

# The Tower of Karastal

An adventure set in the Wilderlands for low to mid-level characters

by

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The Tower of Karastal is set in the region along the Old South Road just south of the Mermist Marshes near Ered Losthain (Old Map 1 hex #2826). But can be moved to any location that would support a small village near a valley with some forested area. It is designed for characters of 2-5<sup>th</sup> level but can easily be scaled for adventurers of all levels.

## Adventure Background:

Thulas Kal is a minor thief who has stolen a pair of scrolls from his masters in the Thieves Guild of the City State of the Invincible Overlord. He has fled the City State traveling south along the Old South Road, laying low in the village of Aeristol, just south of Bier. Aeristol lies in Map 1 hex #2826, Bier in #2926, just beyond the Mermist Marshes. Aeristol is a small village about a mile and a half from the mouth of a valley in the foothills of the Ered Losthain range. Long ago the valley was the home of a powerful wizard known as Karastal the Covetous.

Karastal's mind was consumed by greed and a lust for power. In his dotage, his greed consumed him and pushed him over the brink of

madness and paranoia. He gathered a wondrous hoard of gems and jewels in his tower, but trusted none to guard them. He believed everyone desired to rob him of his pretties. As the shadow of death neared, Karastal took steps to prove his superiority and ensure no one would ever claim his hoard. His pride battled with his greed and won out, and so he scribed a series of scrolls boasting of his hoard and challenging any to attempt to take it. He promised a horrible death to all who tried but promised no living creature guarded the hoard.

Over the years a few hearty souls took up Karastal's challenge, but none ever managed to recover his treasures. A few survivors of these attempts added to the mystique of the secret of Karastal's Tower. Over time though, the challengers became fewer and fewer, and the accounts of Karastal's Tower and challenge disappeared into the hands of private collectors or the dusty libraries of enlightened sages. The legends of the Tower have faded from the memory of the common folk and none have challenged the Tower in decades.

About a year ago, a group of thieves from the City State

successfully robbed the vaults of an antiques dealer who refused to pay them protection money. Among the loot was a pair of scrolls, one an account of Karastal's challenge and hoard, the other a map drawn by a survivor of one of the last attempts to capture that hoard. Thulas Kal was the apprentice of one of these thieves. He heard his master discuss the accounts in the scrolls with his fellows and became intrigued. One evening he stole into the vaults and looked at the map, being unable to read the other scroll. The stories his master told were reminiscent of a tale he had heard in his youth, and the map confirmed his suspicions, the Tower lay near the village of Aeristol where he had grown up.

Thulas Kal began to plot and scheme to recover the treasure for himself. A week ago he snuck back into the vaults and stole the pair of scrolls. Slipping out of the city he headed south along the Old South Road until he reached Aeristol. He has been laying low since his arrival, seeking a likely group to dupe into helping him acquire the treasure, one he feels he can easily manipulate and betray to keep the treasure for himself.

Unfortunately for Thulas Kal, the Thieves Guild has tracked him down to the village. Allies of the Guild in Bier spotted him as he passed through, and reported his location back to the Guild. The Guild's enforcers located Thulas Kal

a day ago, and have had him under observation. A band of toughs waits, camped near the village to take Thulas without drawing the attention of the villagers. Thulas however, is unaware of this. He has however marked a group of weary adventurers who arrived in the village on the way to the City State as likely dupes for his plot. The adventure begins with him approaching the PC's with an offer...

### Notes for the DM:

The adventure is a standalone adventure, but is short enough to be a side adventure in a longer-running scenario. If the DM wishes he can add rumors of an item the party needs or desires being a part of the hoard of Karastal, or have the item mentioned in the scroll's account.

The adventure includes a brief overview of Aeristol and its inhabitants, with a focus on the Loaf and Ladle Inn where most of the town action will occur. It will detail a pair of encounters in the wilderness between Aeristol and the Tower of Karastal, and fully detail the Tower and its guardians. Maps of the town, countryside, and Tower are included. The village of Bier and the Nightcave Coven figure into the background of this adventure and are expanded upon in the Rorystone Road download available at the Judges Guild website. Major NPC's will be detailed in an appendix, and a new

monster, the Aspect of Yooneghu will be presented in the appendix as well.

The DM should pace the adventure to suit the needs and desires of his players. If they are enjoying the town adventure, add to that section. If you want to extend the search for the Tower, add more encounters. The Tower itself will be quite challenging and potentially deadly if the party cannot figure out the Tower's secrets. Trying to take out the animated Tower by force of arms will likely get a large chunk of the party dead and dying. The same will happen if the party allows the Gnolls to complete their sacrifice and summon the aspect of Yooneghu. The party will have to make good decisions to survive the challenges the adventure presents.

### **Adventure Synopsis:**

Thulas Kal will approach the party in Aeristol and hire them to accompany him to the Tower of Karastal in search of reaches beyond their imaginings. The next day the party will travel from the village heading northeast. As the party approaches the edge of the old forest, they will be ambushed by a band of thugs sent by the Thieves Guild of the City State of the Invincible Overlord to recover the scrolls Thulas has, and to punish Thulas for their theft. The toughs though are expecting a lone rogue, not a well-armed party, and will likely be driven off and flee into the forest.

The forest area has been the site of lot of Gnollish activity recently. An hour or so into the forest, the party will hear a bloodcurdling scream, and then the cries of a young girl. The Gnolls have captured and brutally killed the bandits who fled, but they have also taken a young girl captive. The leader of the Gnoll band is a cleric of Yooneghu who plans to sacrifice the girl to summon an Aspect of Yooneghu to the land. They wish the Aspect to attack the Nightcave Coven which has been responsible for the hunting down of Gnolls in the area since the Gnoll Times.

If the party rescues the girl, she will tell them that she lived on a small farm on the other side of the forest with her family. She was away visiting an old tower, which has always intrigued her, when she heard screams from her home. She rushed home and into the clutches of the Gnoll band.

She can lead them to the old tower and will tell the party stories about it. She says that she believes the Tower is guarded by a gray giant. She has only ever caught a glimpse of the gray shape moving about, but she has found giant footsteps about. She likes to go stare at the old tower and pretend she is a princess and it is her home, but she has never actually approached closer than 100 yards or gone inside.

The party will have to explore the mysterious tower which is full of

magical traps, constructs, and other non-living guardians. The biggest threat is the Tower itself, which is actually a huge monstrous construct which animates to destroy intruders. The party must discover the Tower's secret to destroy it, the powerfully enchanted Heart of Karastal. This is the largest of the mages gems which continues to empower his dweomer upon the tower long after he has shuffled off his mortal coil. If they accomplish this, maybe, just maybe they will claim the wizard's fabled hoard.

### **Getting Started:**

can choose 1 of 2 openings to start the adventure, depending on your preference of style. The adventure opens with Thulas Kal approaching the party to hire them to explore the Tower. If you prefer a lot of role-playing you can use this opening to play out the negotiations, establish Thulas' personality, etc. If you prefer to get to the action more quickly, start with the party having been hired and heading out of town with Thulas on the way to the Tower. If the DM chooses the second option, skip Part 1 detailing Aeristol and go to Part 2: The Journey to the Tower.

