



Readers of DRAGON® Magazine will remember John Nephew's creative revision of the pernicon in issue #108. He makes his first appearance here with an adventure involving the last stand of the remnants of a norker army. A resident of Duluth, Minnesota John has another module fated to appear in our pages in the future.

*Grakhirt's Lair* is an AD&D® adventure designed for 4-8 characters of 1st-3rd level. At least one strong fighter (above 1st level) should be in the party to increase survival chances in difficult combat encounters. A balance of basic character classes (fighter, magic-user, cleric, thief) is helpful for success.

[Note that the reference to the alignment of flinds in the FIEND FOLIO™ Tome has been altered. The flinds encountered here are chaotic evil, as are their gnoll cousins. — Editor]

### Adventure Background

In its scant fifteen years of existence, the town of Nolivari has had many hardships and trials, but it has always managed to pull through. It had to be carved out of a wilderness untamed by mankind for a thousand years (or so says *The Book of Dalayle*, a local chronicle), struggle for independence from the city-state of Ivirwylliw (far to the west), and mourn the loss of its leader, the one to have been its first prince. Even so, Nolivari has been prosperous; growing on the abundance of raw materials on the edge of the wilderness.

Recently, the town suffered repeated raids of norkers from the foothills of a great mountain range to the south. The raids continued over a period of eight weeks, at which point the druidess Aldrelle came from her hermitage to warn the prince of a great host of the humanoids coming to surprise and burn the town. Prince Corin assembled his small group of men-at-arms and militia and fortified the town as best he could, utilizing all materials available. Empty crates were filled with rocks and set up as makeshift walls. Hunting bows were brought out, old swords retrieved from attics, and hatchets, meat-cleavers, and pitchforks were sharpened for use.

The "great host" of norkers did arrive, 150 strong. Though great generals may sneer at such a small force, it was almost three times the number of trained warriors in the town. The battle

# GRAKHIRT'S LAIR

BY JOHN NEPHEW

The war is  
over—but  
there's one  
battle left

was desperate as the town's common folk valiantly fought for their homes and lives. The humanoids were driven back at a terrible price; nearly 250 defenders lay wounded or dead, a great loss for a population of little more than 1,000 people. No one in the town avoided loss of family, friends, or property.

But Nolivari had weathered the attack. According to local trappers and rangers, there should be no more than 50 norkers alive within 30 miles. What perplexes everyone is how the norkers, chaotic creatures by nature, could have been organized for battle on such a scale.

The druidess Aldrelle, who reappeared after the battle, had some new information. There have been rumors among other humanoid tribes that the norkers had a powerful leader named Grakhirt. Little is known about him except the unquestioning loyalty the norkers gave him; no other beings have even seen him. Before the battle, the norkers were organized at the lair of the tribe whose chieftain is named Hragtam; perhaps this Grakhirt resides there. The ambition and charisma of this person are apparent. If he could discipline the disorganized norkers like this, what could be done with the lawfully aligned humanoid races such as the goblins and hobgoblins? To prevent future invasions of Nolivari, Grakhirt must be eliminated.

This much the characters have learned since they arrived in town, one day after the great battle. Prince Corin has posted announcements asking for adventurers willing to capture or slay Grakhirt. A reward of 250 gp is offered to each member of such a party — not a very great sum, but Nolivari is not a very rich town (especially now). Prince Corin warns that Hragtam was not killed in the battle, and there are likely to be a fair number of norkers alive in the lair.

### For the Dungeon Master

The following information may be uncovered by the player characters once they reach Grakhirt's chambers in this adventure, or by using *charm person*, *ESP*, or similar questioning upon Grakhirt, if captured. Certain other spells, such as *legend lore* or *commune*, may provide fragmentary information that eventually produces the whole

story.

Half a century ago, a stranger came to the city of Ivirwylliw. He was the illusionist Arham, exiled from his native city in the far south. Powerful, cunning, and cruel, the wicked illusionist became associated with the city's notorious Assassin's Guild.

Though unable to gain an official position in the Guild hierarchy because of his class, and unable to become an assassin due to physical weakness, Arham achieved influence through deceit, threats, manipulation, and magic, and he prospered in his evil ways. Any man who opposed his plans, regardless of rank, would more often than not be found stabbed, poisoned, or inexplicably dead — with an expression of supernatural terror on his face. In time, even the Guildmaster dared not oppose Arham for fear of arcane or mundane retaliation, especially after the illusionist married the Guildmaster's daughter and she gave birth to a son. The child was named Grakhirt.

Arham had his son trained by the Guild in the skills of stealth and murder, and by himself in illusion. Grakhirt was intended to assume his father's power and influence, perhaps even with an official position — as Guildmaster — but this scheme never had the chance to be carried through. When the old Guildmaster died, the new one brought great enmity towards the illusionist and his offspring. After several failed murder attempts and the loss of some of the Guild's most talented assassins, Arham was slain while studying his spells.

Little thought was given to the 19-year-old son of Arham as the Ivirwylliw Assassins's Guild licked its wounds; indeed, the assassin/illusionist was not seen in Ivirwylliw after the slaying of his father. The few who noted his absence assumed that he had fled forever, and Arham's missing journals and spellbooks were thought to have been taken by opportunistic thieves.

In truth, young Grakhirt had fled southeast to one of his father's wilderness sanctuaries, a small group of caves near Nolivari that served as the lair of a tribe of norkers. Grakhirt withdrew here to meditate for a time and familiarize himself with his deceased father's abode, books, and magical devices. . . and to plot vengeance.

Grakhirt dreamed of raising humanoid armies who would rise up at his calling and follow him in conquest

across the lands. He would honor his father by being even greater and more terrible than had been planned. The norkers, manipulated by the clever Grakhirt (with help from his illusions and from pliable tribal authorities eager for territorial dominance), were organized for a military campaign. Raids were organized on farms to raise provisions and build morale. Then the great attack on Nolivari was set into motion, to attract the attention and support of other humanoid groups in the region which sought to halt human civilization's conquest of the wilderness. Such a movement in the wild lands could hardly go unnoticed. The druidess Aldrelle, informed by her friends in nature, warned Prince Corin. Anticipated and prepared for, the attack met with defeat.

Defeat at Nolivari may well have been the fatal step in Grakhirt's career. He has withdrawn to his lair to fume and plan his next move. It is the task of the player characters to stop him from making any more such plans, though his capture or elimination and the destruction of the norkers.

