

# BATTLELORE

## THE SIEGE OF JUVAGE

A loud crash drowned the cries of the citizenry as another boulder hit the castle wall. The ground shook, and small pebbles from the ceiling gave off a glassy sound as they hit the marble floor. The aging scribe sat anxiously at his desk in the castle library. He was sweating heavily as he awaited Count Gervase. Some of the shelves had toppled over, and the floor was now littered with books and random debris from the broken decorations that had once adorned this elegant hall. Dawn had broken, and the small city of Juvage awoke to the sound of crashing boulders.

Through the doorway entered a tall, well-dressed figure holding a staff. The scribe was now more disconcerted as he noticed the man entering was not the count, but rather Adémar, the court wizard.

"Where is Count Gervase?" Odo mumbled, his gaze still on the desk.

"He shall arrive shortly."

But the remark did nothing to soothe the nerves of the old scribe. The drums of war could be heard ever closer, and the occasional boulder shaking the earth foiled any attempts at focusing on the task at hand.

"Are you ready?"

"Of course I am! But what's your affair here wizard?" Odo demanded.

"I was summoned here to ward your craft, old scribe." Adémar shot back.

"I beg your pardon?"

Odo, who was of the past generation of scribes, regarded magic as dangerous and unnatural, and had little respect for wizardry.

As Adémar began to explain himself the count burst into the room.

"Quickly we haven't much time! The defenses have not been fully assembled!"

"Agreed. Then why is Adémar ..."

"No time." Gervase interrupted, and then proceeded to clear his throat loudly.

Odo nodded and dipped the tip of his feather inside the dark quill on the desk. The count started to speak in a proud voice, as if addressing the city folk from his balcony.

*"Esteemed Lady Sibylle,*

*We call upon you in dire circumstances. Juvage is under siege. We gracefully request immediate assistance. If this city should fall, your Majesty will have lost one of the most important trade routes in the south. Please, make haste. Konrad's forces are large in number, and he is employing several boulder-hurling giants. Our walls will not hold for long. Sound two long horn intonations, followed by three short ones, and our sentries shall open the gates to let your forces inside our city.*

*Please kind Lady, do not allow Juvage share the same fate as Heloise."*

"Is that all Sir?" Odo questioned frightfully. That last sentence he scribed had cleaved his spirit.

"Seal the envelope," replied the count in a grim voice.

Gervase then turned to Adémar and ordered, "Adémar, place the enchantment!"

"Are you positive your Excellency? This will exhaust most of my power, and in our ominous circumstances a well placed fireball will most certainly aid our defense."

"As skillful as you are wielding your art, some meager spells cannot stop so powerful an army. We desperately need to double the size of our own forces. Now place the enchantment, and do not have me ask a third time."

Adémar closed his eyes, lifted his staff, and started to whisper some arcane indecipherable words. The staff began to emit a bright bluish glow. Odo and Gervase stood mesmerized at the spectacle. Moments later, Adémar ceased his incantation and the glow transferred from the staff onto the envelope. The wizard, now exhausted, opened his eyes and sat down.

"It is done."

\*\*\*

"What route shall we follow?" asked Fedrick.

"Trail the river through the Grainstone Mountains and you should arrive just before the sun peaks. Your journey will be a treacherous one, but you must not forget your objective. You are to deliver this message to Lady Sibylle in Aikeham. The enemy forces are right outside our gates. Do not engage them. If a comrade should fall, leave him behind. The survival of Juvage may very well depend on you delivering this letter."

Gervase pulled the letter from his pocket and handed it to Fedrick.

"That glow.... Is it magical?"

"Indeed. This letter contains the key to our gates. It is so enchanted that it can be handled only by those allied with Juvage. Any other would be repelled by the enchantment, and unable to get closer than a few steps from it."

"Go now, Son of Tineris, and may your years at the warrior and tactics academy prove indeed fruitful. For the sake of us all."