### **Starting Choice 1:**

#### **In the Tavern**

*"You have spent a hard day on the road and welcome the respite this small village offers. A quick questioning of a local tells you this*

*village is Aeristol. He directs you to the Loaf and Ladle, one of two taverns in the village and the only one with stables and rooms to rent. The village seems to be mostly small wattle and daub cottages mixed with worked fields, but one large manor house sits on a small rise, with a large horse corral nearby. You make your way to the Loaf and Ladle, stable the horses, and order a hot meal and drinks. The atmosphere is typical of many a small village, filled with mostly locals and a few travelers upon the Old South Road. One figure at another table has been eyeing you since you came in, seeming to size you up. He is a small smarmy looking fellow in traveling clothes. His dark complexion and features wrinkle as he smiles at you and approaches your table."*

The fellow is Thulas Kal (Male Human Rog 2). He will engage the characters in conversation and broach the subject of the map and scroll and the possibility of hiring the adventurers carefully. His story is a lie to cover his possession of the items and hide his affiliation with the Guild. When the conversation leads to the topic read the following:

Thulas Kal's story/offer:

*"This village sure hasn't changed much from when I was a boy here. My gran, he used to like to talk to people like you, adventurers. He*

*would collect stories and souvenirs that they would give him. I sure do miss him though. He died this past winter, and I received a package from him and came back here a few days ago. He sent me some parchments. One was an unmarked map of the area to the west of here, and the other a collection of stories about an old wizard's tower full of treasure. I am just a poor scribe who used my talents to make a living in the City State. I don't need a lot of treasure, but it would be nice not to have to struggle to survive. There is no way I can get this myself, and I was hoping you could help for a share of the hoard. The scroll says there are no living guardians but there is danger. There is also some talk of the Heart of Karastal being the key to recovering the treasure. What little I could find out is that the old Wizard Karastal the Covetous had a large gem he called his heart. I wasn't able to find out much else from the scroll or any of my contacts. Only that the wizard was mad and rich beyond imagining. Would you be interested in helping me find this tower and recover its wealth? I am not much use in a fight or in ruins, but I do have the scrolls. We could split the treasure equally."*

If the party agrees, Thulas Kal will retire to his room after making plans to leave in the morning. If the party is hesitant Thulas will try to sweeten the deal, making up details about

vast treasures and magic which he says the scroll details. Thulas fully intends to keep the treasure for himself. For more on Thulas Kal and his motivations see the appendix detailing NPC's.

### **Starting Choice 2:**

#### **On the Way to Karastal's Tower**

*"After several long days traveling north on the Old South Road, you stopped in the town of Aeristol for a hot meal and an evenings rest. While at the Loaf and Ladle Inn, a small smarmy looking fellow in traveling clothes, named Thulas Kal approached you. Thulas has sought your aid in an adventure, telling you a tale of two scrolls he acquired through an inheritance from his grandfather. He tells you of these two parchments: one was an unmarked map of the area to the west of Aeristol, and the other a collection of stories about an old wizard's tower full of treasure. Thulas tells you he is just a poor scribe who used his talents to make a living in the City State, and who has no way of recovering the treasure himself. He has hired you for a share of the hoard. The scroll says there are no living guardians in the tower, but there is danger. There is also some talk of the Heart of Karastal being the key to recovering the treasure. What little he could find out was that the old Wizard Karastal the Covetous had a large gem he called his heart. He wasn't*

*able to find out much else from the scroll or any of his contacts, only that the wizard was mad and rich beyond imagining”.*

**DM Notes:**

**Karastal, Thulas Kal, and the scrolls**

The wizard Karastal lived over a century ago and his tower has remained hidden for some time. He was reclusive, greedy and quite paranoid. Little is known about him outside the scrolls and a few legends. Any Knowledge checks or Bardic Knowledge checks will reveal the following information about Karastal based on DC they beat.

**DC 15** Wizard of some power and madness, fascination with gems, who left behind a challenge regarding his tower

**DC 20** Was rumored to have made a deal with a demon for immortality and protecting his horde

**DC 25** he was fascinated with summoning and animating magic

Thulas Kal is clever and opportunistic, but a coward at heart. He fully intends to betray the party, but not until after they have recovered the hoard. If presented with a choice of his life or the treasure though, he will choose life. He will try to pit the PC's against the Guild enforcers and slip away if the situation looks bad. His full stats are given in the appendix, but he is a con man more than a thug, and should be played with cleverness not aggressiveness.

If the party manages to get the scrolls away from Thulas long enough to read them the following are the key ideas:

- Karastal's Tower holds great wealth
- Karastal challenges those brave enough to come take his hoard
- there are no living guardians in the tower
- the key to defeating the Tower's challenges is the Heart of Karastal
- the map shows the Tower in a valley in the foothills to the north west of a major mountain range, somewhere south of the CSIO.

## **PART I:**

### **The Village of Aersitol**

**AERISTOL:** (Village) Conventional  
AL: CG, Tech Level 6, 150 gp limit;  
Assets 2000 gp; Population 512  
(Able bodied Men: 150); Mixed  
(Human 85% [Tharbian, Dunael,  
Altanian, and Alyran], Gnome 10%,  
Halfling 4%, Other 1%; Resources:  
Agriculture and Livestock (horses),  
*Authority Figure(s):* Glastel Willock  
Male Gnome NG Bard 4, *Important  
Characters:* Jahar Ferrell, male  
human (Tharbian) N Ftr 3/Exp 4/Ari  
1 (horse rancher and manor house  
owner).

Aeristol is a peaceful farming village, but the heart of its economy is the large horse ranch run by Jahar Ferrell. The farmers are rough individualistic sorts, who are mostly self-sufficient. They trade surplus to Bier and other surrounding communities. It is a frequent stopping point for travelers upon the Old South Road, especially those seeking fresh horses or a hot meal. The Loaf and Ladle Inn is well-known to travelers for its spiced mutton and stews. Glastel Willock is a very charismatic character, who is adept at getting the various individuals to work together for the common good.

### **Important Locations in Aeristol**

A) All locations marked A on the map are private homes, most wattle and daub cottages holding single families and lots of children.

B) Areas marked B are tilled fields, worked in common by the villagers. Medieval style farming was a community effort, and this is the case here. These are used mostly for the cultivation of grains. Each cottage has a small private garden for other vegetables.

#### **1) The Rearing Stallion Tavern**

*"This "L" shaped building sits near the northern edge of the village. A faded wooden sign of a rearing stallion and a tankard of ale mark the place as the local watering hole. Sawdust covers the floor, and tables crowd the common room."*

This is the smaller of the two taverns in the town, and has no rooms for rent or stables. It is simply the gathering place where the locals go to have a few drinks after a long day in the fields or working the ranch. The proprietor is Gilad Hornleaf, a middle aged plump Halfling (Expert 4). His 2 sons and 3 daughters help run the tavern. All are friendly, but the locals prefer to keep to themselves here, and outsiders are not particularly welcome by the patrons. Gilad will cheerfully serve them and charge them a higher rate than he does the locals. He will

suggest they seek rooms at the Loaf and Ladle if they engage him in conversation. The patrons have too much respect for Gilad to cause trouble with non-locals, but they will be cold and aloof. Gather information checks are at a -4 circumstance modifier here for non-natives. Ale or wine is 2 cp for locals but 1 sp for out-of-towners. Bread and cheese are available for 5 cp for locals 2 sp for outsiders.