### Town Personalities

Below are detailed some major non-player characters of Nolivari and its vicinity. Their personalities and statistics are presented for use in player-character interactions as well as for ongoing campaign use.

Prince Corin is the ruler of Nolivari (AC 2; MV 12"; P7; hp 47; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; S 12, I 10, W 17, D 14, C 10, Ch 17; AL LG; *long sword of sharpness*, *chain mail* +3). He is wise, compassionate, cautious, kind, and respected by everyone in town. He will not seek out the norker lair himself for a couple of reasons. At age 62, he thinks himself too old to fight and realizes what bad shape the town would be in if he did not return (he has no heir). Above all, he desires to rebuild the town physically and psychologically.

Princess Teliva is Corin's wife (AC 10; MV 12"; 0-level human; hp 3; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 9, I 15, W 13, D 6, C 8, Ch 14; AL LG; *amulet of life protection*, *dagger* +1). She has an intelligence superior to that of her husband, but sometimes lacks his caution and common sense. Many times her cleverness has aided the town. Though she and Corin have no children and she is



beyond childbearing age, she is loved and respected by the townsfolk as much as her husband.

**Aldrelle the Druidess** (AC 4; MV 24"; D12; hp 65; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 12, I 13, W 16, D 12, C 10, Ch 17; AL N; *bracers of defense* (AC 4), *spear* +2, *hammer* +2, *boots of speed*, numerous potions and scrolls) is a powerful figure in the locale, but a solitary one. She lives to the southwest, in a hermitage deep in a forest, with three Initiates of the First Circle (3rd-level druids) named Aldrin, Vellic, and Maraz. Little is known about her motives, and she only comes out in public to warn of great danger. In reality, she is not very concerned with the problems of other humans — but she prefers not to have humanoids ravaging the area and harming the things with which she is concerned. Though well-armed, she hates to fight and has no desire to kill anything, even norkers, especially if someone else is able to do it. If the DM considers the party to be too weak, Aldrelle may permit one of her three Initiates to aid the party in this adventure. The Initiate should be fleshed out by the DM as desired, but he

or she uses no magical weapons and remains silent much of the time.

### The Wilderness

If this adventure is used in an ongoing campaign, the DM may fit it in wherever it fits best on his maps, altering the names of places and people as necessary. Otherwise, a map showing the route to Grakhirt's lair is not an absolute requirement; one may be generated quickly and easily if desired.

When the characters are equipped and ready to go, they proceed south along the trail obviously traveled by the norkers (the food scraps and tracks are telltale signs). The lair is known to be 22 miles south of Nolivari, and the trip can be made one day (assuming normal rest breaks are made) over normal terrain (see the DMG, page 58). Heavily equipped parties may require two days. Wandering monsters are checked for twice each day (morning and evening) and once at night (at midnight); an encounter occurs on a roll of 1 on d10. Roll d8 to determine what was encountered, using the following section:

**1. Bandits** (# 2-5; AC 7 or 8; MV 12"; 0-level humans; 1-6hp; hp 4 each; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; AL NE). Two of these bandits have leather armor, shields, and swords; the others (if any) have leather armor, short bows, and daggers. If at all possible these men will ambush the party.

**2. Centipedes, huge** (# 2-20; AC 9; MV 21"; HD 1/4; hp 1; #AT 1; Dmg nil; SA save vs. poison +4 or take 4-16 hp damage; makes saving throws at -2; AL N)

**3. Flinds** (# 3-6; AC 5; MV 12"; HD 2 + 3; hp 12 each; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 1-6 or 1-4/1-4; SA + 1 "to hit," 25% have flindbar which has two attacks per round, does 1-4 hp damage; and the person struck must save vs. "wands or be disarmed; AL CE). This group of flinds is hunting norkers, particularly those wounded in the battle. The flinds have fought the local norkers for years, but hate humans with equal passion.

**4. Leprechaun** (#1; AC 8; MV 15"; HD (1-1); 4 hp; #AT, 0; Dmg 0; SA become *invisible*, *polytroph* *non-living objects*, *create illusions*, and *ventriloquism*, all at will, and 75% *pick packets*; AL N). This mischievous little being, Larran by name, is looking for opportunities to play jokes, steal, and generally be a nuisance. He has already bothered a couple of groups of flinds, but they aren't as much fun — or as wealthy — as a group of adventurers. Larran has a fair amount of treasure hidden in a hollow tree nearby: 219 cp, 148 gp, four base 10 gp gems (moss agates), and two *Quaal's feather tokens* (bird and tree).

**5. Minimals, cave bear** (# 1-4; AC 8; MV 8"; HD 2 + 2; hp 11 each; #AT 3; Dmg 1-2/1-2/1-3; SA hug for 2-5 hp damage; surprise on 1-3; SD save as 7 HD vs. poison and death magic, + 2 save vs. spells; AL N)

**6. Norkers** (# 1-6; AC 3; MV 9"; HD 1 + 2; hp 6 each; #AT 2; Dmg 1-3/1-6; AL CE) These are stragglers from the battle who managed to get away, but are still homeless and lost in the wilderness. Being very desperate, they attack anyone or anything they encounter. Each has a pouch with 1-6 sp, 1-4 ep, and a few miscellaneous and virtually worthless items.

**7. Spiders huge** (# 1-4; AC 6; MV 18"; HD 2 + 2; hp 9 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA surprise on 1-5 (d6), poison (save at +1 or die); leap 30'; AL N)

**8. Wolf, dire** (# 1-2; AC 6; MV 18"; HD 3 + 3; hp 17 each; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8;

AL N). These avoid well-armed groups, preferring to pick off lone stragglers. The eating has been good because of the number of wounded norkers who fled the battle, so the wolves won't put themselves out to attack healthy, dangerous characters.

## Starting the Adventure

When the party reaches the lair, read the boxed section below to the players.

Your party has followed the norkers' trail all the way to its source — a small opening about 4' high in a rocky hill. The area you are in is dominated by the foothills of a great mountain range visible in the distance to the south. To the west is a dense forest in which Aldrelle is rumored to live.

Near the cave mouth is a pond, fed by a small stream that trickles down from the mountains. Next to the pond is a charred, dead tree with axe marks upon its trunk. Though there are a few scrubby bushes, the landscape is mainly clothed with short, sun-baked grass that is dead virtually everywhere except by the stream.

