

**NYR3-06**

# **Beyond the Wisteria Tree**

**A One-Round D&D Living Greyhawk®  
Nyron Regional Adventure**

**by Robert Moon**

A slight gust blew through the area, rocking the pendulous violet blooms of the wisteria tree. Wrapping its vines up the ruined chimney of a former farmhouse, its presence was a curiosity and even somewhat of a concern to Kalia. It had not been there the previous night, and guests at her nearby inn were beginning to whisper. A mystery adventure following the events of *Returned Mail* for parties of APL 2-8.

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This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

## **Preparation**

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least three players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rule books during

certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the Dungeon Master's Guide when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the Monster Manual when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin. Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the LIVING GREYHAWK *Gazetteer*.

Special thanks goes out to my editor and playtesters.

## **Living Greyhawk Levels of Play**

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc) use the following chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals

of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

<b>CR</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
1	1	1	2	3
2	2	3	4	5
3	3	4	5	6
4	4	5	6	7

3. Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure – round up.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Three or four, or sometimes even five 1<sup>st</sup>-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

1. Attempt to create a table of six 1<sup>st</sup>-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or

Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

## Adventure Background

The following is a summary of the recent history of the Duchy of Woodwych [wood wick], previously known as the Barony of Woodwych. This section is a compilation of common knowledge taken from the Nyrond website, as well as an update and incorporation of events from the Nyrond regional scenario *Returned Mail*. The information herein plays a notable part in this scenario.

### Baron Bastrayne's Rule

Prior to King Lynwerd's crowning, the land of Woodwych was managed by a corrupt man, the Baron Bastrayne. He and his bailiff Radnen Gryppe conspired to skim off some 30-40% of the local populace's taxes for themselves and succeeded.

The other manner in which Bastrayne sought to fill his coffers was to exploit the resources of the Celadon Forest. His excessive logging angered the residents of that sylvan land so much, the group, the Brotherhood of the Bronze, appointed themselves protectors of the forest. Bastrayne denounced them as "terrorists" and gave glowing accounts of how his troops were imposing order and protecting the vital trade of the kingdom.

The Baron's greed and oppressive governance continued for quite a while until the abdication of King Archbold in favor of his son Lynwerd. When Lynwerd began making inquiries into every aspect of the kingdom, Bastrayne's house of cards came tumbling down. The new king learned the wayward baron had embezzled enormous amounts of gold from the crown and sparked much anger and violence in the lands of Woodwych—especially within the Celadon.

Immediately Lynwerd sent Royal Guards to arrest the Baron. Because he still had the loyalty of his own militia, however, Bastrayne received advanced warning of the approach of the Guard, and he and Radnen managed to flee. It is rumored they got away with wagonloads of gold, and speculation on where they are runs the gamut from the Shield Lands to the Pomarj to right inside Rel Mord.

## **Verin Talnith's Rule**

Acting decisively, King Lynwerd appointed Verin Talnith, a powerful southern noble, as Baroness of Woodwych, giving her unprecedented autonomy in running the province. She immediately ordered a handful of lesser nobles exiled for their role in the Bastrayne Affair and sacked most of the former Baronial Guard, a body that had become unacceptably corrupt.

## **Adrean Talnith**

Adrean was the first-born son of the Baroness. An impetuous teen just entering manhood, he was eager to make a name for himself amongst the nobility in his mother's circle. To that end, he proposed the idea of building a new town on the Duntide River between Swan's Bore and Arnford. He believed a new city would restore confidence in the Barony—a symbol of change from the oppression of Bastrayne to that of renewal and growth. This new city would provide a convenient gathering place for farmers, traders and visiting travelers. It would serve secondary duty by becoming a sort of amusement park. Specialty shops and services would give distraction to any who desired it. Indeed, it would be a jewel in Woodwych's crown, the envy of every province in Nyronnd.

While initially wary of the idea, the Baroness allowed her son to explore the idea further. She arranged for meetings with engineers, trade advisors, and other experts. Mostly she was allowing her son to learn and grow from the experience with little intention of following through with his idea.

When rumors spread that plans were in the works to build the new city, the residents of neighboring Swan Bore were infuriated. How could the Baroness consider building a new town from the ground up when she could expend a fraction of those funds to repair and improve their existing city?

Also alarmed were the residents of the Celadon who feared new construction on such a large scale would further negatively impact their homeland through the excessive harvesting of lumber. To be sure, all was not well in Woodwych.

## **Widow Renadra's Farmhouse**

Before the existence of Adrean's Landing, nearly all trade between Swan Bore and Arnford was conducted via barges on the Duntide River. A minor road connecting the sixty-mile stretch between the two river communities did exist, but it

was primarily used by locals and those preferring to travel by land. One of those locals was named Renadra Galantan. She owned a large farmhouse on the road about thirty-five miles south of Swan Bore, having opened it up to travelers after the death of her husband in 583.

Providing home-cooked meals, comfortable lodging, and adequate stabling for horses, Widow Renadra's farmhouse was a welcome stop.

## **Adrean's Death**

*The following information is known only to Parvis Thander and, to a much more lesser extent, Boland Thipp and should not under any circumstances be shared with the PCs prior to the adventure.*

There came a time in 589 when Adrean Talnith found himself at Renadra's farmhouse. He had arranged to meet with a man whom he thought was an elven ranger from the Celadon Forest to discuss responsibly harvesting lumber for his new, proposed city on the Duntide.

In actuality, the man was a glamered assassin of Nerull who had been hired by a merchant house in Swan Bore with connections to the Scarlet Brotherhood. The merchant house, secretly headed by a half-elf named Boland Thipp, smuggled exotic goods into Nyronnd through Nesseremouth, bypassing both legitimate and corrupt tariffs of other port cities, such as Oldred and Mithat. Fearing his shipments would fall under greater scrutiny were this new trading center come to be built along his smuggling route, Boland sought to kill Adrean and thus his plans.

So on that fateful night as the hired assassin, Parvis Thander, entered Adrean's room in the wee hours with sickle in hand and ensorcelled with a *silence* spell, a dweomer protecting the young noble was triggered, awakening him. (All the growing resistance to his plans for the new city had concerned Adrean's mother, and she sought to protect him from harm with this spell cast by an abjurer friend of hers. Indeed it worked, as Adrean jumped up fully alert.)

A brutally violent struggle ensued. Young Adrean put up a valiant fight, toppling a table, hurling a plate, and even wielding a pillow in desperation, but he was no match for the far superior assassin. Making the matter all the more terrifying for Adrean was the fact his screams were being muted by Parvis' *silence* spell. Help was in the next room, but none would hear his cries. In less than a minute's time, the lordling lay dead on the floor, his blood splattered about.

## **The Burning of the Farmhouse**

To make the assassination all the more uncertain and difficult to trace, Parvis proceeded to burn the farmhouse down. Emptying several flasks of alchemist's fire in the upstairs' hallway, down the staircase, and throughout the lower floor, the place was engulfed in flames in a matter of moments.

