

# *In The Shadow of White Plume Mountain*

## Contents

<a href="#">Setting</a> .....	2
<b>1: <a href="#">The Wandering City of Ringland</a></b> .....	<b>2</b>
A. <a href="#">The Dread Pirate Norbert's</a>	
B. <a href="#">Belditi Trade Consortium</a>	
C. <a href="#">Trompty Capital Bank</a>	
D. <a href="#">Ramswell Smithy</a>	
E. <a href="#">The Athenaeum of Ringland</a>	
<b>2: <a href="#">The Four Estates of Ringland</a></b> .....	<b>6</b>
A. <a href="#">The Estate of Remedies</a>	
B. <a href="#">Belditi Manor</a>	
C. <a href="#">The House of Trompty</a>	
D. <a href="#">The Stronghold of the Manni</a>	
<b>3: <a href="#">The Darktide Forest</a></b> .....	<b>10</b>
A. The Dead Gnoll's Eye Socket	
<b>4: <a href="#">The Ruins of Castle Mukos</a></b> .....	<b>11</b>
A. <a href="#">The Dutchy of Mukos</a>	
B. <a href="#">The Castle</a>	
C. <a href="#">Underhill Maze</a>	
D. <a href="#">Mukos Keep</a>	
<b>5: <a href="#">The Creeping Swamp</a></b> .....	<b>(?)</b>
B. Thingizzard's cabin	
C. Rift Canyon.	
<b>6: <a href="#">Dragotha's Lair</a></b> .....	<b>(?)</b>
A. Venturing into the lair	
B. Dragotha's Bones	
<b>7: <a href="#">White Plume Mountain</a></b> .....	<b>(?)</b>
A. Approaching the Mountain	
1. The Broken Giant	
<b>8: <a href="#">Weapons of Legend</a></b> .....	<b>16</b>
A. <a href="#">Whelm</a>	
B. <a href="#">Wave</a>	
C. <a href="#">Blackrazor</a>	
D. <a href="#">Frostpoint</a>	
E. <a href="#">Empathy</a>	
F. <a href="#">Brickerbrackerbrick</a>	

## *Setting*

Nine days before the adventurers receive their summons to the City of Ringland, an extraordinary heist was carried out at the private estate of the **Belditi Trade Consortium**; a powerful clan specializing in rare commodities and precious artifacts. The letter each hero received was intentionally vague, explaining only that individuals of skill and discretion were urgently required, and offering a healthy sum to any person who presented their summons at the **Belditi** estate. A much more significant bounty is mentioned upon the completion of a job, to be described only upon their arrival.

Whether the heroes are familiar with Ringland's strange beauty or are coming upon it for the first time, they *would* know enough about the **Belditi Trade Consortium** - whose general stores and auction houses have a place in every city of note in the **Shield Lands** - to understand that such letters are never drafted lightly. The reward for making such a powerful ally would certainly be generous, and who knows what else may be uncovered in the course of this mysterious quest...

### *1: The Wandering City of Ringland*

The 'wandering city' is so known because the extraordinarily high volume of travelers that pass through its gates. While there is a steady population of approximately 20,000 individuals, at least that again can be found temporarily biding in the city at any given time; likely in the employ of some merchant company or other. This is due in large part to Ringland's advantageous position along the only major thoroughfare between the North and South in the region. Four days to the east lies **White Plume Mountain**; between which are the cursed ruins of **Castle Mukos**, the **Dead Gnoll's Eye Socket**, and the wilds of the **Darktide** forest. To the East past **White Plume** lies a fetid swamp where the weirding **Thingizzard** is said to reside. Northeast of Ringland near **Castle Mukos** is the **Rift Canyon**, where the **Legendary** dragon **Dragotha** and the **Rift Canyon** barbarians once resided.

The wandering city of Ringland is presided over by four major enterprises; each of which control one broad facet of the city's economy. There is the **House of Remedy**, which controls the production and generation of medicine and the management of hospitals in the region, the **Belditi Trade Consortium**, which facilitates the transportation of all manner of trade goods, **Trompty and Trompty Bank**, which has holdings in almost every business in the region and is a common provider of venture capital, and the **Manni of Ringland**, a league of information archivists and historians with a fanatical interest in obscure knowledge and archaic artifacts.

The city itself is structured as a walled metropolis divided into four business districts, suffused with more ground-level (day-to-day) businesses such as restaurants, shops of various caliber, and general housing. In the middle of each district lies a vast estate belonging to one of the major enterprises; each centered by a single narrow spire rising to overlook the city below. Much like the walls of the city, these four spires appear to be made of an eldritch green glass, suffused with sinewy gold filaments of something unknown. Most structures and roads are constructed of more traditional materials, but the main thoroughfare, running South to North, is embedded with the same glass as the walls and towers; apparently seamless, as if laid down in a single impossibly long piece. While historians avidly debate the origins of this special glass, it is generally accepted to be the remains of a far more ancient city which once stood on the same ground. It is a place of many secrets, both new and old, and many would pay a hefty price for those who seek to unravel them.

## 1.A: The Dread Pirate Norbert's

A famous tavern and inn located on the Northeastern corner of the town square. The building itself is three stories tall, constructed of colorful panels of wood and brick, and gilded rather heavy-handedly with gold calligraphy along the walls. The sound of raucous music leaks from every gap in the building throughout the night, and most of the day.