\*\*\*

Fedrick mounted his black stallion and rode to the assembled cavalry line. These were an elite fighting unit who had trained under him for three years. The men were chattering excitedly and looked uneasy. They finally quieted down when they saw their commander returning from the castle. The gallop of Fedrick's horse echoed through the streets as he approached. Upon reaching his fellow soldiers, Fedrick pulled out the glowing envelope and lifted it up in the air for all to see. He spoke in a loud, stern voice:

*“Look around you! War has come to Juvage! The survival of this city, and that of our sons and daughters hangs by a thread.”*

*“The enemy outnumbers us by a large margin and is surrounding our city at this very moment. We have been honored by his Excellency to carry out the most important of missions. We are to break through the enemy lines and deliver this message to Lady Sibylle in Aikeham. We ride hard and with haste. We stop for no one. If I should fall in battle, the nearest rider is to retrieve the message from my coat without dismounting. The message carrier shall continue forward, never looking back. You have trained with me for many years. Do not let me down. Do not let your sons down. We shall be leading Aikeham’s army into the heart of the enemy before this day ends.”*

\*\*\*

As the front gate opened the sky darkened with arrows. On Fedrick’s orders, the Juvage cavalry executed a quick, right-turn maneuver as they cleared the city gates. The arrow fire failed to inflict a single casualty.

“Faster!” demanded Fedrick. The Juvage warriors pushed their beasts to their limits while hugging the city wall. A second volley of arrows was released. It became difficult for the enemy archers to lead their shots with their targets moving this quickly. Still, one of Fedrick’s riders succumbed to the second volley. No one looked back. Such was the discipline Fedrick had instilled in his soldiers. They continued riding expecting a third volley of arrows, but none came. Instead, when Fedrick glanced at the enemy line, he saw a detachment of enemy cavalry galloping towards them at full speed.

“They wish to conserve arrows. Continue eastward and be on alert!” he told his men.

The soldiers acknowledged the order, but their expressions turned bleak as they saw a dense and disturbingly black cloud take shape above them. “Scatter!” cried Fedrick.

As the formation was spreading, a bolt of lightning descended upon the vanguard riders.

The bright flash and accompanying thunder frightened and disoriented all the horses. The air smelled of ozone and burnt flesh. In midst of the disorder that ensued, Fedrick could discern two dead horses about forty paces from him. He noticed the hair on the dead horses’ manes start to rise, as if defying gravity, until all their hair was held upright in a most unnatural manner. The corpses suddenly started to trickle with electricity. With reflexes of a wild animal, Fedrick instinctively arched his spine so that his head almost touched on his horse’s rear. From that awkward position he saw a bright bolt of lightning whiz by over his head and continue onto the obscured sky. He could not understand why his instincts had guided him so, but he was certain that he would not be alive if not for that quick evasion move.

From this leaning position and with his heart still pounding, Fedrick gazed onto the sky and saw the dark clouds begin to dissipate. He inhaled a breath of relief. He was now out of the enemy archers’ range, and had survived the twisted clerical magic. But the relief was short lived. A large dust cloud was now contrasting against the clearing sky. “The pursuers!” he recalled. He jumped back up to his riding position and kicked his mount.

“Carry on men! Konrad’s riders are closing the distance!”

\*\*\*

Adémar wiped the sweat on his brow as he watched the brave Juvage warriors from the tower balcony. Sable Spire as it was called, was built from dark bémor or “dwarven stone,” and raised comfortably above the city walls on the north-eastern ward of Juvage.

The wooden signs dotted across the city proclaimed this area as the Mercantile District, but it was known as “Richmen’s Moor” to the common folk because it housed Juvage’s wealthiest merchants and aristocrats. Sable Spire was the tallest building in the city and stood defiantly high as an excellent lookout point to survey its surroundings. The tower had been used in the past to forecast the weather and treat important guests to dinner with a grand view of the Melonwine Valley. However the tower was now serving its main purpose: To relay information on enemy movements if the city were ever assaulted. Adémar had employed Beugar’s Iron Dwarves for the construction of the tower and would readily trust his life to its capacity to withstand the worst that the enemy could throw at it.

The wizard felt momentarily content. The Juvage soldiers had survived Konrad’s magic, even as he had watched in despair without means to dispel it. Magic was a fickle and unpredictable force in Uchronia. Even a master of the arcane arts like Adémar had but a limited number of spells available to cast. Dispel Magic was not among the spells he had memorized when the enemy cleric cast Chained Lightning on the Juvage warriors. Luckily the enemy spell had caused little damage, and by now Adémar had replenished a substantial amount of the power consumed enchanting the count’s letter.

Walking to the other side of the balcony, Adémar could see the entire spectacle of Konrad’s forces. The enemy army must have been over three thousand bodies strong. This included humans, goblins, and a handful of giants. A sizable portion of the army was mounted on horses or other exotic beasts. His despair grew as four earth elementals raised from beneath the ground and slowly advanced towards the city gates. Made from the hardest wood in all Uchronia and protected by a steel portcullis, these gates had deterred many an attack on the city’s long history. But as the earthen monsters approached, the unthinkable happened. With a loud creaking sound, the city gates began to open. Adémar could not believe what he was witnessing. The sight of the opening gates elicited a turmoil of thoughts on the wizard:

“What kind of treachery is this? Who would betray their holy allegiance to our king and let the enemy inside our great city?”