Thick, dark smoke filled the upstairs hall and crept into the rooms of Renadra's family and guests. Among their number was an elderly cleric of Cyndor, Lahara Hestri, and her companion, Jinelle. Lahara awoke in a coughing fit and rolled onto the floor. Thinking quickly, the priestess of the god of time, infinity, and continuity began gasping out a special incantation of ritual magic. Her intent was to shift the farmhouse's occupants out of the time-stream until the fire was over. Unfortunately, she fell unconscious before she could finish the ritual. That did not mean her magic failed, though. On the contrary, it worked, but without completing the spell, no duration was set.

Not only did Lahara successfully phase out herself and the other guests, but Adrean's dead body and Parvis as well. Parvis had been standing outside, watching for anyone trying to escape the fire, and Lahara had simply targeted all she knew to have been in the house, not having realized Parvis was Adrean's killer.

## **The Aftermath**

When Adrean was a week late in returning from his trip, Verin became concerned. She had her temple priest scry for her son, which was met with failure. The next day she had various diviners seek out the answers to what happened to him. The Baroness was overcome with anguish when it was revealed Adrean no longer existed. She took this to mean he had been murdered—which he had been, but the divinations were in actuality referring to his phasing out of time.

The Baroness was further frustrated when the identity of the killer or where the act occurred could not be divined, again being confounded by the temporal flux. Had she or her diviners known of the actual circumstances, they could have phrased their divinations in a manner that would have revealed the sought information. Sadly, though, this was not the case.

Immediately, Verin suspected the Brotherhood of the Bronze, as they had been most vocal and somewhat militant during Bastrayne's rule, and it was an agent of the forest her son had arranged to meet. Her grief and rage blinded her to other

possibilities, and the connection to Adrean and the destruction of the little-known farmhouse was never made.

The Brotherhood denied any involvement, of course, though admitted to having members who shot first, demanding identification second. An investigator even uncovered clues as to Boland Thipp's possible involvement after the drunken merchant blabbed the tale during a game of chance in Swan Bore. The Baroness, however, ignored the report; convinced the Brotherhood was behind the slaying.

Whatever gains Boland hoped to acquire by killing Adrean resulted in the exact opposite. The Baroness was so bereaved by the death of Adrean and so angry at the elves of the Celadon that she ordered the immediate construction of her son's city on the Duntide, calling it Adrean's Landing. Not only would it be a center of commerce and entertainment, it would be a veritable monument to him. Any within the Baroness' court who even suggested the project should be kept within reason, or, worse, abandoned, was dismissed immediately.

The lofty construction project required a great deal of wood, and the Baroness was initially all too happy to extract it from the Celadon. This angered the Brotherhood and the splinter group the Celadon Resistance. Relations degenerated from there, leading to near-revolt. As her pain subsided and a more level head returned, Verin slowed down the construction and resumed talks with the forest folk. The two sides eventually came to an understanding (*Returned Mail*), and the leader of the Celadon Resistance voluntarily left in exile for his role in disrupting the Barony in other matters.

In 593 CY, King Lynwerd elevated Verin Talnith from the courtly rank of Baroness to that of Duchess, citing her efforts in restoring peace to the region and service to the crown. Verin, though, still mourns for the loss of her child.

## **The Current State of Affairs**

It has been years since the assassin in the employ of Swan Bore merchant, Boland Thipp, murdered Adrean. The Duchess of Woodwych has resigned herself to the belief she may never know what happened to her son, though she mostly believes he was killed by a rogue resident of the Celadon. While Boland initially suffered some economical loss of business with Arnford upon the construction of Adrean's Landing, he has since ultimately benefited through vigorous trade with the new memorial city.

The burning down of Widow Renadra's farmhouse certainly saddened the local residents and the handful of regular travelers along the little-used road, but it otherwise went unnoticed by the region at large. The lack of charred remains led most to believe animals or other creatures carried them away.

When her fellow clergy at the Temple of Cyndor in Greyhawk failed to contact Lahara via *sending* and other communicative magicks, they presumed the aged priestess had simply died of natural causes. The other travelers who were staying at the inn that fateful night also left behind concerned friends and family aggrieved at having heard no word from them in years. In a country of millions, however, reports of disappearances are numerous, and no one made the connection between Adrean's high-profile disappearance and the others of no renown.

### **The Briar Toad Inn**

After the farmhouse burned to the ground in 589, and it was presumed Renadra and her children perished in the fire, the deed to the land passed to her sister, Kalia Westerly, a resident of the city of Mowbrenn. Kalia, however, remained in Mowbrenn with her husband, Zilus, continuing their lucrative yet competitive trade as specialty cloth weavers. When the city experienced its unrest in 592, the Westerlys had had it; they decided to sell their business to one of their apprentices and leave Mowbrenn in retirement for the comparatively idyllic life in Woodwych.

Having heard of the success of Adrean's Landing, Kalia thought this would be the perfect opportunity to take advantage of the increased road traffic between the Landing and Arnford, building an inn on the land of her late sister.

Arriving a few weeks later, Kalia and Zilus began construction. They decided to build the inn 300 feet closer to the road to entice more travelers, leaving the ruins of the old farmhouse standing amidst tall grasses as a reverent monument to Renadra and her children.

Calling it the Briar Toad Inn in homage to Renadra's childhood fascination with the rare briar toad, the Westerlys officially opened for business a month ago. Unfortunately, several of the local children have nicknamed it the Fire Toad Inn—a cruel reference to the fire that destroyed the former farmhouse.

### **The Wisteria Tree**

Lahara Hestri was a powerful cleric of Cyndor. Her personally researched ritual spell that phased

the seven occupants of the farmhouse out of time was known to no others. As Lahara went unconscious during the ritual, the subjects of her spell were caught in perpetuity in an alternate phase of existence. Years later, however, that is about to change.

The evening previous to when this adventure takes place, a storm was brewing. As the wind picked up and rain began to fall, Kalia shuttered the windows soundly and removed the inn's shingle to prevent it from squeaking all night long. There was a full moon, and its light refracted off the water droplets in the storm clouds, illuminating the flying debris quite nicely. Everyone, though, eventually settled into bed.

A few hours later, a small branch segment from a wisteria vine two miles away was carried on the wind and landed near the crumbling chimney of the ruined farmhouse. Like mistletoe, belladonna, and many other forms of flora, wisteria possesses mystical properties in the right circumstances, especially those that pertain to time.

Nearing 2:30 in the morning, the moon Luna reached its highest position in the sky, as the rainstorm worsened. The pod of the wisteria bloom settled in the tall grass in the ruins of the farmhouse and was suddenly infused with temporal energy, the perfect confluence of circumstances having occurred. The surge caused the pod to sprout roots, which hungrily dug deep into the earth, as a winding trunk rose upwards. In a matter of moments, a full-grown wisteria tree towered 25 feet in the air, entwining the chimney along the way.