On a faux balcony over the front entrance lies the elaborately preserved bones of a humanoid, gilt with bands of silver and bedecked with rings and gemstones, and chains of other precious metals. The skeleton has been positioned such that it appears to recline comfortably on a sturdy golden throne.

❖ A **DC 12 arcana check** reveals that the bones radiate a faint aura of abjuration magic.

Each owner of the establishment has historically gone by the moniker “the Dread Pirate Norbert”, and wears a fancy petticoat and hat in the spirit of such a figure. The present owner, an affable bugbear named Bel, is also the sole employee of the establishment. Wisecracking and charismatic, Bel offers information, drinks, and rooms to Ringland’s elite clientele.

- ❖ If players talk to Bel, they’ll notice he wears an eye patch and glass eye, although neither appear to impact his vision.
  - A **DC 16 Arcana check** (and 4 gold coins for the privilege) reveals that the glass orb has been engraved with a magical glyph that allows him to see as per the spell arcane eye spell.
  - He will offer the adventurers a room (at a special discount of 2 gp per night, only for “friends”) repeatedly, as well as drinks and more creative substances if they show interest.
  - He will also note upon prompting that the House of Remedy and Tito Belditi of the Belditi Trade Consortium have put out requests for adventurers for an unknown purpose. Perhaps it has something to do with the recent burglary at the Belditi estate? Not that anyone should know about that, of course.
- ❖ If the players elect to get a room for the night, sometime in the evening at least one member of the group will be contacted by a representative of Trompty and Trompty Bank, who strongly suggests they take their summons and any information they may have gathered from the Belditi’s to Ewan Trompty himself, who has seemingly taken a great interest in his rival’s crisis.

## 1.B: Belditi Trade Consortium

Located in the Southwestern corner of the city square, Belditi ATG is a fine building of polished stone with large windows. A short set of steps leads up to a large patio and a pair of large iron doors. Obviously expensive rocking chairs, some occupied, are tastefully strewn around the patio in little clusters, and a long horse rack with a water trough stands in front of the left wing.

The interior of the space is decorated with potted plants and expansive murals; the largest of which is positioned along the west wall, and depicts a wizened old man posturing atop the decapitated head of a red dragon. There is a glass case with a sword and a small placard standing in front of this mural, which reads: “In honor of Vortigern Belditi, who brought low the terror of the peaks, Peligas the Red.”

The interior is divided into two main sections, helpfully labeled “Acquisitions”, and “trade goods”, separated by a velvet cord.

- ❖ A single clerk stands behind the “Acquisitions” counter, and if asked, explains that artifacts are often brought here for appraisal and storage as part of trade deals, private collections, or for auction.
- ❖ Several busy-looking employees’ bustle around the trade goods section, assisting customers of varying levels of wealth; some remarkably wealthy, others surprisingly poor. They sell all items on the adventuring goods table, as well as many travelling goods and some minorly magical items.
  - If the adventurers want to purchase something, Cyrus, an Elvish woman offers to help them. Everything on the adventurer’s table is available, as well as most common and some uncommon magic items.

### 1.C: Trompty Capital Bank

The northwestern corner of the square is dominated by a monolithic art deco building. High, stained-glass windows bathe the interior in multicolored light. Vaulted ceilings and extensive tilework cause every movement to echo dramatically. Bronze busts of the old Trompty patriarchs sit in silent vigil along the rafters, overlooking the square. Two immense ogres adorned in heavily gilded armor etched with arcane sigils stand in the hall to each side of the main doors, carrying spears.

- ❖ A **DC 15 perception check** reveals the bronze busts they are indeed watching the square, as a keen-eyed observer can see their eyes occasionally move.
- ❖ If spoken to, the Ogres will respond as concisely as possible, as if suffering an immense pain. A **DC 15 arcana check** reveals that the ogres are under the effect of the “Dominate Monster” spell, likely relating to the sigils on their armor.
  - At **DC 18**, it is also revealed that the ogres know they are magically enslaved, unable to act against their commands.

The walls and floors inside the bank are a crisply polished white marble, and the ceiling far above appears to be embossed gold. In place of real plants, magical illusions of various flora are posed around the space. A line of obviously wealthy customers in various styles of dress are queued in a long line leading to a panel of teller’s kiosks. The bank tellers cannot be seen through the panel of magically robust glass which separates them from the clients, but they speak politely and dispassionately. The teller can exchange types of currency, exchange denominations, and offer loans.

- ❖ Although the players may not know it, the Trompty Capital Bank is run by a powerful Rakshasa, and contracts entered with their business carry some of the same magical binding as deals directly with the Devil. If they take a loan and refuse to repay it with considerable interest, something of equal “value” will be taken from them.

### 1.D: Ramswell Smithy

An unadorned but sturdy building; Ramswell Smithy seems to almost glow with the heat of the forges within, constantly billowing smoke through the four stout chimneys on its roof. The steady rhythm of hammer-blows echo through the open doors like the ticking of a clock.

The main doors open into a cozy little reception room, adorned with thick rugs and colorful tapestries. The smell of incense and gunpowder is heavy on the air. The right corner of the candlelit space has been converted into a reading nook. Books are packed tightly along the walls, and an overstuffed lounge chair sits askance in the space; one upturned book open on its cushion, as if the reader had only just stepped away.

The reception desk is manned by an excitable lizardman in a striped vest named Eskew, who cheerily lists off the Smithy's services (horse tacking, armoring, gunsmithing, architectural consultation and design, and special commissions upon request!) and asks if they've come to see the forgemaster.