Seeing the rocky path and many limestone outcroppings on the hills, it would seem that caves beneath the entrance occur here naturally or could easily be hewn from the rock, which has at most only a thin layer of soil atop it.

**Two norkers** (AC 3; MV 9"; HD 1 + 2; hp 6,7; #AT 2; Dmg 1-3/1-6; AL CE) are posted as guards on the hill, directly over the entrance. They are only surprised on a roll of 1 on a d12. When the party comes within 200 yards of the cave mouth, the norkers hide and move to get behind the party as the characters enter the cave. If such happens, the party is surprised on a roll of 1-3 on d6. If the party inspects the whole hillside before entering, it has the normal chances of being surprised.

On the bottom of the pond is the skeleton of an elf whose party stumbled upon the cave at a time when there was a full lair of norkers around. Most of the adventurers got away, but the elf fell into the pond after receiving his death blow. The norkers never bothered to search for the body, so there it lies with its treasure: 3 gp, 7 tarnished sp, and a

platinum brooch worth 45 gp. Because of the rotting material in the stagnant pond, anyone who drinks the water must make checks for both contraction of disease and parasitic infestation, with a + 10% addition to each chance of occurrence. A parasitic infection occurs in the intestines; any disease is acute and gastro-intestinal in nature (DMG, page 13-14).

The cave goes forward into the hill about 3', descends a bit, and opens to a small room (5' x 6') with a wooden trap door in the floor. Going through the trap door and climbing down the ladder under it leads to room 1 after a 9' descent.

Unless otherwise stated, all norkers found within this lair share the following statistics: AC 3; MV 9"; HD 1 + 2; #AT 2; Dmg 1-3/1-6 (bite/club); AL CE. Hit points are offered for norkers encountered, as well as any variant information on special individuals. Following their defeat, the norkers here are very depressed and angry, and are brooding over their immediate future (as well as their leadership, whom they hold to blame for the disaster).

## Upper Level

The ceiling height for this entire level (carved out by norkers) is not greater than 5½', requiring taller characters to stoop and be less able to fight effectively, unless using thrusting or stabbing weapons such as short spears, daggers, and short swords. Any character between 5½'-6' in height has a -1 "to hit" on all attacks, save for those made with thrusting and stabbing weapons. Characters taller than 6' have a -2 "to hit" penalty on all attacks of any kind and cannot use medium or large shields effectively (no armor class reduction for their use). All dwarves, gnomes, and halflings are completely unaffected by the ceiling height with regards to attacks they make, though they must use weapons appropriate to their size, of course.

**1. Entrance Room.** The ladder goes down to this room. Though the room is empty of traps and creatures, there are signs that it recently held many beings. Discarded food scraps, an occasional trail of blood, a couple of broken weapons, and some discarded, bloodied bandages are scattered about. The door to the south was crudely made and has

rusty hinges, so an *open doors* attempt is at one less in six chance to succeed (e.g., someone who opens doors on a 1-3 must now roll a 1-2 to succeed).

**2. Guard Alcoves.** Each alcove is occupied by a norker. The two guards (hp 8,7) both bear minor wounds from the battle against Nolivari (each being down 1 hp). They attack all intruders with ferocity, especially humans, but wait for the party to come up the passage so that they have a better chance of gaining surprise (1-3 on a d6). One wears an unadorned rusty iron medallion (worthless) around his neck on a slightly tarnished silver chain (10 sp value).

**3. Drunken Guard.** Slumped against the wall of this alcove is a highly inebriated norker, unconscious (hp 5). He could easily be dispatched, and it takes quite a bit of stimulus to wake him. He has no items of value on his person. Lying beside him is an emptied wine amphora. As much of its contents are on the floor as are in the norker.

**4. Solitary Cell.** This cell is particularly damp, having a trickle of water coming in from its ceiling. Its occupant is a weak and starving half-elf (AC 10; MV 12"; T2; hp 2 (normally 9); #AT 0 (weakened and unarmed); AL NG). He is quite helpless at the present and would be very grateful to the party if rescued, but he cannot help the party in their ventures here because of his weakness. He asks for food so he can survive and get to Nolivari. Nothing else of interest is here.

**5. Large Cell.** Chained to the limestone wall here are five prisoners. This is where the majority of the prisoners of Grakhirt and the norkers are put. Conditions are terrible, to say the least, and the prisoners have been ignored since the battle with Nolivari.

Not counting a starved and dead goblin, and the bones of an old dwarven prisoner, three prisoners remain:

1. A merchant whose entire caravan was ambushed and destroyed by the norkers (AC 10; MV 12"; 0-level human; hp 2; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); AL N). The norkers now hold him here for a ransom that can never come, since he has nothing of value left in the world. If rescued, he has no way of paying the party back in

valuables or gold. This man is very depressed, feeling that he has nothing to live for — though killing a few norkers would appeal to him.

2. A flind that has been tortured for the entertainment of the chieftain and tribe (AC 10; MV 12"; HD 2 + 3; hp 1 (normally 9); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); AL CE). He won't survive long without care. If a party nurses him back to health and treats him well, he voices his thanks but takes advantage of any chance to get away. He has no true sense of gratitude to the characters. The flind has neither weapons nor armor.

3. A huge, battle-scarred norker named Kargh (hp 10; #AT 1 or 2 if armed; Dmg 1-3/by weapon type if armed). Kargh was recently imprisoned after protesting to the norker chieftain, Hragtam, about the tribe's domination by Grakhirt. If released by the party and questioned, he tells them as much and offers to help them slay Hragtam. He will also show them the way to the lower level. He speaks a smattering of Common as well as Norker and Hobgoblin.

Not one of the prisoners has any item of value. Other than their chains, there is nothing else in the room.

**6. Feast Hall.** (The door to this room is oiled and much used, so an *open doors* roll is unnecessary.) This room is used for meals and celebrations, as well as torturing of prisoners — an activity that these norkers consider an art. It was last used for a meal, so the four tables and crude stools are set out rather than piled haphazardly along the walls. Upon the roughly-hewn dais is a large, intricately carved, thronelike chair (obviously not of norker craftsmanship). If somehow transported out and sold, the bulky, 750-lb. chair could command as much as 2,000 gp on the open market. Behind the chair is a curtain of cheap red cloth dividing this room from the next.