The years lost by the seven people trapped in the alternate phase of time were unleashed and channeled into the now-decades old wisteria tree.

Yet the trapped were still not released... In fact, the anomaly created an invisible, one-way portal that surrounded the tree and led to the time flux.

The next morning while Kalia served breakfast, a married couple, Volene and Padd, came downstairs with their daughter, Shandry, and commented on the new tree. They had not recalled seeing it the evening before when they shuttered their room window against the impending storm. Several other guests whispered amongst themselves as they peered out the dining hall window, confirming the story.

Kalia, Zilus, Volene, Padd, and Shandry went outside to investigate. Kalia laughed in whimsical wonderment as the group approached the beautiful tree. Eight year-old Shandry gleefully ran ahead of the others toward it, excited to see the huge clusters of violet flowers dangling thereon.

As she neared it, however, she was pulled into the unseen portal, shimmering away into nothingness. The adults stopped in their tracks.

Taken aback and unsure of what just happened, Volene and Padd called out to their daughter several times. When there was no response, Volene became panicked, screaming out Shandry's name. Padd cautiously approached the tree, and he, too, was pulled into the portal.

Kalia and Zilus pulled Volene away—much to her protest—retreating to the inn. Imploring the help of others in the inn, none could explain what was occurring. Over the course of the day, several new travelers arrived at the Briar Toad, and the crowd of onlookers grew.

## **Help Arrives**

It was about that time when a group of player characters happened upon the inn. Surely they would help out and get to the bottom of the mystery...

## **Adventure Summary**

This scenario solves the mystery of what happened to Adrean Talnith. The majority of the adventure takes place while the party is projected into the past, observing an 8 hour time loop that repeats itself continuously. PCs are unable to interact with anybody or anything in this loop with the exception of Lahara's book and the temporal creatures that roam the area.

The PCs can only end the loop by figuring out the mystery after having followed the right people at the right times through the farmhouse. Each time the loop repeats itself, the NPCs reset, but the PCs do not. The party will most likely have to experience the loop several times before they understand what is going on and how to solve the mystery.

The key to breaking the cycle is to complete Lahara's incantation for her by reading from her book—the only object in the loop that can be manipulated. Once that occurs, the loop is dispelled, and the original trapped seven appear in the current time with the party and Shandry. The PCs will most likely engage immediately in battle with the assassin, Parvis. Should they survive that encounter, the party will want to inform Verin of her son's fate. If they discovered the other clues, they may also want to report Boland Thipp's involvement.

**Introduction:** The DM describes how the PCs begin the adventure.

### **Encounter One - Tumult at the Briar Toad**

**Inn:** PCs arrive at the Briar Toad Inn and receive the plot hook, finding out about the appearance of the tree the previous night as well as the vanishing of Padd and Shandry.

**Encounter Two - Padd Appears:** After the party has gathered sufficient information from talking with the townsfolk, the dead body of Padd appears outside the tree's temporal zone. He was killed by a stream sentry (see Appendix 6) and his body then purged from the time loop. The PCs will most likely examine his body, find few clues and then decide whether they want to enter the portal.

**Encounter Three - Back at Renadra's Farmhouse:** The party enters the time portal and is projected several years back in time to the night Adrean Talnith was murdered in 589 CY. They appear just outside the farmhouse (Area A) at 9:00 pm and are attacked by the stream sentries that killed Padd. After the fight, they will likely try to enter the farmhouse, seeing and hearing people therein. The adventure is non-linear from this point forward, although timed events still occur regardless of the party's location.

**Area A - Farmhouse, Exterior:** It is here that the party arrives when they first enter the loop. The front door opens to allow entry inside during the 8:00, 10:00, and 2:00 periods. PCs can try to eavesdrop on the various conversations occurring in the farmhouse by listening through the walls and windows. Small PCs can climb down the chimney into the kitchen.

**Area B - Dining Hall:** The guests and staff are here dining and talking during the 8:00 and 9:00 periods. If PCs pay attention to the conversations or make their Spot checks, they realize the young lad is Adrean. The PCs may also spot Lahara's holy symbol of Cyndor—a significant clue. Renadra opens the front door at 8:00 to let the cat out and at 10:00 to let the cat in. Parvis sets this area on fire and exits the building at 2:00.

**Area C - Kitchen:** Renadra and her two children work in here, serving the guests. It is on fire during the 2:00 period.

**Area D - Upstairs' Hall:** This is where the party can access nearly everyone's room by waiting until the appropriate hour for their doors to open. The door to Parvis' room is open at 1:00 and 2:00. Adrean's door is open at 11:00. Renadra's door is open at 10:00. Lahara and Jinelle's door is open at 11:00. The upstairs' hall is on fire during the 2:00 period.

**Area E - Parvis' Room:** Parvis is in here reading at 10:00 and 11:00, praying at 12:00, and leaving at 1:00 to murder Adrean. The door is

open and the empty room on fire at 2:00 while Parvis is downstairs exiting the building. Clues implicating Boland Thipp can be found here.

**Area F - Lahara and Jinelle's Room:** The priestess Lahara stays in this room with her aide, Jinelle. Lahara is in here alone at 9:00, having gone to bed early while Jinelle and Adrean stayed downstairs to chat. The door opens at 11:00 when Jinelle enters after a rendezvous with Adrean. Lahara is awake at 2:00 reciting from her book, but falls unconscious before completing the phasing ritual. To break the time loop, the PCs must complete the incantation printed on the page.

**Area G - Adrean's Room:** Adrean stays in this room, his plans for the city spread about. He is here with Jinelle at 10:00 and later asleep at 11:00 as Jinelle sneaks out and returns to her own room. At 1:00, Parvis enters the room and murders Adrean after a brutal yet *silent* struggle. The room is on fire and the door open at 2:00.

**Area H - Renadra's Room:** This is where Renadra sleeps. At 10:00, Renadra enters this room and gets ready for bed. At 1:00, while Adrean is getting assassinated under the effects of Parvis' *silence* spell, a picture is knocked off the wall in Renadra's room from Adrean slamming into it from the other side. Renadra angrily covers her head with a pillow, thinking it is more activity from when Jinelle was present in the room earlier.

**Area I - Mina and Nello's Room:** Renadra's children sleep here. The door to their room is never open, the children having entered between periods. They are here sleeping from 10:00 on.

**Encounter Four - Back in the Present:** After the party completes Lahara's incantation, they and everyone else previously trapped in the time loop appear back in the present time around the wisteria tree. A battle with Parvis will most likely ensue. After Parvis has been defeated, the other freed members of the house will give thanks to the party. Renadra and her sister will have a touching reunion. Adrean's dead body will also be there, and the party will have to decide what to do with it.

