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Sample file

INTRODUCTION

S*pectre of Sorrows* is the second part of a heroic DRAGONLANCE adventure campaign that ranges across Ansalon. The world is still readjusting to the death of three Dragon Overlords and the return of the gods, leaving much of the world in confusion and chaos. In this chaotic time, the characters are embroiled in events that will shape the world to come. And it all began with a tiny, unassuming music box.

Encounter Levels: *Spectre of Sorrows* is designed for a party of four characters of 7th–8th level. By the end of the adventure, the characters will have overcome a number of major milestones which should be enough to advance them to approximately 14th level.

PREPARATION

In order to run this adventure, you will need a copy of the *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, *Monster Manual* and the *DRAGONLANCE Campaign Setting*. These books are all that are absolutely necessary to run this adventure, although there are a number of other supplemental books that will aid in fleshing out the campaign (as described below).

Spectre of Sorrows is the follow-on to the *Key of Destiny* adventure, and thus it is assumed the player characters have taken part in many of the exploits described in that adventure. If this is not the case, or if you would rather the characters become embroiled in the events of this adventure without having them get involved in the events of *Key of Destiny*, please refer **Getting Started** on page 5 for suggestions on how to incorporate this adventure into your campaign.

The adventure is set more than six months following the return of the gods at the end of the *War of Souls* trilogy. *Age of Mortals* provides in-depth detail on the state of the world following the return of the gods, as well as introduces a new core class (the mariner) and new prestige classes, spells, and magic items of the era. Several NPCs in this adventure use core classes or prestige classes that can be found in other books, but all pertinent abilities and statistics are included within the NPC entries in **Appendix Two**.

Text that appears in shaded boxes is information for the players, which you may read aloud or paraphrase as appropriate. Any text found in sidebars contains information pertinent to running the adventure, such as background information or things for you, the Dungeon Master, to keep in mind.

Monster and NPC statistics are presented in abbreviated form in the encounter entries. For standard monsters, full statistics can be found in the *DRAGONLANCE Campaign Setting* or the *Monster Manual*. Some monsters have also been taken from the *Age of Mortals* and the *Bestiary of Krynn* sourcebooks, though all pertinent abilities and statistics for these monsters are included in **Appendix Two**, along with any statistics for

unique monsters. Details on new monsters introduced in this adventure are presented in **Appendix One**.

Before you start the adventure, you should completely read through the adventure from beginning to end, including the Appendices, in order to familiarize yourself with the book.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

As far as most people believe, it all began with a tiny music box.

In many ways, they are correct, for the music box known as the *Key of Quinari* does play an important part in the events to come. However, the music box does not appear until near the end of the story.


During the War of the Lance, the Silvanesti Forest became twisted by the magic of the *dragon orb* that brought the nightmares of the elven Speaker Lorac into a horrifying reality. Following the War of the Lance, the Silvanesti elves returned to their homeland to try to cleanse the forest of the darkness that tainted it. It was not a task for the faint of heart, or weak of spirit, for even following Lorac's death and the disappearance of the *dragon orb*, the land still resonated with the foul echo of Lorac's unending terror.

One group that traveled through the twisted forest, working together to try to heal the land, was led by a powerful member of House Cleric, a priest of Quenesti-Pah (the name the elves give to Mishakal) known as Lothian Shadowbrow. Lothian was accompanied by Kayleigh Starfinder, a maiden of House Royal, whose skill with magic was said to have been surpassed, only by her beauty. Prior to the War of the Lance, Kayleigh and Lothian had been betrothed to each other in a prearranged marriage. At first this arrangement was just a simple formality, an agreement between families, but for Lothian it was soon to become much more.

For many months, Lothian and Kayleigh worked together with the kirath warriors to drive away the nightmare. A friendship swiftly grew between them, a camaraderie forged in trials and tribulations. However, something else also began to develop—a growing lust in Lothian for his noble companion.

It became clear to Lothian that Kayleigh's feelings were not the same as his own. He would bring attention to their relationship, only to hear from her that it was friendship and companionship, and nothing more. At first in denial about her comments, he started to wonder whether any of the other male elves in the kirath were the true target of his beloved's affections. This suspicion gnawed away at his soul.

Despite there never being any true vows of love between himself and Kayleigh, Lothian's mind finally seized upon the notion that his beloved had been seduced away from him by another. As bitterness and hatred grew in his heart, his connection to the goddess of healing and



love began to wane, but the cleric paid little attention to that for he had other, more pressing matters upon his mind—how to make Kayleigh his own.

As weeks passed, the group drove deeper into the midst of the Nightmare, stumbling eventually upon a band of skeletal warriors led by an elven death knight. Unprepared and overpowered, the elves fought to escape, but in the process of protecting her warrior companions from the death knight's magic, Kayleigh was struck down. The kirath went berserk, tearing through the skeletal warriors while Lothian rushed over to the fallen maiden. Gathering her up in his arms, Lothian tried to heal her, but Quenestipah did not answer his prayers. In desperation, Lothian called out to any god who would answer him—and his call was answered by an unexpected source.

The death knight felled the other elven warriors with blow after blow. He approached Lothian last, and made the grief-stricken elf a bargain—agree to serve Chemosh, the Lord of the Dead, and Kayleigh would be bound to Lothian for eternity. Blinded by grief and rage, Lothian agreed. The death knight called upon his magic to take the priest, the fallen maiden, and the bodies of the fallen kirath away from the forest.

His dedication ritual to Chemosh complete, Lothian was granted the ability to anchor Kayleigh's spirit to him forever, tying her to his side through undeath and magic. However, this was a pale shadow of what Lothian believed he deserved. As the years passed, Lothian grew more and more dissatisfied with the bargain he had struck with the Lord of Bones, yet were he to turn from Chemosh, the god would take Kayleigh from him.

In the aftermath of the Chaos War, with the absence of the gods, Lothian exulted. No longer was he as bound to Chemosh as Kayleigh was bound to him. It was then that Lothian began to research ancient lore, seeking a way to return Kayleigh to his side. In the ancient manuscripts that he uncovered, he found reference to a mysterious relic called the *Shroud of Soul's Calling*. It was said that the shroud could bring a spirit back from the afterlife. It lay within Quinari's Tomb, where it could be used to bring the ancient queen back from the realms of the dead so she could serve her people once again.

Delving further and further into his research, unworried by the passage of decades, Lothian learned that Quinari's Tomb was said to lay somewhere within the Dragons' Graveyard, the portal to which could only be opened by the song of a dragon of Light or by the key given to Quinari during the First Dragon War. For years, Lothian searched for clues about the whereabouts of the *Key of Quinari*, calling upon the powers of mysticism he had gladly embraced over his lost clerical magics. Yet no matter what powers he called upon or how hard he worked, he could find no clues to its location. He did not despair, however, for he knew that if he were patient, the answer would come to him.