- ❖ If the players say they are, Eskew will lead them through a large steel door into the forge itself.

The forge is a sprawling space lined with automatic hammers, metal presses and drills, ovens and quenching chambers, and racks of hand tools. It appears to be run entirely by automatons with the singular exception of the forgemaster; a towering Elvish woman wearing a leather apron and welding mask named Andora.

- ❖ Andora offers her smithing services to the players at a heavy discount if they bring her unusual materials or designs, and can be commissioned to create almost any non-magical object, as long as sufficient gold and materials are provided.

### **1.E: The Athenaeum of Ringland**

Manned by the Manni of Ringland, the Athenaeum is a sprawling library complex in the Southeast corner of the city, almost a city block in size. Towering columns circle the building's exterior, each adorned bottom-to-top with spiraling text. Over the main entrance, on which there are no doors but a massive raised adamantine portcullis, is a message inscribed in stone: "I cast out the darkness of unknowing, and usher in the light".

The interior of the Athenaeum is a cavernous space filled with thousands of book shelves, stretching dizzily overhead and crisscrossed by ladders and narrow walkways. Scores of Manni buzz between the book stacks, filing or retrieving books, guiding citizens, or clustering together in animated discussion.

Information of all varieties can be found in the book stacks, from a comprehensive history of the nation of Greyhawk to the newest trends in horticulture, as well as theological treaties on dimensions of dread to a first edition of the Book of Leg. Some library sections require Manni supervision to access, but as sharing knowledge is a key tenant of their society, it is usually provided.

- ❖ All Manni wear knee-length black robes under vibrantly-dyed tunics of various colors, and dark veils that obscure their faces. A sigil of an open eye is embroidered with delicate white thread on the foreheads of their hoods and the palms of their gloves.
- ❖ If approached, most Manni will be more than willing to assist the adventurers, mentioning that the high council of Manni have been looking for a troupe of competent adventurers for an important task; directing them toward the nearby Manni Estate.

## *2: The Four Estates of Ringland*

### **2.A: The Estate of Remedies**

The Estate of Remedies lies in the Northwestern district of Ringland, surrounded by a high fence of woven metal “branches”. The fence and archway onto the property are so structurally complex that it almost seems to have grown together. The fence appears to be solely decorative, as there is no gate to the estate; allowing visitors to come and go freely.

Dozens of tents fill the courtyard and line the cobblestone pathway leading to the mansion and adjoining tower, ostensibly providing medical care and selling potions and medicine to the city folk.

❖ Medicinal herbs and potions of healing (30gp) and greater healing (80gp) can be purchased from the tents, as well as general medical supplies such as bandages, cleaning alcohol, and crutches.

The doors to the mansion proper are guarded by two mercenaries; a young woman with a revolver on her hip, and a silver golem wielding a glaive. Each wears a long white sash adorned with a fat red cross. On the end of each point is an outstretched hand. The woman, Nis, and the construct, Wall, ask the players their business with the Doctor.

❖ If the players mention the Doctor’s request for adventurers or mention their profession, they will be allowed to enter the estate’s spire and ascend to the office at the top.

The office of the Doctor is an immaculately clean white room with three plush seats arranged in a half circle facing a large bay window opposite the door. A cloaked figure stands facing the window, so tall that it has to hunch to avoid scraping the ceiling. The cloak is a simple unadorned gray, and the room is entirely silent except for a steady, rhythmic ticking. The Doctor’s voice is soft and toneless, but polite. As he approaches the adventurers, four delicate metal hands, each with needle-thin fingers, extend from his robes to shake their hands.

❖ The Doctor explains that he’s heard of Tito Belditi’s recent contract seeking mercenaries to enter the Darktide Forest. The doctor expresses no interest in whatever Tito wants them to recover, but urges them to search the woods for rare medicinal herbs. He suggests that Thingizzard’s Marshland may be rich with potential resources, as well as any of the various caves throughout the Darktide.

➤ If questioned about his lack of interest in Tito’s stolen goods, he will explain that he only collects interesting pins, and opens his cloak to reveal a great assortment of such things. He would, quite simply, have no use for them, except as possible reference material.

### **2.B: The House of Trompty**

A grand complex surrounded by a cobblestone wall embedded with chunks of quartz to catch the sun as it passes across the sky, the House of Trompty stands as an unabashed monument to wealth. Immaculate sculptures line the top of the cobblestone wall, as if endlessly parading around the perimeter. The gate, constructed of thick panels of a dark wood, is protected by a pair of guards in regal, gilded armor. Both guards, a Minotaur named Garrus and a green dragonborn named Vinny, carry claymores with pearl studded hilts.

❖ If the players approach the walls, Garrus will ask whether they’ve been summoned. If they’ve encountered Trompty’s emissary or received letters of invitation prior to arriving in Ringland, they’ll be allowed in. Otherwise, they will be harshly rebuked Garrus, who seems far more willing to brandish his claymore than Vinny.

- They can also bluff their way in with a **DC 14 deception check**.

The interior of the complex is adorned with several marble fountains and odd, unintelligible art pieces in a variety of exotic metals. The right side of the lawn is occupied by a hedge maze; the left by a vast, cross-shaped pool by which clusters of elites reside, serviced by troops of butlers carrying drink trays and platters of food. All those present leave a wide berth around the players.

A large mansion stands beside the glass pillar, with both entries angled toward a brickwork turnabout, centered around another fountain cast in orichalcum. The fountain, which looks relatively new, depicts four angelic women kneeling against a throne on which a chiseled young man sits. It's rather gaudy.