## **2) Trading Post**

*“This is one of only a few wood and brick structures in the town. A pair of small tables outside holds a sampling of wares, marking this as a trading post. Inside is a good selection of goods at reasonable prices. The trader is a middle aged man who offers you an enthusiastic smile as you enter.”*

The proprietor is Wil Seamus (Exp 3), once a traveling merchant, he settled here about 10 years ago to open his trading post. He often traveled the Old South Road from the City State to Onhir, and made the journey up the Rorystone Road to Thunderhold a few times as well. Wil is glad to be settled, as travel was much too dangerous for his tastes. Anything in the PHB equipment lists up to the 150 gp limit, except livestock is available here at  $\pm 10\%$  of listed price. Weapons and armor are usually a little more, everyday tools and items a little less, and other

equipment at PHB prices. Wil frequently dines with merchants passing through and loves to gossip and collect stories. He can be a valuable source of information about the road, and the surrounding areas.

## **3) Village Green**

*“Along the eastern side of the road through the center of the village lies a well manicured green. It is here that the village gathers for festivals, announcements, markets, judgments, etc.”*

During the daylight hours, locals may set up a cart here to sell surplus or to get food for the day that they need. Across from the green lie the town wells, so this area sees a lot of activity during the day.

## **4) Mayor’s Hall**

*“A large mortar and stone house sits just off the road across from the village green. A well cared for hedge surrounds the structure. A table and a bench are set up on the front lawn.”*

This structure is the home of the town Mayor Glastel Willock, a Gnome Bard 4. Glastel is assisted by Kara Leaflight, a female High Elf Exp 2, who was enamored of Glastel’s tales of high adventure and joined him in adventure to record his exploits. She became his scribe when he settled down here to become mayor. Glastel is amazingly

charismatic (Ch 19) and outgoing. He manages to keep the town focused on the common good, and has adventuring contacts he uses to deal with the major threats the community may face. As such, he is well-liked by the village-folk, even though he was once an outsider. Glastel or Kara may be able to shed some light on legends of Karastal, but neither is really an expert in the field, but may have heard scraps of the legends surrounding him and his tower.

### **5) Loaf and Ladle Inn**

*“As anyone approaches the town from the south along the Old South Road, the aroma of spices and roasted mutton will greet them. A large wood and brick two story structure sits along the eastern edge of the road at the southern limits of the village. A carefully painted wooden sign showing a loaf of bread and a ladle mark this as an inn or tavern. The delectable smells of a hot meal fill the area. A stable stands behind the main structure of the inn, and two small gardens lay near the stable.”*

The proprietress of the Loaf and Ladle is Elana Haverhill, a plump middle aged human (Tharbian) woman (Exp 6). She is an incredible cook (Profession cook +13). She runs this inn and caters mostly to travelers and non-natives. The locals stop by for a meal and to talk to

Elena, as she is well-liked in the community. They appreciate that she keeps the outsiders out of their hair and appreciate all she does for the community. There are a half dozen rooms at the Inn that she rents out, plus the common room. Staying in the common room costs 5 sp, and private rooms range from 1-3 gp a night depending on size. Two of the rooms are taken currently. One by Thulas Kal, who has the smallest room available, and the other by Devram Hidlar, a merchant bound from the City State to Onhir. A half dozen caravan guards of his are staying in the common room, and he hopes to hire a few more in the town. Devram and Wil Seamus (see area 2) are old friends.

The rooms are comfortable and the portions generous here. Elena does a good business and her inn is renowned for the quality of her roast mutton and mutton stew.

Meals cost 3-5 sp and drinks 5cp -1 sp depending on quality. Stabling of horse costs 1 gp per night per animal.

### **Areas 6-8) Shrines to the Gods**

*“To the west of the main road stand 3 larger shrines and a host of smaller shrines. The largest are shrines featuring a gilded oak leaf, a granite triangle, and the exaggerated figure of a female figure. Several dozen smaller shrines are scattered through the area as well.”*

This area is where any worship or ceremonies take place. The three most revered deities in the town are Beyntorn Lord of the Trees (gilded oak leaf), Teth Tufa Rock Mother of the Gnomes (Granite Triangle), and Suthak, Goddess of Fertility (earth mother/Venus of Wittendorf symbol). The shrines are tended by a visiting Druid who comes once a month or so to tend to the needs of the village folk. An aged priestess of Teth Tufa recently passed on to the realms of her goddess, and one of Mayor Glastel's top priorities is to attract another priest to reside in the town. He is willing to build another major shrine to accommodate any priest willing to take up residence.

### **9) Horse Corral**

*"A large fenced in area is visible from the road. It is a corral and a number of horses roam about it. A number of horse handlers are at work in the corral training horses and tending to them. Most look to be riding horses, but a few war horses are among those being trained."*

This is the exercise yard for the horses of Jahar Ferrell. The laborers are all low level commoners 1-3 and a half dozen are expert horse handlers (Exp 1-3). They are polite to potential customers, and travelers often come to survey potential purchases. Ferrell's horses are well trained and dependable, but a bit pricey. Prices

range from 125-150% of those in the PHB. Ferrell's horses are well known among those in the know of animal handlers.

### **10) Manor House/Barn**

*"On a rise above the corral is a large manor house with an attached barn. The barn is constructed of wood while the house is made of stone and mortar. It is the largest and most luxurious of buildings in the entire town."*

This is the home of Jahar Ferrell (Ftr 3/Exp 4/Ari 1). Ferrell's brother won a title of nobility through his war-time efforts, but Jahar was always more comfortable around his horse than those his brother associated with. Jahar is a veteran of several conflicts, but retired to train war horses. He earned quite a reputation and a small fortune doing so, and retired to the village of his mother to build a manor house and raise horses. He has brought a much needed boom to the village's economy and is treated as a favored son. He welcomes visitors and potential customers, knowing those that do not buy will still spread word of the quality of his animals.

### **11) Tack and Harness Shop**

*"This small wooden building serves as a workshop for a number of leather workers. Various pieces of completed tack and harness are*

*displayed for sale. The craftsmen are hard at work creating more.”*

The craftsmen are in the employ of Jahar Ferrell. There are 4 leather workers (ranging from Exp 1-5) who create tack and harness for Ferrell's use on the ranch and for sale to the general public. Pieces range from use for warhorses to harnesses draft animals used to till local fields. Tack and harness items are for sale at 100-125% of PHB prices, and are exceptional quality.

## **12) Town Wells**

*“Across from the village green, three covered stone wells stand. These are for public use by the townspeople and travelers. The natural springs tapped here are what enabled the town to grow up as a stopping point along the Old South Road.”*

The townsfolk do monitor the wells to make sure none tamper with them, but do not prevent any from taking what is needed. Every 5 years or so new wells are dug to tap the springs in a new location to keep them contamination free.

## PART II:

### Overland to Karastal's Tower

The journey from Aeristol to the foothills that hold the valley of Karastal's Tower is a short one, barely two miles, but it is one fraught with peril. Waiting at the edge of the forest near the foothills is the gang of enforcers from the Thieves Guild in CSIO, and within the small stand of forest is a band of Gnolls plotting a raid on the Nightcave Coven to the north. You should plan on having the characters leave near noon to allow the encounters to happen later in the day. The approach to the tower is particularly more effective at night. Thulas Kal can delay matters or the getting of supplies, etc. can take a few hours. The terrain in the foothills will be hard on mounts, and any from the horse corral will advise against bringing any horses there save a pack animal, as it will be quite easy for them to break a leg on some of the steeper inclines, especially if heading down into a valley.