During the War of Souls, only the strength of Lothian's magic and the force of his will kept Kayleigh by his side, preventing her from being lost to the so-called One God. When the War of Souls ended, however, the true gods

returned and Lothian felt the first stirrings of doubt—Chemosh would want Lothian to obey him once more, something the dark elf had no desire to do.

Six months after the War of Souls, a tiny music box was brought from the protective sanctuary of the Silvanesti Forest, triggering a powerful vision that came to Lothian's mind. Finally, he would be able to gain access to the Dragon Graveyard, retrieve the *Shroud of Soul's Calling*, and return Kayleigh to life. But if he left the protection of his fortress, Chemosh would surely strike out at him. So, greatly daring, Lothian used his beloved's bound spirit to find a group of hapless individuals who could bring the *Key* to where it needed to be, along with a few other items that could be used against Chemosh and his servants. The stage was set, the players in place, and Lothian sat back to watch the play unfold, little realizing his own part in the unfolding events was yet to come or that his efforts to locate the Dragons' Graveyard had not gone unnoticed.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

In Chapter One, the characters escape the Peak of Malystriyx, in the process escorting a group of freed kender to the relative safety of Port Balifor. Unfortunately, they find themselves caught between a horde of red dragonspawn from the east and an army of Dark Knights from the west. Avoiding capture, the PCs are rescued by a group of phaethons who provide much-needed assistance. The phaethons reveal that the heroes are still bound by fate, but that a pair of artifacts known as the *Tears of Mishakal* might help them. The phaethons have one of the *Tears*, with the second being in the clutches of the Knights of Neraka at Darkhaven. Parting ways with the refugee kender, the heroes journey to Darkhaven with the phaethons' Tear and attempt to liberate the other one from the Dark Knight dungeons.

Chapter Two finds the characters in Flotsam, where they must investigate the means of ridding one of the *Tears of Mishakal* of its corruption. Lord Toede has the information, but he also has his eyes on the *Tears*. Armed with the knowledge provided by Toede, the heroes set out for Nordmaar, either by ship or by traveling overland along the Rugged Coast.

In **Chapter Three**, the heroes confront numerous hazards and dangers at sea and on land, leading ultimately to a shipwreck and becoming prisoners of the Dargonesti. The heroes discover that the sea elves are under the thrall of an aquatic ogre priest of Zeboim, and must liberate them before they themselves can escape.

In **Chapter Four**, the characters must cross the Kern peninsula, where a war is being waged between the hags and the ogre titans for control over the ogre nations. In order to get to Nordmaar, the characters must either strike a bargain with the hags or titans, or they must risk being on their own as they cross a land caught in the grip of a terrible civil war. At the northern coast of Kern, the characters must unravel the mystery of the Clocktower of Miremier in order to find the *Scroll of Stellar Path*, an important key to completing their journey, along the way potentially making a gnome very happy indeed.

In **Chapter Five**, the characters must work their way through the marshy domain of the black dragon, Mohrlax (Pitch), in search of the Fountain of Renewal. Pitch may aid them or hinder their efforts, depending on how the heroes approach the search for the means of purifying the *Tears of Mishakal*.

Chapter Six finds the characters set upon by an army of undead when they emerge from the swamps. The ancient ruins of Qwes once more hear the clash of steel and magic as the characters battle the army raised by the Betrayer to destroy those who wield the *Shard of Light* and the *Tears of Mishakal*. Fighting their way across a battlefield of the undead, the characters run into a contingent of draconians from Teyr, who will escort the characters to the barbarian city of Wulfgar. In Wulfgar, Kayleigh once more reveals herself, but freed somewhat from Lothian's control, the spirit is finally able to answer some of the character's questions. She pleads for them to stop Lothian from defiling the Dragons' Graveyard.

In **Chapter Seven**, the characters seek out the entrance to the Dragons' Graveyard. They open the portal with the *Key of Quinari* and enter the pocket dimension where the good dragons come to die. At that moment, having learned of Kayleigh's betrayal, Lothian strikes. As Lothian engages the characters, Kayleigh tries to stop him, but finds herself torn when the Betrayer appears. The agent of Chemosh has come to exact payment from Lothian for turning against the Lord of the Dead. This gives the characters time to use the *Tears of Mishakal* to open Quinari's Tomb, where they will discover that their journeys are far from over!

GETTING STARTED

As *Spectre of Sorrows* is the second part of an ambitious adventure trilogy meant to take characters from (roughly) 1st through 20th levels, there are a number of different things to take into account when running this adventure.

This chapter offers numerous suggestions on how to incorporate this adventure if you have not run *Key of Destiny*, how to keep the party together and motivated as they work through the adventure, and information on scaling the adventure for both higher and lower levels of experience, as well as other useful ideas.

PUTTING TOGETHER A PARTY

Spectre of Sorrows is the sequel to and continuation of the adventure *Key of Destiny*. It is assumed that most parties that were assembled in the first adventure continue on through the events introduced in this adventure. That might not be the case with your group, however. Some parties may have lost members during the events of the first adventure, while other parties might find themselves taking part in this adventure without any knowledge of the events found in *Key of Destiny*. You may even be starting the campaign with this adventure. What follows are suggestions on forming balanced parties, how to play races with ECLs, scaling the adventure, and how to introduce new characters into the game.

BALANCED PARTIES

This adventure, like most published adventures, is written for a party of four player characters, assuming one fighter, one wizard, one cleric, and one rogue in the party. As such, there are specific challenges aimed at the specialties of these characters—traps for rogues, magical research and useful spells for wizards, the combat ability of a pure fighter, and a cleric's ability to turn or rebuke undead creatures and cast divine spells.

It is certainly possible for parties composed of other mixes of classes to complete this adventure successfully, and there are ways that you can help things along. For example, if instead of a cleric the party has a mystic (a character unable to turn undead without the Sun domain), you can either tone down the strength of undead creatures, provide the party with a temporary NPC that can lend assistance, or provide the characters with a magical item that will help characters against undead (such as a weapon with the *disruption* quality). It will take a little work on your part as the Dungeon Master to go through the adventure and address those areas of concern.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

There may be any number of reasons why the encounters given in this adventure may seem either too easy or too hard for your players.