**Encounter Five - Visiting the Duchess:** Unless the PC's decide the end the adventure early, they likely travel to The City of Woodwych and seek audience with Verin to return Adrean's body or at least inform her where he is now buried. They may also wish to report Boland Thipp's involvement in Adrean's murder if they figured out the clues in Parvis' room at the inn. Depending on their Diplomacy rolls and previously awarded medals and other honors, they may or may not get past her chamberlain. Should they succeed, they will be further rewarded by the Duchess for bringing to a close the mystery of Adrean's death

and, if applicable, finding the one who hired Parvis.

**Conclusion:** The DM figures out the awards and rewards gained.

## DM Notes

### Changing History

It is also important to remember that nothing the PCs do will change the course of history. Adrean's death cannot be prevented, and the inn cannot be prevented from burning down. After the party escapes the time loop, however, they are free to use the knowledge they discovered therein any way they see fit.

### Laws of Physics

Certain phenomena that occur in the farmhouse violate real-world physics. This is due to the unique nature of the time loop and the presence of the PCs not belonging in it. If some players start balking at the seeming implausibility of the phenomena and recite scientific theories, such as Newton's Third Law of Motion ("For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction"), have their characters make a Knowledge (Mathematics) check DC 30 or Knowledge (Architecture) DC 35 to actually know these anachronistic concepts. If they fail those rolls, tell the players their characters are unfamiliar with such studies. If, however, they do make those Knowledge checks, tell them any violation of these laws must mean more than just physics is at work here. And then roll your eyes at them for abusing out-of-game knowledge.

### Full Moon

The adventure begins the day after a full moon. For the purposes of lycanthropy, this will not affect PCs with the curse while in the time loop. It will, however, affect them if they, at the end of the adventure, travel to the The City of Woodwych for Encounter Five - Visiting the Duchess. The City of Woodwych is 100 miles away as the crow flies from both the inn and Swan Bore, so even if the party flies, they will not make it there before night falls.

The only way to avoid a lycanthropic change in this scenario is to decline to visit The City of Woodwych (and thus miss the conclusion) or to *teleport* the party there, ending the scenario before night falls.



## **Programmed Actions**

The original seven NPCs found in the farmhouse are stuck inside the time loop. In effect they are doomed to repeat the same basic actions until the cycle is broken. They are not ghosts or automatons however, so they can still have some interaction with the PCs. This typically involves speaking with them, although it is possible that fighting could result as well. Whatever the outcome of these interactions, nothing can prevent the predetermined actions from occurring (see [Changing History](#) above). This also means that if a certain person performs an action (such as letting the cat out) you must design events so that the person lets the cat out at the correct time. If a person is killed by the party and then is required to perform an action later, they simply disappear from their previous location and appear alive and well in the required one.

All specifically mentioned items: Parvis' journal, Adrean's maps, any of the NPCs clothing, or Lahara's book; cannot be taken by the PCs. The PCs may be able to gain access to any of these items for a brief period, but each time the scene changes (the clock advances) the items are returned to their proper locations – no matter what precautions the PCs take against this occurrence.

There are two exceptions to this. The first is that the PCs can affect themselves and Shandry normally, and anyone injured or killed, or any items taken within the period of the last cycle immediately prior to the PCs escape will remain in that condition when the cycle is broken.

The programmed actions and resetting time loop do mean that those PCs who end up with hostile PCs (such as by attacking Parvis in one cycle) will have those NPCs' attitudes reset to normal when the next cycle begins.

## **Pre-Rolling Those Checks**

To prevent the game from dragging, DMs may want to pre-roll certain numbers, specifically the following:

**Parvis' Disguise check:** Parvis is disguised throughout half of the scenario as the elf "Quial," so pre-rolling his disguise check at the beginning along with each players' opposed Spot will help speed the game along during the investigation phase. Parvis' Disguise check is as follows: APL 2 +18, APL 4 +21, APL 6 +23, APL 8 +25. These checks include Parvis' base ranks in Disguise plus

the bonuses and penalties from the disguise kit, Bluff, alternate race, and *hat of disguise*.

**Adrean's Identity:** Adrean Talnith's face has been immortalized in several places throughout Adrean's Landing. As such, there is a good chance the PCs recognize him. Pre-rolling the Spot checks for when the party first gets a good look at him will help move the game along. The Spot DC to recognize Adrean is 15. PCs get a bonus of +2 on their Spot checks for each of the following they possess: the Savior of Adrean's Landing Medal from *The Great Pie Fest*, Favor or Disfavor of the Barony of Woodwych from *Returned Mail*, and Proclamation of Hero also from *Returned Mail*.

## **Special Game Mechanic: Advancing the Clock**

The gimmick of this adventure is that the PCs only get to witness seven 5-minute periods of time in the farmhouse over the course of the endlessly looping night and must deduce what occurs during the other 55 minutes they don't see. This, of course, is the puzzle, and the cycle will likely have to repeat a few times before they catch on.

Since the crux of the adventure rests on this gimmick, it is extremely important the game mechanic behind it is understood. We call this mechanic 'advancing the clock,' and its successful implementation is vital to escaping the loop and finishing the scenario. Here is how it works:

Every 5 minutes, time within the loop suddenly advances an hour. That means only the first 5 minutes of each hour can be witnessed by the PCs before it is suddenly an hour later, and they are witnessing an entirely different scene in the room in which they are standing. This shift is very obvious. Read or paraphrase the following when it occurs:

***"All of a sudden the very air about you shimmers with a silvery hue. You feel a slight tugging at your gut, and then the sensation and visual effect are gone."***

Depending on where the party is at that point, the change in time may be obvious. For instance, if the PCs are in the Dining Hall when the clock advances from 9:00 to 10:00, the guests and staff will suddenly be gone. On the other hand, there is no discernible change in the Dining Hall from 11:00 to 12:00, as it is unoccupied during both periods.

## The Clock Resets

The seventh time period, 2:00 am, is unlike the others. Not only is the farmhouse on fire during this period, it is only 1 minute in length. After this 1 minute, the clock advances—resets, actually—to 8:00 pm, and the time loop begins all over again, the NPCs having been reset to their starting positions in Area B - Dining Hall. The PCs do not reset, though; they remain in the room they were standing in at the end of the 2:00 period.

Once the PCs figure out this puzzle, they will quickly learn to how to move about and investigate the inn with ease.

