



TARTH MOORDA

An Adventure Site
for *Complete Arcane*

CREDITS

Design:	Penny Williams
Editing:	Penny Williams
Typesetting:	Nancy Walker
Cartography:	Rob Lazzaretti, Dennis Kauth
Web Production	Julia Martin
Web Development:	Mark A. Jindra
Graphic Design:	Sean Glenn, Cynthia Fliege

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Complete Arcane offers a wealth of new spells, prestige classes, feats, and magic items for arcane spellcasters. Considerable information on running an arcane campaign is also provided, along with the details of three standard classes: the warlock, the warmage, and the wu jen. A fortified enclave dedicated to one of these classes, the warmage, is mentioned in a sidebar in the book. This adventure site details this isolated warmage training facility.

Tarth Moorda is an adventure site that can be dropped into any remote area with a hot, dry climate. A variety of adventures can take place here, though the intrigue within the enclave can constitute an adventure in itself. As always, feel free to adapt the material presented here as you see fit to make it work with your campaign.

PREPARATION

You (the DM) need the D&D core rulebooks—the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*—as well as *Complete Arcane*—to use this adventure site. The information presented here utilizes the D&D v.3.5 rules.

To get started, print out the adventure site, including the map. Read through it at least once to familiarize yourself with the situation, site, and major NPCs (particularly their motivations). You must decide what kind of action takes place—whether the PCs simply stumble upon the place or have a reason to visit.

Finally, review the information on warmages in *Complete Arcane*. Monster and NPC statistics are provided with each encounter area in abbreviated form.

BACKGROUND

On a high crag in the arid hills of the Abbor-Alz stands the ancient fortress known as Tarth Moorda, which once housed the garrisons that defended Urnst against gnoll and nomad raids from the Bright Desert. Abandoned when adventurers finally drove off the humanoid tribes, Tarth Moorda stood empty for many years and eventually fell into ruin. Finally, some fifteen years ago, the Duke of Urnst gave the old fortress to the Order of the Fire Hawk, an enclave of warmages who wanted an isolated stronghold in which to train new initiates.

The Fire Hawks renovated the fortress and reinforced its defenses. Some of the old buildings were razed to make room for student quarters; others were simply refurbished and put to new use. The area was thoroughly scouted and defenses against mundane and magical intrusion were set in place.



Since the Fire Hawks made it their own, Tarth Moorda has become the principal training academy for Urnst's warmages. The uncomfortable climate and rugged terrain of the surrounding area are considered advantageous for training recruits in the art of war, since they quickly become used to harsh conditions.

About five years ago, Sereda Ostarte ascended to the position of high warmaster at Tarth Moorda. Like her predecessors, Sereda runs the academy with an iron hand. Since she took over, the graduates of Tarth Moorda have proven their valor and might on the battlefield and shown an increased aptitude for strategy and tactics that is largely attributed to the changes she has made in the curriculum.

But Sereda is not as confident about the impregnability of the fortress as her predecessor was, and with good reason. In recent months, the academy has begun to lose members. Five of her most promising students, two senior students, and one of her instructors—a warmaster—have died or disappeared. Unfortunate accidents do claim the lives of occasional students, and desertions are not unknown, since not all can tolerate the harsh conditions of training. But Sereda fears that the security of her enclave has been breached—and she is right.

Bendrik Sogoth, a Suel arcanamach, has infiltrated the complex posing as a student. A spy and assassin operating on behalf of Rary's rising empire in the Bright Desert, he is responsible for the deaths and disappearances. He is also gathering information about the Fire Hawks for his employers, who wish to see the order disbanded, or at least moved to another location. Bendrik's fighting ability and sorcerer spells allow him to pose as a low-level warmage, putting him in a perfect position to use his more subtle Suel arcanamach spells to move unseen about the complex.

Sereda understands better than her predecessors did that the warmages' near-exclusive focus on damage-producing spells leaves them weak in other areas, such as investigative and defensive magic. She has been working with the enclave's priest of Heironeous on ways to discover the source of the problem. So far, divinations have pointed to somewhere inside the complex and to the Bright Desert, depending upon the spell used, but Bendrik's defenses have preserved his cover. Sereda is interested in retaining the services of agents who can uncover the perpetrator. Meanwhile, she works to ensure the safety of her remaining students and staff and minimize the demoralizing effects of the previous incidents.

TARTH MOORDA

Tarth Moorda is situated on a high peak on the edge of the Duchy of Urnst, overlooking the Bright Desert. Its isolation helps to maintain the discipline required for a military training camp, and the site is highly defensible against threats originating from the ground. Against threats from the air, its occupants must depend on their magic.

The fortress spans the entire top of the peak on which it rests. Portions of the slope have been leveled to provide firmer foundations for buildings, creating a three-tiered, terraced effect. The building known as the High Warmaster's Quarters (areas 15-18) rests alone atop the highest tier. On the second tier are the other buildings of the complex, except for the stable, which stands on the lowest tier.

FEATURES

Access to Tarth Moorda is via the main gate (area 2) and the two postern gates (at the rear of the Students' Quarters and the Warmasters' Hall). The complex has the following features.

Ledges

The ledges that separate the three tiers are roughly 30 feet high and span a horizontal distance of about 20 feet. Stairs built into the roads and walls within the complex allow access from one tier to another.

Curtain Wall (EL 6)

A 20-foot-high stone curtain wall surrounds the entire fortress. The rear portions of three buildings—the High Warmaster's Quarters, the Students' Quarters, and the Warmaster's Hall—are actually built into the curtain wall. The wall is 10 feet thick, with crenellations along the outside and a walkway made of smooth, fitted stones behind them.

Arrow slits pierce the curtain wall at 20-foot intervals. Because of the thickness of the wall, these slits limit line of sight to directly ahead. Tarth Moorda's defenders use them primarily for firing ray spells, *magic missiles*, and *Melf's acid arrows*.

The wall includes three round towers that extend 10 feet above the rest of the wall. Two of these towers are situated on the lowest tier of the complex, flanking the main gate (area 2). The third stands on the second tier, just below the armorer's shop (area 6).

Stockpiles of material components are cached about every 20 feet along the walkway and at the top of each tower. Neatly stacked piles of javelins, arrows, and other standard missile weapons are also readily



available to defenders, as are pitch, rags, oil, flint, and tinder for creating normal flaming arrows and pots of boiling pitch. These mundane defenses have been augmented in recent years, since Sereda is a firm believer in covering contingencies such as nullification of magic.