First, remember that the encounters are written with four characters in mind. If you have more or less in your group, you will need to either increase or decrease the difficulty of the encounter respectively. Do this by altering the number or type of monsters in an encounter (goblins to hobgoblins; changing an encounter of 7 goblins to 4 goblins for fewer characters or up to 12 for more characters). Alternately, you can give certain creatures levels in a character class to help balance the encounter (giving one of the goblins a few levels in mystic) or add a template (such as the Tainted Blood template from the *Bestiary of Krynn*). If a creature with class levels seems too powerful, you can remove a few levels. For creatures with templates, you can either remove the monster template or replace it with another one. This does require some work on your part, however, so it's best to be aware of and address these things in advance.

There are many times that you'll find that you need to change things in the middle of an encounter. You might find that the encounter is going too easily for the players, so you might want to throw something else in to make the encounter more difficult. Or, if the encounter is going badly, throw something in to help the characters out. Go with your gut instinct, and remember that the aim is to provide the players with an exciting and challenging, yet manageable, adventure.

INTRODUCING NEW CHARACTERS

There could be any number of reasons why you might have to introduce new characters into your ongoing campaign, from character deaths, to a player's loss of interest in the current character to having a new player join the campaign. Rather than just having the new character

appear in the group, there are a number of ways you can seamlessly introduce a new character to the group.

Unlike *Key of Destiny*, *Spectre of Sorrows* begins with the assumption that the characters are already experienced adventurers, placing them between 7th and 8th level. This opens up the possibility of allowing players to play more powerful races that might have been inappropriate at the start of *Key of Destiny*, where characters were assumed to be 1st level. The character levels for the start of *Spectre of Sorrows* may also allow for new characters to begin play with prestige classes, particularly as a Wizard of High Sorcery or a Knight of Solamnia. Keep in mind that some players may have been working towards those classes since 1st level and it may lessen the impact of their perseverance to have another player join the game with that class already achieved.

The easiest way to introduce a new character to an existing party is to run a short introductory scenario that introduces the character to the group. In just about any city or town locale, this can be rather easily accomplished in a tavern or inn, but that is not the only possibility. Other possible “key points” in the campaign where new characters could rather easily be introduced include the town of Flotsam or in the prison of the Dargonesti, or perhaps the character is a mercenary working for the hags of Kern or an inhabitant of the Clocktower. Of course, there are many other points in the adventure where a new character could be introduced, but those points should be discussed between you and the new player in order to make it a natural transition.

CHARACTER HOOKS

Spectre of Sorrows picks up where *Key of Destiny* left off, with the characters having already acquired the *Dragonlance of Huma*, as well as possessing both the *Key of Quinari* and the *Shard of Light*. These three items play an important role in the following adventure. While it is suggested that you run the *Key of Destiny* adventure first, it is not necessary for you to have done so in order to run this adventure—although it will require some planning on your part to introduce the necessary tools into the player’s hands.

The pivotal item the players must come across, which truly sets them on the path towards dealing with Lothian’s machinations, is the small music box known as the *Key of Quinari*. The song played by the music box is the key to opening the portal to the Dragons Graveyard. While this is the most important item the players must have, it is also the easiest for them to come across. They could pick it up at a merchant’s shop. They could find it mixed in amongst random treasure. A character may be given the music box by a mysterious stranger or a kender PC might just ‘find’ the box in their pouches.

In *Key of Destiny*, as the adventurers are exploring the ruins of Hurim, they find the magical blade known as the *Shard of Light*. This short sword is a powerful weapon against the undead. By the time the players reach the Ruins of Qwes, if they are not properly equipped to deal with undead, they will have a rough time of it.

Introducing the *Shard of Light* can be a bit tricky, but it can be accomplished in a number of possible ways: the heroes could discover the sword in the armory of the Dargonesti village when they make their escape, it could be located in one of the rooms of the Clocktower, or it could be contained within the treasure hoard of the black DragonLord Pitch. Other options are certainly possible, but remember that the *Shard of Light* is a powerful weapon that should only be gained once the characters have undergone some hardship to acquire it.

The third and final component the characters will require is the *Dragonlance of Huma*. While it only plays a relatively minor role in this adventure, it is both one of the most important weapons in the player’s arsenal and something the characters will have to struggle to keep hold of—they aren’t the only ones in the world that desire the weapon. Giving the *Dragonlance* to the characters is something that will require some work on your part, as it is a major artifact and something that can swiftly change the entire pace and balance of the game.

One possible scenario for allowing the characters to find the *Dragonlance* involves having the characters discover a contingent of Dark Knights escorting a “precious” artifact towards Neraka, which the characters must intercept. For a slight variation on what happened after Dhamon Grimwulf stabbed Malystrixx with the *Dragonlance of Huma*, you can rule that she casually tossed the *Dragonlance* aside into the Sea of Blood, where it found its way into the hands of the Dargonesti. Like the *Shard of Light*, the characters should not just find the *Dragonlance* lying around—it should only be acquired after a grueling adventure that enables the characters to take pride of the effort they put forth in order to gain the reward.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

Spectre of Sorrows is the second of three epic adventures meant to take the characters across the continent, through numerous quests and side-quests, and create an epic adventure that will have ramifications in the world of Krynn for many generations to come. The possible complications that may arise are far too numerous to be covered in this book, but there are a number of things that are important for you to keep in mind as you run the adventure.

THE MOONS OF MAGIC

Given the unique tie between the magic of Wizards of High Sorcery and Krynn’s moons, it is important to know the positions of the moons when dealing with the effects on wizards. **Chapter Three** of the *DRAGONLANCE Campaign Setting* details two different methods of tracking the moon—one that requires constant record keeping and one that requires you to roll for random positioning of the moon whenever it becomes important. **Chapter Two** details the effects of the moons on High Sorcery.

As in *Key of Destiny*, each chapter within this adventure will begin with an annotation describing the current phase of the moon. This assumes that you and the characters follow the prescribed timeline of events. This may not

necessarily occur. It's up to you to decide whether or not you wish to keep track of the moons on your own (using the chart provided in the *DRAGONLANCE Campaign Setting*), or roll randomly each time it comes up, or simply use the suggested moon phases annotated at the beginning of each chapter. In the end, you should decide which method works best for you and for your players.

THEME AND MOOD

One of the primary themes of the entire Age of Mortals adventure trilogy is that of change and transformation. Begun in *Key of Destiny*, this theme carries through all three adventures. Too many changes in the past few decades have been detrimental to the world and its people, with few changes bringing any true hope. Yes, the moons and constellations have returned to the way that they were, but they bring with them memories of how things seemed different then, constant reminders of the way things used to be and of all the suffering and loss the world has undergone. However, if the player characters are successful in their quest they will find they have indeed brought about a great change to the face of Krynn, and even the worst changes can end up beneficial in the end.