Seated on the chair is a massive norker: Hragtam, the chieftain of the tribe (HD 3 + 2; hp 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1-3/by weapon type; STR 17). He has a broad sword, in a sheath slung over his shoulder, which he wields with two hands in combat. He is, at the time that the party enters, in a heated argument with his two bodyguards, each of which carries a footman's mace (hp 9,9; #AT 2; Dmg 1-3/by weapon type). The topic is the "traitor" Kargh (prisoner #3 in

room 5). If Kargh is in the party, he charges forward and engages Hragtam in melee. The guards do not attack Kargh (they openly sympathize with him), but they will attack the party members and Hragtam. Kargh and the bodyguards won't fight each other, even if it means that Kargh has to turn on the party — which happens if the chieftain is slain before the guards are, and Kargh is alive. If the party incidentally kills the guards in the battle, Kargh still shows them the secret door in room 7 (his hatred of Grakhirt is very strong).

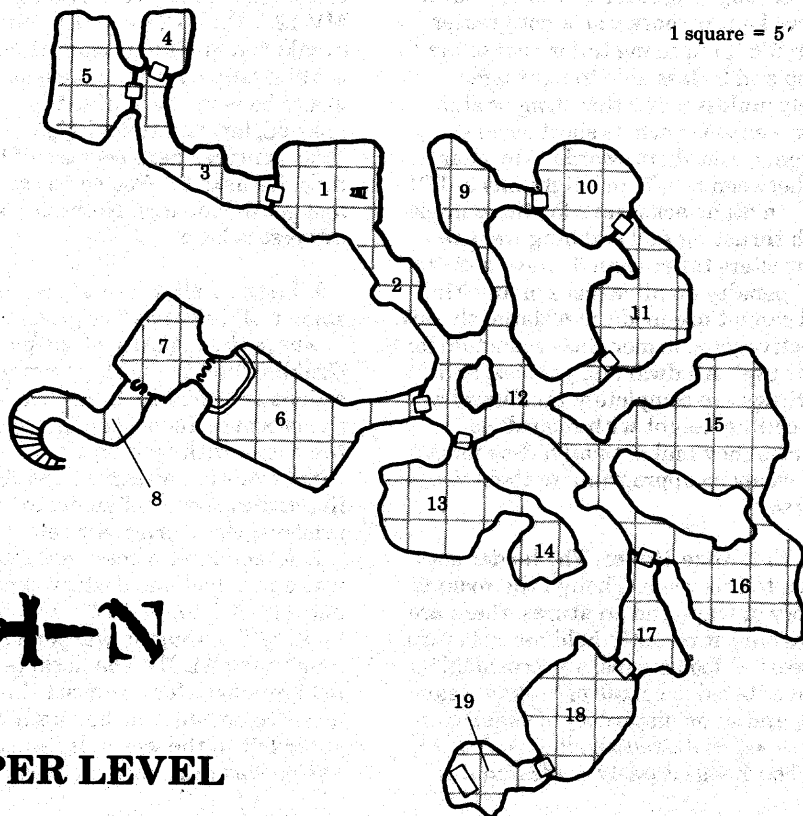
Each guard wears, as a symbol of his position, a jasper bracelet (red with green veins) worth 55 gp. The chieftain wears a gold ring set with a small, deep red spinel worth 92 gp. The ring is not magical.

Hragtam also has an item of value strung around his neck: a small, finely crafted, silver statuette of an Amazon warrior. Unfortunately, the norkers drilled a hole through its neck so that it could be strung on a copper wire and worn by their chieftain. As a result, it is only worth 155 gp; if the hole is somehow fixed, it could be brought all the way up to a 255 gp value.

**7. Treasure Room.** As well as being used for the storage of most of the tribe's treasure, this room is the sleeping quarters of the chieftain Hragtam. He has a crude bed, stolen from a human cottage some years ago, that is slightly rotted and has no mattress, but is instead filled with moldy, dirty straw.

Beneath the bed is an iron-banded oak chest. The chest is locked and has a poison needle (save vs. poison or slip into a coma for 2-20 days; a *cure disease* or *heal* brings a character out of the coma, but the comatose state is 50% likely to be mistaken for death by everyone present). The chest contains much of the tribal treasure: 430 cp, 2,439 sp, 1,054 gp, 25 pp, three gold earrings set with small pearls (each worth 160 gp total), a magic-user scroll with the spells *unseen servant*, *polymorph other*, and *magic mouth* within a jade map case (value: 435 gp), and a rusty flindbar taken in a raid a few years ago.

There are some other items of potential interest to the party scattered about the room. On the southwest wall are hung a variety of weapons: a composite long bow with a broken string, a short sword with a rusty hilt and notched



UPPER LEVEL

blade, three 5' spears with bronze heads in good condition, and a quiver of 20 arrows (four of which are silver-tipped). On the north wall, near the foot of the bed, is a 5' spear which holds on its tip a mummified, severed flint head (a war trophy of Hragtam's). On the southeast wall, just north of the secret door, is a large, human-made shield with a beautifully painted coat-of-arms (three gold, rampant lions on a violet field). Though the front looks excellent, the shield is corroded on the back and effectively useless for battle purposes.

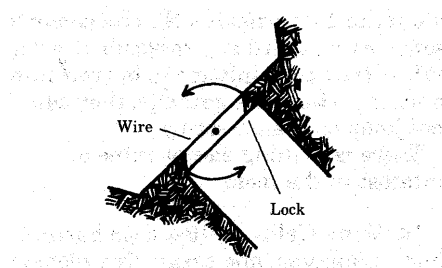
If Kargh (prisoner #3, room 5) is alive and allied with the party, he shows them the secret door on the southeastern wall before he leaves. Under no circumstances does he willingly enter the lower level. Kargh then leaves the lair; he can see that there is little or no hope for the tribe, and he seeks his fortune elsewhere – for the cause of evil, of course.

The secret door looks simply like two vertical cracks in the stone, with a small, thick wire protruding from the wall by the southernmost crack. In actuality, there are also cracks at the top and bottom of the wall (where they are virtually invisible against intersections of floor and ceiling with the wall), and the cracks go all the way through the wall, making the door a separate stone. The middle of the stone is drilled out and there is an iron cylinder there, set in the ceiling and floor, allowing the door to rotate. Thus, as shown on the secret door diagram, pushing on the secret door near its southernmost part (while pulling the wire, releasing the lock) allows entrance to the passage beyond. There is a slight incline to this room, and even more of one on the wall, towards the west; the door is also thicker and heavier on its southern part. This causes the door to fall shut by gravity. Someone must hold the door open while the party passes through, and it pulls itself shut once released unless blocked or spiked open. A minimum strength of 9 is required to push the door open from room 7.

