

To North Pass



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To East Pass

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







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Sanction

City of Doom

-  Warehouses
-  Inns
-  Slum Districts
-  Ruins
-  Lava River
-  Stone Bridge
-  Temple
-  Army Tents
-  Steep Ridge
-  Volcano Caldron



Scale: 1 hex equals 100 ft.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons



Official Game Adventure

Dragons of Deceit

by Douglas Niles

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PROLOGUE

NOTES FOR THE DUNGEON MASTER

"Dragons of Deceit" is the ninth module in the epic DRAGONLANCE® series. It ends the second book of the DRAGONLANCE saga: "Tales of Winter Night," following "Dragons of Ice," "Dragons of Light," and "Dragons of War."

The modules recreate the DRAGONLANCE story, casting the player characters in the roles of the epic's heroes. Thus, it is recommended that this module be played as part of the series, using the player characters provided. If players wish to use their own characters, however, allow them to do so, taking care that the party is as balanced as the party included in this module.

This module may also be played as a stand-alone adventure without having played the rest of the series.

The characters listed on pages 16 and 33 are some of the heroes of the DRAGONLANCE story. The equipment and magic items listed for each should be used if you have not played previous DRAGONLANCE modules or have not used that particular PC before.

If your party has played a previous module in the series, however, use the equipment listed on the original character cards plus any additional items that the PCs have acquired during your adventures.

In DL6, "Dragons of Ice," the original party of PCs was split into two groups. This module deals with the group that went south from Tarsis—the Heroes of the Lance. The remaining heroes will return in the next module, DL10.

If you do not have enough players to take all the heroes as PCs, run the others as NPCs or allow players to run more than one character. In any event, it's a good idea to keep the party to a size you are comfortable with.

The player character of Lord Gunthar is introduced in this module. Any player whose character met a heroic death during the battle at the High Clerist Tower should be allowed to player Gunthar from the start of this adventure. If no characters died, keep Gunthar in reserve in case a PC should die during this adventure (in which case Gunthar appears in Chapter 17).

In the DRAGONLANCE multi-module epic, some heroes and villains figure prominently in later adventures. If an important NPC, such as Fizban, Ariakus, or Kitiara, should be slain, invoke the "obscure death" rule. This rule states that, as in Saturday afternoon matinees, the circumstances of death of an important character should be confused and the body not found. Later the character may reappear with a story of how he miracu-

lously survived. Sivaks, a new draconian race introduced in DL7, polymorph into their slayer's likeness when killed, providing a new way to explain the apparent death of an important character.

Remember that player characters are no longer subject to the obscure death rule. If a PC dies, he's gone forever!

Module Sections

This adventure is divided into chapters that lead to the conclusion of the second DRAGONLANCE book. Although the chapters move toward the climax and culmination of this part of the PCs' adventures, allow your players' decisions to affect the direction and course of the adventure. The PCs have a great deal of freedom in determining how they pursue the quest that is laid before them in the first chapter.

In the very center of the module is a four-page pullout folio (the Silvart Folio) on the character of Dargent/Silvart. This should be given to a player who will play Silvart (during this adventure only). The player controlling Silvart should not control any other PCs during this adventure.

The skill of the player controlling Silvart will have a great bearing on the success or failure of the adventure. Try to assign this character to a player with good role-playing skills!

Surrendering the Silvart Folio is a 12-page Dungeon Master reference section. This contains the maps needed to play the adventure as well as the Random Encounter Chart and NPC Capsules. Carefully remove both the folio and the DM reference section.

The countersheet included in "Dragons of Deceit" contains cardboard counters representing the dragons that meet in the module's final engagement—an aerial battle over the evil Temple of Luerkhisis. These counters can be used with the BATTLESYSTEM™ rules or employed simply to clarify the positions of the characters and their mounts during what should be a rather fast-moving and wild battle in a three-dimensional battlefield.