Four regular guards and four students patrol the curtain wall around the clock. Four of them are relieved every four hours. These guards are fighters that Sereda has recently employed to beef up security, and they answer to the watch captain of the moment (see area 3).

Hired Guards (4): hp 5; see The Order of the Fire Hawk.

Students (4): hp 3; see The Order of the Fire Hawk.

Roads

The buildings within the complex are connected by well-maintained roads made of hard-packed dirt. Since the inhabitants rarely have occasion to ride, these trails support mostly foot traffic. The roads are usually level except where wide stone steps connect the tiers. Because the area receives little rain, the roads tend to be somewhat dusty.

ENTRYWAY

Tarth Moorda's main entrance is well fortified and defensible.

1. Hailing Point (EL 5)

At a sharp bend in the road on the lowest tier of the outpost is an octagonal cleared area, paved with stone, that functions as a hailing point at which visitors can state their business to the guards.

The paved road winding up the steep slope widens out into an octagonal area about 25 feet across, then continues at a sharp angle. Ahead rises a formidable wall of stone with two towers flanking its main gate and a third farther back, to the east.

Anyone standing here has a good view of the High Warmaster's Quarters and the top portions of the other buildings. The hailing point is clearly visible from all three towers and from the northern portion of the curtain wall.

Trap: This site is trapped with a *discern lies* spell (renewed regularly by Melver; see area 10) that reveals falsehoods spoken by anyone standing on the stones. False responses to questions produce coruscating colors in the paving stones that are visible to both those on the octagon and the guards in the towers.

Discern Lies Trap: CR 5; magic device; location trigger; automatic reset; multiple targets (all on octagon); spell effect (*discern lies*, 12th-level cleric, Will DC 16); Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29.

Development: When visitors reach this point, they are hailed by the guards on the towers, who ask them to halt and identify themselves. If they fail to comply, the guards open fire with missile weapons and spells, and the watch captain arrives within 2 rounds to lend firepower (see area 3).

If the visitors stop and answer, the guards then ask what their business is and whether they mean harm to anyone within the complex. If the trap indicates that they have lied at any point, the guards deny them entry and notify the Warmasters' Council. If visitors who have lied persist in trying to gain entrance, the guards attack. A member of the Warmasters' Council arrives within 3 rounds and, if the visitors are still alive, decides whether to admit them or order them driven off.

2. Main Gate (EL 6)

This fortified gate is the main entrance to the complex.

Ahead stands a closed pair of 10-foot-high wooden gates, painted yellow and reinforced with iron bands. A bird sheathed in red and orange flame is emblazoned across the gates.

The gate area has two access points—the outer gates and a second pair of wooden gates that leads into the complex. Both sets of gates open outward. A portcullis behind the outer gate gives the defenders inside the time and space to cast spells if desired. The portcullis can be raised and lowered with a winch inside the 10-foot-square area between the two sets of gates. This area is also equipped with an alarm gong.

Reinforced Wooden Gates: 2 in. thick, hardness 5, hp 15, break DC 16.

Portcullis: 2 in. thick, hardness 10, hp 60, Strength DC 25 to lift.

Creatures: Two senior students are stationed between the two pairs of gates. They rotate every eight hours, but their schedules are staggered, with one changing at midnight, the other at 4AM, and so forth around the clock.

Senior Students (2): hp 17; see The Order of the Fire Hawk.

Tactics: If intruders force the gate open, the two warmages inside sound the alarm and then attack with spells and weapons, while the guards atop the towers and the curtain wall support their efforts.



If they have time to prepare, the senior students cast *blades of fire* and *true strike*, then *Melf's acid arrow* or *scorching ray* as soon as they can see the intruders. They follow up with *magic missile*, *lesser orbs*, and *whirling blade*. When the attackers close to melee, they use their morningstars (equipped with the *blades of fire*, if they had time to cast it), plus *shocking grasp*.

Development: Should the alarm sound, the high warmaster and the Warmasters' Council take up positions atop the wall within 5 rounds and bring their ranged attack spells to bear on the intruders. The students gather on the ground inside the compound, ready to attack should the inner doors open without the all-clear signal from their superiors.

3. TOWERS

Each of these round towers stands 30 feet high and has a crenellated top.

Two towers, each about 30 feet tall, flank the main gate. Another such tower rises from the curtain wall on a bluff to the east. Two guards patrol the top of each tower.

Each tower top has a stockpile of material components, javelins, and other supplies like those along the wall's walkway. Access to the tower is via a door inside the complex and a spiral staircase. Each of three stories inside the tower consists of a single round chamber equipped with beds, tables and comfortable chairs for off-duty guards, plus extra material components and supplies for the guards on the wall. At any time, eight regular guards (male or female human fighter 1) are sleeping or relaxing inside each tower, and one watch captain is inspecting one of the three towers.

Students (6): hp 3; see *The Order of the Fire Hawk*.

Guards (24): hp 5; see *The Order of the Fire Hawk*.

Watch Captain (Senior Student): hp 17; see *The Order of the Fire Hawk*.

Development: If the warmages atop the towers see intruders approaching, they wait until they reach the octagonal watchpost (area 1) or stray from the main road, then hail them, asking them to halt and identify themselves (see area 1 for details). Should an altercation break out, the watch captain arrives at the top of one tower within 2 rounds to lend magical support.

4. STABLE

This stable houses the order's regular mounts—rugged mountain ponies accustomed to the high altitude and difficult terrain.

Seven of the stalls in this well-maintained stable house shaggy mountain ponies about the size of small horses. The eighth is occupied by a spirited black thoroughbred with a white mane. Hay peeks out from the loft above, which is accessible via a wooden ladder. Saddles and tack are neatly stored in the west end of the stable.

The horses here are somewhat older than most combat-trained mounts. Except for Nightfire, Sereda's thoroughbred, they are actually retired from active service. They are used for training in mounted combat.

The students here rotate stable duty, with two arriving morning and evening to see to the horses. Unless the complex is in danger, the horses are led out onto the mountainside to graze for four hours each day.

Creatures: The thoroughbred is Sereda's horse Nightfire.