#### **Encounter 1: Ambush** (EL 6)

*"You have been heading southwest for a little more than a mile through the rolling grasslands. Up ahead you can see a stand of dense forest which lies between you and the foothills. The forest is densely shadowed and seeing into it is difficult."*

Awaiting the party in the forest is the band of Guild enforcers from the City State. As the party draws within 150 feet of the forest, Jarak Skullknot and two thugs will emerge from the forest and call for the party to halt. There are another 9 thugs waiting in ambush just beyond the tree-line. The party should make DC 25 spot checks before Jarak emerges to catch a glimpse of movement in the trees. You should roll 1d12 for any who are successful. That is how many figures the party member thinks they see within the trees. Different party members may see different numbers. When Jarak steps out, read the following.

*"A large imposing half-orc in banded armor and carrying a great sword steps out of the copse of trees flanked by two scarred and weathered looking thugs wearing scale mail and brandishing large clubs. The half-orc calls out to you in an accented common.*

*"You have something that belongs to us. That scurvy weasel Thulas Kal stole it from us and we want it back!" Give it to us, and give us Kal, and we will let you go peacefully. If not we can take it from your cold corpses."*

*The two thugs leer menacingly at you and the half-orc brandishes his sword into a threatening position."*

If the party turns over Kal and the scrolls, Jarak will take them and begin to walk away. He will then order his men to kill the party. If they do not surrender the thugs will attack.

*Tactics:* Jarak will avoid personal combat; if at all possible, he prefers to let his men do the dirty work. If he is given the scrolls he will walk into the forest to fetch a horse and ride off towards the Old South Road taking a northwest route to intersect the road just south of Bier. He will ride at a full gallop to put some distance between himself and the party, and it will be difficult for them to catch him on foot.

The two thugs who come out with him and one other in the forest are his sub-commanders who handle most of the actual command during combat. There are 8 more thugs in the forest. Two are armed with crossbows and will fire at the party with the first sign of trouble. The 6 others will charge into melee if the party makes a move or if Jarak orders them to kill the party.

These thugs are expecting an easy capture of Thulas Kal, not a pitched fight with a well-trained well-equipped group of adventurers. If they outnumber the party they will remain fighting, but if more than a third of them are killed they will break and run into the forest. The two crossbowmen will not leave the forest to engage in melee, but look for opportunities to pick off the party

if they can. Those that flee will continue to hide and set ambushes for the party as they travel through the forest, at least until they are captured by the Gnoll raiding party hiding in the forest.

### **Guild Thugs:**

**Jarak Skullknot** Male Half-Orc Ftr 2; HD 2d10+2, hp 19, Init +1, Spd 20 ft., AC 17 (Dex +1, Banded +6) 18 Dodge, T 11, FF 16; BAB/Grp +2/+5, Attack: greatsword +7 melee (2d6+4) Full Attack: greatsword +7 melee (2d6+4); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Saves: Fort +5, Ref +1 Will +3; Abilities: Str 17 Dex 13 Con 13 Int 8 Wis 12 Cha 6; Skills: Intimidate +3 Ride +6; Feats: Dodge, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (Greatsword); AL LE CR 2 Possessions: Banded Mail, masterwork greatsword, sack with 65 gp, riding horse

**Sergeants** (3) Male Human War 2; HD 2d8+5, hp 14, Init +0, Spd 20 ft., AC 15 (Shield +1, Scale Mail +4) T 10, FF 15; BAB/Grp +2/+3, Attack: club +4 melee (1d6+1) Full Attack: club +4 melee (1d6+1); Saves: Fort +4, Ref +0 Will -1; Abilities: Str 13 Dex 11 Con 12 Int 8 Wis 9 Cha 12; Skills: Intimidate +5, Jump +1, Ride +1; Feats: Dodge, Toughness; AL LE CR 1 Possessions, scale mail, light wooden shield, masterwork club 10 gp each

**Crossbowmen** (2) Male Human War 1; HD 1d8+1, hp 8, Init +1, Spd

30 ft., AC 13 (Leather +2 Dex +1) T 11, FF 12; BAB/Grp +1/+1, Attack: heavy crossbow +2 ranged (1d10, 19-20) or shortsword +1 melee (1d6, 19-20) Full Attack: heavy crossbow +2 ranged (1d10, 19-20) or shortsword +1 melee (1d6, 19-20); Saves: Fort +3, Ref +1 Will -1; Abilities: Str 11 Dex 12 Con 13 Int 10 Wis 9 Cha 8; Skills:, Ride +3, Spot +1; Feats: Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot; AL LE CR ½

Possessions: leather armor, heavy crossbows, 20 bolts, short sword, 1d6 sp

**Guild Enforcers** (6) Male Human War 1; HD 1d8+3, hp 9, Init +4, Spd 30 ft., AC 15 (Leather +2, Shield +2, Dex +1) T 11, FF 13; BAB/Grp +1/+2, Attack: handaxe +2 melee (1d6, x3) Full Attack: hand axe +2 melee (1d6, x3); Saves: Fort +2, Ref +1 Will -1; Abilities: Str 12 Dex 13 Con 11 Int 10 Wis 9 Cha 8; Skills: Climb +3, Jump +3, Ride +3,; Feats: Improved Initiative, Toughness; AL LE CR ½ Possessions: Leather armor, heavy wooden shield, hand axe, 1d6 sp

The sheer numbers of the thugs makes this an EL 6, but their inclination to flee and the fact that Jarak does not stay for the fight makes this a little easier encounter. Jarak fleeing can be a plot hook for further adventures against the Thieves Guild either in Bier or CSIO, but if you want to make the encounter tougher have him stay and

fight. Some of the toughs, especially the crossbowmen, should flee to set up the next encounter.

### **Encounter 2: Chase** (EL 2)

Those enforcers, who escape the initial combat with the party, should harass them with hit and run tactics through the forest. Crossbowmen shooting out from behind trees then running off and hiding from the party should get the party annoyed and moving quickly and carelessly through the forest. The object is to get the party to chase after the thugs leading them to encounter #3. Encounter #3 takes place after sunset, as the Gnoll ritual has to occur after dark.

### **Encounter 3: Sacrifice** (EL 7 or 10)

*“As you make your way through the forest, you are stopped by a blood-curdling scream. It is a cry of pain and anguish. It is followed by a dull hammering and then the ear piercing cry of a young girl.”*

The party members should make listen checks. Any succeeding at making a DC 15 check will be able to determine the general direction of the screams. What the party is hearing is the Gnolls torturing one of the CSIO thugs and preparing to sacrifice a young girl to Yooneghu, Demon Lord of Gnolls. The following text descriptions assume that 3 of the

thugs escaped and have been captured by the Gnolls.

*“Moving through the forest, you soon hear the sound of chanting mixed with the whimpers of a young girl. Up ahead you spy a clearing with glowing firelight, and as you approach you are greeted with a grisly sight. One of the thugs from the City State is nailed to a tree and dripping blood. The flickering flames plays off the blood dripping from his body. Two more of the thugs are bound and on their knees before a group of grisly hyena headed humanoids. An altar of smooth dark wood is at the center of the clearing and a young girl is chained upon the altar. One of the humanoids in dark brown robes with mangy yellow highlights stands over the girl with a dagger raised chanting and spraying blood into the fire. His robes seem to be covered with both fresh and dried blood. Rising from the smoke of the fire is a monstrosly large spectral figure with a hyena head, glowing red eyes, and a menacing triple flail. The figure lacks solidity and seems to be made up of the wispy red tinged smoke rising from the sacrificial fire.”*

The humanoids are Gnolls, and the robed figure is Grr'nzztikar a priest of Yooneghu. He is attempting to complete a summoning ritual to bring forth an aspect of Yooneghu.