One thought in particular overshadowed the rest: He would not live through this day. As the lumbering elementals approached the city gates, Adémar searched for an explanation; and found it quickly.

\*\*\*

A small detachment of the Juvage irregular cavalry was making a stride towards the gates. They were being led by Camelia, who had been denied permission to go on the delivery mission moments before the first riders departed. Being a stubborn leader she was now leading a detachment of around thirty untrained riders down the main road of the city. Camelia correctly appraised the gravity of their situation, and the unfortunate consequence if the message remained undelivered. Her mind was set on providing additional support to the main force. Their lack of armor made this look like a suicidal run, but the light combat gear made the irregular cavalry extremely nimble targets. It did not matter. As agile as they were, not one of them would be able to handle a horse once the ground itself started to shake violently. Such was the preferred method of attack of an earth elemental.

The sight of the Juvage fishermen, merchants, farmers, and wives, unknowingly on a path to clash with the approaching elementals tore the wizard’s heart. This time he was not powerless to intervene. Adémar concentrated on the road

ahead of Camelia's riders and with a quick wave of his staff cast a spell. Columb, the rearmost rider in the group, recounted to the count that same morning:

*"The air in front of us wrinkled and took the shape of a very long piece of cloth. The fabric was suddenly torn from the inside, y'know, like if someone on the other side had put a knife through it. The tear in the fabric became taller and wider 'til it was spread across our path. On the other side of this curtain between dimensions, we could see the Juvage knights riding 'bout two hun'nered yards in front of us. They were very far but we knew they were our men 'cause they were flyin' the standards of our city. The curtains began to close after most of our men had passed through. With me bein' the last man I saw the thing close right in front of mi' eyes. Might've been stuck'n between dimensions if the thing had closed on 'miself. I continued to gallop and when I turned the corner to reach the gates I saw them mud monsters charging towards the gates themselves. I kicked my horse as 'ard I've ever dared to and was able reach the lever before one of 'dem things charged inside. Almost dropped the gate on the top of its 'ead I did. 'Tis a miracle I be here telling the tale."*

After Camelia's riders stepped through the portal they instinctively looked back with fascination. When the conjured curtains dropped completely, they could see the uninspiring sight that now lay behind them. Trailing them by fifty

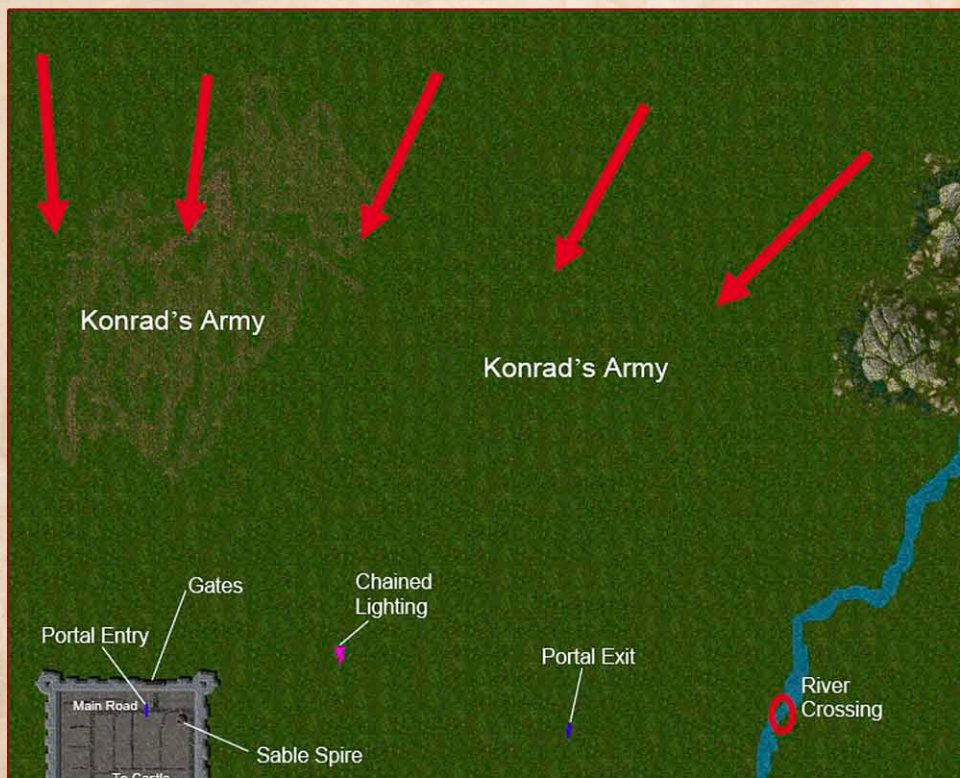
yards was the detachment of enemy riders; and five hundred yards in the background, the city of Juvage. Adémar had made a portal to rejoin both of Juvage's cavalry groups, but Fedrick's riders were out of range. The spell had effectively placed the irregular cavalry between Fedrick's riders and their pursuing enemy.