- ❖ Waiting at the foot of the green tower is a gnome named Gunteezly, who explains that he is madame Trompty's personal assistant, and apologizes for meeting them in Sir Trompty's stead. He explains that the master of the house has been dreadfully busy as guides them up to the room at the top of the tower.

A crystal chandelier lined with candles provides light to the carpeted office at the top of the tower. Lines of vases, weapons and armor, and miniature sculptures stand on marble pillars along the left and right walls of the room. A large oaken desk with a tall, throne-like chair faces the doorway. Several visibly shorter chairs sit on the other side, facing the throne.

A muscular man with carefully manicured nails and perfectly parted hair sits askance in the throne, swirling a mithril goblet in one hand. His purple shirt, tastefully open to the waist, reveals more muscles. As the adventurers enter, he flashes them a perfect theatre-star smile.

- ❖ Beneath the perfect illusion of a human man, the creature calling itself Ewan Trompty is a powerful [Harvester Devil](#) named Al'Hazoret. No one living in Ringland knows this fiend's true name or nature, but an exceptionally ancient or knowledgeable creature might be able to provide insight if prompted by the party.
  - Outright attacking Trompty won't inherently reveal his devilish nature, but heroes will find it requires enormous willpower to land such an attack, as if magically compelled against it.

Ewan Trompty wants to snipe the players from the Belditi's, offering them exorbitant wealth if they turn over the artifacts to him instead. If the players haven't spoken to Tito Belditi yet, Ewan will tell precisely what was stolen. He claims that the two legendary artifacts, a magical hammer named Whelm and a legendary sword named Blackrazor, were entrusted to the Belditi's by House Trompty nearly 800 years ago as part of a trade agreement. Besides being funny, Trompty hopes the permanent loss of their greatest treasure will cripple trust in their business and put the Belditis firmly back under his thumb.

- ❖ Ewan maintains an air of indifference if he is refused, unaffected by any response short of an outright attack, telling the party to consider his offer at their leisure and that he looks forward to chatting again soon, clearly confident they will eventually return to him. At the end of their conversation, he commands his slave to escort them out.
  - If asked, Gunteezly will remark that he much preferred when the enterprise was managed by Ava Trompty, prior to her marriage. A **DC 13 persuasion check** convinces him to express serious discomfort over the nature of his mistress's marriage, especially (at **DC 15**) so soon after the death of her father.
- ❖ If the adventurers explore the mansion or return to the Trompty estate, they will meet Madame Trompty, who is cool and kind in all the ways her husband is vain and cruel. Although polite and intelligent, Ava seems unwilling to talk about her husband, their marriage, or her family line.
  - A **DC 18 Insight check** or a **DC 16 Arcana check** reveals that something seems to be stopping her from discussing such subjects.

## 2.C: Belditi Manor

A sturdy Brick wall surrounds the estate. A significant number of guards are positioned along the top of the wall, armed with muskets. New construction seems to be ongoing to reinforce the walls further. Six guards stand around the main entrance apparently overseeing the installation of a Portcullis and extended defensible gatehouse. The captain of the guard, a Tiefling named Allistair, wears sturdy plate armor supplemented by a green and white striped tabard, and a matching garland around the left shoulder.

- ❖ Distracted by the installation, Allistair doesn't notice the party until they approach him. He appears both startled and sleep-deprived, but will amicably guide the party to the manor if shown their letters of summons.

More guards and contractors' bustle around the estate, apparently reinforcing the manor and installing lamps throughout the gardens. The gardens themselves seem to be practical and efficient things; herbs, grapes, and fruit trees grow in neat rows to either side of the avenue leading up to the manor.

While the massive green tower looms dramatically over the estate, it doesn't appear to carry the same significance as its siblings on the other estates. Rather, business seems to be conducted in and around the main residence, which is large but surprisingly conservative in design. Tito Belditi's office is on the third floor, overlooking an apple orchard. Tito's office is clean and functional; designed to be comfortable but with little attention paid to details. A family portrait sits squarely in the corner of his desk.

- ❖ The man behind the desk is squat, round, and visibly exhausted. His puffy black hair looks slightly wilted and great black rings underline his eyes. His hands tremble slightly, although it is unclear whether this comes from a lack of sleep or nerves.

Tito Belditi asks the party if they've noticed the renovations, and if they understand what that means. If allowed to continue, Tito resignedly admits that the Belditi Trade Consortium recently suffered the most severe robbery in the last 550 years. If the party doesn't already know from other conversations, Tito will reveal that the thief made off with two legendary weapons entrusted into his family's care by the Trompty Bank 800 years earlier. Tito fears the economic consequences to his company and potential danger to his family if he can't recover the artifacts soon.

- ❖ The stolen artifacts are a magical greatsword named [Blackrazor](#), and a Legendary Dwarven hammer named [Whelm](#).
- ❖ If the party agrees to help and vows to be discrete, Tito will lead them down to the underground vault complex to survey the damage.

Once in the vault, Tito explains that seven days ago, an unknown number of thieves apparently infiltrated the estate in broad daylight and made their way down to the vault. While the mansion itself was entirely untouched - no trace of any robbers has been found at all, in fact - the vault door was utterly obliterated.