He desires to unleash the aspect on the Nightcave Coven to the north. They seek vengeance on Melanie the twisted elven leader of the Coven, infamous for her slaughter of Gnolls. They have been raiding the area gathering victims for the sacrifice and to feed themselves.

There are 8 Gnolls along with Grr'nzztikar. There are 2 Gnolls guarding each bound thug, 2 helping at the altar to hold the girl down and 2 supposedly on watch, but engrossed watching the ritual. All PC checks to hide or move silently should gain a +2 circumstance bonus against the Gnolls because of this.

If Grr'nzztikar completes his sacrifice of the young girl, he will succeed in summoning the aspect. The Gnoll priest will complete the sacrifice 5 rounds after he is spotted by the party. If he completes it, the Aspect will arrive by achieving solidity 10 rounds after the sacrifice.

*Gnoll Tactics:* The Gnoll Warriors will try to protect Grr'nzztikar and give him time to complete the ritual. The party really cannot afford to let the ritual be completed. If the Aspect is summoned, the party will be in serious peril, and may not survive the encounter. The party's best strategy is stealth if possible or something to incapacitate the priest, or a number of Gnolls quickly allowing them to reach Grr'nzztikar. The priest will not stop the ritual to fight, but will defend himself if

attacked. He is flatfooted until attacked. Once the sacrifice is completed, he will take up his flail and attack the PC's.

**Gnolls** (8) Medium Humanoid (HD 2d8+2, hp 11, Init +0, Speed 30 ft, AC 15 (+1 Nat, +2 leather armor, +2 hvy steel shield) T 10 FF 15; BAB/Grapple +1/+3, Attack: Battleaxe +3 melee (1d8+2/ x3), Full attack: Battleaxe +3 melee (1d8+2/ x3), Space/Reach 5 ft/ 5ft, SQ Darkvision 60 ft, Saves: Fort +4 Ref +0 Will +0, Abilities: Str 15 Dex 10 Con 13 Int 8 Wis 11 Cha 8; Skills: Listen +2, Spot +3; Feats: Power Attack; AL CE CR 1)

*Possessions:* leather armor, battle axe

**Grr'nzztikar** Male Gnoll Clr 4 HD 2d8+2 plus 4d8+4, hp 36, Init +0, Spd 30 ft., AC 15 (+1 Nat, +4 chain shirt) T 10, FF 15; BAB/Grp +4/+6, Attack: dagger +6 melee (1d4+3, 19-20) or Flail +7 melee (1d8+3), Full Attack: dagger +6 melee (1d4+3, 19-20) or Flail +7 melee (1d8+3), Space/Reach 5/5, SA: Spells, Spontaneous Casting Inflict spells, SQ Rebuke Undead, Darkvision 60', Saves: Fort +8, Ref +1 Will +6; Abilities: Str 15 Dex 10 Con 13 Int 10 Wis 14 Cha 10; Skills: Concentration +8, Knowledge Religion +4, Knowledge the Planes +3, Listen +2 Spot +3; Feats: Combat Casting, Power Attack, Spell Focus Conjunction, AL CE CR 5; Domains:

Bestial, War; Granted Powers Scent (Ex), Weapon Proficiency and Focus with Flail

Spells/Day 0-5, 1-4+1, 2-3+1

Spells Prepared: 0-Cure Minor Wounds, Resistance, Guidance x2, Virtue

1-Bane, Cause Fear, Command, Sanctuary (Magic Weapon-domain)

2-Bear's Endurance, Cure Moderate Wounds, Silence (Spiritual Weapon)

**Aspect of Yooneghu** see appendix for details of this new monster.

The young girl's name is Jessica (Com 1). She is between 10 and 12 years old, and lived on a small farm just outside the far edge of the forest, near the mouth of Karastal's Valley. She knows of the Tower. She likes to travel into the valley to look at it, and will gladly show the party how to get there. She tells them she likes to pretend she is a princess and that the Tower is her castle, but she is afraid to get too close. The Tower is guarded by a gray giant with glowing red eyes. She has never seen the giant really, just caught glimpses of it and its glowing red eyes at night. She has however found giant footprints in the earth near the Tower. The farm she lived on was raided by the Gnolls, she was taken prisoner and her family killed. She can take the PC's to the farm to rest for the night or take them to the Tower. The farm sits at the mouth of the valley and the PC's can see down

into the mist shrouded valley from the farm.

*Ad Hoc XP:* If the party rescues Jessica and prevents the summoning

of the Aspect,, the party should receive an additional 1500 XP to be divided among them, over and above those received for defeating the Gnolls.

## PART III: Karastal's Tower

It is most effective if the party catches their first glimpse of the Tower during the evening hours, but not necessary to the adventure. It just adds to the effect. If the party stays at Jessica's farm, describe the following scene if they look down into the valley during the night. If they travel straight into the valley, describe it as they enter the valley.

*"As you crest a small rise you look down into the valley that you have traveled here to find. The Valley seems shrouded in mists. Ahead in the mist, you see a pair of pulsing red lights, like a pair of glowing red eyes. A grey hulking form lurks in the mists behind the glowing red eyes. You would have to estimate it stands some 40 feet tall at the least, but it is hard to tell at this distance."*

If Jessica is with the party still, read the following:

*"Jessica begins to hop up and down excitedly, shouting "It's the giant, see I told you, I told you! A grey giant protects the Tower. It's the giant!" The figure does not seem to be moving but simply sits there hulking ominously. There does seem to be a pulsing to the red glowing eyes though."*

What the party is seeing is Karastal's Tower itself. The glowing red light comes from the gem the Heart of Karastal that seems to pulse with life, and its pulsing reflects off mirrors in the room through open windows to appear as glowing red eyes. The hulking grey giant is the Tower itself, which stands about 35-40 feet tall with its dome.

As the party gets closer it becomes more apparent what the hulking figure actually is. Have the PC's roll spot checks as they travel down into the valley. The DC is 15 to determine that the hulking figure is the Tower itself. The PC's should get a +1 cumulative circumstance bonus for every 100 yards closer to the Tower they travel. The Tower is roughly a half mile into the valley (or 900 yards). When someone in the party succeeds on the spot check read the following:

*"As you move closer, you heave a sigh of relief as you realize that the hulking grey figure is the Tower itself, and the glowing red "eyes" seem to be some pulsing light source coming from within. The Tower stands roughly 35-40 feet tall and is made of a pale grey stone. There is a copper plated dome over the top of the tower. The domed parapets and windows of the tower give the illusion of a face on a hulking figure from a distance. There seems to be a set of double doors at the base of the tower."*

The party should be feeling some relief they are not actually facing a giant, but you don't want them to get too comfortable, so add to the tension by reading the following when they get to within 100 yards of the Tower.

*“Up ahead you see a large depression in the ground. Within the depression are the remains of a human sized skeleton. Many of the bones are broken, and it looks as though this person may have been crushed. The depression is almost 2 feet deep and vaguely rectangular, measuring over 6 feet in length and about 3 feet wide.”*

If Jessica is with the party read the following:

*“See! It's one of the giant's footprints. I never go closer than this. I am afraid to. The giant stomps people who get too close to the tower. There are footprints all over this area of the valley. Please don't go any closer. I showed you where it is. Can we leave now? Please!!!!”*

If Jessica is not with the party, they may find more of these footprints on their own. A spot check DC 13 will allow them to spot another one nearby. If they actively search the area for more it is only a DC 8 Search check to find more. All told

there are between a score and two dozen of these depressions all within about a 100 foot radius of the Tower. Only 3 others (total 4) have skeletal remains in them. These are at the outer edge of the radius.