Starting Play

One player should be given the Silvart Folio from the center of this module and asked to play the role of Silvart. This is a challenging part, but the module will be much more fun to play if Silvart is treated as a PC, rather than an NPC. This is a one-time only exception to the restriction on monster player characters, and whoever plays Silvart should regain their

usual character after this adventure.

Be sure to read the folio before giving it to the player. You, as the referee, are primarily responsible for making sure that Silvart abides by the Oath.

Each chapter is divided into a series of Events and Encounters. The Events, listed at the start of the chapter, occur regardless of where the PCs are or what they are doing. Each event includes instructions on when to use it. Encounters, on the other hand, are keyed to locations and occur only if the heroes go to the appropriate places.

Occasionally an Ability Check is called for against one of a character's abilities (Strength, Wisdom, etc.). Roll 1d20 and compare the result with the appropriate ability score. If the roll is less than or equal to the ability, the action succeeds; if greater than the ability, the action fails and the character suffers the consequences given in the text.

New Weapon

At the start of the adventure, the player characters possess 20 Dragonlances—10 footman's and 10 mounted—obtained in DL7 (unless these were lost or destroyed in subsequent adventuring).

There are two types of Dragonlances: mounted and footman's. The footman's lance is eight feet long while the mounted lance is twice as long and much heavier. The mounted lance often has an attached shieldguard.

A footman's lance causes 1-6 points of damage versus normal foes and 1-8 against larger than man-sized targets. Against dragons it inflicts damage equal to the hit points of the wielder (a 14-hit point fighter would cause 14 points of damage to a dragon). The weapon is +1 to hit if held in hand; it can be cast as a spear at -2 to hit.

The mounted lance causes 3-9 points of damage versus normal foes and 3-18 against larger than man-sized targets. Against dragons it inflicts damage equal to the hit points of the wielder and his mount. A 15-hit point fighter on a 40-hit point dragon causes 55 points of damage when the lance strikes another dragon. The mounted lance is almost exclusively mounted on the backs of dragons (see the sketches on page 28). If not mounted, the lance causes 3-18 points against dragons. The weapon is +2 when mounted; normal when unmounted.

Prologue

The World of Krynn

There are several important differences between the world of Krynn and the standard AD&D® campaign world. While players who have played previous DL adventures are familiar with these changes, new players should be made aware of the following information.

Clerics

When the Queen of Darkness started her war against the folk of Krynn, true clerics were unknown. Early in the war, the heroes retrieved the priceless platinum Disks of Mishakal.

Mishakal is the benign goddess of healing and growth. Knowledge of her existence brought the first use of good clerical spells. Through the reading of her disks, knowledge of the entire pantheon of the Gods of Good has been returned to the people.

Likewise, the Dragon Highlords of the Queen of Darkness have gained the power of clerical spells of evil, bestowed by the Queen herself.

Clerics are still very rare on Krynn, but as knowledge of the good and evil gods spreads, their presence becomes more and more common.

Icy winds race across the desolate plains of Solamnia. Their force concentrates at a narrow pass in the sheer Vingaard Mountains, howling with banshee intensity. Firmly planted at the summit of the pass rests the battle-scarred bulk of the High Clerist Tower.

Savage fighting has raged here since winter, for bodies litter the valley south of the keep. Many fresh graves have been excavated in a nearby graveyard.

Yet this huge battle was but one small part of the Queen of Darkness's plan to crush the forces of good throughout Ansalon. There are many more fronts to the Dragonarmy's evil offensive.

War has raged across the continent of Ansalon for many months. Men, dwarves, elves, and kender have found the courage to resist the armies of the Queen of Darkness.

The evil dragons that fly with the Queen's armies have proven nearly invincible on the battlefield. The mere presence of the creatures paralyzes most mortals with a sense of terror and awe.

But strides have been taken to further the cause of good. Knowledge of the true gods—

If PCs do not have the information given on the disks from previous modules, allow clerics to select as a deity either Mishakal or Paladine, the high god of good.