## Interacting with the Environment

As the PCs are merely interlopers in this alternate phase, they are unable to permanently affect anything caught in the time loop – with the exception of each other, Shandry and the Stream Wisps/Sentries. Here is a summary of how physics, magic, and other acts by the PCs apply in this loop:

- Forming the boundary of the temporal loop, an opaque bubble 100 feet in diameter encapsulates the inn and the surrounding land. It is indestructible, being formed of time, and nothing can bypass it.
- The PCs are able to interact with any of the original seven people caught in the loop, however they will continue to act according to their “program”, regardless of PC actions. For example, the PCs may warn Adrean of the upcoming assassination attempt, but Adrean will still go upstairs to bed. Similarly, the PCs may kill Parvis in an attempt to stop the time loop, but his corpse will arise (any items taken from him will reappear on his person) and head down the hall to kill Adrean at the appointed time. Even if disintegrated, the key events will still proceed as scheduled.
- Continuing this thread, the original seven NPCs will act as though they are dreaming and the PCs are only walking through the dream. Nothing the PCs do will be considered unusual (except initiating combat), nor will the NPCs even react to things like PCs hanging outside a second story window or observing them while they prepare for bed.
- Stream wisps and stream sentries patrol regions of alternate time, attacking everything that does not belong. These creatures do not interact with any of the original seven people caught in the loop. For all intents and purposes, the two groups do not exist in the other’s reality.
- Gravity, the laws of physics, and other real-world phenomena still apply to the PCs themselves.
- The walls, doors, windows, and anything else of a physical nature comprising the inn are destructible, but they will reform during the next time loop. This allows clever PCs to break through a wall to observe the actions in a particular room, but the wall will return when time resets itself.
- **It is very important to note that PCs cannot open doors, pick up objects (other than special ones described in the text), or otherwise mundanely interact with anything other than the NPCs. They can destroy objects, batter down doors or otherwise violently manipulate things, but these changes are temporary and are fixed in the next cycle of the time loop.**
- The PCs have extreme difficulty moving through smoke in the time loop. That means PCs moving through areas, such as in the chimney during the 8:00 and 9:00 periods and upstairs during the fire at 2:00, have their movement rates reduced to 5, regardless of the PCs’ normal speeds. PCs may not take free 5-foot steps into or out of squares with smoke. It also obscures all vision beyond 5 feet like *solid fog*. Similarly, the fire (being time compressed) is solid, and does bludgeoning damage rather than elemental fire damage (see [Adjudicating the Fire](#) in Encounter 3 for more details on the fire).
- The temperature is always a constant 72 degrees Fahrenheit (22 Celsius), even when standing within fire.
- The original seven members of the inn and anything they are wearing or carrying are mostly insubstantial with respect to the PCs; they party may walk through any original seven as if the PC was incorporeal. This is due to Lahara’s spell affecting the targeted seven differently than the house itself.

- Stream wisps and sentries are incorporeal with respect to the structures in the time loop, and not only can they pass through doors, walls, floors, etc., their blindsight extends through them as well. Therefore, it is nearly impossible to hide from these creatures.
- As this time loop does not exist in the normal time-stream, it is disjoined from all other planes, including the astral, ethereal, and shadow planes. This will have the effect of negating such spells as *blink*, *etherealness*, *astral projection* and the like.
- Spells with the [calling, summoning, teleportation, and shadow] descriptors cannot be cast, although they are not wasted if attempted. The same holds true for spells that access or pass through other planes, such as *phase door*.
- Divination (scrying) spells cannot create magical sensors beyond the bubble encapsulating the time loop.
- A *wish* or *miracle* is the only way to violate any of these laws. If the PCs use such magic, please judge the results accordingly.

## Introduction

This adventure begins in the Duchy of Woodwych—previously known as the Barony of Woodwych. Therefore, any character that possesses the “Favor of the Barony of Woodwych” from *Returned Mail* is permitted to take the Standard lifestyle cost at half price. By the same token, any PC who has the “Disfavor of the Barony of Woodwych” must pay double Standard lifestyle costs for this scenario.

Have each player inform you if his or her character participating in this scenario also adventured in *The Great Pie Fest* or *Returned Mail*. If so, review their log sheets, adventure records, or other documentation to determine if they possess any of the following:

- “Savior of Adrean’s Landing” (*Pie Fest*);
- “Favor of the Barony of Woodwych” (*Returned Mail*);
- “Proclamation of Hero” (*Returned Mail*);
- “Disfavor of the Barony of Woodwych” (*Returned Mail*).

Note who has which of the above items, as this becomes important during Encounter Five - Visiting the Duchess if the party wishes to speak to the Duchess of Woodwych. Also, it helps the

PCs recognize Adrean when they spot him in the farmhouse in the time loop. At this time find out which PCs have curses and take note of them.

## The Adventure Begins

***“The unimproved road south from Adrean’s Landing has seen increasing traffic ever since the founding of that new city a few years ago. While barges and ferries to and from Arnford still dominate the trade route, foot travel is making roadside businesses an attractive option for some. Farmers park their fruit carts and hawk their produce to passers-by, no longer feeling the need to travel all the way to Adrean’s Landing.***

***Today, however, finds the road somewhat difficult to negotiate. Last night’s storm left the road muddy; the long existing ruts becoming troughs of brown water. Leaves, branches, and other forms of foliage blown about by the night’s strong winds are strewn about here and there. A faint sprinkle still falls from the heavily overcast sky.***

***At just before noon, you arrive at a newly built roadside inn approximately 15 miles south of Adrean’s Landing. Its merchant’s shingle bears the prominent image of a green and orange toad. In bright letters, it reads in common “Briar Toad Inn.” Short, thin chains attach a secondary shingle beneath that contains wording in a different language.”***

[It reads “Briar Toad Inn” in elvish, an addition business-savvy Kalia made to the sign to appeal to customers from the Celadon.]

***“A long hitching post in the front has several horses attached, and a few wagons and carts are also parked nearby.***

***As you near the building, your attention is immediately drawn to a commotion occurring near a large, blossoming tree some 300 feet behind the inn amidst tall grass. Nine to ten people are gathered about with some of them appearing quite emotional and distressed.”***

Ask the PCs what they wish to do and proceed to Encounter One accordingly.

## Encounter One:

### Tumult at the Briar Toad Inn

#### Ignoring the Hook

If the PCs ignore the obvious adventure hook and decide to just enter the inn, read the following:

***“You approach the inn rather than the commotion at the tree, and a serving wench leaning against the doorway nods to you. ‘Quite the scene, eh? I don’t blame you for not wanting to get involved. Not everyone is cut out for heroics. I’m sure not!’ she adds with a chuckle. ‘Yep, leave all that adventuring stuff to the fools. Us nameless shopkeepers, fishwives, and serving wenches are quite content leading boring, ordinary lives, thank you very much.’”***

**Jana Porterman** (female human Com 1; hp 4).

If the party presses her for more information, she tells them she is not sure what is happening—only that the large yonder tree somehow appeared over night and someone is now missing. She has nothing else to add, and nobody else is inside the inn. She certainly serves the party food and drink if they so desire. She’s new to the area, and has no history to offer.

The temporal portal only remains for another 10 hours. If the party refuses to enter it within that time, the adventure is over for them.