However, the stone door has a lock on the side facing area 8, preventing anyone from passing back through the door from the lower level without the key (which Grakhirt possesses). The only way to open the door from area 8, besides slamming one's body against it (chance of success equal to *bend bars/lift gates* roll) or using a *knock* spell, is to

use Grakhirt's key. The thieves' *open locks* ability won't work because the catch is too heavy.

### SECRET DOOR DIAGRAM Upper level, room 7



**8. Wet Corridor.** This area of the complex is particularly damp. The slow trickle of water from above makes the wall glisten almost as if it is sweating, as well as causing rippled lime deposits on the walls. Because of the slipperiness from the water, any characters running along the passage or stairs must save vs. dexterity every 10' (roll dexterity or less on d20 to be successful) or fall, taking 1-6 hp damage if falling down the stairs to the next level, 30' below.

**9. Armory.** This cave is used by the norkers for the storage of weapons. Guarding the room is a single norker (hp 8; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg by weapon type (sling) or 1-3/by weapon type (club)). He normally carries a club and sling for weapons, using the sling for fighting intruders coming along the corridor and the club in melee combat. On each wrist he wears a leather band 4½" wide, each set with 16 silver studs and worth 19 sp.

Stored in the room are five javelins, two light crossbows, a broken crate with 94 normal arrows (of which 63 are in usable condition), 12 clubs of the sort normally used by norkers, two hammers, a single short sword with a rusty blade, an unopened crate with 120 rotating light quarrels (8 are still usable), three horsemen's flails, and three short bows without bowstrings.

There is also a human-sized suit of plate mail (a war trophy) that, though outwardly seeming to be of excellent quality, is corroded on the inside and rusted together. It would cost 150 gp to hire a smith to put the armor back into usable condition. At the DM's discretion, a character with the secondary

skill of armorer may be able to repair the suit himself, if given the proper tools and facilities.

**10. Food Storage.** The first thing one notices upon entering this room is that it is unusually chilly, especially close to the crates stacked on the west side of the room. The crates contain enough standard rations to supply a single person for 40 weeks, though the food tastes awful (but the norkers like it). Although there is another food storage chamber (room 13) on this level, this one is used to store perishable items because of its "cooling system" – a small patch of brown mold on the west wall (AC 9; MV 0"; HD nil; #AT 0; SA freezing for 4-32 hp damage if being approached within 5'; AL N). The crates are situated such that the norkers can put them in and take them out unharmed by the mold.

Beneath a section of the mold on the floor is the frozen body of a careless norker. It has at its side a small pouch with 3 pp, 1 gp, 14 sp, and 5 agates (value of 10 gp each).

**11. Subchief's Chamber.** This is the private room of the sub-chief, Krekal, third in command of the tribe. While the chief plans attacks and is in charge of just about everything in general, the sub-chief holds the real power in the lair: he has the keys to the secondary food storage (room 13) and the wine cellar (room 14), as well as the friendship and trust of many of the warriors. There has long been a power struggle – sometimes open and physical – between Krekal and Hragtam, the chief, but the witch doctor, has managed to keep them in an uneasy truce. The defeat at Nolivari has worsened the relationship.

Krekal, always wary for treachery from Hragtam, has a warrior norker posted at each door to his room 24 hours a day: The two guards (hp 8,8; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg by weapon type (hurled) or 1-3/by weapon type) carry two hand axes each for duty at this post. They raise the alarm throughout the lair (calling to other guards, leaders, and regular norkers) if any non-norkers appear or if anyone tries to enter by force. The sub-chief is informed if there is any matter of importance to the tribe. Each guard has a pouch with 1-6 pp and 2-8 gp.

When the party enters, the sub-chief is sleeping. He is off his bed and ready to fight one round after the guard calls



out, though he loses the initiative if immediately engaged in melee. The sub-chief (AC 2; HD 2 + 3; hp 15; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg by weapon type (hurled) or 1-3/by weapon type; STR 17, DEX 15) is quite strong and agile (-1 to AC), and he wields a footman's mace. He also has a throwing axe at his side, which he uses if an opportunity presents itself. On his left arm he wears an ivory band (worth 15 gp), and he wears a gold neck torc with a zircon gem on each end (worth 114 gp total). Hanging from his belt are two small pouches. One is full of poison ivy leaves, and the other has 7 pp, 3 gp, 5 ep, five garlic buds, a blue quartz (10 gp value), two human molars, a dart, and a 2" splinter of obsidian (3 gp value).

The sub-chiefs crude bed is by the south wall, consisting of a wooden frame supporting several boards, upon which is a matted-down pile of straw. Lost in the straw is a small violet garnet (worth 250 gp); there is a 15% chance of finding it per turn of searching (roll separately for each person searching). Beneath the bed the sub-chief stores a small variety of weapons: a sling with 19 bullets, a horseman's flail, a club, a hand axe, and five darts. Hung by nails on the north wall, just opposite the sub-chiefs bed, is a plush multicolored woven rug worth 160 gp. It is very bulky, though — about 1,000 gp encumbrance (6' x 12').

**12. Guard Post.** A guard stands at this point, placed on watch to report any intruders to the chief (room 6), the sub-chief (room 11), or the witch doctor (room 18) as the situation deems appropriate. Intruders have rarely come, and there is only one guard (hp 9). Furthermore, it is 50% likely that he is asleep when encountered, unless the party has made a lot of noise, in which case he raises an alarm in the lair. He carries 2 pp, 12 gp, 7 ep, a sling with 12 bullets, and a large (16 gp) rhodochrosite.

**13. Secondary Food Storage.** This room is locked, and the only key is in the possession of the sub-chief (room 11); the lock can be picked by a thief at normal probability.

Inside the room are many crates and barrels filled with preserved food, such as dried meat, iron rations, meat soaking in salt water in the barrels, etc. There is enough to keep the norker tribe going through the winter when

food isn't as easily available on the surface.

One of the crates, separate from the rest and in the southwest niche of the room, has rotting contents and containers. Burrowing around in the rotting food are 14 rot grubs (AC 9; MV 1"; HD less than 1-1; hp 1 each; #AT 0; SA kill victim in 1-3 turns; AL N). Use common sense with regard any rot-grub attacks. While they certainly try to burrow into a hand probing the garbage, they cannot jump onto a passer-by.