- ❖ The piles of wealth in the main chamber appear equally untouched, but the secret passageway to the Deep Vault was not only identified, but likewise devastated by some extraordinary force.
  - A **DC 20 arcana check** reveals a lingering aura of the purest evocation magic anyone in the party has ever experienced, indicating a spellcaster of enormous prowess. If this check is failed by 5 or more, no lingering magical aura can be detected at all. Perhaps adamantite vault doors do just liquefy sometimes.

The deep vault has been scoured for magical artifacts; the locks, traps, and wards all apparently ineffective in so much as slowing the thief's assault. The only clue is a single voluminous white feather which has been driven

directly into the stone floor. Carved in front of it is a stylized **K**, and a smiley face. This calling-card, for lack of a better term, seems to suggest that the thief resides in **White Plume Mountain**.

- ❖ A **DC 10 History check** identifies the stylized **K** as likely referencing the great wizard **Keraptis**, who resided in **White Plume Mountain** a millennium earlier.
- ❖ A **DC 12 Arcana**, or **DC 15 perception** seems to indicate that the magic has been drained from the wards.
- ❖ While **Tito Knows** very little about **Keraptis** (it's been 1,300 years since his rein, supposedly), he suggests that the **Manni of Ringland** might be able to provide more information.

**Tito** stresses how imperative it is that the artifacts are returned quickly, before word spreads about their failure, stressing that it would be the end of his dynasty. He offers an enormous sum of gold if his lost treasures are returned before his investors come to collect.

## **2.D: The Stronghold of the Manni**

The grandiose stronghold of the **Manni** rests in the **Southeastern** district of the city, surrounded by magically enhanced plaster wall with a wide-rooved colonnade with shaded benches. Vines curl up many of the individual columns, weaving between the arches to form a sort of lattice roof. The gates, so far as the adventurers can tell, are unguarded. A pair of immense ironbark gates stand open, completing the inviting image.

The left side of the courtyard is dominated by a ring of polished black standing stones, surrounded by tiered stadium seats. Dozens of **Manni** and **Ringlanders** fill the stadium, watching a performance of **The Fall of the House of Zarovich**.

The right half of the courtyard houses a large hearth hall, with long dining tables to either side of an immense fire pit. Narrow channels are set into the floor to convey scented oils throughout the space. A large ironwood table on a raised dais seats the four **Elder Manni**, each wearing a brightly colored robe of a different color.

- ❖ The **Manni** in the cyan robe is a **Drow** woman named **Imrys**; the current leader of the faction.
  - If the players tell her about the clue left in the **Beliditi's** vault, she can provide insight into the legend of **Keraptis**, and his flight into **White Plume Mountain** 1300 years earlier. She believes more specific information on the nature of the ancient wizard may be found in the old lord's library of **Castle Mukos**, and implores them to bring her what they can in exchange for an advantage in their journey to **White Plume**.

**Imrys** can provide further background on the nearby ruins which fell sometime in the last two centuries. **Castle Mukos**, once a bastion against invaders of the North, is now believed to be the domain of the undead. Reports claim that ethereal white flames perpetually burn from the tops of the battlements and the surrounding area. She wants them to access the old lord's private library and recover the old books therein, so that they may be repaired and added to the **Manni's** ever-growing collection.

- ❖ To further sweeten the deal, **Imrys** will remind the party that given its significant history as the fortress that drove back the **Rift Canyon** invasion and mortally wounded the ancient dragon **Dragotha**, it likely holds many treasures for the taking.

**Imrys** will implore the heroes to reconsider if they refuse to collect the library's treasures, accusing them of squandering a chance to preserve history. If the heroes aren't moved, she sardonically suggests they use the research of *real* heroes before throwing themselves blindly into the forest beyond **Ringland's** gates.

### *3: The Darktide forest*

The lands to the East of Ringland are terribly cursed; the product of an aberrant hex so corrosive that even the veil of reality has worn thin, opening rifts to unfamiliar places and allowing many horrifying things to slip through the cracks. Flora and fauna of the far realms spot the forest like a bizarre, extraplanar mold. Aberrant beasts, eldritch constructs, and walking nightmares lurk in White Plume Mountain's great shadow.

- ❖ Travel in the Darktide Forest is very dangerous, and every day travelled results in an encounter on a probability roll of 5 or higher on a D10. In addition to standard encounters, the following special encounters can occur.

#### Possible encounters:

1. The flora in the area grows increasingly bizarre. Weird shapes, unnatural colors, and odd, spongy ground slowly creep over the normal forest. Deeper in, the party finds a clutch of 1d4 eggs buried in a pile of corpses guarded by two hungry [Grells](#). If slain, any intact eggs can be harvested and sold, and the bodies have petty cash worth 10d4 gold and a locket with a bloody family photo. The photo depicts a young woman wearing a white sash with a fat red cross surrounded by an older couple.
2. A deep channel has seemingly been worn into the forest clearing, as if it an old river once ran this way, except that the path seems to curve spastically back and forth through the space without any logical flow. A cursory examination of the space reveals that the grass in the supposed riverbeds was crushed flat, as if something heavy rolled over them, and a **DC 8 hearing check** detects a rumbling sound rapidly approaching the clearing. It's a very angry [Odopi](#). It's clearing is home to some rare herbs that thrive in its fiendish energy. The DM may choose to scale the threat down by treating it as large instead of huge, with 160 hp 180 and 40ft of movement instead.
3. The party comes upon a clearing with a sandy mesa in the center, ringed by a rusted old fence. A stone bridge leads up to the top of the mesa, where an outcrop of 21 weathered tombstones sit. 2d8 of the tombstones have been replaced by [mimics](#), which will attack the party if touched. The bridge is a rare type of mimic known as a [Spanner](#) which will attack them as they try to leave. A dusty revolver can be looted from the most recent tomb, clutched in the hands of a skeleton. It is also a mimic, but can be domesticated by a dedicated owner.
4. The party comes upon a large, moss-ringed hole in the ground. A **DC 12 nature check** reveals the walls of the hole to be made of a vibrant red clay; certainly not endemic to the area. The moss is a pseudo-magical creature known as "memory moss" which will attempt to enchant party members who step onto it. Characters that fail a **DC 16 wisdom check** fall into a magically induced coma; waking ten minutes later with no memories since their last rest. Party members that notice their memory dissonance can investigate their affliction with a **DC 18 arcana or nature check**, learning that eating the moss will return their memories, at the risk of (DC 14) poisoning them. If players choose to call into the hole, a different voice will respond. If anything larger than a coin is dropped into the hole, the voice starts screaming and 1d4 [Otyugh](#) will emerge and start combat.