### **Taking the bait**

If the party decides to investigate the tree, read or paraphrase the following:

***“As you approach the group of gathered townsfolk, you realize the large tree has grown up the side of a crumbling chimney, many of its branches intertwining it. A middle-aged woman with reddish brown hair approaches you with a look of concern on her face. ‘Good day, friends. Mayhap you might be able to help us out here. Something terrible has happened, and we’ve been at a loss to fix it!’”***

**Kalia Westerly** (female human Exp 8; hps 28, Bluff +2, Craft (Weaving +16)).

If pressed for more information, she has the following to offer, all of which is true:

- The tree was not here the night before.
- When the new tree was spotted this morning, Kalia and her husband, Zilus, went out to investigate, accompanied by a couple staying at the inn and their 8 year-old daughter.
- The young girl, Shandry, ran ahead, excited at all the lustrous blooms on the

tree, and suddenly shimmered away into nothingness as she got within 20 feet of it.

- Distraught parents, Volene and Padd, cried out to their daughter, to no avail.
- Padd ran after her and also disappeared.
- They don’t know what to do next.

Regarding farther in the past...

- The chimney is part of an old farmhouse owned by Kalia’s late sister, Renadra Galantan, which had been converted into a makeshift inn. It burned down in 589, killing Kalia’s sister and children.
- Renadra’s husband had died in 583 of natural causes, and it was then his widow decided to convert the farmhouse to help support her family.
- Kalia inherited the land from her sister but did not build her new inn, the Briar Toad, until last month. She and her husband had been living in Mowbrenn and moved here after the insurrection last year.
- Kalia left the chimney of the former farmhouse standing as a memorial to her sister.
- Kalia named her new inn The Briar Toad in homage to her late sister’s childhood fascination with the rare briar toad.
- Some cruel, local children have nicknamed it The Fire Toad Inn, referencing how the previous roadside stop had burned down.

### **Other Present NPCs**

Aside from Kalia, there are nine other NPCs:

Kalia’s husband, **Zilus Westerly** (male human Com 4; hps 10); the grieving mother and wife, **Volene Armolis** (female human Com 2; hps 6; +2 Sense Motive); and seven **other townsfolk** (humans Com 1; hps 4). Zilus is a quiet man who lets his wife do the talking. If questioned himself, he confirms everything Kalia says. Volene is very emotional, being distraught at the prospect of losing her husband and child. A PC can try to calm her down with a Diplomacy check (DC 16 + APL) or through magic, such as *calm emotions*, which is not considered a hostile action in this instance; she does not try to resist the spell. Once calmed, Volene can be questioned but has little else to add. She provides the following if specifically questioned:

- Volene and her husband, Padd, are second-hand book vendors.

- They live in Beetu 80 miles to the south with their daughter, Shandry, and were heading into Rel Mord with a new collection of books to sell.
- Shandry is 8 years old and very rambunctious. She loves flowers and other pretty things, which is why she ran towards the mysterious tree, ignoring her parents' calls for her to stay back.

### **Knowledge Checks, et al.**

At this point, the PCs may wish to make knowledge checks and try to apply this information. Adjudicate as follows:

**Identifying the Tree:** The tree can be identified as wisteria automatically by anyone with a class level of druid or by succeeding in any of the following checks: Knowledge (Nature) (DC 11), Profession (Herbalist) (DC 13), or an Intelligence check DC 16. Clerics of Cyndor, Labelas Enoreth, and Lendor can make a Knowledge (Religion) check (DC 11) to identify the tree.

Wisteria is a climbing woody vine in the pea family, having compound leaves and drooping clusters of showy purplish or white flowers. It is known to exist throughout parts of Nyronnd, including Woodwyck.

**Wisteria Properties:** A Knowledge (Arcana) (DC 15), Knowledge (Nature) (DC 17), or Spellcraft (DC 19) reveals that wisteria, like belladonna, mistletoe, and other types of flora, has mystical properties in certain circumstances. It is mostly associated with time—specifically, loops of time and paradoxes. Clerics of Cyndor, Labelas Enoreth, and Lendor automatically know this.

### **Proximity of the Portal**

The portal is an invisible sphere 40 feet in diameter, centered on the trunk of the tree at its base. When it came into being, it neutralized the surrounding ground and foliage to its effect, which is why there is no gaping hole in the ground. Despite being invisible, the perimeter of the portal can be easily determined. The first obvious clue is that the tracks of Padd and Shandry end at its edge.

Objects tossed at the tree vanish in a shimmer as soon as they hit the edge of the portal, ending up in the time loop. They do not stay there, however. The stream sentry that killed Padd with its temporal damage (see Encounters Two and Three) is still in the vicinity on the other side of the

portal and attacks all objects entering the time loop.

Anything tossed into the portal returns in 1d6+4 rounds on the ground just outside the point where it entered. Such objects are unharmed and lack any marks. (The stream sentry attacks both living and non-living material entering the loop, hitting with its tendrils that expel part of the object out of its realm with each strike. When the person is dead or the object brought to 0 hps, it is returned whence it came.)

For objects that return from the time loop, read or paraphrase the following:

***“All of a sudden, part of the air 20 feet from the tree begins to shimmer with a silvery hue and emits a disconcerting, high pitched whine. Coalescing in the center of this effect is [the object] that shimmered away into nothingness earlier.”***

### **Examining the Area**

If the PCs decide to search, detect, and otherwise examine the area, the following results occur:

**Search for Tracks:** The previous night's rain has left the area wet, soggy, and ideal for tracking. Aside from the trampled grass and numerous footprints of the gathered townsfolk staying a safe 40 feet from the tree (DC 0 to track), a tracking check of 5 reveals the tracks of Padd heading to the tree and suddenly stopping 20 feet from it. A Track check of 6 also reveals the footprints of Shandry having done the same thing.

Also found during a search around the portal (Search DC 11) are several dead animals: birds, mice, gophers, and other creatures that might enter the portal unknowingly. They, too, were attacked by the sentry on the other side over the course of the night. There are no indications as to how they died. No broken bones, no abrasions, nothing. See the subsection “Examining the Body” in Encounter Two for more information.

Finally, small twigs, branches, and leaves that were blown into the portal during the storm were also expunged. They now lie in the tall grass at the perimeter of the portal, and it takes a Search DC of 23 to see them and the recognizable pattern of surrounding the portal.

**Detect Magic:** If the tree or the temporal portal around it is scanned for magic, neither radiates. The power that advanced the tree in age from just a pod was instantaneous, and there is no residual magic. As for the invisible portal, is not

radiating magic because of the nature of temporal energy. If any PC made the “Wisteria Properties” knowledge check in the previous subsection, “Knowledge Checks, et al.,” he also knows temporal portals do not usually radiate magic.

**Speak with Animals / Plants:** The plants and the animals in the area, if *spoken* to, relate how the tree suddenly grew “when the wind pushed, the rain hurt, and the round light was high in the dark sky.” It takes a Sense Motive check DC 12 to realize they mean the moon was in its highest point in the sky.

**Divination Spells:** No magic short of a *wish* or *miracle* can divine, scry, or detect the location of Padd or Shandry, since they do not exist in this time.

## Moving on to Encounter Two

After the PCs have spent an adequate amount of time getting information from the NPCs and doing their own investigatory work, move on to Encounter Two: Padd Appears.