There is nothing else of value or interest in the room.

**14. Wine Cellar.** Filled with barrels, jugs, amphoras, and casks, this room is used for the storage of alcoholic beverages. There are 50 pints of ale, 125 pints of beer, 15 pints of mead, and 42 pints of watered wine. Most of the room's contents were stolen from merchant caravans, hapless travelers, and an occasional farmhouse.

**15. Common Room.** Housed in this room are the surviving females, young, and elderly warriors of the tribe: four females (HD 1; hp 4 each; #AT 2; Dmg 1-3/by weapon type) armed with crude hammers, 10 young (AC 5; HD less than 1-1; hp 1; #AT 0), and three "retired" warriors (hp 5,4,3).

A large female, the chiefs mate, is also present (HD 1 + 2; hp 10; #AT 2; Dmg 1-3/1-6). She wears the following jewelry: two earrings (gold, set with "tiger eye" gems) worth 11 gp each, a fox-skin sash (dyed red) around her waist (value: 25 gp), a lapis lazuli bracelet on her left arm worth 21 gp, two gold bracelets with platinum inlays (worth 12 gp each) on her right arm, and a large pouch at her side. The pouch contains the following items: 3 pp, 5 gp, 15 sp, 35 cp, two small cat teeth, about an ounce of pepper in a rolled-up wad of leaves (1 gp value), a half dozen sling bullets, a red-brown spinel (100 gp value), and three marble-sized balls of hardened clay. She uses a club in battle and also has a sling for situations when missile fire is necessary.

Distributed among the others are 17 ep, 96 sp, 214 cp, and 1-10 banded agates. The floor is covered with many worthless animal pelts for comfort.

**16. Warriors' Room.** This room contains all the norker warriors left after the battle, besides those on guard.

Many are wounded and not fully healed (only current hit points are given). Only eight warriors are present (hp 7,6 (x2), 5 (x3), 4,3), of whom five are awake and ready for combat. The others will be ready for combat by the second round of any fight.

On the persons of the warriors are the following items in total: 5 pp, 11 gp, 21 ep, 52 sp, 17 cp, three moonstones (valued at 55 gp each), two hematites (10 gp each), and a silver neck-chain (worn by the 7-hp norker) worth 3 gp.

**17. Witch Doctor's Guards.** In this room are two elite guards, those of the witch doctor. The norkers (AC 2; hp 10, 10; #AT 2; Dmg 1-3/by weapon type; each STR 16) use footmen's maces and carry small shields (hence the AC 2). They let *no one* into the witch doctor's room. These quarters are very spartan, and the norkers have no treasure.

**18. Witch Doctor's Room.** The witch doctor, Shum-Valka, is present when the party arrives (AC 3; MV 9"; HD equivalent to 2; hp 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1-3/1-6; MU2/C3 in effect). He will be ready to fight the party if he hears a battle with his guards in room 17. Shum-Valka has the magic-user spells *affect normal fires* and *push*, and the clerical spells *cure light wounds*, *protection from good*, and *resist fire*. Before the party enters the room, he casts *resist fire* and *protection from good* on himself, and uses other spells (especially *cure light wounds*) as needed. He also wears a *medallion of ESP* (30' range) that has made him one of the most powerful norkers in the tribe. The witch doctor is highly intelligent and should be cleverly played.

This room is rather messy and cluttered, filled with all sorts of things, useful and not, that Shum-Valka loves to fiddle with. His bed is by the west wall and is of rather good human make. Under the bed is a small open crate filled with seven blocks of wood, each cut with strange symbols and runes. The blocks have worn, smooth surfaces from the touch of fingers for over a century; they form the traditional "spellbook" of the witch doctor, having carved upon them the spells *affect normal fires* and *push*, as well as *ventriloquism*, *dancing lights*, *audible glamer*, *invisibility*, and *scare*. There is one spell on each block. A *read magic* deciphers the blocks for what they are, though one must also know the norker tongue.

They are worth up to 400 gp to interested magic-users or clerics in the area.

Covering the floor are, three rugs of predominantly gray and green designs (#1—gray-and-green checkered, threadbare, 5' x 12', worth 20 gp; #2—gray-and-black striped, thick and plush, 3' x 6') 14 gp value; #3—solid green, thin and worn, 4½' x 9', 9 gp value). Despite different sizes, each rug has an encumbrance of 200 gp. Scattered on, under, and around the rugs are 23 pp, 20 gp, 2 ep, 64 sp, 44 cp, several goblin and orc teeth, some crumpled pieces of parchment with illegible scrawls, some broken feather pens, and any other useless small items that the DM can think of.

On the north wall are three shelves. The lowest shelf contains a variety of herbs and plants, both fresh and dry; though most are harmless or possibly useful, there is also some poison ivy and deadly nightshade. (For possible herbs, look in the DMG's Appendix J, pages 220-221, and include wolfsbane). The middle shelf contains 31 vials and flasks of various sizes with liquid contents of many colors and texture. Most are worthless (colored water, syrup, or sap), but some are of interest: two vials of *unholy water*, one of *holy water*, a *potion of sweet water*, two flasks with poison, and five of oil. Anyone who drinks the poison must save vs. poison or die in 1-4 rounds, with no prior warning symptoms save for a warm flushed feeling through one's skin. The highest shelf has writing materials: five sheets of good parchment, a blank 35-page vellum book, three unopened jars of ink, and an open jar of ink that has spilled over (and ruined) some papers with unintelligible writings.

In the center of the room is a bronze brazier (value: 10 gp) with a block of incense burning in it. Scattered around are 37 more incense blocks.

**19. Shrine of Maglubiyet.** This chamber is a shrine to the deity Maglubiyet (see the *Legends & Lore* book; he is worshipped by norkers as well as goblins and hobgoblins). Directly opposite the entrance is an altar on which monthly sacrifices (every new moon) are made of the hearts of creatures with souls. The altar is carved from limestone and rudely sculpted with the forms of fighting norkers. Leering over the altar as if studying the figures is a large, stone statue of Maglubiyet, with

rubies as eyes. On either side of the altar is a dull gray iron brazier with smoking incense.

