xp

<b>Encounter Eight</b>	
Avoid Gnome Ambush	50 xp
Avoid Gnome Bloodshed	50 xp

<b>Encounter Nine</b>	
Defeat the Raiders	75 xp
Capture Caidax	50 xp

<b>Conclusion B</b>	
Question Caidax or Raider Prisoner	25 xp

Total experience for objectives	450 xp
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Discretionary roleplaying award	0-50 xp
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[Note to authors: the roleplaying award should be 10% or less of the total award for objectives, if you are writing in 3<sup>rd</sup> edition D&D. If you are writing in another game system, you may determine the amount at your discretion. Remove this paragraph.]

<b>Total possible experience</b>	<b>500 xp</b>
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## **Treasure Summary**

Player characters may keep items from the scenario that are listed on the treasure list below or which meet the following conditions:

1. The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.
2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless



the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.

3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items which are worth more than 250 gp that are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and all magical items, will be discovered in the possession of the character by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief. For other stolen items which meet the criteria in #1 above, use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

Any item retained according to these rules, which does not have a certificate, will not ever have a certificate issued for it.

The campaign staff reserves the right to take away any item or gold acquired for things that it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

### Encounter Three

Smoking Pipe (50 gp, -, ivory, common): This smoking pipe has the designed of earth elementals engraved on the bowl and is made of ivory.

### Encounter Nine

Quaal's Feather Token (Bird) (300 gp, -, feather, common)

24 gp, 28 sp

### Conclusion B

Masterwork Studded Leather (175 gp, 10 lb, leather, common) - This masterwork studded leather is fitted for small humanoids.

100 sp per PC (120 sp each if negotiated).

Favor of a Noble House of Verbobonc (0 gp, -, -, unusual, non-tradable) - Mark one only: - Favor of House Galan - Lord Galan counts the adventurer named above as trusted and faithful freeman. The ideals of good and true friendship are within your heart. House Galan stands by your side in times of need.

Influence point in Verbobonc Nobles (0gp, -, -, unusual, non-tradable) - The adventurer named above has earned an influence point with the nobles of Verbobonc. This Influence point will allow the adventurer to receive

support from the noble council at some time in the future.

### Conclusion C

50 sp per PC (60 sp each if negotiated).

Favor of a Noble House of Verbobonc (0 gp, -, -, unusual, non-tradable) - Mark one only: - Favor of House Milinous - The Black Griffon accepts the adventurer named above as one able to recognize that military might and strength are the hallmarks of all that is just on the battlefield. House Milinous will sponsor the adventure into the Milinous militia and provide support in times of need.

Collect one gnome influence point from any PC that holds one. The influence point will be returned to the clan that gifted it accompanied by an explanation of what happened with the list of dead.

### Conclusion D

100 sp per PC (120 sp each if negotiated).

Favor of a Noble House of Verbobonc (0 gp, -, -, unusual, non-tradable) - Mark one only: - Favor of House Milinous - The Black Griffon accepts the adventurer named above as one able to recognize that military might and strength are the hallmarks of all that is just on the battlefield. House Milinous will sponsor the adventure into the Milinous militia and provide support in times of need.

Collect one gnome influence point from any PC that holds one. The influence point will be returned to the clan that gifted it accompanied by an explanation of what happened with the list of dead.

## Appendix A – NPC Descriptions

**Cyril Holdforth male human Rog4:** CR4; Medium Humanoid; HD 4d6; hp 22; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Atks +7 melee (1d6 [18-20/x2], rapier), +7 ranged (1d8 [19-20/x2], light crossbow); SA Rog Sneak Atk +2d6; SD Evasion, Uncanny Dodge; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 15

*Skills and Feats:* Diplomacy +9, Sense Motive +8, Balance +10, Bluff +9, Climb +7, Decipher Script +9, Escape Artist +10, Open Lock +10, Pick Pocket +10, Hide +10; Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (Rapier), Weapon Focus (Rapier).

*Possessions:* Rapier, belt pouch with 3 gp, 2 sp.

**Scarlet Flame Mercenaries male human Ftr6:** CR6; Medium Humanoid; HD 6d10; hp 52hp (ea); Init +1 (+1 Dex); Speed 20 ft.; AC 16 (+4 scale mail, +1 buckler, +1 Dex); Atks +9/+4 melee (1d6+3 [x2], club), +11/+6 melee (1d6+6 [19-20/x2], scimitar), +5 ranged (1d8 [19-20/x2], light crossbow); AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +9, Jump +9, Ride +10, Handle Animal +7. Feats: Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Specialization (scimitar), Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Cleave, Improved Disarm, Point Blank Shot, Mounted Combat.

*Possessions:* Scimitar, Scale Mail, Buckler, Light Crossbow with bolt case and 10 bolts, belt pouch with 14 sp.

**Scarlet Flame Mercenaries male human Clr6:** CR6; Medium Humanoid; HD 6d8+6; hp 42; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (+1 Dex, +7 halfplate); Atks +6 melee (1d8+2 battleaxe [crit x3]), +5 ranged (1d8 light crossbow [crit 19-20/2x]); AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +7; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 13

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +6, Knowledge (Religion) +3; Move Silently +2, Speak Language (Common); Spellcraft +3; Brew Potion; Combat Casting, Weapon Focus (Battleaxe).

*Spells* (4/3/2): 0 - Inflict Minor Wound, Read Magic, Resistance, Virtue; 1st - Protection from Law (Domain); Doom, Entropic Shield, Obscuring Mist; 2nd - Bull's Strength (Domain); Hold Person, Summon Monster II.

*Special Abilities* - (Domain: Chaos & Strength). *Possessions:* Battleaxe, halfplate armor, light crossbow, 10 bolts, pouch containing 24 gp, and pouch spell components, holy symbol of Lle