INTERLUDE: GRAYWALL

An hour after Kordanga leaves the vicinity of Six Kings, Graywall comes into view.

You see a faint pall of smoke along the western horizon. At your side, one of the crew confirms that this is Graywall, about two hours out.

Approximately three hours after leaving Six Kings, after flying about 60 miles, Kordanga sails into Graywall.

Graywall passes below you, a sprawling mass of stone buildings and canvas workers’ shelters obscured by the smoke of wood fires and furnaces. The wall that surrounds the town shows signs of recent and ongoing construction. To the west rise new buildings; to the east are great quarries where stone is cut. Ahead, your destination is the foreign quarter, called the Calabas—or, as the locals refer to it, “the Kennel.”

Graywall has nothing resembling an airship dock, so Kordanga moors above the House Orien enclave in the foreign quarter, where Delan has allies. Further, the Graywall Orien enclave can’t afford to turn away the Kech Volaar’s business.

THE ORB

Either here or earlier on the airship, Yeraa tells the PCs of the final missing component of the Crown, and of the Wordbearers’ plans for retrieving it.

“Dhakaani ruins are the deep foundations of Graywall, and it is there that our seers say Murkoorak’s orb lies. Rumor and legend place it beneath what has become the Calabas. Now, the circlet will show us the way.”

While Yeraa pinpoints the location of Murkoorak’s orb within the foreign quarter, the PCs can accompany the Wordbearers as security. In any event, the characters have some time to wander the foreign quarter (or any other part of the town) on their own if they wish.

Streetwise Check
DC 12: Emerald Claw agents have been spotted in the foreign quarter in recent days (though the PCs see no sign of them).
DC 17: Denise was here for a time, but she teleported to Sharn a day ago by way of the Orien enclave.

THE ROAR

Yeraa and her seekers trace Murkoorak’s orb to an ancient goblin shrine located beneath the Roar—a huge open plaza within the Calabas.

For the better part of a day, you walk the foreign quarter with Yeraa and her best seekers, as the circlet allows her to subtly sense distance and direction to the orb. In the end, you find yourselves led to a great public plaza. This is the Roar, named for the House Tharashk dragonne statue at its center.

Show the players the illustration “The Roar” (see Adventure Book One, page 31).

Yeraa stops suddenly in a space between two tents. “This is it,” she whispers, but when you look around, she taps her blade on the cobblestones. “Below. Two hundred feet or so. The orb is buried here.”

Armed with this knowledge, the group returns to Kordanga, where Yeraa consults an old map that indicates that the orb’s hiding place is an ancient goblin shrine now buried beneath the cobbles of the plaza. Claiming the orb should simply require digging down to it—in the center of one of the busiest parts of the town. Yeraa suggests setting up a fake merchant stall to cover the digging. Once the job is done, Kordanga, the PCs, and the Wordbearers can return to Sharn victorious.

ENCOUNTER 24: GOBLIN MARKET

Encounter Level 4 (875 XP)

The PCs and the Kech Volaar must find some way to conceal an archaeological dig they are about to undertake in the middle of the Roar. By night, the plaza becomes the Goblin Market, a great bazaar where monstrous races and humanoids rub shoulders and nearly everything has a price. The noise and chaos of the market gives the PCs and the Wordbearers the cover they need.

This encounter is a skill challenge in which the PCs disguise and guard the goblin dig site over the course of a night. The default assumption is that the PCs use Yeraa’s idea and set up a market stall over the site of the dig. However, if the PCs have other ideas, run with them. The only stipulation is that the seekers’ activities be fully obscured, including covering up the noise of the dig and having some way to hide approximately 10 cubic feet of cobblestones and dirt. Simply shielding the site with walls on all sides and putting up a “Keep Out” sign will attract
the attention of House Tharashk. The PCs must create the impression that they belong in the market.

The choice of what kind of stall to set up is left to the players, and you should let them make those plans themselves. A party that has an abundance of treasure or mundane gear might decide to sell some of it off. PCs who came to town with cash on hand could resell relics or stolen goods obtained from the town’s less savory quarters, after roleplaying those risky shopping expeditions.