## Encounter Two: Padd Appears

When you determine it appropriate, begin Encounter Two by reading or paraphrasing the following:

***“All of a sudden, part of the air 20 feet from the tree begins to shimmer with a silvery hue and emits a disconcerting, high pitched whine. Coalescing in the center of this effect is the unmoving body of a man lying on his back. As he fully materializes, he displaces the tall grass. After a moment of shock, Volene cries out, ‘That’s my husband!’ as she clutches her bosom in fear and dread.”***

If the party succeeded at the earlier Track check, they know Padd has appeared where his footprints ended. The body is 1 foot from the edge of the portal. If the PCs wish to lasso, hook, or otherwise ensnare him to drag him away, he has an AC of 9, taking into account his lack of Dexterity, prone position, etc.

### Examining the Body

Padd is dead, having been killed by the stream sentry. No examination of the body reveals the cause, as the temporal damage he suffered left no marks—residual or otherwise. A PC can, however, exclude necromancy, poison,

disease, and other traditional forms of non-visible damage as the cause of death with a successful Heal check (DC 15).

The body can be *raised*, although none of the townsfolk, including Volene, has the requisite diamond component. If Padd is brought back from death, he describes how he was transported to another place and time—it was evening where he went—and was attacked by a ball of sparkling light. The entity lashed out at him with tendrils of energy, which apparently killed him. Shandry fled when they were attacked, running into the front door of some home as the goodwife opened it up.

**Padd Armolis** (male human Com 3; hps 11; Will Save +2). If *raised*, loses a level, becoming Com 2; hps 8; Will Save +1.

### Speak with Dead

If a PC casts *Speak with Dead* on the corpse, it gets a saving throw (Will save +2) if the caster is any other alignment than Padd’s, Neutral Good. The corpse recalls what happened to it in the time loop and answers questions pursuant to the spell’s effects (*i.e.*, briefly, cryptically, etc.). It answers thusly to the following anticipated questions:

**What killed you?** A ball of light.

**How did the ball of light kill you?** With tendrils of energy.

**What kind of energy?** I don’t know.

**Could you damage it?** I think so.

**Where were you when you died?** I was at a farmhouse at night.

**Is Shandry alive?** Yes.

Adjudicate any other questions as necessary.

### Volene’s Plea For Help

After Volene learns Padd is dead, she sobs with grief as Kalia tries to comfort her. After she composes herself (conveniently after the PCs are finished examining the body), Volene pleads with them to save her daughter. Obviously, the grieving mother is asking something absurdly dangerous of these strangers. If the PCs made their “Wisteria Properties” Knowledge check earlier, however, they can draw the reasonable conclusion that this could a temporal portal and may not necessarily be innately deadly.

Of course there are always those greedy PCs who only do good deeds if they get paid. If the party even hints at a “what’s in it for me?” proposition, Volene without a second thought desperately tugs at her wedding ring, trying to

remove it. ***“Here, take my ring! Just save my daughter!”*** she begs. The simple gold band engraved with the words “For my love” is valued at 90 gp and takes 30 seconds for her to get it off her finger. If the PCs have not yet waived off such payment by that time, she hands it to the one she perceives to be the greediest.

All other townsfolk present are appalled if the PCs accept Volene’s wedding ring in payment. Sample condemnations include:

- ***“By Pelor’s light, her husband just died, you jackals!”***
- ***“Boo! If you don’t want to go, don’t go! —Just don’t do something so callous as take this poor woman’s ring!”***
- ***“Look at this filth! A little girl is in danger, and these wicked devils want to profit from it!”***

If, however, the PCs insist Volene keep her ring, she thanks them heartily.

### **Convincing Hesitant PCs**

Even good-intended PCs may be justifiably wary of approaching the tree or stepping through the portal. While most players may realize it probably isn’t suicide to enter the portal based upon their meta-game presumption the scenario won’t go on unless they do so, good roleplayers will still play up their understandable concern and hesitance. For them, they may need a little more convincing.

If that should happen, swap out one of the previously nameless commoners with the herb woman, Goody Percal. (Goody means “Goodwife” and is used in the same context as “missus.”)

**Goody Percal** (female human Exp 6; hps 20; +12 Heal, +11 Knowledge (Nature), +12 Profession (Herbalist)).

She is an elderly woman in her 60’s who travels about selling various herbs for culinary, medicinal, and spiritual purposes, and is present today to sell to Kalia. She pipes in an observation if the PCs are refusing to approach the tree:

***“I’ve been watching with interest, young ones, a I can understand how you might be wary to blindly walk into danger. Let me allay your fears, though. I am well familiar with wisteria,’ she says gesturing to the tree, ‘and it seems to me you must somehow enter and***

***right some kind of wrong or otherwise repair that which is causing this flux.”***

If this is the first time the players are identifying the tree as wisteria or hearing about its time properties, she adds,

***“As you may know, this is a wisteria tree, and like belladonna, mistletoe, and other types of flora, it has mystical properties in certain circumstances. It is mostly associated with time—specifically, loops of time and paradoxes.”***

She doesn’t know anything else, but politely encourages the PCs to help find Volene’s daughter.

### **Ending the Adventure**

If the PCs still refuse to help out, and more than 10 hours pass, then the portal suddenly closes and the adventure is over for them. They should be given a warning, however, if they try to leave. Goody Percal warns them, “I fear that this portal—or whatever it is—is unstable and may not last much longer. If you leave now, it may be too late.”

The party does, however, have 10 hours, but there is no way to determine this. Clerics who pray at noon have the opportunity to prepare spells as needed (the party arrives at the inn just *before* noon) if the PCs want to risk waiting the hour.

### **Stepping Through the Portal**

Once the PCs decide to step through, read or paraphrase the following:

***“As you near to within 20 feet of the tree, you suddenly feel a tugging at your gut almost as if the wind has been knocked out of you. The air swirls about in a shimmer of silvery hues. A moment later, you find yourself standing outside in front of a farmhouse. It is past dusk with only the faint orange glow of the setting sun on the horizon. The sounds of people talking and the clanking of dining implements can be heard from inside.”***

Proceed to Encounter Three: Back at Renadra’s Farmhouse.

## Encounter Three:

### Back at Renadra's Farmhouse

#### Arriving at 9:00

Having passed through the temporal portal, the party arrives just outside Renadra's farmhouse (Area A, see below) in the year 589, during the 9:00 pm time phase. This is the night the farmhouse burns down, so the landscape is quite different for the PCs. Rather than being ruins, the farmhouse is still standing, and Kalia's new inn, the Briar Toad, is nowhere to be found. The grass is not overgrown, and it is evening with the moon (Luna) at half. There are no wisteria trees around.

Depending on the degree of information the party received before arriving here, it may or may not be obvious where they are. The PCs can make Wisdom checks or their best nature-based skill checks (both DC 10) to recognize the landscape as being generally the same as where they were before they entered the portal.