There should always be an underlying context that not everything is what it seems to be at first glance. Appearances and perceptions can be deceiving, even manipulated. In the end, the only individuals that the characters can truly trust are one another. This underlying theme can be greatly enhanced by changing the mood from one chapter to the next. The best way to enhance a particular mood is through subtlety and judicious application, not through constantly reinforcing it to the point that the characters (and the players) feel only manipulated by it. It is also important to remember that if the mood is at a constant low, it will bring the characters (and the players) down in mood as well, so be sure to give the characters some up time—time to unwind, to savor their victories, to heal their wounds and to prepare to face the trials the next day may bring!

PLAYING THE NPCs

In **Appendix Two**, you will find detailed stat blocks on every major NPC that appears in this adventure. Minor NPCs (those individuals only mentioned in passing or who are not as important to the adventure) do not receive detailed statistical information.

Remember that the NPCs are more than just a collection of statistical information. Play each NPC as a distinct individual, giving each a unique 'voice' that will stick with the players. For many of the NPCs, information on their personalities can be gleaned through reading the encounter information. From that, you can quite easily create a distinct persona. You can use accents or mannerisms to bring NPCs to life. Tricks like this make the NPC stand out from the masses, allowing the players to get a better mental image of the character.

Most NPCs are provided with an Initial Attitude, which is the basis of how they will interact with the characters. Depending upon the characters' actions or attempts at diplomacy, this attitude can either improve or worsen. Where necessary, attitude adjustment modifiers are provided, along with the DC of any Diplomacy skill checks.

Many encounters that involve combat between the PCs and the NPCs will contain a section entitled Tactics, which will provide you a number of different actions the NPCs can take during combat. Of course, it's impossible for this adventure to include responses to every possible action characters can take, but the given tactics will cover the most obvious choices and provide a framework from which to base other optional responses.

ENCOUNTER NUMBERING

To easily correlate encounters and locations with the provided maps, areas in this adventure have been divided into distinct sections.

The descriptions for subrooms listed by letter within these areas can be found in the text for the nearest main numbered room.

The areas in the adventure are designated:

GT	Goblin Tunnels	CT	Clocktower
DH	Darkhaven	NO	Nordmaar
FL	Flotsam	GM	The Great Moors
RC	Rugged Coast	RQ	Ruins of Qwes
SB	Sea of Blood	WU	Wulfgar
SU	Surf	DG	Dragon Graveyard
KE	Kern		

1. CLASH OF FIRE & DARKNESS

With the death of Malystryx and the return of the true gods, the area known as the Desolation has become even more chaotic and dangerous than it was. Assuming the characters completed the *Key of Destiny* adventure successfully, the surviving dragonspawn of Malystryx will discover the death of their leader, Sindra, and the theft of the *Dragonlance* (although they will be more upset at the loss of their leadership).

Even though the characters have survived the Peak of Malys, their adventures are far from over. They have achieved a major milestone, but they do not have time to rest. They still have to escape the Desolation.

DANGER IN THE DESOLATION

Current Date: 14th day of Rannmont (Winter). This date picks up at the end *Key of Destiny* (p. 128). It assumes the characters took approximately 2 days within the Peak of Malystryx. If the characters took longer, adjust the date accordingly.

Phases of the Moons

Solinari: Waxing, First Quarter.

Lunitari: Waning Gibbous, High Sanction.

Nuitari: Waxing, First Quarter.

The introduction presented below assumes that the characters completed the adventure *Key of Destiny*, leaving the Peak of Malystryx behind as they seek to escape the Desolation. If the characters have not played through *Key of Destiny*, then you may need to design your own beginning to the adventure, or you may wish to have the characters end up caught between a battle between the Dark Knights and the red dragonspawn from the Peak.

When you are ready to begin the adventure, read or paraphrase the following text aloud to your players:

The journey through the ant tunnels progresses with surprising ease, although the footing is treacherous at times. As you emerge from the twisting passageway, you are greeted by the sullen light of the Desolation's dawn. Behind you, the volcanic peak casts its shadow to the west, while the ruins of Kendermore can be seen off to the south.

The tunnel from which the characters emerge is a little over a mile to the north of the ruined Kendermore. The tunnel is 10 feet wide, made of stone excavated by the

phalanx ants of the Peak. From the exit of the tunnel, the characters can either return to Kendermore, where they can meet up with their Kagonesti guide and the refugee kender, or they can strike out towards the Oracles (if they retrieved the *Staff of Bones* and agreed to return it to the Oracles in exchange for the information they received; see *Key of Destiny* for details).

If the characters meet up with the Kagonesti and the refugee kender, they will find them camped out in the ruins of the Palace in Kendermore (Location K3, see map of Kendermore in *Key of Destiny*). The refugees have been made comfortable, fed, and their wounds tended by the insane afflicted kender, Deuce Spadestomper (male afflicted kender expert, hp 17; see description of the Palace in *Key of Destiny*), and Parrick Whistlewalk (male kender rog3, hp 14; see details in *Key of Destiny*), who is happily reunited with his sister, Kerra Whistlewalk (female kender rogue 3, hp 14), whom the characters may have rescued from the chamber in the Peak (again, see *Key of Destiny*).

The characters will be hounded for information by the kender, while the Kagonesti will wait patiently for the characters to fill him in on what happened. If the characters are carrying the *Dragonlance of Huma*, this will open up an entirely new set of questions as even the afflicted kender in the group are awed by the obviously holy artifact.

This is an ideal place to let the characters catch their breath following their adventure in the Peak and give them enough time to rest up and heal their own

wounds. After about 8 hours, if the characters have not made any move to leave, have their guide suggest the party prepare themselves, telling them they should leave before the dragonspawn or ogres send out any patrols to come looking for them.

As the heroes rest, Sindra's death is discovered, sparking a massive search through the volcano by the dragonspawn, a number of scuffles between the ogres and dragonspawn in the Peak, and the regrouping of some of the dragonspawn by Sindra's mate, Vagard Bloodmane.

Getting the kender organized and ready to leave would normally be a massive undertaking, but the Kagonesti will have worked to get the kender ready for travel. When you feel that the characters are ready to move on, or if the pace is slowed for some reason, then run the following encounter and send the characters headlong into the rest of the adventure.



TRAVELING WITH THE KENDER

If the characters are helping to escort the kender away from Kendermore, they will find their going slowed a bit, and not only because of the volcano's eruption. There are 21 kender, not including Deuce Spadestomper (who will accompany the party to help the Kagonesti guide deal with the kender) and Parrick Whistlewalk (who will gladly help as much as he can). Seventeen of these kender are 1st-level afflicted kender commoners, while the other four are true kender.