Dragons

Dragons have been absent from Krynn for centuries, returning only with the initiation of the war. The only dragons most people have seen are red, green, blue, black, and white dragons—all creatures of highly evil nature.

Rumors persist of other dragons—copper, bronze, brass, silver, and gold—that are creatures of good. The PCs have met only two good dragons thus far: Blaize, the brass dragon in DL3, and Silvert. No other good dragons have appeared to take part in the war against evil.

Kender

The equivalent of a halfling in the world of Krynn is a kender. In addition to the standard abilities and limitations of AD&D halflings, kender have the special abilities of taunt and fearlessness.

The Story

lost for nearly three centuries—has been regained. True clerics once again walk among the people of Krynn.

The knowledge needed to forge Dragonlances—knowledge lost even longer than that of the true gods—has also been relearned. But even these mighty weapons are not enough to halt the Dark Queen's hordes.

Rumors speak of other dragons—dragons of brass, copper, bronze, silver, and gold—who fought against the evil dragons in a war now lost in the mists of time. Yet hope springs from these myths—hope that good dragons might still exist and might aid the cause of the Whitestone Council. This brings us to our story.

The heroes have bought themselves some time with the savage battle at the High Clerist Tower. Yet they realize that this only delays the inevitable conquest of Krynn by the Dark Queen.

In this setting, and with this knowledge, they receive a visitor—Silvert, a companion from a previous adventure (“Dragons of Light”). Whether or not Dargent (the silver dragon) took the form of Silvert in DL7, she

See Tasselhoff's character card for game mechanics for these abilities, which will be usable by all PC kender (and halflings from other campaigns).

Money

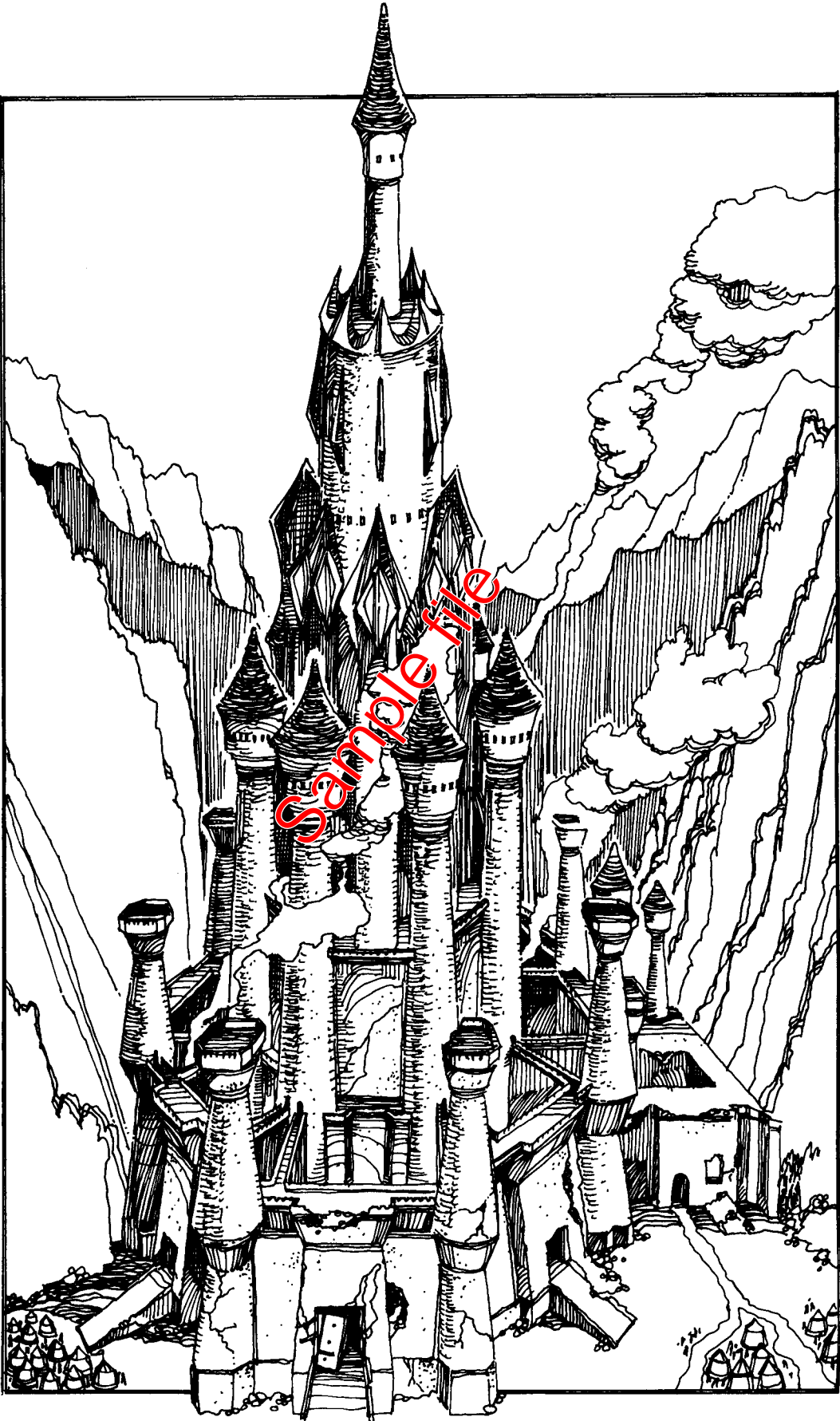
Steel is the most valuable metal in the world of Krynn while gold is fairly common and of little worth.