Horses (8): Light warhorse; hp 19; see *Monster Manual*, page 273.

STUDENTS' QUARTERS

The students' quarters are located in the fortress's largest building, on the east side of the complex. This newer structure is two stories tall and has a postern gate at its rear. The armorer's shop is attached to the north end of the building.

The second floor of the residence hall consists of a long hallway stretching from north to south, with five chambers on each side. Each of these rooms is identical to area 8.

5. Supply Rooms

These three small rooms are used to store supplies ranging from candles to textbooks. The rooms are kept locked (Open Lock DC 10), and the senior students have the keys.

6. Armorer's Shop (EL 9)

Delkin, a dwarf smith, manufactures all the order's weapons and armor in this one-room shop. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs approach, adjusting as needed for the time of day.

Heat emanates from the open door of this small building. Inside, a short, stocky humanoid works at a forge. Nearby stands a well-used anvil, neatly stacked piles of metal ingots and wood, and hooks for finished products. Weapons and pieces of armor hang from most of these hooks, but a few are dedicated to more mundane items, such as cookpots and horseshoes. In the back of the shop hangs a curtain.



The forge operates from dawn till dusk. From time to time, one or two students may help Delkin in his forge in order to learn weaponcrafting. Delkin tolerates these intrusions with as much good grace as he can manage, but he prefers to work alone or with well-trained help.

Behind the curtain are a bed, a nightstand with a lamp, and a chest of drawers. This area serves as Delkin's bedroom.

Creatures: Delkin is always here except when he transports weapons to the armory or confers with the warmasters.

Delkin: Male dwarf expert 6/fighter 3; hp 24.

Tactics: Should anyone try to attack him in his forge, Delkin drops whatever he is working on and grabs the nearest sword to defend himself, bellowing for help as he does. The warmages in the complex are



quick to respond (five students respond in 1 round, five more the next, and the Warmasters' Council the third), since their armorer is one of their most valuable resources.

Development: Delkin cares little about the affairs of the warmages, so long as they continue to provide him with his weekly pay and an opportunity to do the work he likes best. If asked about unusual events in the complex, he claims to have heard someone skulking around in the middle of the night a few times. He also says that one morning he found a suspicious stain on one of the weapons he had repaired the previous night. He cleaned it off and reported it to the high warmaster, who instructed him to be silent about it and inspect each weapon before returning it to its owner.

7. Students' Quarters Lobby (EL 8)

The students congregate in the lobby of their residence hall to chat, study, and debate. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs approach, adjusting as needed for the time of day.

The sound of laughter and song fills this long chamber. The walls bear marks of impact, as well as numerous scorch marks. Young humanoids of all races sit in groups here and there, playing games, drinking, and talking. At one end, someone strums a lute and sings a song of battle. Lit torches line the walls, and other lights sit on tables or hover about students. Tables and chairs stand in haphazard groups about the room. Two staircases lead upward into the darkness.

This chamber serves as a common room for the students training at this facility. When not in classes, they gather here to play cards and socialize. The marks on the walls give mute testimony to what happens when tempers flare and are thus left to serve as reminders.

Creatures: This building can house a maximum of eighty students (eight to a sleeping room). At present, only fifty-two students are enrolled here. They are distributed more or less evenly within the sleeping chambers. About a dozen students are in the common room at a time; the rest are studying, sleeping in their rooms, attending classes or weapon practice, or standing guard, depending on the time of day.

Students (12): hp 3; see The Order of the Fire Hawk.

8. Student Sleeping Rooms (EL 2, 4, or 13)

Each of these chambers houses eight students, but none are filled to capacity at present. Two of the rooms on the

upper floor are for the eight senior students in the complex. Bendrik sleeps with four other students in the southeasternmost chamber on the first floor.

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters enter one of these rooms, adjusting as needed for the time of day.

Eight beds, made up in military style, ring the walls of this chamber. At the foot of each is a chest, and at the head is a small table bearing a lamp and one or two books.

Rarely are these chambers completely empty, since the students rotate guard duty and classes around the clock. The books on the nightstands are textbooks on battle tactics.

Creatures: Two to four students are asleep in each room at any given time.

Students (2-4): hp 3 or hp 14; see The Order of the Fire Hawk.

Tactics: The students are not immediately hostile if roused; they are merely curious. Should a fight breaks out in one of these chambers, they need 1 round to arm themselves. The students lead off with *magic missile* spells, then use the rest of their spells to advantage. Should they be in position to melee, they attempt to flank their opponents.

Development: These students know only the basic routines of the complex. A few have heard odd sounds during the night, but none have encountered anything unusual.

Treasure: The students' chests contain mostly personal belongings. Each of the regular students' chests also contains 12 gp and a fire hawk symbol (an enameled pendant, worth 30 gp). Each of the senior students' chests contains 80 gp and a jeweled fire hawk symbol (a gold pendant set with small rubies and topazes, worth 150 gp). Bendrik's chest also contains his scrolls, his *sending stone*, and a book with notes about the warmasters' plans (gleaned from eavesdropping on conferences). (See Bendrik's statistics in The Order of the Fire Hawk for details of these items.)

†New item in *Complete Arcane*.

CHAPEL

The chapel on the grounds is dedicated to Heironeous, though the students are free to worship any other nonevil deity they wish here.

9. Narthex

The entryway of the chapel is lined with statues of various nonevil deities.



The chapel's double doors stand open, revealing a 15-foot-by-15-foot area ringed with statues of various deities. Pelor is here, along with Wee Jas, Fharlanghn, Boccob, and others. Before each deity are several lit votive candles, and each offering box contains a few coins. On the wall is the inscription, "Temper your power with wisdom." Across from the main entrance is another set of double doors, and a stairway on the west side leads up.

The inscription is the Fire Hawks' motto, and it refers to combining magic with good strategy. The stairs lead up to the balcony over the sanctuary.

10. Sanctuary

This spacious chamber is where the members of the order gather to worship Heironeous.

The double doors of this chamber open to reveal a spacious sanctuary dedicated to Heironeous. A statue of the god stands in the front, next to the altar, and on the opposite side is a pulpit with a holy water font next to it. On the altar is a gold altar service consisting of several candlesticks, a bowl, and a censer.

Worship services are conducted here weekly, as well as on special occasions and prior to major battles. This chamber also serves as an infirmary to house students injured during spell practice.