The afflicted kender won't be too much of a problem, particularly under the care of Deuce Spadestomper, who will keep them whipped into shape like a little general. The true kender are a more problematic, as they will want to "help" as much as they can.

The true kender are:

Kerra Whistlewalk (female kender rogue 2/cleric 1 of Mishakal, hp 16), Parrick's sister. Ingenious and friendly, she tends to talk a lot more than even a normal kender, but contained within her speech is usually some good, solid advice. She's remarkably streetwise and does try to stay on topic. She, along with Parrick, will try their best to keep the other true kender under control. After her time in the Peak as a prisoner, and having closely witnessed the atrocities committed against her "people," Kerra has become a cleric of Mishakal, complete with a *Medallion of Faith* she "found" in the ruined Palace. She will act as the resident caretaker of the kender, healing wounds and offering advice in equal measures.

Wren Meadowlark (male kender rogue 2, hp 10) is a young kender, barely into his late teens and still early in his wanderlust. Wide-eyed and innocent, he takes everything said at face value, seeing no deception

in anything or anyone. He's also remarkably sharp-eyed and if the characters don't notice the circling dragonspawn, Wren will be the first to point them out.

Gilly Stickyfingers (female kender rogue 4, hp 18) is bossy, opinionated, and she has a bad habit of finding things that people have "dropped" and giving them back to the person with a stern lecture on how they should keep better watch over their possessions. She's also a convenient way of introducing small things that are needed at the right time (such as *potions of cure light wounds* or handkerchiefs to protect against the ash clouds).

Derrin Wolfnose (male kender ranger 3, hp 17) stays close to the Kagonesti, looking up to the elf with something akin to hero worship. He is a ranger, and has a keen ability to ferret out herbs and water. He also has a tendency to think of himself as a young wolf, complete with howling at the moon and snarling in combat.

During encounters, the afflicted kender will scatter, each seeking to find some place to hide. The true kender, however, will leap gleefully into the fray. They won't be truly effective combatants as they are mostly inexperienced, but for particularly difficult encounters they can provide assistance to the PCs (tripping up opponents, throwing rocks from a safe distance to distract enemies, etc.).

It is important to remember not to play the kender as comic relief here. The afflicted kender have been nearly broken, acting listless and generally obeying any order without question.

If the characters do choose to escort the kender out of Kendermore, award them a story bonus equal to their average party level +1.

OUT OF THE FIRE

Allow characters a Survival check (DC 20) to sense the telltale vibrations in the ground heralding an imminent eruption of the Peak of Malys. Regardless of the result, read the following:

There is a sudden deep rumbling sound from the volcano, a reverberation that causes the ground beneath your feet to tremble. A flaming spume explodes violently from the mouth of the peak and a noxious black cloud billows upwards, blanketing the sky in cinder and ash. Trails of molten light streak through the clouds, fragments of rock hurtle through the sky and strike the ground with concussive force. Unfortunately, the strength of the explosion is strong enough that some of those fragments are heading directly towards you.

The volcano has erupted, which it has not done since before Malystryx's death. The eruption has been building up for months, and was triggered by the backlash of magical energies following the disruption of the ritual and the death of Sindra.

The ash cloud from the volcano boils forth rapidly, expanding to cover a nearly 50-mile radius with the volcano at its epicenter, and visible for more than a hundred miles in every direction. This cloud will last for a week, completely obliterating the sun from the sky and making life a bit difficult for those unlucky enough to dwell in the volcano's shadow. Lava flocs rapidly wind their way down the side of the Peak and, though they won't travel much further than the base of the peak, the magma that travels just beneath the surface of the Desolation will continue to be volatile for the next few days.

Kendermore, at the base of the Peak, has witnessed and withstood many such explosions over the last few decades. Natural gullies have formed around the ruined town,

which provide protection against the lava flows, although little can be done about the cinders and ash that will rain down on the ruins for the next week as the volcano continues to vent.

There are three danger regions the characters may have to pass through as they seek to get away from the volcano. The first zone is on the Peak itself and the region that includes Kendermore. For the first hour following the explosion, there is the risk of being struck by falling rocks from the Peak. There is a 75% chance of being caught in a hail of stones within the first 10 minutes, decreasing by 10% for every 10 minutes after the first. Characters caught in a hail of stones take 4d4 points of bludgeoning and fire damage from being struck by falling rocks, (Reflex DC 15 half) as long as they remain in the open. The thick, noxious cloud inflicts a -10 penalty to Listen, Search and Spot checks, and provides concealment (20% miss chance) to anyone within it.