One steel piece (stl) is the equivalent in purchasing power of a gp in a normal AD&D campaign. A gold piece on Krynn is the equivalent of one sp in a standard campaign.

Player characters who enter Krynn from other campaigns may be allowed to trade their gold pieces for steel—though they will find their personal wealth greatly reduced.

meets and travels with the PCs in this form during “Dragons of Deceit.” Dargent will assume her true form only after the perversion of the good dragons' eggs is revealed in this adventure.

Silvert tells the party that the key to the good dragons' Oath lies in the evil city of Sanction, in the very heart of the Dark Queen's empire. She wishes to recruit the heroes to undertake a quest to Sanction to free the good dragons from this oath.



Chapter 13: The Silver Messenger

The adventure in DL9 begins three days after the last battle at the High Clerist Tower. Three introductions are provided: one for players new to the DRAGONLANCE® saga; one for DL8 players who won the battle at the High Clerist Tower; one for players who lost the battle at the High Clerist Tower.

If the players are new to the saga, the meeting with Silvart occurs in the city of Palanthus. If they have played DL8 and won, allow them to decide whether or not to return to Palanthus after the battle (the meeting with Silvart occurs wherever the PCs are). If the tower fell to the Dragonarmy, the heroes and all surviving defenders will be forced to retreat to Palanthus.

If they are in the city, establish some lodgings for the characters and inform them that they have just had time to rest from the journey, and are finally feeling fit and ready for action. Any wounds inflicted in the previous adventure have healed.

Allow the player controlling Silvart/Dargent to read the Silvart Folio in the center of the module before beginning play. All of the adventure beginnings require this character to visit the PCs and present them with a request for aid.

Although you can try to summarize details to move the adventure quickly onto the road to Sanction, it is recommended that you instead allow the players to role play the encounter between Silvart and the other PCs, working out the objectives between themselves.

Events

Event 1: Background

Read the first section of boxed text only if the players are new to the DRAGONLANCE saga. Read the second section of boxed text only to DL8 players who won the battle at the High Clerist Tower. The third section of boxed text is to be read only to DL8 players who lost that battle.