## *4: The Ruins of Castle Mukos*

Once upon a time, Castle Mukos was a shining bastion of safety for the Shield Lands, standing firm against the dragon tyrant Dragotha and the barbarians of Rift Canyon for millennia. Those days have long since passed. The once-dazzling obsidian walls are cracked and tarnished and spires that once touched the very sky now lay moldering in the dirt.

Approximately 300 years ago, the barbarians of Rift Canyon mounted an enormous final attack on Castle Mukos, hoping to bring down the greatest barrier to their conquest of the Western Shield Lands. The assault proved catastrophic for both factions. The castle's defenders fought to the last, sacrificing their fortress and their Lord to shatter the barbarian advance. Capitalizing on the chaos of their final clash, another ancient enemy of Castle Mukos chose that moment to strike. Drawing on the latent power of the battlefield deaths, Thingizzard's hag coven hexed the battlefield with a vitriolic curse of undeath. Those of the castle, it is said, are doomed to battle endlessly with their chthonic foes in the ruins of their devastated homeland.

### 4.A: The Duchy of Mukos

- ❖ DMs should endeavor to have the party approach the duchy in the evening so that they reach the castle at sundown, when the curse of Castle Mukos activates.

The crumbling remains of the castle town of Mukos sit festering in the scorched basin beneath the mountain keep. The sky seems to darken as the adventurers approach the ruined land of Mukos and a low, chilling mist hangs heavy on the ground. The cracked and overgrown outline of a road winds up the slope through the village to the mountaintop. Broken carts and rickshaws (all facing away from the castle) litter the thoroughfare. rusted farm equipment clutters devastated fields as if abandoned mid-work. Thousands of small, white flames dance impossibly across the wooden spines of empty buildings, piles of crushed masonry, and the bones of the dead.

- ❖ Even a cursory glance reveals the flames to be deeply unnatural. The party can hear the echoes of agonized screams, like the distant sounds of torture, if they approach the flames.
- ❖ Partial skeletons scatter road and the edges of the fields. Each one's skull is utterly smashed, as if something were pulled out through the front of the face.

As the party continues through the farmland into the town proper, the sheer scale of death here is made apparent; hundreds of fragmented skeletons of all sizes and races litter the ground and fill the alleys between buildings. Rusting armor, weapons, and shields leave no room to question what caused this death. Small groups of intact skeletons stand amidst the wreckage. Some appear to be the remains of peasants and civilians, while others are clearly warriors of Mukos or Rift Canyon. Many of these standing skeletons appear locked in a museum recreation of their climactic battle. Swords are lodged in skulls, maces freeze halfway caving in breastplates, and skeletal archers stand posed with arrows pulled taught against their bows.

- ❖ A **DC 12 arcana check** identifies an obvious aura of necromancy magic on the standing skeletons, holding them together until the damage is too great to repair even through magical means. Necromancers in the party may recognize this particular kind of undeath as related to Hag magic.
  - On a **DC 17**, an aura of transmutation magic can also be detected. DMs may choose to list the types of spells included in this domain, including time manipulation.
- ❖ A **DC 15 investigation check** on the standing skeletons reveal most to be covered in overlapping wounds, many of which would be individually fatal. Some of the deepest wounds show signs of healing.

Further along the road, as the party sweeps around the bend toward the Castle gate, the ground to the East of the path drops off steeply toward a vast plain. The sheer scale of violence inflicted here dwarfs all that was seen in the town. The moldering husks of siege weapons sit broken and burning with that same eldritch white fire. The impossibly grand bones of siege animals - rhinos and elephants, and the unmistakable glinting skull of a dragon - are strewn about the space. Broken banners and tattered flags shudder in the breeze, bleached almost white by thousands of passes of the sun. The bodies - those that haven't been reduced entirely to dust - number greater than a thousand.

The remains of two factions can still be adequately recognized; the purple and yellow regalia of the Knights cut a sharp contrast to the ivory jewelry and monstrous moldering pelts of the Rift Canyon barbarians. Several wide channels of ground around the remains of Mukos Soldiers appear to have been turned to glass, and dozens of boulders can be spotted embedded in the shattered skeletons of Rift Canyon siege beasts.

- ❖ The last rays of sunlight should be fading as the party approaches the broken gates of the keep. As they fade, the skeletons grind to life, resuming their conflict as if it were the day of the invasion.