\*\*\*

The river came into view. It was an impressive sight with its violent current and muddy water.

"There's our river" declared Fedrick. "We shall continue along its bank to Aikeham. Behind those hills up ahead there is a long section of river that is fordable. We cross there and continue along the east bank."

Signs of fatigue were already showing on the horses. When the first riders reached the top of the hill, they saw the shallow area of the river their commander spoke of. A sizeable enemy force stood in formation on the other side of the river. The force was led by a burly hobgoblin named Bash'leen, and included humans, goblinoids, and a giant spider. They had already spotted the Juvage cavalry and were readying their weapons. The brave knights looked on their commander for instructions. As the enemy archers cocked their arrows, Fedrick assessed the battlefield and screamed "Charge!"



# SUMMER 1301

## DELIVER THE MESSAGE



1st

### BASH'LEEN

The Mad

Command Cards: 4  
 Victory conditions: 7  
 War council level 2

(Level 1 Commander, Giant Spider)

### FEDERICK GODFREY

Warrior Academy Champion

Command Cards: 6  
 Victory conditions: Special  
 War council level 6

(Level 3 Commander, Level 3 Warrior)

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

This adventure is the companion to *The Siege of Juvage* short story. Players are strongly encouraged to read *The Siege of Juvage* prior to setting up as this will greatly increase their enjoyment of this adventure.

#### BRIEFING:

The Standard player can use the assorted mounted figures that have been destroyed during the game to create the mounted green banner units that come into play later. Simply choose three random mounted units and place the two Standard green banners that come with the game.

This adventure uses a substantial amount of special rules and is therefore recommended for experienced players only.

#### CONDITIONS OF VICTORY:

**Standard Player:** Reach the Pennant player's edge with the unit carrying the message. The game ends instantly at this moment.

**Pennant Player:** Capture all 7 victory banners.

#### SPECIAL RULES:

**No Landmarks.** The entire river is fordable.

**Fightn' Clash:** The lore deck for this adventure will consist of the 15 Warrior cards only. The Standard player can use these cards as level 3 warrior and the Pennant player can use the cards as level 0 warrior. In addition, the pennant player starts the game with no lore tokens or lore cards, and can have a maximum of 1 lore card in his hand.

**The Message:** The message is represented by the victory token. When a unit carrying the message retreats, it retreats with the message. If the unit carrying the message is

destroyed, leave the token on the hex where the unit was destroyed. The message has an enchantment that repels all Pennant units. No Pennant unit can occupy the hex where the message is. If at any moment a Standard unit occupies the hex where the dropped message is, they automatically pick it up. Picking up the message is not an action and does not affect the combat or movement phases in any way. However, passing the message to another unit replaces the attack action of the passer and requires that both units be adjacent. The receiving unit does not forfeit its attack when being handed the message.

**Must Press On:** When playing a command card the Standard player can choose to either play the text written on the card or play the card as a Leadership command card. The Standard player can do this as many times as he wishes during the game. When a Counter Attack is played by the Pennant player, he must play the same action (not the text on the previous command card) the Standard player played the previous turn.

**In Hot Pursuit:** At the end of each of the Pennant player's turns, place one lore token from the lore pool at the Standard player's side victory track. These lore tokens will be used to keep track of how many turns have elapsed. They also effectively reduce the amount of lore available in the lore pool.

At the moment the 5th token is placed, the Standard player must deploy two mounted green units anywhere along his edge. They can be ordered during the Standard player's turn, which should follow immediately.

At the moment the 7th token is placed, the Pennant player will deploy 1 blue mounted unit, and 2 red mounted units anywhere along the Standard player's edge. The Pennant player can order them on his next turn.