New Players

The world of Krynn—your world—reels from the violence of a brutal war of conquest. From out of the nightmares of the past, dragons have returned to Krynn after an absence of many years.

Aided by these serpentine monsters, armies of evil have spread across the continent of Ansalon, seeking to subjugate all the free peoples of your land. These Dragonarmies are made up of familiar troops like goblins and hobgoblins, but the back-

bone of each wing of the evil armies consists of lizard-like creatures called draconians.

Several types of draconians have been encountered, including the small Baaz, who turn to solid statues upon death, temporarily imprisoning weapons within their bodies, and the slightly larger Kapaks, who dissolve into caustic pools of acid upon death.

Two more-powerful types of draconians, the spell-casting Bozaks and the shape-shifting Sivaks, have also appeared. The origin of all types of draconians remains a mystery.

You have all performed valuable services for the cause of good in this war, aiding the fight against evil wherever you can. Lately, a new weapon, known as the Dragonlance, has aided your side. Even this will not be enough to turn the tide.

A few weeks ago, you came together at a towering fortress, the High Clerist Tower, that blocks a narrow pass in the Vingaard Mountains. To your back was the great city of Palanthus, the largest community to remain unconquered by the Dragonarmies. Toward the tower charged the might of an entire wing of the Dragonarmy, supported by several blue dragons.

In a battle that raged for days and claimed the lives of many friends and foes, you helped bring the Blue Wing to a halt. Now you have returned to Palanthus to rest, knowing that this is only a temporary lull in the savage war.

And in Palanthus, you receive a visitor. You recognize her as an elven maiden who saved your lives on the island of Ergoth, where you were caught up in a feud between rival factions of elves.

DL8 Battle Victors

The wounds of battle heal slowly, but you are the lucky ones, alive and whole after the horrible siege of the tower. You have all spent time thinking of the brave warriors who fell at the tower, buying victory with their lives.

Back in Palanthus, the atmosphere is subdued. No celebrations greet the news of victory, for all know the respite is only temporary.

Within the city awaits a bit of good news: a visitor from earlier adventuring. The Kagonesti elfmaid Silvart has traveled far to find you—a rare friend in this war-torn world!

DL8 Battle Losers

The long retreat has been grueling, but not panicked. The Knights have fallen back to Palanthus, well aware that there is little hope of holding the city against a concerted Dragonarmy attack.

Scouts report that the Dragonarmy is not pressing the pursuit. The reason is unknown. For now, the evil forces seem content to occupy the captured tower. No one doubts that the assault will come against Palanthus, perhaps within the next few weeks.

Within the city awaits a bit of good news: a visitor from earlier adventuring. The Kagonesti elfmaid Silvart has traveled far to find you—a rare friend in this war-torn world!

At this point, allow the player character of Silvart to meet the other players. She has been provided with the information necessary to get the heroes aimed toward Sanction and the main action of this adventure.

This meeting can occur in any location that the PCs might be found, most likely their lodgings or a place that the group frequents.

Allow the PCs to ask questions about the feasibility of the different routes. If they have a map of Ansalon from a previous adventure, they may consult it. Do not show them the partial map of Ansalon from this module, however!

This is the only scheduled event of Chapter 13. Allow the players to proceed on their own from here.

Palanthus

Set in a narrow valley at the end of a long, fjord-like bay, Palanthus was the only deep-water port on Krynn to survive the Cataclysm unscathed. It is a center of learning and trade unmatched in the world.

The buildings in Palanthus are tall and well-built. The city is remarkably clean, with no garbage in the streets and a complete absence of rats.

The city is poorly defended, since its founders placed their faith in the command of the sea approaches and the strength of the High Clerist Tower. Of course, if the tower has not fallen then the city remains fairly secure since it still has enough ships to retain control of the nearby seas.

Since the city serves only as a meeting and starting place for this adventure, it is not detailed extensively here. If you need to provide more details to your players about the city, expand upon the framework presented