#### 4.B: Castle Mukos

The walls of Castle Mukos are carved from immense bricks of obsidian, visibly weathered and crumbling at points, but remarkably intact given the circumstances. Seven skeletons battle in front of the massive iron portcullis, which presently stands open. Six are normal [skeleton warriors](#), while the last Mukos Knight is a [revenant](#).

- ❖ Four of the skeletons are barbarians, while the other three are Mukos knights. The barbarians will attack the players unconditionally, but the Mukos knights will prioritize the barbarians unless attacked.
- ❖ Adventurers can attempt to climb the walls on a successful **DC 25 acrobatics check**.
  - If the players have climbing instruments, they may use them to reduce the check to **DC 15**, but doing so will make the Mukos knights atop the wall hostile.
  - The group can sneak past the skeletons with a **DC 18 stealth check**.

The gate into Castle Mukos is 20ft deep, and 15ft wide, with murder holes every 5ft in the ceiling leading into the passageway.

- ❖ 1d4 of the holes are manned by skeletons which will attempt to pour boiling oil onto the adventurers below
  - A **DC 12 perception check** will note that the floor here appears smoothly eroded and remarkably clean, as if the filth has been burned off repeatedly.
  - Skeletons will attempt to pour boiling oil onto players who walk under them, dealing 4d4 fire damage and knocking the victim down. A **DC 15 dexterity check** halves the damage, and negates being knocked down.

In front of the keep itself is a wide courtyard, crowded with clusters of brutally fighting [skeletons](#). To the left and right of the courtyard are two longhouse-style buildings of dark stone. The one to the left looks a little like an overturned ark; the one to the right is two stories, with large windows on the upper floor. At the far end of the courtyard is the castle keep.

**1A)** To the left is the dining hall: The interior of this space is utter chaos. Chairs have been smashed against walls, bone splinters are embedded in overturned tables and litter the floor. The chandeliers and sconces on the walls glitter with the same phosphorous-white flames the party saw on their approach. The central dining table, at least 60ft long, remains largely intact despite the deep gouges beaten into its surface and refuse of destroyed dining

ware. Six skeletons are fighting near the entrance to the hall, bashing at each other with chair legs and the dulled blades clinking ineffectually off deformed armor.

- ❖ If a skeleton's head is not destroyed or its body does not suffer insurmountable damage, dark tendrils of necrotic energy materialize to pull their skeletal bodies back together at the beginning of the next initiative cycle.
- ❖ In the silence after the battle, the adventurers hear a rhythmic crunching from a small room at the far end of the room. If they approach, they will see a [flaming skeleton](#) kneeling over the ruined body of a Rift Canyon berserker, flaming tears like pitch streaming from its eye sockets. The berserker's head and collarbones are utterly destroyed; yet the flaming skeleton keeps pounding at the space where it was, reducing its own hands and wrists to splinters. It stops at the sound of the party's approach, turns to them, and releases a scream of pure agony.
  - This monster uses the flaming skeleton statblock, except with a +8 modifier to hit, 18 AC, and 105hp.
  - On the remains of the flaming skeleton is a large, triangular obsidian key.
- ❖ The weapons and fineries in the room have been all but totally destroyed, but a **DC 18 perception check** will uncover a golden circlet that slipped under the table at some point, as well as a few small jewels that are embedded in the body of the table.
  - A **DC 11 perception or investigation check** notes no congealed blood or stains anywhere in the room, suggesting the battle spread here only after Castle Mukos fell to the dead.

1B) The multistoried building to the right is a library annex. Sparks of incandescent white flames Dance around the entrance and extend up the second floor of bookstacks. The vast majority of books appear too damaged to read. Either too scorched, or increasingly as the party moves deeper into the room, spoiled by mold. The floor in the back third of the room appears heavily rotted, with large chunks dissolving entirely to expose damp earth and ugly, violet mushrooms. Bones scatter the floor, but none are animate.

- ❖ Thorough investigation of the library, or a **DC 19 investigation check** if players try to clear the room quickly, reveals a single shelf of rare books preserved under several other collapsed shelves. These books appear to have survived only because of the glass case they were placed in, staving off enough mold and damage to keep them legible.
  - Among the books are a set of bound journals noting major events in the castle's history, including an account of the defeat of Dragotha, and a map charting several locations where the dragon might have fled after being mortally wounded in battle.
  - One other book, *A Historical Survey of White Plume Mountain*, recounts the rise of a hedge mage named Keraptis who gained great fame and fortune by conquering various warlords in the North, seizing their treasures and magical artifacts grow his horde.
    - It describes a fateful battle with an ancient archdruid who once presided over White Plume Mountain. Descending with his horde of fanatical gnomes, Keraptis slayed the archdruid, pinning the giant's corpse to the mountainside with a magical glaive known as Frostpoint. The mountain became Keraptis' fortress until his abrupt disappearance 1,300 years ago (900 years after the book was written).
- ❖ Set into the back wall is a large stone door, half-hidden behind a pair of crumbling bookshelves. Dark streaks stain the earth around the door. Despite the damage and obvious ware, the doors are sturdy, and bare no mark except for a small, triangular indent at waist level.
  - Behind the door, a stone staircase descends deep into the mountain. More [violet mushrooms](#) sprout from cracks in the walls and ceiling, mycelial tendrils swaying as if caught in an undercurrent. Splinters of marrowless bone scatter the floor in a fine dust.

- A **DC 12 investigation check** reveals deep grooves in the wall, as if something sought to claw its way out.