Creatures: Melver, the priest of Heironeous, can be found in this room during the day. He leads all the religious services for the complex and also provides healing for students and faculty injured during spell practice and wargames. The priest also offers wise advice to Sereda from time to time on matters both military and mundane.

Melver: Male half-elf cleric 12; hp 42.

Development: Melver is happy to talk with the PCs as long as he knows that Sereda has given them permission to probe. He is quite certain that the deaths here have not all been accidents, and that someone walks the halls at night. His divinations point to a hostile presence within the complex, but he has been unable to pin it down so far.

Treasure: The altar service is worth 1,000 gp.

10a. Cleric's Chamber

This room serves as Melver's bedchamber and robing room. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs enter, adjusting for the time of day.

This room is furnished with a bed, a wardrobe, a table and chair, a nightstand, and a large chest next to the wardrobe. In the center of the yellow bedspread is a hawk, picked out in crimson thread.

Melver is here only at night; otherwise he is in area 10. On the table are notes for his next sermon. The wardrobe holds his vestments as well as his normal clothing. On the nightstand is a holy symbol of Heironeous.

Treasure: The chest is locked (Open Lock DC 20). It contains a spare altar service (gold plated, worth 500 gp), plus Melver's traveling clothes and diary. The diary notes the exact dates and times that he heard mysterious sounds at night, plus a few complaints from students about "being watched."

DINING HALL

This building is where food is stored, prepared, and served. Most of the vegetables for the complex are grown on the surrounding hillsides, but the fruits and spices are brought in from Urnst. Hunting parties leave the complex every two weeks to search for game.

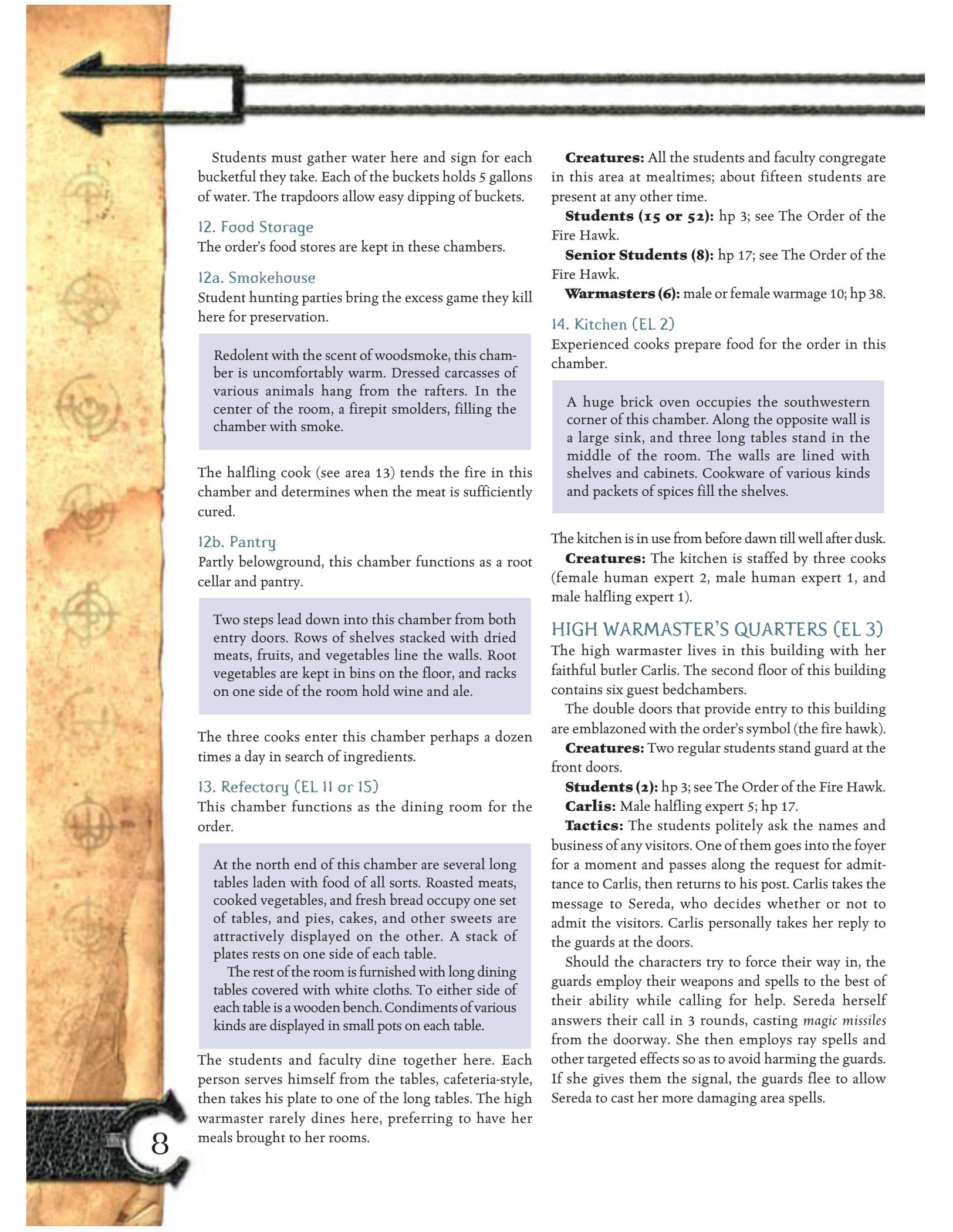
11. Cistern House

Because of the dry climate, the order conserves water religiously. Rainwater is piped into the cistern here.

This small building has stone walls and a slate roof with metal gutters suspended all around the edges. Two drainpipes, one on the east side and one on the west, run into the building through-holes in the walls. Two doors, both standing ajar, give access to the structure. Two more drainpipes run into the building from the gutters around the adjacent structure.

Beyond the doors is a short flight of steps leading down to a single room with a dirt floor. In the center of the floor lies a flat, oval piece of wood about 10 feet by 15 feet. Set in each end is a trapdoor with an iron handle. The drainpipes plunge into the ground a short distance from the trapdoors. Buckets are piled neatly in the corners of the room, and a book hangs from a chain by the south door.