The party may later learn the cause of these depressions. The Tower itself will animate if Karastal's private quarters are disturbed, and will try to destroy the attackers. The power of the Heart of Karastal is what animates it (see area 6 of the Tower for full details).

Jessica will not go any closer under any circumstances. As afraid of being alone as she is, she is more afraid of the Tower. She will stay here and even watch horses, animals, and/or gear, but will not approach the Tower.

As the party approaches within 100 feet of the Tower entrance read the following:

*“The only way into the tower at ground level seems to be a pair of wooden double doors at its base. These are bound in copper. The left hand door seems to be slightly ajar.”*

Have the PC's roll Spot checks. A DC 13 check will reveal that a small white object seems to be stuck between the doors. A DC 15 check reveals it seems to be a bone, either an arm (incorrect) or leg bone (correct). It is actually the leg bone of a dwarf, cracked and broken in 2 places, and keeps the doors of the

Tower from fully closing unless it is removed. If the PC's move closer or try to look through the door proceed to area 1 of the Tower.

If the party attempts to climb the tower they will have some difficulty. The windows and parapets are protected by permanent walls of force, and access cannot be gained through them. It requires a DC 20 climb check every 10 feet to climb the smooth surface of the Tower exterior. It will be all but impossible to get grapnels to find purchase on the dome or parapet due to the walls of force.

## **Tower Key**

All doors in the Tower are made of mahogany bound in copper and are 8 feet tall and either 4 or 8 feet wide. All are locked, require a DC 13 Open locks to open. Doors may be broken open on a DC 18 strength check. The lowest level is roughly 15 feet tall; the upper levels only about 11 feet tall. The floors all look like polished flagstones and the walls are all smooth clean cut worked stone.

### **1) Entry Hall (EL 3)**

*“As you peer through the gap between the doors, you see a human sized skull lying on the floor a few feet beyond the doors. About 4-6 inches of the spine is attached to the skull, but seems to have been severed cleanly there. Beyond the skull, a large semi-circular room opens up,*

*roughly 25-30 feet across and 20 feet deep. The ceiling stands about 15 feet above. Your light seems to catch a faint glittering on the far wall. A large statue carved from black onyx holds a shimmering axe carved from obsidian. The statue stands nearly 9 feet tall and seems to be carved from a single piece of onyx. It is roughly human in shape but has exaggerated features, such as a six inch long 2 inch wide nose. Flanking the statue on either side is a black velvet tapestry which glitters as hundreds of gems recreate the night sky on the tapestries.”*

The statue resembles nothing so much as one of the Easter Island standing stones with limbs. The statue is the guardian of the entrance. Its obsidian axe is razor sharp. The statue will animate 3 rounds after someone crosses the threshold of the room. When it animates, it will attack the closest person.

There are two other doors in the room, one on each side of the entryway. The door to the right of the entryway opens into a stairwell leading up to the second level of the tower. The one to the left opens to a passageway which runs around the perimeter of the tower ending in a door which opens into area 2.

**Statue Guardian:** Animated Object, Large Construct (HD 4d10+30, hp 52, Init. +0, Speed 30,

AC 14 (-1 Size, +5 Natural) T 9 FF 14; BAB/Grapple +3/+10, Attack: battle axe +6 melee (1d8+4, x3) or slam +5 melee (1d8+4); Full Attack: battle axe +6 melee (1d8+4, x3) or slam +5 melee (1d8+4); Space/Reach 10ft/10 ft; SQ Hardness 5 (see PHB 166 for hardness rules); Construct Traits, Darkvision 60 ft, low-light vision; Saves: Fort +1 Ref +1 Will -4; Abilities: Str 16 Dex 10 Con - Int - Wis 1 Cha 1; Skills: -, Feats: -, AL N, CR 3)

*Treasure:* Each tapestry has 50 ornamental gems sewn in, very similar to rhinestones. Each gem is worth 10 gp, intact each tapestry is worth roughly 600 gp. The onyx from the statue can be sold as well; depending on the condition after it is defeated it will get between 100-600 gp. The obsidian axe is masterwork and worth 400 gp intact.

*Tactics:* The statue will fight until destroyed. It will attempt to dismember party members with its axe, always attacking the closest opponent. There is a chance the obsidian axe will shatter if the statue rolls a 1 on the attack roll. Roll another d20, if the result is 4 or lower, the axe breaks. The statue will then resort to slamming opponents. It will also do this if it is disarmed by any means.

## 2) Library (EL 4)

*"The door opens into a large semi-circular room taking roughly half*

*the base of the tower. Across from the door is a series of shelves built into the wall. A collection of books and scrolls line the shelves. A small fire pit is in the center of the room, and a large mahogany, throne-like chair sits next to the wall on the opposite side of the room from the shelves."*

This was Karastal's library. There are 2 traps in this room. The first is a pressure plate in the floor immediately in front of the door. If someone steps on the plate, they will trigger a javelin trap, as a javelin will fire from the underside of one of the shelves bolted on the wall. There are 3 javelins set, one on each of 3 of the 4 shelves on the wall, so the trap can be set off 3 times.

**Javelin Trap:** CR 2, mechanical; fires javelin +16 ranged attack (1d6+4) Search DC 20, Disable Device DC 18. This is marked as area A within room 2.

There is a second pressure plate in front of the mahogany throne. This is marked as area b on the map. If someone steps on this pressure plate, a cloud of noxious gas issues from a hidden valve in the fire pit and fills a 10' radius around the fire pit. The fire pit is marked area c on the map.

**Gas Trap:** CR 2, mechanical; issues poison gas; all within 10ft radius of

the fire pit must make DC 18 Reflex save to avoid the gas. If they fail they must make a DC 15 Fortitude Save or pass out. They will suffer 1d4 points of temporary Con Damage for each round they are within the gas cloud. The cloud will dissipate in 2d4 rounds.

*Treasure:* On the book shelves are several volumes of historical and arcane knowledge. Most are written in ancient tongues. They will have great value to the right people. There are a total of 17 rare volumes; each will get 1d4+1x100gp value in the proper market. There are also 4 arcane scrolls on the shelves.

*Scroll #1: disguise self, enlarge person, Nystul's Magic Aura, protection from law, (all caster level 1)*

*Scroll #2: mount (caster level 1)*

*Scroll #3: fly, non-detection, sleet storm (all caster level 5)*

*Scroll #4: Rary's Mnemonic Enhancer, Wall of Fire (both caster level 7)*

The remainder of the items on the shelves are personal memoirs, drafts of the challenge Karastal issued, catalogs of gems, treatises on gems, etc.

### **3) Summoning Room (EL 1 or 3)**

*"The stairwell ends in a short landing leading into a large semi-circular chamber. Inscribed on the*

*floor of the chamber is a large 10 foot radius pentacle within a circle, made of a silvery substance. Floating within the confines of the pentacle is an 8 foot tall mass of ambulatory flames flickering and sparking. The flame seems to stare at you as you stand in the doorway. There is a door in the wall opposite you."*

The creature within the pentacle is a medium fire elemental. The elemental cannot leave the circle unless released. The party may accidentally release the elemental though. Just inside the entryway, in the area marked **a**, is a pressure plate. If someone steps on the pressure plate, it will cause one of the floor stones containing part of the pentacle to flip, breaking the circle containing the fire elemental, releasing it to attack the party.