### **4.C: Underhill Maze**

The stone stairway descends at least fifty steps into the earth, opening at last into a dark antechamber; air thick with spores and lit only by the soft glow of a cracked and flickering [driftglobe](#) hovering above a corpse. Fans of colorful mushrooms sprout from its skeletal back like wings, and one outstretched hand reaches helplessly toward the bottom step. The skeleton's body below the waist is entirely missing.

Beyond the antechamber is a winding network of hallways; a [maze of some sort](#), designed to disorient and delay invaders. During the final days of Castle Mukos, a few individuals seem to have found their way into its dark depths. Fewer still seem to have found their way out.

The violet fungus infestation appears to have been significantly magnified by whatever dire magic ensnares the castle. Feasting on the bones of the lost dead, growing fat on the necrotic energy seeping into the soil, a [violet fungus necrohulk](#) resides in the maze. The twisted remains of a dozen skeletons, stitched together with mold and fungal rot, form its dilapidated body. Broken weapons needle out of its bulk, but the smooth, sturdy handle of a battleaxe juts out of its shoulder.

- ❖ Each minute, roll a D4. On an even roll, the necrohulk gets closer to the party. After a total of four even rolls, the necrohulk locates the party and will chase them until they escape the maze, kill it, or all successfully hide with a **DC 16** stealth check or a **DC 20** athletics.
  - If the violet necrohulk is killed, its mycelial mass will rapidly decompose, exposing a grim battleaxe once buried in its chest. The word "[empathy](#)" is inscribed on the haft in an ancient common dialect.

The antechamber at the far end of the maze is a mirror of the room beneath the library, lit by one intact driftglobe floating above one half of a matched set of podiums. The stairs on this side lead to a secret entryway into Mukos Keep.

### **4.D: Mukos Keep**

The stairs at the far side of the maze leads up to small vestibule via another hidden door. A quick survey reveals it to be the antechamber of Castle Mukos' keep. On one side of the room, the gates to the keep are barred from the inside and appear free of damage. Another door, far grander than the gates, stands on the opposite side of the chamber, likely leading to the throne room.

- ❖ Although the flames are scattered all over the place, they don't seem to spread or actually burn the materials they're attached to. Pale flowers of light burn on the lush carpets and wall tapestries, consume the metal candelabras on the walls, and blossom on the wooden ceiling far overhead.
  - If a hero touches any of the flames, it will immediately flare up, burning their hand for 1d6 necrotic damage as tortured screams echo into their mind.
  - In such high concentrations, it is possible to discern the nature of the flames. On a **DC 20 religion check**, reduced to **DC 15** for necromancers, reveals the flames to be some kind of Soulfire. Soulfire burns metaphysical energy, obliterating the essence of any creature that it consumes. If a hero dies and their body is consumed by soulfire, their soul is destroyed; preventing resurrection. Soulfire can be smothered like any other flame, but never burns out by itself.

The doors to the throne room aren't locked. They swing open heavily if pushed, revealing the sparse remains of the heart of Castle Mukos. The room is 40' square. The floor is smolders with embers, and the walls overhead are wreathed in pale flames. The only remaining piece of furniture sits against the far wall, upon which a richly adorned skeleton sits.

The pale Duke of Muchos sits atop his silver throne, and he burns. White fire dances along the sharp lines of his unmoving skeleton giving the illusion of ghostly movement, like shallow breathing. Hunched on the shoulders of the great silver throne is a madly grinning beast sculpted from the fire. As the doors screech open, the Burning Thing howls fanatically and leaps forward, exploding into a roiling storm of fire as it does.

- ❖ The Burning Thing is an extremely ferocious [cinder swarm](#), borne of strange magic and sculpted from soul fire.
  - When the Burning Thing is slain, it erupts in a massive expulsion of wind, blowing out the soulfire in the throne room bathing it in darkness.

The Duke's bones crumble to ash and blow away in the blast, sending rings, necklaces, and his coronet clattering to the floor.

- ❖ Casting Detect Magic on the coronet reveals it to be magical. While attuned, the wearer gains resistance to necrotic damage and gains +1 to AC.
- ❖ Searching the throne room reveals a variety of petty treasures and 1d4 random uncommon magic items.
  - If the silver throne is moved, or on a **DC 20 investigation or perception check**, the heroes find a hidden chamber under the throne. In it, a lantern made of mithril sits on a 10' coil of chain. It is enchanted so that any fire placed inside cannot be smothered.

If the Burning Thing is defeated before leaving the keep, the first rays of light begin shining over the vast mountains to the east, signaling a new day as the grinding chaos of the castle stills until the next night.

## *Weapons of Legend*

### Whelm

As written in White Plume Mountain module.

### Wave

As written in White Plume Mountain module.

### Blackrazor

As written in White Plume Mountain module.

### Frostpoint

Frostpoint is a +2 magical glaive made of enchanted ice that leaves entropic ice shards in those it strikes. Each time a character is struck by Frostpoint, a sliver of enchanted ice is left in the wound. Whenever a character poisoned by an ice shard is dealt damage, they take 1 additional damage for each ice shard in them.

### Empathy

Empathy is a +5 magical battleaxe that deals equal damage to both its target and wielder each time it is swung. The latent magic in the battleaxe is so strong it is unlikely to survive more than four swings before shattering.

### Brickerbrackerbrick

A magically enchanted stone chiseled into a roughly cubic shape. When swung with sufficient force, it emits an ear-splitting snap before crumbling to dust and reforming 1d4 hours later. Deafens and blinds all creatures within 15 feet on a failed DC 18 Constitution throw.