The cistern is about 10 feet deep and holds 9,000 gallons (a three-month supply for one hundred people if water is rationed, otherwise a month's supply). The drains feed the rainwater collected in the gutters of this building and the refectory into the cistern.



Students must gather water here and sign for each bucketful they take. Each of the buckets holds 5 gallons of water. The trapdoors allow easy dipping of buckets.

12. Food Storage

The order's food stores are kept in these chambers.

12a. Smokehouse

Student hunting parties bring the excess game they kill here for preservation.

Redolent with the scent of woodsmoke, this chamber is uncomfortably warm. Dressed carcasses of various animals hang from the rafters. In the center of the room, a firepit smolders, filling the chamber with smoke.

The halfling cook (see area 13) tends the fire in this chamber and determines when the meat is sufficiently cured.

12b. Pantry

Partly belowground, this chamber functions as a root cellar and pantry.

Two steps lead down into this chamber from both entry doors. Rows of shelves stacked with dried meats, fruits, and vegetables line the walls. Root vegetables are kept in bins on the floor, and racks on one side of the room hold wine and ale.

The three cooks enter this chamber perhaps a dozen times a day in search of ingredients.

13. Refectory (EL 11 or 15)

This chamber functions as the dining room for the order.

At the north end of this chamber are several long tables laden with food of all sorts. Roasted meats, cooked vegetables, and fresh bread occupy one set of tables, and pies, cakes, and other sweets are attractively displayed on the other. A stack of plates rests on one side of each table.

The rest of the room is furnished with long dining tables covered with white cloths. To either side of each table is a wooden bench. Condiments of various kinds are displayed in small pots on each table.

The students and faculty dine together here. Each person serves himself from the tables, cafeteria-style, then takes his plate to one of the long tables. The high warmaster rarely dines here, preferring to have her meals brought to her rooms.

Creatures: All the students and faculty congregate in this area at mealtimes; about fifteen students are present at any other time.

Students (15 or 52): hp 3; see The Order of the Fire Hawk.

Senior Students (8): hp 17; see The Order of the Fire Hawk.

Warmasters (6): male or female warmage 10; hp 38.

14. Kitchen (EL 2)

Experienced cooks prepare food for the order in this chamber.

A huge brick oven occupies the southwestern corner of this chamber. Along the opposite wall is a large sink, and three long tables stand in the middle of the room. The walls are lined with shelves and cabinets. Cookware of various kinds and packets of spices fill the shelves.

The kitchen is in use from before dawn till well after dusk.

Creatures: The kitchen is staffed by three cooks (female human expert 2, male human expert 1, and male halfling expert 1).

HIGH WARMASTER'S QUARTERS (EL 3)

The high warmaster lives in this building with her faithful butler Carlis. The second floor of this building contains six guest bedchambers.

The double doors that provide entry to this building are emblazoned with the order's symbol (the fire hawk).

Creatures: Two regular students stand guard at the front doors.

Students (2): hp 3; see The Order of the Fire Hawk.

Carlis: Male halfling expert 5; hp 17.

Tactics: The students politely ask the names and business of any visitors. One of them goes into the foyer for a moment and passes along the request for admittance to Carlis, then returns to his post. Carlis takes the message to Sereda, who decides whether or not to admit the visitors. Carlis personally takes her reply to the guards at the doors.

Should the characters try to force their way in, the guards employ their weapons and spells to the best of their ability while calling for help. Sereda herself answers their call in 3 rounds, casting *magic missiles* from the doorway. She then employs ray spells and other targeted effects so as to avoid harming the guards. If she gives them the signal, the guards flee to allow Sereda to cast her more damaging area spells.

15. Foyer (EL 4)

This chamber is the entryway of the High Warmaster's Quarters. Read or paraphrase the following if the characters gain entrance.

The imposing double doors of this building, emblazoned with the order's signature fire hawk symbol, open to reveal a small foyer decorated in crimson, orange, and yellow. Chairs upholstered in vermillion fabric and emblazoned with the fiery hawk line the chamber, and two racks for outer garments stand near the entry door. Single wooden doors lead out to the east, south, and west.

This foyer serves as the waiting area for students wishing a conference with Sereda. Warmasters are generally shown in immediately.

Creatures: If the characters were announced in the usual way, Carlis is here to meet them and serve them refreshments while they wait for an audience. When the time comes, he leads them into area 18 to see Sereda.

Carlis: Male halfling expert 5; hp 17.

16. High Warmaster's Study (EL 0 or 15)

The high warmaster uses this chamber to plan the curriculum for the school.

Books and papers are stacked neatly on the desk in this comfortable study. The remains of a fire glow in the hearth, and overstuffed leather chairs and couches provide comfortable seating. Bookshelves filled to capacity line the walls. On a small table next to the couch stands a flat board with miniature soldiers on it, positioned for battle.

The desk contains a typical assortment of pens, paper, and bottles of ink. The papers atop the desk are sketches of battle plans that Sereda has made for the next set of wargames. Also in the desk is a copy of the latest instructor reports on the students. Three, including Bendrik, seem to be progressing more slowly than the others, and in fact seem unable to reliably cast all the spells that they should. The books on the shelves cover a wide range of military subjects, from history to battle-field tactics.

Creature: Sereda usually spends her afternoons in this chamber, working alone.

Sereda Ostarte: hp 55; see The Order of the Fire Hawk.

17. High Warmaster's Bedchamber (0 or 15)

The high warmaster sleeps in this chamber.

Disciplined opulence seems to be the theme of this huge bedchamber. The bed sports a satin cover embroidered with the fire hawk symbol. On the nightstand next to it are a lamp and a book. On the opposite wall is a fireplace flanked by bookshelves. A wardrobe, a table, and two plush chairs complete the furnishings. The entire room is impeccably neat and clean.

The book on the nightstand is a history of Rary and his realm. Sereda has been studying it for clues about the strange events of recent weeks. The wardrobe holds her ceremonial garb as well as her daily clothing. The books on these shelves are her personal favorites. The subjects range from fanciful tales of knights and dragons to biographies of famous leaders.

Creatures: Sereda is here only at night.

18. Audience Chamber (EL 10 or 15)

This room is used for strategic planning sessions and to discuss performance issues and complaints with staff and students.

The walls of this chamber are painted white and hung with tapestries depicting famous battles of ages past. A great oval table, made of oak and surrounded by chairs, dominates the center of the room. At one end of the chamber stands a group of small camp chairs.