**Pressure Plate Trap:** CR 1, mechanical; cause stone to flip releasing elemental; the stone will flip back over in 10 rounds as the pressure plate resets itself

**Medium Fire Elemental** (HD 4d8+8, hp 26; Init +7, Speed 50 ft; AC 16 (+3 ex, +3 Nat) T 13 FF 13; BAB/Grapple +3/+4; Attack: Slam +6 melee (1d6+1 plus 1d6 fire), Full Attack: Slam +6 melee (1d6+1 plus 1d6 fire); Space/Reach 5 ft/ 5 ft; SA: Burn (if hit make Reflex save DC 14 or catch fire taking fire damage for

1d4 rounds unless put out, doing so is a move action), SQ: Darkvision 60', elemental traits, immune to fire, vulnerability to cold; Saves: Fort +3, Ref +7 Will +1; Abilities: Str 12 Dex 17 Con 14 Int 4 Wis 11 Cha 11; Skills: Listen +3, Spot +4; Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Weapon Finesse; AL N; CR 3

*Tactics:* The elemental will fight until destroyed. If he defeats or drives off opponents, and trap has not reset yet, he will reenter the circle.

The door opposite the one the party entered through opens and one can either go up a set of stairs to the next level, or go left into area 4.

#### **4) Wizard's Workshop**

*"This semi-circular chamber seems to have been a workshop of some sort. A small furnace is near the entryway to the room, and bellows, tongs, and other tools hang near it. Two large work benches sit in the center of the room. Scattered on the tables are various bottles, vials, and tools. Some of the bottles seem to have powders, crushed ingredients, or fluids within them. Three medium sized windows give a view of the surrounding area."*

This was Karastal's workshop. The windows are blocked by walls of force, so nothing except smoke can escape. This was a variation of the

spell that Karastal developed. Among the tools on the table are various alchemists' tools, gem cutters tools and metal smith tools. The bottles and vials contain various ingredients, but a few hold magical potions and dusts. Among the magical booty is:

*Dust of Tracelessness*

*Dust of Disappearance*

*Dust of Illusion*

There is enough of each of these for only 1 use each.

There are also the following potions and magical fluids:

*1 vial of Elixir of Sneaking*

*1 vial of Universal Solvent*

*1 potion of cure light wounds*

*1 potion of levitation*

#### **5) Corridor Trap (EL 4)**

The party will climb the stairs up to the next level, reach the landing and find the corridor doubling back. Just after it doubles back the corridor is trapped. The floor is hinged underneath and a 5 foot section is set to give way if more than 20 pounds of weight is placed on it. If it gives way, the floor will open up beneath the character dropping him 40 feet to the ground outside the tower. The section is situated so that it is outside the cylindrical base of the tower itself, dropping the character outside the tower, not inside.

**Camouflaged Pit Trap:** CR 4 mechanical; magically resets after 10 rounds, DC 20 reflex save to avoid

falling; fall caused 4d6 points of falling damage; Search DC 25, Disable Device DC 17

## **6) The Heart of Karastal** (EL 3 or 7)

*“The first thing you notice when you open the door is a pulsing red light. This is the source of the odd glow you saw as you approached the tower. In the center of the room, atop an obsidian obelisk is a gigantic ruby which pulses with red light. There are two large windows on the wall to your right, and a ladder leading up to the parapet sits between the two windows. On the other side of each window is a large bound chest. On the opposite wall, a skeleton lies battered and broken on the floor against the wall.”*

The pulsing ruby is the heart of Karastal. Five rounds after someone crosses the threshold of this room, the Heart will animate the entire Tower. The Tower will begin to buck and twist and try to batter all within. If any are outside, within a 100 foot radius of the Tower, the Tower will try to smash them, getting up and moving to catch them. Once the Tower animates, the encounter can be tricky to run. The party must either defeat the Gargantuan animated tower from the outside (doubtful chances of success) or destroy the Heart of Karastal (more likely), but destroying the Heart will have other consequences. It is the

Heart that powers the magic keeping the tower together. If it is destroyed, the Tower will soon collapse on itself, crushing any within.

### **What to do once the Tower animates:**

- roll initiative for the Tower
- each round on its initiative, the Tower bucks, everyone within the Tower must make a Balance Check DC 13
- if they succeed they maintain their feet and can act normally on their next action.
- if they fail they fall and are prone until their next action when they can stand up, in addition they must make DC 15 Reflex save
- if they succeed they fell where they were and take no damage
- if they fail, roll a d8 to determine direction (start at north and count around) and 1d4 to determine how many squares they were tossed by the bucking action before they hit the ground; if a solid object is in their path (i.e. wall or obelisk) they will take 1d6 points of slam damage
- if they pass through an occupied square, the person occupying the square must make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid being bowled over by the moving character, failure means the struck character moves with the first character, success means struck character avoided the tossed character.

-on its initiative, the Tower also gets to use attacks on any outside of the Tower, resolve normally

**Karastal's Tower** Gargantuan Animated Object (HD 16d10+60, hp 148; Init -2; Speed 10 ft; AC 12 (-4 size, -2 Dex, +8 natural) T 4 FF 12; BAB/Grapple +12/+31; Attack: Slam +15 melee (2d8+10) Full Attack: Slam +15 melee (2d8+10); Space/Reach: 20 ft/ 20 ft; SQ Hardness 8 (see PHB for rules), Construct Traits, Darkvision 60 ft, Low-light vision; Saves: Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +0; Abilities: Str 24 Dex 6 Con - Int - Wis 1 Cha 1; Skills -, Feats: -; AL N CR 7

**The Heart of Karastal** tiny magically imbued gem (HD 3d6+10 hp 20; Init -; Speed 0; AC 8 (-6 Dex, +2 size +2 nat) T 6, FF 8; BAB/Grapple +0/+0; Attack: none; SA animate Tower; explosive final strike (when it reaches 0 hp, the gem explodes and all within 10 feet must make reflex save DC 13 or be struck by flying shards for 1d4+1 points of damage) SQ hardness 5, immune piercing, vulnerable bludgeoning (bludgeoning attacks do 1.5 damage) SR 5; Saves: Fort+0 Ref -6 Will +5; Abilities Str - Dex - Con - Int 10 Wis 14 Cha 1; AL N CR 3 (the obelisk with the Heart is marked A on the map)

The key to defeating the Tower is to shatter the Heart of Karastal. It will

be difficult as the characters will be tossed about the room by the bucking tower, so they will find it difficult to strike a blow on the gem, even though it is incapable of moving itself. If the gem is reduced to 0 hp, it explodes. The DM should then roll 1d12+10, this is how many rounds will pass before the Tower collapses in on itself. After 5 rounds pass, the DM should have the party roll spot checks, with a DC of 10 (5 for Dwarves). Any succeeding will feel the Tower beginning to vibrate. It will increase in intensity every round. After 8 rounds it is noticeable even if they failed their spot check, and they will begin to hear cracking sounds. At 10 rounds the Tower begins to shake and crumble. When the number of rounds indicated by the die roll has passed, the tower collapses, causing 6d6 points of damage to all within (Reflex save DC 20 for half damage). Any within 15 feet of the Tower outside must also make a reflex save (DC 15) or suffer 3d6 points of damage from collapsing rubble.

#### *Other Room Features:*

-if someone climbs the ladder to look on the parapet, they will see a collection of silks and furs making a soft bed, Karastal liked to sleep under the dome to see the stars which reminded him of gems in the night sky (he dreamed of owning as many gems as he saw in the night sky).