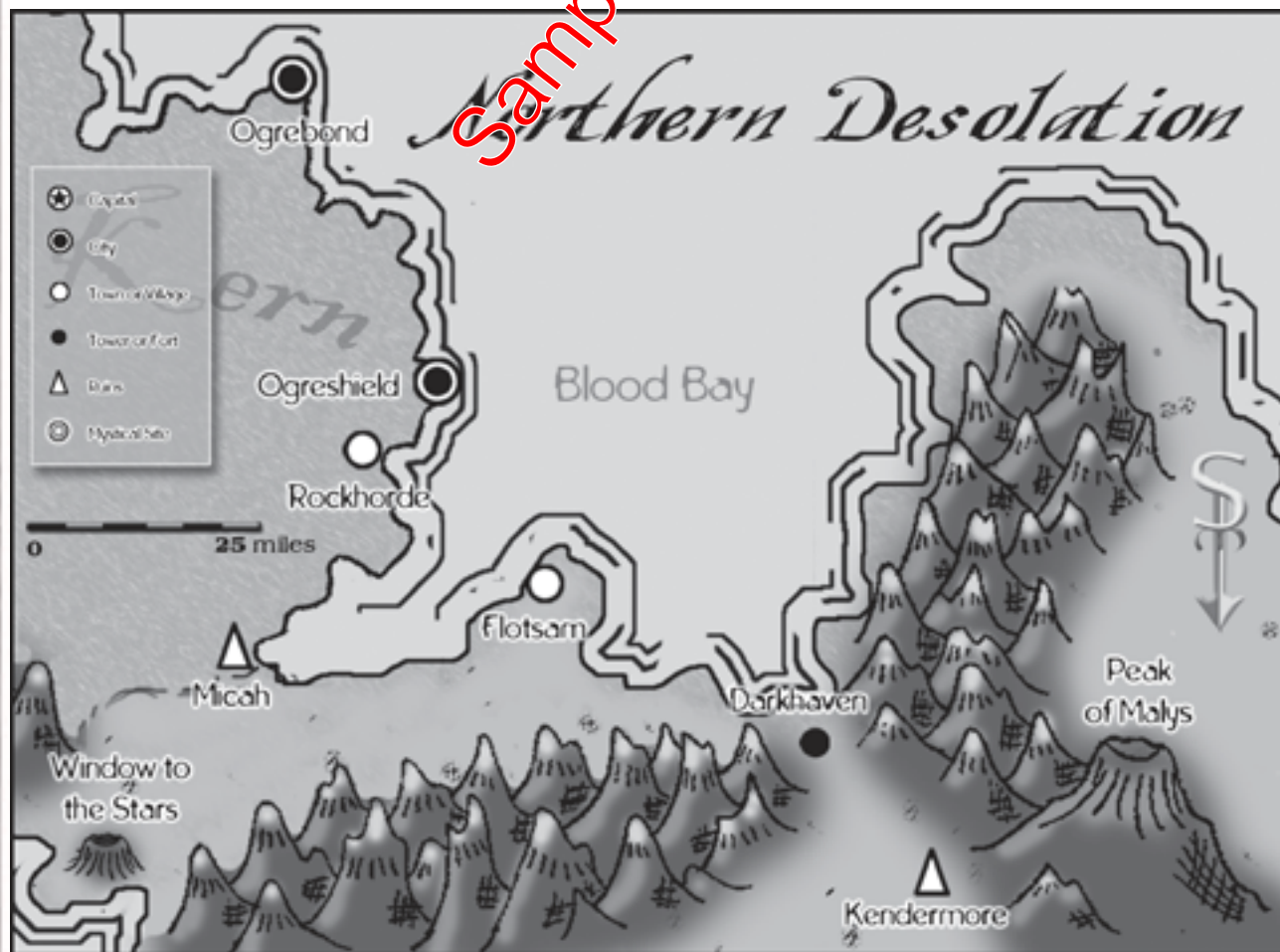
Those who do not protect themselves from the toxic fumes (either via a wet cloth worn over the nose and mouth, protective magic, or the like) must make a Fortitude saving throw each hour (DC 10, +1 for each check after the first) or spend 1d6 rounds choking and coughing. A character that chokes for 2 consecutive rounds takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage and is considered nauseated.

The second danger region, from 20 to 40 miles away from the epicenter, is marked by a near-constant threat

of choking ash and soot. This is similar to the effects of a constant (non-severe) silt storm (see **Travel in the Desolation** on p. 11), although there is little threat of damage from falling rocks. There is a 10% chance per hour, however, that the silt storm will worsen due to adverse weather conditions. In this case, the severe silt storm will last for about an hour before calming, forcing the characters to seek out shelter. In this area, characters will suffer a -6 penalty to Spot and Search checks, a -4 penalty to Listen checks, and a 10% miss chance due to partial concealment.

The third danger region, from 40 to 50 miles, is the least dangerous of the three, as it is the furthest from the volcano. In this region, the volcano ash falling from the skies is similar in effect to a silt storm (see **Travel in the Desolation**), mostly an irritant, although characters will suffer a -4 penalty to Spot, Listen and Search checks.

A successful Survival check will enable a character to weather each region much more easily. In the first zone, the Survival DC is 25, and a successful check enables the character to avoid having to make Fortitude saves against the gases. In the second zone, the Survival DC is 20, with a successful check allowing the character to halve the penalties imposed by the silt storm. The third zone's DC is 15, with a successful check allowing the character to halve the penalties from the silt storm.



TRAVEL IN THE DESOLATION

This inhospitable region is covered in greater detail in **Chapter 5** and **Chapter 6** of the first adventure module of the Age of Mortals campaign, the *Key of Destiny*. The kender city of Kendermore (**Chapter 5**) and the Peak of Malys (**Chapter 6**) are useful resources if you want to more fully flesh out the retreat of the party from the Desolation.

This chapter includes enough information for you to play out the events of this escape and the challenges faced by the heroes along the way. You should be familiar with the rules for heat exhaustion and thirst (see **The Environment, Heat Dangers and Starvation and Thirst in Chapter 8: Glossary** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), and desert environments (see **Desert Terrain in Chapter 3: Adventures in the Dungeon Master's Guide**).

The *Bestiary of Krynn* also includes expanded encounter tables and additional creatures that suit the Desolation, beyond what is provided here. You can use that sourcebook to introduce even more dangers for wayward heroes.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

The chance of a random encounter during the day is 15% and 35% chance each hour at night. Because of the volcanic fallout, line of sight distances are all reduced to less than 50 feet, as the volcanic particles effectively neutralize both low-light vision and darkvision. Rely more on resisted Listen checks against Move Silently checks (modified by the appropriate penalties based on the fallout zone) to determine surprise for each encounter.

Day Die Result	Creature Encountered	Average EL
01-04	Bad Weather	+1
05-15	Heiracosphinx pair (2) †	7
16-25	Arrowhawks (1 juvenile, 1 adult) †	6
26-35	Goblins in Need *	8
36-55	Lamia Seductress*	6
56-65	Ogre Expedition *	9
66-75	Desolation Giant	7
76-85	Athach †	8
86-95	Sand Wretch Band (3)	7
96-100	No encounter	

† See *Monster Manual* for details.

* Unique encounter. Do not use the same encounter again, either roll again or treat as no encounter.

Night Die Result	Creature Encountered	Average EL
01-04	Bad Weather	+2
05-15	Ogre Expedition *	9
16-25	Ankheg Cluster (3) †	6
26-35	Kender Vampire *	8
36-45	Shadow Mastiff (2) †	7

46-65	Lamia Seductress *	6
66-75	Desolation Giant	7
76-85	Barghest Pack (3) †	8
86-95	Wraith Gang (3) †	8
96-100	No encounter	

† See *Monster Manual* for details.

* Unique encounter. Do not use the same encounter again, either roll again or treat as no encounter.

BAD WEATHER

If this encounter occurs, the weather takes a sharp turn for the worse. Roll d% and consult the following table:

BAD WEATHER	
d%	Weather Hazard
01-29	Acid Rain
30-59	Electrical Storm
60-89	Silt Storm
90-00	Roll twice (catastrophic weather)

Acid Rain: When rain falls on the Desolation is it neither cool nor refreshing. The effects of precipitation and different types of storms are described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. However, when it rains in the Desolation, there is a 25% chance that the rain is acidic.

The black acid rain of the Desolation is laced with volcanic dust and volatile gases. In addition to the -4 penalty to Spot, Search, and Listen checks, the acid rain of the desolation eats away at equipment and irritates skin. Each round spent in the rain the character must make a DC 13 Fortitude save or take 1 point of acid damage. Magic items must also make saves or suffer damage as well. Normal items begin to weaken and eventually disintegrate if left out too long.