Sereda sits on one of the camp chairs to talk with students in the mornings, and one of the warmasters takes over that task for her during the afternoon. She had the camp chairs brought in to replace the thronelike chair that her predecessor used. Important meetings and strategy sessions take place around the table.

Creatures: Either Sereda or one of the warmasters is here with one or more students during the day.

Sereda: hp 55; see The Order of the Fire Hawk.

Warmaster: Male or female warmage 10; hp 38.

WARMASTERS' HALL

This building is where the students take their classes. Each of the six warmasters has a private bedchamber on the second floor.

19. Armory

The order's weapons and armor are stored here.



This spacious chamber is divided into sections—one for armor, one for melee weapons, and one for ranged weapons. All are neatly organized by type and size and stored on racks.

The armor is all of the light category, since anyone in the complex who can wear heavier armor has his own. For the same reason, the weapons are all simple ones. None of the items here are magical. Delkin makes a daily trip to this building wheeling a cart full of freshly repaired or newly made weapons and armor.

20. Hall of Fame

This hallway partially encircles the Warmasters' Hall.

The entry hall to this building is festooned with portraits and statues. Their nameplates proclaim them to be previous high warmasters and heroes of the Fire Hawk.

The artwork here is of value only to those interested in the order.

21. Classroom (EL 13)

This chamber is where the warmasters instruct students in spellcasting and teach them basic battlefield strategy.

This chamber smells of fresh paint, and the walls and floor bear marks of impact. Large pieces of slate are affixed to the walls, and on each is what appears to be a battle plan, with circles to represent various forces and arrows marked with spell names.

This chamber is repainted weekly by a team of regular students. No large-area spells are cast in here, but the targeted ones are sometimes practiced—and they sometimes go astray.

Creatures: When in use, this chamber accommodates up to thirty people.

Warmaster: Male or female warmage 10; hp 38.

Students (10-30): hp 3; see The Order of the Fire Hawk.

22. Library (EL 5)

The order's prized collection of books is kept in this chamber.

Rows of bookshelves fill this chamber from end to end. In one corner stands a desk with a chair. Students browse among the stacks, and some sit and read in chairs conveniently placed around the room.

The library holds no magic books of any sort, but it does have an excellent collection of books on military history, spellcasting theory, schools of magic, and other arcane subjects.

Creatures: During the daylight hours, one of the senior students mans the circulation desk, marking down who removes volumes from the library.

Librarian (Senior Student): hp 14; see The Order of the Fire Hawk.

Students (5): hp 3; see The Order of the Fire Hawk.

23. Inner Circle Chamber

This room is reserved for conferences between the high warmaster and her six underlings.

Seven overstuffed chairs upholstered in crimson stand around an oval table. A sideboard holds a crystal decanter and matching wineglasses. On one wall hangs a piece of slate. A stack of books rests on a small table in one corner.

This room is unoccupied except for weekly staff meetings. At such gatherings, the warmasters discuss the progress of various students, discipline problems, and safety issues.

The books contain the progress reports on various students. A red line drawn through a student's record indicates death, and a mark that resembles a pair of wings at the end of an entry indicates a disappearance. A successful Decipher Script check allows a character to read the code that the warmasters use to track a student's progress and discover that the deaths and disappearances were among the order's most promising students, and that only one of these ever constituted a serious discipline problem. Characters who read the books also discover that Bendrik is one of three students who does not seem to be progressing as he should. His problem, as noted here, is that his ability to cast certain spells seems unreliable, and his technique is poor for certain spells. A lack of proper discipline is blamed. The other two students seem to have similar difficulties.

THE ORDER OF THE FIRE HAWK

The current high warmaster of Tarth Moorda is Sereda Ostarte. She and the six warmasters (10th-level warmages) who report to her make up the Warmasters' Council. Each of the warmasters has a specialty that makes his contribution valuable. One is an elemental

savant, another is an expert with the use of wands, and a third spent time as a fighter before becoming a warmaster. The six warmasters directly oversee the training of initiates, teach classes, and monitor wargames in the open areas of the complex.

Sereda has for some time been attempting to ferret out information about Rary's sinister realm in the Bright Desert. Unbeknownst to her, a spy for Rary is even now in the midst of her order, gathering information about its strengths and weaknesses and preparing to eliminate some of its more powerful members, including Sereda herself. The spy is Bendrik Sogoth, who is posing as an ordinary student.

◆ **Sereda Ostarte:** Female human warmage 15; CR 15; Medium humanoid; HD 15d6; hp 55; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +7; Grp +8; Atk +12 melee (2d6+2/19–20, +1 skillful greatsword) or +8 ranged (1d8+1/19–20, +1 distance light crossbow); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (2d6+2/19–20, +1 skillful greatsword) or +8 ranged (1d8+1/19–20, +1 distance light crossbow); SQ advanced learning, armored mage (heavy), warmage edge +7; AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +9; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 8, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +18, Craft (armor-smithing) +11, Craft (weaponsmithing) +11, Intimidate +19, Jump –14, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (history) +18, Spellcraft +20; Battle Caster, Combat Casting, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Explosive Spell, Extra Edge, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Sudden Empower^B, Sudden Enlarge^B, Sudden Widen^B.

Advanced Learning (Ex): Sereda has added two spells to her spell list (already included in Spells Known, below).

Armored Mage (Ex): Sereda can wear heavy armor with no chance of arcane spell failure because of this ability and her Battle Caster feat.

Warmage Edge (Ex): Whenever Sereda casts a spell that deals hit point damage, she adds +7 to the amount of damage dealt.