The relatively small price of 10 gp obtains a stall tent with side walls and tables high enough to obscure the goblins’ dig. Lay out the poster map and pick one of the larger enclosures in the market as the place where the Wordbearers and the PCs set up shop.

By arriving early, you lay claim to the spot Yeraa identified, quickly setting up your stall to obscure the dig site from all sides. The seekers already have the cobblestones pried up from the ground as other stalls begin to fill the space around you.

Midway through the skill challenge (after either 6 successes or 2 failures), the Wordbearers reach their first goal.

The Kech Volaar are experts at excavation, digging swiftly through six feet of gravel and dirt to find a cracked slab of blood-red stone. With pry bars and rock hammers, the seekers force an opening, revealing a five-foot-wide shaft heading directly down. The light of a shrouded lantern shows a rough rock wall laden with handholds and footholds.

Yeraa’s plan is for the Wordbearers to descend while the PCs hide their activities by continuing the skill challenge. If any of the PCs are insistent on accompanying the Wordbearers down, Yeraa explains that the shrine below is a goblin holy site that might be warded against nongoblin intruders. She thinks it’s less risky for her and her seekers to do the dirty work.

She points to the PCs’ sending stone (or gives one to them if they returned hers earlier). With such an easy means of staying in contact, she has no fear of being ambushed below without access to help. Although Yeraa needs the circlet to find the orb, she does not object to leaving the cord with the characters for safekeeping if they insist she do so.

Night in the Market

Giving the Wordbearers time to find the orb requires equal parts observation, distraction, and ingenuity.

Setup: The PCs must play the part of Graywall merchants while they keep unwanted attention away from the goblins’ dig. Each round of the skill challenge represents about one-half hour of time. At your option, award a +2 bonus to checks on which the players effectively roleplay their interactions with customers, merchants, and the other folk of the Goblin Market.

Level: 4 (XP 875).

Complexity: 5 (12 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills: Athletics, Acrobatics, Bluff, Diplomacy.

Athletics (DC 11): Two characters engage in some entertaining demonstration of physical prowess to keep passersby distracted away from what’s happening in the stall.

Two PCs can put on a demonstration of combat moves, with one character making the check while the other aids him or her.

This skill can be used to gain 1 success per round in this challenge. No more than three Athletics checks can be attempted during the challenge.

Acrobatics (DC 11): The character uses the roar of the crowd to cover the goblins’ hammers with a display of juggling, tumbling, or some other type of performance.

This skill can be used to gain 1 success per round in this challenge. No more than three Acrobatics checks can be attempted during the challenge.

Bluff (DC 13): The character entertainingly inflates the history of wares being sold, invents a fanciful tale to charm or distract passersby, or diverts the attention of a customer who sees evidence of the dig.

This skill can be used to gain 1 success per round in this challenge.

Diplomacy (DC 12): The character placates an angry merchant, sweet-talks a monstrous mercenary band looking for a fight, or stays on the good side of a passing Tharashk patrol.

This skill can be used to gain 1 success per round in this challenge.


Insight or Perception (DC 12): By watching onlookers carefully, the character knows who among the crowd might be a potential problem, and how to approach that person to distract him or her.

Each successful Insight check or Perception check, grants a +2 bonus to the next primary skill check made in this challenge.

Success: The PCs manage to keep up their charade long enough for the Kech Volaar to successfully complete their mission in the hidden shrine below.

Failure: The PCs gain no experience points from this skill challenge, and their actions draw the hostile attention of a group of orc mercenaries. The orcs suspect that the PCs are hiding something valuable within the stall—something they plan to steal. These mercs know the market well, and they time their attack to coincide with the absence of any Tharashk patrols.

Level 4 Encounter (850 XP)

✦ 1 orc eye of Gruumsh (level 5 controller; MM 204)
✦ 2 orc berserkers (level 4 brute; MM 203)
✦ 2 orc raiders (level 3 skirmisher; MM 203)

To stage this encounter, cluster the PCs around the stall and put each orc in a square adjacent to at least one character. The mercenaries make melee attacks only, and they all flee as soon as any one of their number is bloodied.