Electrical Storms: The dry heat of the Desolation fuels lightning storms above the broken lands. During a day when an electrical storm occurs, each storm lasts 4d10 minutes, with a lightning bolt striking approximately once each minute. There is a 10% chance that a bolt from that storm will affect the party on the ground (increasing by 2% for each character in medium armor and 5% for each character in heavy armor). Each lightning bolt inflicts 1d10 eight-sided dice of damage in a 10 foot radius. Roll randomly to determine which character is the center of the strike. Any affected character is allowed a DC 15 Reflex save to take only half damage.

Silt Storms (CR 3): The Sea of Cinders often has terrible silt storms that can be deadly if they catch one unaware. A silt storm blows fine grains of sand that obscure vision, smothers unprotected flames, and can even choke protected flames (50% chance). Silt storms are accompanied by severe winds (ranged attacks and Listen checks are at a -4 penalty). However, most silt storms in the Desolation (75% chance) are accompanied by windstorm-magnitude winds (Ranged weapon attacks are

impossible, and Listen checks are at –8 due to the howling of the wind.) These greater silt storms deal 1d4 points of nonlethal damage each round to anyone caught out in the open without shelter and also pose a choking hazard (see **Water Dangers** in **Chapter 8 Glossary** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*—except that a character with a scarf or similar protection across her mouth and nose does not begin to choke until after a number of rounds equal to 10 x her Constitution score). Greater silt storms leave 2d3–1 feet of fine silt in their wake.

SAND WRETCH BAND

Sand wretches are twisted spawn of the Chaos War that thrive in Malystryx's twisted landscape. These particular wretches are composed of volcanic ash and silt as well as sand, but they are otherwise identical to the creatures detailed in the *Bestiary of Krynn*.

When the sand wretches attack, they will seek to target the weakest characters first (if the PCs are escorting the kender, they will focus on the afflicted kender). Because of the volcanic cloud, the sand wretches receive a circumstance bonus to their Hide checks dependent upon the zone in which they are encountered (+10 in the first region, +6 in the second region, +4 in the third region); this is cumulative with the penalties to Spot checks suffered by the characters.

☞ Sand Wretches (3): hp 32; see page 174.

DESOLATION GIANT

Driven out of its cave by the eruption of the Peak, enraged by the ash and silt, a rampaging Desolation giant will be stampeding on a path of destruction. Unfortunately, the characters have stumbled into the path of this beast.

☞ Desolation Giant: hp 89; see page 172.

Tactics: The Desolation giant will seek to take out the most physically impressive character first, making a spring attack to get in and out of combat quickly. It will seek to avoid being surrounded, using the cover provided by the ashen haze.

KENDER VAMPIRE

Terrin Whiteknot is a kender vampire—a creature that takes pleasure in feeding off others of his own kind. If this encounter occurs, he will start stalking the party during the night, keeping an eye out for opportunities to pick off the refugee kender. He is not particularly brave, so will not risk a direct confrontation with the party, instead preferring to snatch his prey and disappear into the darkness, retreating to his lair.

☞ Terrin Whiteknot, afflicted kender vampire: hp 59; see page 175.

Tactics: Terrin is a coward, and will do everything in his power to avoid a direct confrontation. He will start by using his *children of the night* ability to summon bat swarms to distract the characters while he snatches away one or two kender, retreating to his lair to feed. If he is caught in the open, he will assume *gaseous form* and retreat.

Development: Terrin's lair is a cave not too far from

where he encounters the party. He will not travel more than 5 miles away from his cave, as he is afraid of being caught out in the open. The volcanic fallout has given him a false sense of security, as he needn't worry about sunlight, but he still will not risk a direct confrontation if he is obviously outnumbered.

Tracking Terrin back to his lair requires a DC 25 Survival check. The entrance to his cave is hidden behind a large boulder, requiring a DC 20 Search check to find: Break DC 65, 900 hp, hardness 8, Strength DC 30 to move out of the way. Terrin typically uses his *gaseous form* to seep around the cracks, although to bring his prey to his cave, he will have had to move the boulder, then move it back, leaving the tell-tale traces of his presence to be discovered.

The tunnel behind the boulder is narrow and barely large enough for a Small creature to stand upright (Medium creatures would have to crawl, Large or larger creatures would be unable to pass through the tunnel). The tunnel angles downwards about 20 feet, with a simple trap halfway down:

☞ Patch of Brown Mold: CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger (disturbing the rock covering the patch); automatic reset; 5-ft. cold aura (3d6, cold nonlethal); Search DC 22, Disable Device DC 16. Activating this trap automatically triggers a small bell, sending it skittering down the tunnel and alerting Terrin to an intruder's presence.

The tunnel emerges into a small natural cavern, about 20 feet in diameter with a 10-foot ceiling. It is here that Terrin rests, away from the light. If he is confronted in his lair, he will attack viciously, fighting like a cornered rat. The kender he snatched will be unconscious and tied up.

Treasure: The only treasure in the lair is found in Terrin's pouches, as he refuses to leave anything lying around to be carelessly picked up by wandering hands. Refer to **Appendix Two** for his treasure.

GOBLINS IN NEED

As the group is traveling through the fallout zones of the Desolation, they will see that the fallout has caused problems for those creatures that have somehow managed to survive in the Desolation all these years. Already scarce natural resources, such as drinkable water and edible plants have been made toxic by the ashes from the volcano.

In this encounter, the characters come across a small band of goblins that have gotten lost due to the fallout. The miserable creatures are huddled together under a crude lean-to, squabbling among each other and unfortunately attracting the attention of not only the characters, but also a rather hungry behir.

The characters will hear the sound of screeching and fighting as the starving behir attacks the goblins.

☞ Goblins (8): hp 5 each; see *Monster Manual*.

☞ Behir: hp 94; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: The behir has no real tactics—it's starving and the goblins are convenient. It will seek to swallow whole at least 4 goblins. If the behir is pressed, it will unleash its breath weapon towards the largest concentration of foes.

The goblins are too weak and scattered to have any true tactics except for survival.

Development: If the characters manage to save the goblins, they will find the goblins obscenely grateful; almost worshipful of the brave heroes that rescued them. They will offer to lead the heroes to a goblin tunnel entrance, which will enable the party to avoid any further random encounters above ground (see **Goblin Tunnels** on p. 19).

Treasure: The behir has no treasure, although the goblins will shower the heroes with “treasure” (mostly assorted junk and items that even kender wouldn’t have in their pouches), but hidden amongst the dross will be a *major ring of energy resistance (fire)*.