The ruby eyes on the statue can be removed with little difficulty. They are cursed, however; any being possessing one or both of them behaves as if in possession of a *cursed berserking sword* (see DMG, page 166). The *wish* or *exorcism* is needed to be rid of them only if the possessor has been affected by them, by carrying them into battle. If the gems are handled, the handler becomes uneasy and has a disturbing urge to become violent for any trivial reason. In the unlikely situation that the party attempts to sell the gems before again engaging in combat, they seem to have a 5,000 gp value; any NPC of semi- or better intelligence, when he touches them and experiences the uneasiness, automatically refuses to purchase them. In a superstitious area, word may get around and the PCs could find trouble or banishment for trying sell "devil stones."

There is a secret compartment in the back of the altar. It contains 32 sticks of incense (two of which are *incense of meditation*) and 110 pp.

## Lower Level

Most of this level has walls, ceilings, and floors glistening with condensation. The moisture drips down to form rivulets of water on the floors. Most of this level slants slightly towards cavern 20, allowing the rivulets to drain into the subterranean stream. This normally has no effect on characters (other than making thieves' *climb walls* skills virtually impossible: -70% chance of success), except at the fork in the passage out of room 20, wherein conditions are as those described in room 8 of the upper level.

The ceiling height on this level is 9', making all combat as normally performed.

**20. Underground Stream.** This stream travels off to a surface lake 17 miles away; anyone trying to swim this distance *must* be able to breathe underwater at will for hours on end, or else drowns within minutes of starting. Several white, blind fish flit about in the slow current.

Lying on the river bed is what appears to be a golden staff of supreme beauty, encrusted with gems and inlaid

with platinum. In actuality, it is a *permanent illusion* hiding the corpse of a witch doctor who opposed Arham, Grakhirt's father (see area 27, tomb 7). There is nothing of value on the body.

**21. Garbage Room.** The walls of this damp room are covered with fungus (not monster-types), and the floor is strewn with assorted trash discarded by Grakhirt, Arham, and the norkers that inhabited this level before them. Living in the trash are five scum creepers (AC 8; MV 3"; HD 1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; Dmg Nil; SA attaches to victim and does 1 hp damage per round thereafter; AL N) who viciously defend their "hoard" against intruders. There is nothing of value (in human terms) in the room.

**22. Torture Chamber.** This currently unused room is strewn with an assortment of tools for inflicting pain upon captives. On the south wall is a rack, and next to it a large stone table with an assortment of huge whips draped over it. Three of the nine whips are real; the other six are actually the tentacles of a *kampfult* (AC 4; MV 3"; HD 2; hp 12; #AT 6; Dmg 1; SA surprise on 1-3; AL NE). The main body of the *kampfult* is hidden under the table, looking like an extra leg.

It was common custom for any treasure found on torture victims to be given to the chieftain. However, there is a secret compartment in the floor (the loose stone covering it is held down by a leg of the stone table) in which a dishonest torturer hid some loot for himself. It contains a pouch (holding 7 pp, 4 gp, a moonstone worth 50 gp, and a *ring of sustenance*), and a knife (gold-inlaid blade and pommel; worth 12 gp).

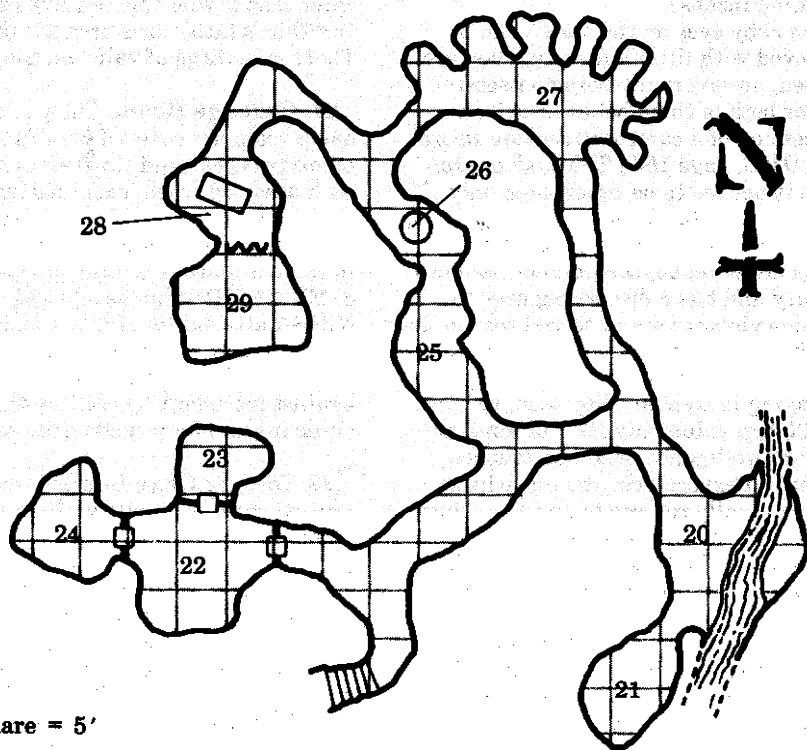
**23. Auxiliary Cell.** This room was used to hold prisoners for the torture chamber or if the upper-level cells were filled. A flind skeleton is chained to the wall, as it has been since Arham first took over the lower level. There is nothing of value here.

**24. Torturer's Room.** This chamber was the residence of the tribal information-gatherer and "entertainment specialist." The room has been abandoned since the lower-level takeover by Arham and now is empty.

**26. Enchanted Mud.** This chamber filled with mud, kept from drying by a



# LOWER LEVEL



1 square = 5'

leak in the magical fountain in room 22. Lying dormant in the muck are six mud-men (AC 10; MV 3"; HD 2; hp 9,8; #AT 1; Dmg nil; SA mud-throwing; SD magical weapons required to hit, immune to certain spells — see page 93 of the *Monster Manual II*; AL N). Know this monster well before refereeing the encounter. The mud-men get up one round after someone enters the mud and attack on the second. Clever characters should be able to get across alive, though they cannot directly destroy the monsters without magical weapons. When all other beings are out of the pool, the mud-men sink back below the surface.

Arham brought the mud-men here years ago, and Grakhirt sees no need to have them removed.

**26. Magical Fountain.** This room has smooth walls, and its only feature is a fountain in the middle. Water wells up from deep below, filling a rock outcropping that was carved into a circular tub. The enchanted waters overflow, and form a small stream into the chamber with the mud-men, room 21. The fountain has the magical power to act as a

*crystal ball* if a drop of any sort of blood is placed in it and the desired location is concentrated on. From here, Grakhirt was able to watch the battle at Nolivari and has even seen the characters traveling through the dungeon. There is a flask of fish blood hanging from a rusty iron spike in the wall. The fountain is mildly evil, as it always attempts to portray scenes which incite trouble. The *crystal ball* power doesn't 'work outside of the tub, and the waters lose even their radiance of magic if taken more than 30' from it.