-the skeleton is human sized and looks like it was battered and broken against the wall

-the two chests are marked B in the room. Each is locked (DC 13 Open locks to unlock, DC 15 to break chest)

*Treasure:* Each chest is filled with precious gems. Each round spent grabbing gems will result in 1d12 gems being grabbed. So, each round a character spends grabbing gems, roll 1d12 per character. A max of 2 characters can grab from each chest per round. The gems will range in value from 50 gp each to 5000 gp each; assign value as fits the needs of your game. There is a maximum of 200 gems in each chest. However, the longer the party spends grabbing gems, the more risk of not getting out alive they place themselves at.

Award XP for defeating the Tower whether the PC's defeat the Tower itself, or destroy the heart. Award an additional 1000 XP if the party forsakes the treasure of gems to get out of the tower before it collapses.

### **Wrapping Things Up:**

The party may have recovered vast wealth, but the dangers were high and may have resulted in severe injury or death for party members. Those who let greed overcome survival instincts in the end are especially at risk.

The party may want time to rest and recover after their ordeal.

They may want to retreat to Jessica's farm to do so. If there are any surviving Gnolls, they may be attacked in the night.

If Thulas Kal is still with the party by some miracle, he will attempt to steal the gems and slip away into the night if he can. He will attack whoever is on watch if he has to, but will not take on the entire party.

What the party does next is up to you, but there are some potential plot hooks to build on. Gnoll activity in the area will increase as they plan vengeance against the Nightcave Coven. Perhaps the party earned the animosity of Yooneghu for foiling his plans.

If Jarak Skullknot escaped from encounter #1, he will have delivered the party's description to the Thieves Guild in Bier and the CSIO, and they will be on the lookout to reclaim Karastal's treasure which they regard as rightfully theirs. Jarak can become a recurring villain or at least get a return engagement against the party. Aeristol can be used as a base of operations for the PC's, or they can continue to travel along the Old South Road.

If the party uses part of the treasure to take care of Jessica, finding her a new home, setting up a fund for her, etc award the party an additional 1000 XP as an ad hoc award.

**THE END**

## APPENDIX:

### NPC's and New Monsters:

#### NPC

**Thulas Kal** Male Human Rogue 2 (HD 2d6+2, hp 11, Initiative +2, Speed 30 ft., AC 14 (leather +2, Dex +2) T 12 FF 12, BAB/Grp +1/+2, Attack: Short Sword +2 melee (1d6+1, 19-20) or dagger +3 melee (1d4+1 19-20); Full Attack: Short Sword +2 melee (1d6+1, 19-20) or dagger +3 melee (1d4+1 19-20); Space/Reach: 5/5; SA Sneak Attack (+1d6), SQ Trap Finding, Evasion; Saves: Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1; Abilities: Str 12 Dex 15 Con 13 Int 14 Wis 13 Cha 16; Skills: Appraise +6, Bluff +8, Decipher Script +3, Disguise +8, Gather Information +8, Hide +7, Intimidate +8, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Open Locks +5, Sense Motive +8; Feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Feint; AL CN, CR 2.

*Possessions:* At the start of the adventure, Thulas will have the 2 scrolls taken from the Guild, leather armor, a short sword, a masterwork dagger, a purse with 17 gp and 23 sp, a simple cloak and traveler's outfit, a set of masterwork thieves' tools, and minor equipment such as ink, parchment, quills, etc.

Thulas Kal is a con man for the most part. He likes to manipulate and swindle people and minimize danger to himself. If forced to fight, he uses improved feint to his advantage, trying to use sneak attack to eliminate opponents quickly. If he can avoid a fight altogether he will do so. He does tend to overestimate his cleverness, and this does get him into trouble at times. Thulas is a master at telling tales which are just believable enough to be accepted because they hold a grain of plausibility and a dose of the fantastic. He often dupes adventurers into gaining some treasure for him and then betrays and kills them, taking things for himself. If he can accomplish his goals without killing he will do so, but he is not squeamish about taking a life if it is needed to fulfill his own designs. Thulas is first and foremost an opportunist, and if an opportunity becomes too dangerous, he will abandon it and look for an easier score. He often likes to present himself as being naïve and a little stupid to put potential dupes off their guard. He likes people to believe he is too unintelligent to pull off a scam or succeed in a lie.

## NEW MONSTER

### Aspect of Yooneghu

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar, Evil, Tanar'ri)

HD:	8d8+48 (96 hp)
Initiative:	+4
Speed:	40 ft (8 squares)
AC:	22 (-1 size, +4 Dexterity, +9 Natural) Touch 13 FF 18
BAB/Grapple:	+8/+14
Attack:	+2 Triple Flail +17 melee (1d12+8) (see description)
Full Attack:	+2 Triple Flail +17/+12 melee (1d12+8) (see description)
Space/Reach:	10 ft/10 ft
Special Attack:	Spell-Like Abilities (see description)
Special Qualities:	DR 5/epic, Darkvision 60', fast healing 3, See Invisible, SR
Saves:	Fort +12 Ref +6 Will +5
Abilities:	Str 23 Dex 18 Con 22 Int 16 Wis 17 Cha 17
Skills:	Concentration +17, Intimidate +14, Knowledge: Arcana +14, Knowledge: The Planes +14, Knowledge: Religion +14, Listen +14, Search +14, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +14, Spot +14, Survival +14 (With Track)
Feats:	Cleave, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Triple Flail) Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Triple Flail)
Environment:	The Abyss or any when summoned
Organization:	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	9
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	always Chaotic Evil
Advancement:	-

*The creature stands roughly 10 feet tall with matted fur, glowing red eyes and the head of a hyena. Its fur is many and yellow tinged, with patches of grey flesh showing through where patches of fur are missing. It wields a wicked looking triple flail.*

The Aspect of Yooneghu is like other demons (Tanar'ri) and can communicate telepathically with any creatures within 100 ft that have a language. It also speaks Abyssal, Celestial, and Gnollish. Aspects of Yooneghu can be summoned by those who work in his name to promote the welfare or causes of the Gnolls on

the prime material plane. They can only be summoned by priests of Yooneghu. The summoning is done through blood sacrifice and pleading the merits of one's cause. There is no guarantee Yooneghu will grant the Aspect or even hear the plea, but if he does, the actual summoning requires the blood of an innocent to complete.

### **Combat**

An Aspect of Yooneghu delights in the carnage of melee. It wields a weaker version of Yooneghu's Triple Flail. Yooneghu will charge into battle regardless of odds, but will use his spell-like abilities to prepare himself for battle, particularly bull's strength and blasphemy.

**Fast healing (Ex):** Once damage is received, the Aspect of Yooneghu regains hit points at a rate of 2 hit points per round. Fast healing does not restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation, and it does not allow lost limbs to regrow or be reattached.

**See Invisibility (Su):** An Aspect of Yooneghu has continuous See Invisibility as the spell (Caster Level 8)

**Spell-Like Abilities (Su):** An Aspect of Yooneghu can cast each of the following 3/day at Caster level 8: Deeper Darkness, Dispel Magic, Teleport, Tongues (self only); and the following 1/day at Caster Level 8: Bull's Strength, Blasphemy, Suggestion. All have DC 13+ spell level.

*Possessions:* The Aspect has a +2 Triple Flail, a weaker version of Yooneghu's Flail. When the flail successfully strikes in melee, roll 1d3; that is how many heads of the flail actually struck. Damage is rolled for each head that struck. If more than 1 head hits a target, the victim must make a DC 13 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d6 rounds, if all three hit the same target, the victim must also make a DC 13 Will check or be confused for 1d10 rounds.

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