LAMIA SEDUCTRESS

If this random encounter occurs, the characters will come across a damsel in distress. Dressed as a nomad woman, with a veil covering her face to protect her against the fallout, she will approach the characters begging for assistance. She will tell the characters that her brother was injured in an attack by Dark Knights, that he’s resting in a cave not too far away while she came looking for help.

If the heroes agree to help her, she will tell them the cave is large enough to provide shelter for the party (as well as the refugee kender if they are with the party) and will lead them towards the south, where there is indeed a large cave. In the cave, they will find an unconscious man (one of the lamia’s previous victims). The lamia has been toying with the man for quite some time, having drained him to 3 Wisdom and keeping him *charmed*, however she has grown tired of this toy and wants a new one.

Realizing she cannot take on the full party alone, she will try and separate one of the males in the party (focusing on a particularly chivalrous character). She will try her best to get one of the characters to stay with her, pointing out that it would be only until her brother is healed enough to travel. If a cleric or mystic takes a look at the unconscious man, he will be able to determine that his leg has been broken and is mending poorly, but otherwise he seems to be suffering from some strange ailment (the result of repeated Wisdom drains by the lamia).

The lamia’s disguise is not impenetrable. She has a +11 Disguise check (+1 skill, +10 from *disguise self* spell-like ability), but the disguise is only illusory. She avoids anyone who wishes to touch her, claiming she is afraid whatever sickness is affecting her brother has affected her as well. She will particularly avoid any cleric or mystic, afraid that their magic will see through her disguise.

☞ **Shilandra, lamia:** hp 58; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: If her disguise is penetrated, Shilandra will drop her illusion and use her *mirror image* ability to create confusion, striking out with her touch attack and Wisdom drain to make people susceptible to her *suggestion*, *charm monster*, and *deep slumber* spells while she seeks to escape.

Development: The unconscious man under the lamia’s not-so-tender care is Brandel Bloodstone, a Dark Knight captain who was separated from his patrol a few weeks back. If you should need Brandel’s statistics, use Kalrik Skalon’s stat block, but lower his Wisdom to 3 and his Dexterity to 6. This will have the effect of lowering his Will saves and Wisdom-based skill checks by –4, and dropping his AC, Reflex saves, Dexterity-based skill checks, ranged attacks, and initiative bonus by –2.



ENCOUNTERS FOLLOWING THE ERUPTION

As the random encounters and the following encounters will occur during the fallout the eruption of the volcano, it is important to remember the penalties both sides will suffer to skill checks as well as the miss chances due to the concealment granted by the fallout. For ease of reference, the modifiers depending upon the region are as follows:

- **Region 1:** –10 penalty to Spot, Listen, and Search checks, 20% miss chance.
- **Region 2:** –6 penalty to Spot and Search checks, –4 penalty to Listen checks, 10% miss chance.
- **Region 3:** –4 penalty to Spot, Listen and Search checks.

If the characters don't just abandon him in the cave, award them a story bonus, increasing the effective Encounter Level (for awarding experience) by +1. Brandel will be indebted to the characters for saving him from certain death at the lamia's hands. He will warn the characters to avoid approaching Darkhaven at all costs, and if the characters treat him particularly well, he will offer to write the heroes a writ that will help them if they are stopped by any Dark Knight patrols.

The writ is a scroll, written in Nerakan, declaring that the player characters are under protection of the Third Legion for as long as they travel within the region known as the Desolation, including the occupied territories of Port Balifor and Flotsam. Brandel will seal the writ with his signet ring, found on a chain amongst the rest of his equipment in the lamia's treasure stash.

In return for the writ, he will ask for provisions to be supplied for a few days while he recovers, and for the characters to swear an oath they will report his location to the Dark Knights so they can retrieve him. He will not ask what the characters are doing, nor does he wish to travel with the characters, pointing out (rightly) that while he owes them for saving his life, he does not wish to call his own oaths into conflict.

Treasure: The lamia's treasure is hidden under a large rock in the back of the cave (DC 20 Search to discover). In there, the characters will discover a lamia's standard treasure as well as Brandel's equipment, including a set of masterwork black chain mail armor emblazoned with the Dark Knight Lily symbol, and a signet ring with a lily carved from a bloodstone.

OGRE EXPEDITION

In this random encounter, the group comes across a gang of ogres returning to the Peak from a foraging expedition. The ogres are surly from being caught out in the volcano's fallout and are itching to take out their irritation on anything that crosses their path—including the heroes.

☞ **Graak, Ogre Fighter:** hp 81; see page 173.

☞ **Ogre Brutes (3):** hp 29; see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: Graak is a surprisingly cunning opponent, recognizing that the greatest threat typically comes from the “weak looking humans in funny clothes” (i.e., characters that wear the traditional robes of a wizard). While his gang takes on any warriors, Graak will use his javelins to try and take down any wizard-appearing characters before closing in with his great axe.

Treasure: Only the equipment the ogres are carrying, plus a large hide sack holding an assortment of animal carcasses from the hunting expedition.

DARK KNIGHT PATROL (EL 7)

When the characters are somewhere near the border to the third region of the fallout, have them to make either a DC 19 Spot or Listen check. If they succeed on the check, read the following:

In the distance, through the murky haze of ash and soot from the volcano, you can make out the vague shape of horses bearing riders. The figures are steadily approaching, making little effort to conceal their presence. After a few moments, you can begin to pick out what appears to be armored figures atop the horses, one of whom is carrying a standard of some sort. The image on the standard is indistinct, but, finally, you can pick out what seems to be a white flower standing out starkly against the black fabric—Dark Knights apparently; five of them, heading your direction.

Small groups of Dark Knights have been sent forward on patrol as advance guard (see **The Approaching Darkness** on p. 16).

The patrol consists of one Knight of the Lily and four soldier-squires. If they encounter the party, they will draw close enough to mark the presence of the characters, but they will not attack unless they are attacked first. Kalrik will send two of his squires back towards the contingent of Dark Knights traveling from Darkhaven with information about the strange group. If the characters are openly displaying the *Dragonlance*, this information will be included in the report, as the *Dragonlance* is the reason the Dark Knights are on the move.

If the characters have gained a writ from Brandel, they can use the writ to avoid the encounter almost entirely. If they approach Kalrik and his men under a white flag of truce, Kalrik will be suspicious, but will recognize the distinctive writing style and wording favored by superior officers in the Knights of the Lily, as well as Brandel's mark. The characters can give Kalrik directions to the cave, at which point they will have fulfilled the obligation of their