The fountain is on a natural spring, but the enchantments were placed by Arham. It took a great deal of work to make it, and it is a major reason that Grakhirt chose this as his hideout.

**27. Burial Chamber** This room was used by the norkers before Grakhirt came as the burial place for their witch doctors; Each of the seven niches in the walls contains a stone sarcophagus, and a norker witch doctor's body — often with a small bit of treasure. From left to right on the map, the contents are:

#1: The body is quite rotten, but on" the skull is a simple copper crown,

worth 2 gp, and at its side is a rusty horseman's mace.

#2: All contents are little more than dust; if sifted through, 1-4 pp may be found.

#3: During the lifetime of this witch doctor, the process of embalming was learned from human merchants who thus profited from the purchase of the items necessary. The body is wrapped in strips of linen and mummified but is *not* undead. On its fingers are six rings of pure gold, each set with a different gem and worth 20 gp: the first, obsidian; the second, blue quartz; the third, eye agate; the fourth, azurite; the fifth, turquoise; and the last, hematite.

#4: In this sarcophagus is a witch doctor who was less than entirely devout in his service of Maglubiyet; his transgressions were not too serious, so he was only cursed to be a ghoul rather than be sentenced to eternal torture (AC 6; MV 9"; HD 2; hp 12; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA paralyzation; AL CE). He has been promised a place in the armies of Maglubiyet in the afterlife if he performs a quota of evil acts. He has been somewhat inhibited, though, by the sarcophagus, in which he has been trapped for over half a century. Anyone coming within 10' of the sarcophagus can hear scratching, thumping, and howling noises within it.

#5: This body is poorly adorned and rotting; the only valuable item placed with it was a silver dagger (20 gp value).

#6: At first glance, this embalmed, mummified body would seem to be without treasure or valuables, but inside the norker's mouth is a tourmaline worth 100 gp.

#7: This sarcophagus is empty except for 'a couple of mildewy shrouds. It used to hold the body of the witch doctor who opposed Arham. Arham permitted the norker's ceremonial burial to gain the humanoids' good will (the norkers did not know that Arham killed him) before taking the entire lower level as his own. He then moved the body (see encounter #20) and disguised it under an illusion. Arham was perhaps overly vengeful at times.

There are sconces and torches on the walls, but none are lit. Inscribed on the lid of each of the sarcophagi is a short phrase, in Norker, such as "Gone to serve Maglubiyet" or "In the Land of Eternal War."

**28. Meeting Room.** This room is unadorned and unfurnished, save for a rectangular oak table and four chairs, one side with one and the other with three. Arham and Grakhirt would meet here with the norker leaders. There is nothing else in the room.

**29. Grakhirt's Inner Quarters.** Grakhirt himself lives in this room, which is comparatively well furnished. There is a nice feather bed, an oak desk, a book case, and a dresser with a large mirror.

Grakhirt is well prepared (AC 3; MV 12"; A2/I4; hp 11; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon or spell; SA assassination, spells, poison; SD spells; S 13, I 16, W 15, D 18, C 12; Ch 17; AL CE; *blur*, *chromatic orb*, *darkness*, *invisibility*, *phantasmal force*). He wears a red silk tunic with sable trimming (value: 160 gp), a brown leather belt with gold wire decorative stitching and a gold-inlaid silver buckle (worth 55 gp total), and a mink cape (worth 2,700 gp).

As the party has progressed through the dungeon, Grakhirt has watched them in the magical fountain, paying careful attention to the strengths and weaknesses of each character. Before the party enters his room, he casts *invisibility* and *blur* upon himself. He tries to assassinate the character who seems to be the most powerful (i.e., the one who has performed best so far), and then uses other spells and his dagger as appropriate. If he is seriously hurt (under 4 hp left), he casts *darkness* and attempts to escape.

In the dresser are other clothes, mostly of average quality. On the desk is an inkwell, a feather pen, and several pieces of parchment detailing the norker forces, the Nolivarian forces, and the outcome of the recent battle in a "play-by-play" style — with many angry notes.

The volumes on the book case are mostly the journals of Arham and Grakhirt, imparting all the information in the "For the Dungeon Master" section at the beginning of this module. Also included are details on the structure, operation, signals, passwords, and key members and contacts of the Ivirwylliw Assassins' Guild. Though the material is from eight years ago, much of the information is still valid. These journals would be safest in the hands of Prince Corin (see "Afternotes" below). One of the volumes deals entirely with the

customs, culture, and nature of the norkers and other humanoids of the region. In some of the books are maps showing the locations of Arham's other wilderness hideouts.

Also on the shelves are Arham's first- and second-level spellbooks (Grakhirt hid the others, which he doesn't know how to use yet, in other hideouts). The first-level spells are *audible glamer*, *chromatic orb*, *color spray*, *dancing lights*, *darkness*, *detect illusion*, *hypnotism*, *phantasmal force*, *spook*, and *wall of fog*. The second-level spells are *alter self*, *blindness*, *blur*, *detect magic*, *fascinate*, *improved phantasmal force*, *magic mouth*, *mirror image*, *ventriloquism*, and *whispering wind*.

### Afternotes

If the DM is willing to do a little more work, and the players are shrewd enough (and play characters of a non-good alignment), an arrangement may be made with the Assassins' Guild of Ivirwylliw; the document made by Grakhirt has information potentially fatal to the Guild. It goes without saying that such a deal would be extremely

dangerous. The assassins don't trust the characters and would just as well have them out of the way along with the document.

For along-term campaign scenario (maybe after the characters get to higher levels), the PCs may be hired by Prince Corin or the Grand Duke of Ivirwylliw to eliminate the Guild. This would take a great deal of work on the DM's part and would be very dangerous for the player characters — even more than the previous adventuring possibility. But the Assassins' Guild is at least as wealthy as dangerous, and the Grand Duke would certainly look favorably on the party and reward them accordingly.

Even after the document is in safe hands, there are still opportunities opened by the adventure; perhaps the party could learn from Arham's journals the location of other wilderness hideaways — most of which have since become the home of monsters.