Warmage Spells Known (6/7/7/7/7/6/6/4; caster level 15th): 0—*acid splash*, *disrupt undead*, *light*, *ray of frost* (+7 ranged touch); 1st—*accuracy*†, *burning hands* (DC 15), *chill touch* (+8 melee touch, DC 15), *fist of stone*†, *hail of stone*†, *magic missile*, *lesser orb of acid*†, *lesser orb of cold*†, *lesser orb of electricity*†, *lesser orb of fire*†, *lesser orb of sound*†, *shocking grasp* (+7 ranged touch), *Tenser's floating disk*, *true strike*; 2nd—*blades of fire*†, *continual flame*, *fire trap*, *fireburst*† (DC 16), *flaming sphere* (DC 16), *ice knife*† (DC 16), *Melf's acid arrow* (+7 ranged touch), *pyrotechnics*, *scorching ray* (+7 ranged touch), *whirling blade*†; 3rd—*fire shield*, *fireball* (DC 17), *flame arrow*, *gust of wind* (DC 17), *ice*

storm, *lightning bolt* (DC 17), *poison* (DC 17), *ring of blades*, *sleet storm*, *stinking cloud* (DC 17); 4th—*blast of flame*† (DC 18), *contagion* (DC 18), *Evard's black tentacles*, *orb of acid*† (DC 18), *orb of cold*† (DC 18), *orb of electricity*† (DC 18), *orb of fire*† (DC 18), *orb of force*† (DC 18), *orb of sound*† (DC 18), *phantasmal killer* (DC 18), *shout* (DC 18); 5th—*arc of lightning*† (DC 19), *cloudkill* (DC 19), *cone of cold* (DC 19), *mass fire shield*, *greater fireburst*† (DC 19), *flame strike* (DC 19), *prismatic ray*† (DC 19), *sending*; 6th—*acid fog*, *chain lightning* (DC 20), *circle of death* (DC 20), *disintegrate* (DC 20), *fire seeds* (DC 20), *Otiluke's freezing sphere* (DC 20), *Tenser's transformation*; 7th—*delayed blast fireball* (DC 21), *earthquake* (DC 21), *finger of death* (DC 21), *fire storm* (DC 21), *Mordenkainen's sword*, *prismatic spray* (DC 21), *sunbeam* (DC 21), *waves of exhaustion*.

Possessions: +3 full plate armor, +1 skillful† greatsword, +1 distance heavy crossbow with 10 bolts, cloak of Charisma +2, necklace of fireballs type II, vest of resistance +1†, 2 potions of cure moderate wounds.

† New in *Complete Arcane*.

Description: Sereda is a human woman perhaps 40 years of age. Her face is serious, and though she always appears to be in deep thought, she is keenly observant. Her hair is black with gray streaks, and her frame is thin but wiry.

Sereda has fought in several major battles and distinguished herself as a warmage. She has been a member of the Fire Hawks ever since the order was founded, but she harbors private doubts about the wisdom of pursuing battle magic to the exclusion of all else, and she relies heavily on Melver, the priest of Heironeous, for advice on filling the gaps in the order's defenses. Despite such musings, however, she is determined to train her students well, and she asks nothing less than perfection from her students and staff.

◆ **Bendrik Sogoth:** Male human fighter 4/sorcerer 3/Suel arcanamach 6; CR 13; Medium humanoid; HD 4d10+4 plus 3d4+3 plus 6d8+6; hp 71; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +9; Grp +10; Atk +12 melee (1d4+4 plus poison/19–20, *dagger of venom*) or +10 melee (1d8+1, *morningstar*) or +9 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d4+4 plus poison/19–20, *dagger of venom*) or +10/+5 melee (1d8+1, *morningstar*) or +9 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); SA spell-like abilities; SQ dispelling strike 2/day, extended spellstrength, ignore spell failure chance 10%, tenacious spells; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +11; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +14, Climb +2, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +14, Escape Artist +5, Handle Animal +11, Hide +7, Intimidate +6, Jump +8,

Knowledge (arcana) +7, Ride +9, Search +12, Spellcraft +8, Swim +8, Tumble +6; Blind-Fight^B, Combat Casting, Extra Spell† (*accuracy*†), Extra Spell† (*hail of stone*†), Iron Will, Mage Slayer†, Soul of the North†, Weapon Focus (dagger)^B, Weapon Specialization (dagger)^B.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day—*chill touch* (+10 melee touch, DC 14), *ray of frost* (+9 ranged touch), *resistance*.

Dispelling Strike (Su): Twice per day, Bendrik can attempt a dispelling strike with one normal melee attack. If he hits, he deals normal damage, and the victim is subject to a targeted *greater dispel magic*. If Bendrik makes a dispelling strike with no spells or effects to dispel, it has no effect, but that use of the ability is used up for the day.

Extended Spellstrength (Ex): The duration of any of Bendrik's Suel arcanamach spells that he targets on himself is doubled, as if affected by the Extend Spell feat (but without any adjustment to the spell's effective level or casting time). Spells that target multiple creatures are affected by this power, but only Bendrik gains the extended duration. Spells that do not have a Target entry are unaffected by this power even if Bendrik is the only one affected.

Ignore Spell Failure Chance (Ex): Bendrik subtracts 10% from his total arcane spell failure chance.

Tenacious Spells (Ex): Add 6 to the DC required to dispel Bendrik's Suel arcanamach spells.

Suel Arcanamach Spells Known (4/4/3/1 per day; caster level 6th): 1st—*expeditious retreat*, *fist of stone*†, *true strike*; 2nd—*cat's grace*, *locate object*, *whirling blade*†; 3rd—*fly*, *nondetection*; 4th—*greater invisibility*.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/6 per day; caster level 6th): 0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *disrupt undead*, *light*, *read magic*; 1st—*accuracy*†, *burning hands* (DC 15), *hail of stone*†, *lesser orb of cold*†, *magic missile*.

Possessions: +1 *leather armor*, *dagger of venom*, *ring of theurgy* (*lesser orb of acid*, *lesser orb of electricity*, *lesser orb of fire*)†, *hat of disguise*, *sending stone*†, 2 scrolls of *lesser orb of acid*†, 2 scrolls of *lesser orb of electricity*†, 2 scrolls of *lesser orb of fire*†, 2 scrolls of *lesser orb of sound*†, 2 scrolls of *shocking grasp*.

† New in *Complete Arcane*.

Description: Bendrik is a nondescript human about 35 years of age. With his *hat of disguise*, however, he appears as young as the 1st-level students. Bendrik has studied warmages for years, and the Order of the Fire Hawk is not the first group of them that he has infiltrated.

Bendrik has been responsible for all the deaths and disappearances the Fire Hawks have experienced in the past few weeks. He has used the benefits of his Mage Slayer feat and his ability with weapons, as well as his

own spells and his *dagger of venom*, to kill most of them quickly and quietly. Each night that he does not have guard duty, Bendrik prowls a portion of the complex invisibly, seeking information that he can transmit to his employers via the *sending stone* with which they provided him.

With his sorcerer spells, his Suel arcanamach spells, and his Extra Spell feats, Bendrik can actually cast most of the spells to which a 1st-level warmage has access. The rest he can simulate through his spell-like abilities and the spells stored within his *ring of theurgy*. When he uses his *chill touch* and *ray of frost* spell-like abilities, or produces a spell effect from his *ring of theurgy*, he makes a Bluff check opposed by the observers' Spot or Spellcraft checks to hide the fact that he is not actually casting the spell. He gains a +2 bonus on his Bluff check for his ranks in Spellcraft. The warmasters gain the same bonus on their Spot or Spellcraft checks to oppose.

Bendrik keeps his scrolls in reserve and uses them to replenish his ring. But the fact that he must guess which additional spells he will need means that he occasionally doesn't have access to a spell that is demanded. This lack has caused the warmasters to note that he is not making as much progress as he should and to speculate as to the cause. Bendrik knows that he cannot stay here much longer, and he hopes to deal the Fire Hawks a lethal blow by assassinating one or more of the warmasters before he leaves.

Student: Male or female human warmage 1; CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6; hp 3; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +0; Grp +1; Atk +2 melee (1d8+1, masterwork morningstar) or +2 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); SQ armored mage (light), warmage edge +2; AL LN; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +4, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (history) +6, Listen +1, Spellcraft +6, Spot +1; Alertness, Combat Casting.

Armored Mage (Ex): A student can wear light armor with no chance of arcane spell failure.

Warmage Edge (Ex): Whenever a student casts a spell that deals hit point damage, he adds +2 to the amount of damage dealt.

Warmage Spells Known (5/4 per day; caster level 1st): 0—*acid splash*, *disrupt undead*, *light*, *ray of frost* (+1 ranged touch); 1st—*accuracy*†, *burning hands* (DC 13), *chill touch* (+1 melee touch, DC 13), *fist of stone*†, *hail of stone*†, *magic missile*, *lesser orb of acid*†, *lesser orb of cold*†, *lesser orb of electricity*†, *lesser orb of fire*†, *lesser orb of sound*†, *shocking grasp* (+1 ranged touch), *true strike*.



Possessions: Studded leather armor, light steel shield, masterwork morningstar, masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, scroll of *accuracy*, scroll of *burning hands*, scroll of *lesser orb of fire*, scroll of *true strike*.

☛ **Senior Student:** Male or female human warmage 4; CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d6; hp 17; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk +4 melee (1d8+2, +1 *morningstar*) or +4 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); SQ advanced learning, armored mage (medium), warmage edge +4; AL LN; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +7, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (history) +9, Spellcraft +11; Battle Caster, Combat Casting, Extra Edge.

Advanced Learning (Ex): A senior student has added one spell to her spell list (already included in Spells Known, below).

Armored Mage (Ex): A senior student can wear medium armor with no chance of arcane spell failure because of this ability and her Battle Caster feat.

Warmage Edge (Ex): Whenever a senior student casts a spell that deals hit point damage, she adds +4 to the amount of damage dealt.

Warmage Spells Known (6/7/4 per day; caster level 4th): 0—*acid splash*, *disrupt undead*, *light*, *ray of frost* (+3 ranged touch); 1st—*accuracy*†, *burning hands* (DC 14), *chill touch* (+3 melee touch, DC 14), *fi*st of stone†, *hail of stone*†, *magic missile*, *lesser orb of acid*†, *lesser orb of cold*†, *lesser orb of electricity*†, *lesser orb of fire*†, *lesser orb of sound*†, *shocking grasp* (+3 ranged touch), *Tenser's floating disk*, *true strike*; 2nd—*blades of fire*†, *continual flame*, *fire trap*, *fireburst*† (DC 15), *flaming sphere* (DC 15), *ice knife*† (DC 15), *Melf's acid arrow* (+3 ranged touch), *pyrotechnics*, *scorching ray* (+3 ranged touch), *whirling blade*†.

Possessions: +1 studded leather armor, +1 morningstar, masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts.

☛ **Hired Guards:** Male or female human fighter 1; CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d10+1; hp 6; Init +2; Spd 20 ft. ft.; AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17; Atk or Full Atk +4 melee (1d8+2/19–20, masterwork longsword) or +4 ranged (1d8+2/[TS]3, masterwork composite longbow [+2 Str bonus]); AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb –1, Handle Animal +3, Jump –5, Listen +2, Ride +6, Spot +2; Alertness, Cleave, Power Attack.

Possessions: Chainmail, heavy steel shield, masterwork longsword, masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str bonus) with 20 arrows.

A TYPICAL DAY IN TARTH MOORDA

In Tarth Moorda, the day begins at dawn, with a wake-up call from the bell outside the armorer's shop. After breakfast, the students divide into groups, with some going to class in the Warmasters' Hall, some participating in outdoor weapon or spell practice, some on guard duty, and the rest sleeping. These positions rotate throughout the day. Lunch occurs at midday, and supper at dusk. The students have the opportunity to talk and play games in the lobby of the Students' Quarters in the evenings and between their other engagements.

Sereda Ostarte spends some time each day observing the students, as do the other warmasters. Each keeps notes on the students' progress, and the council members compare notes weekly.

The senior students are those who have spent some time in the armed forces or adventuring, but returned to the academy for private tutoring from the instructors. In return for this service, they act as guards, advisors, and residence hall monitors.

ADVENTURE OPTIONS

The PCs could visit Tarth Moorda for many reasons. As DM, you know best how to work a particular site into your storyline, but you can use the ideas below as inspiration.

- The PCs happen upon the site while traveling from Urnst to the Bright Desert.
- The characters have been sent to the complex by the Duke of Urnst in response to Sereda's request for aid in finding a possible infiltrator.
- Sereda heard of the PCs' exploits and invited them to the complex for a special mission.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Penny Williams joined the roleplaying game industry as game questions expert for TSR, Inc. in the 1980s. Since then, she has served as RPGA Network Coordinator, *Polyhedron Newszine* editor, and senior editor and coordinating editor for the RPG R&D Department at Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Now a busy freelancer, Penny edits for several game companies. When not enhancing the cruelty of designers' creations, Penny puts up jam, works jigsaw puzzles, and tutors students in math and science.