Keep in mind; the stream wisps or sentries attack 2 minutes after the first PC arrives in the time loop, so watch the clock.

#### What Happened to Shandry and Padd

The party may try to contact Shandry, who is currently hiding in Lahara and Jinelle's room (Area F). Since Shandry is part of the PCs' time stream, they are fully able to interact with and affect her. Here is a breakdown of what happened to her and Padd when they arrived in the loop.

- Shandry arrived during the 8:00 period.
- Stream sentries patrolling this space detected her at a distance, and moved in to attack.
- Padd arrived.
- The sentries attacked Padd, as he was the closest.
- Renadra opened the farmhouse's front door to let the cat out.
- Padd yelled at Shandry to run inside; she did, passing right through Renadra.
- In the Dining Hall, Lahara was saying goodnight to Jinelle, and Shandry thought the elderly woman was telling her to come upstairs.
- The sentry killed Padd and then headed for Shandry.
- Shandry entered Lahara's room as the woman opened the door. The stream sentry was stopped by the force created by Lahara's book, and Shandry has been hiding under the table ever since.

Having been traumatized by seeing her father attacked and then chased by the sentry, Shandry is in a state of shock. She does not answer *any* calls for her name until the party enters Lahara's room. She continues to just rock back and forth near the nightstand. See Area F for more information.

#### Environment Recap

This is the first time the PCs experience the odd environment that is the time loop. The DM should reference the previous section "Interacting with the Environment" to adjudicate PCs' actions, as they will most likely try to break open the door, smash windows, etc., as well as experiment with other things to understand what they can expect during the rest of the scenario. The DM should also remember the party cannot travel outside the bubble that encapsulates the entire area, and spells such as *dimension door*, *etherealness*, *summon monster*, *passwall*, *teleport*, etc. have no effect here. Such spells are not wasted if attempted, however.

Another aspect worth repeating is that neither the party nor Shandry can affect the environment. That means nobody leaves footprints; Shandry cannot be tracked, although she can be contacted magically.

#### Spotting Adrean and "Quial"

There will come a time when the party gets their first good look at Adrean. Whenever it occurs, the DM needs to determine if any of the PCs recognize him. As his face has been immortalized in several places throughout Adrean's Landing (albeit in idealized fashions), he is not too difficult to recognize. The Spot DC to recognize Adrean is 15. PCs get a bonus of +2 on their Spot checks for each of the following they possess: the Savior of Adrean's Landing Medal from *The Great Pie Fest*, Favor or Disfavor of the Barony of Woodwych from *Returned Mail*, and Proclamation of Hero also from *Returned Mail*.

Once he is recognized, the DM passes out the player handout "Common Knowledge Regarding Adrean Talnith." If he is not recognized by any of the PCs, his identity can still be discovered through searching his room (marked as Area G).

There will also come a time when the party gets their first good look at Parvis disguised as the Celadon elf "Quial." Whenever it occurs, the DM needs to determine if any of the PCs recognize him as 'someone in disguise.' Parvis' Disguise check is as follows: APL 2 +18, APL 4 +21, APL 6



+23, APL 8 +25. These checks include Parvis' base ranks in Disguise plus the bonuses and penalties from the disguise kit, Bluff, alternate race, and *hat of disguise*.

### **Adjudicating the Fire**

When the clock advances to the 2:00 am period, the PCs find the farmhouse suddenly on fire. This most likely catches a few of them off-guard and could easily kill 1<sup>st</sup> level characters. Therefore, it is important to know and understand how the fire works.

On the judge's maps of the inn, there are symbols representing the location of smoke and the location of fire, each has its own effect as follows:

**Smoke:** PCs moving through squares designated as smoky have their movement rates reduced to 5, regardless of their normal speed or enhancements thereto, as well as have their vision obstructed beyond 5 feet (think *solid fog*). If they move from a clear square to a smoky square, their movement ends for that turn. PCs may not take free 5' steps into or out of smoky squares.

**Fire:** The flames never burn those who are outsiders to this time loop. They do, however, cause grievous wounds, as their seeming mass stabs at the flesh of interlopers. The effect is an attack that causes bludgeoning damage **for every burning square entered**, the degree of which depends on the APL:

#### **APL 2 (CR 4)**

Flames: Atk +5 (1d4+1, bludgeoning flames)

#### **APL 4 (CR 5)**

Flames: Atk +9 (1d6+2, bludgeoning flames)

#### **APL 6 (CR 7)**

Flames: Atk +11 (1d8+3, bludgeoning flames)

#### **APL 8 (CR 9)**

Flames: Atk +13 (1d10+4, bludgeoning flames)

These Challenge Ratings take into account the number of squares that are burning and smoky, as well as the ability to quickly move from a burning square to a safe spot. At APL 8, for example, it is possible for someone caught off guard on the upper floor to have to travel through more than 10 squares through both fire *and* smoke (at a movement rate of 5) to find their first

haven, suffering a potential 10d10+40 points of damage.

#### **The Little Numbers in the Corners:**

If this scenario is played at the higher APLs, more squares are on fire during the 2:00 am time period than at APL 2 and 4. To determine if a particular fire square on the map is present during a given APL, consult the small number in the upper right corner of such squares. The numbers are either 2, 4, 6, or 8, and correspond to the APLs of the scenario. Anything marked "2" is on fire during all APLs. Squares designated as 4 are only on fire in APL tables of 4, 6, and 8. Squares marked 6 are on fire at APL 6 and 8 tables, and squares marked 8 are on fire only at APL 8 tables.

**Bypassing the Perils:** Several tactics succeed in bypassing these perils. To avoid being slowed by the smoke, PCs can cast *freedom* and *gaseous form*, as well as utilize the benefit of the Travel domain. To avoid the fire, the PCs can jump over burning squares (provided they're not prevented from doing so by the smoke), *fly*, *levitate*, *spider climb* across the ceiling, etc.

**Killing Poor Shandry:** While it would be quite possible for the flames to kill poor 2-hp Shandry, you should attempt to avoid this. The little girl is very lucky and if at all possible have her place herself into a square that will not be in flame when 2:00 rolls around. If this is not possible, then have the flames do minimum damage and allow her to get clear. The purpose of this is to help the PCs be heroic and save the child. It is very possible that specific actions of the PCs (such as ordering her to stay in place) might result in her being trapped and killed, but attempt to keep her alive if at all possible.

## **Encounter Three and a Half: Attack of the Sentries**

Exactly 2 minutes after the party arrives, a group of wisps or sentries (depending on the APL) attacks. Passing through the bubble barrier at the most southern part of the exterior map, they charge the closest PC. It is important to read up on the tactics of these creatures in the Appendix, as their CR is partially based on their slight stupidity in always attacking the closest creature, regardless of tactical benefits to the contrary. This can be used to the advantage of PCs who figure it out quickly.

While the sentries can pass and see through the ground, walls, floors, and other structures of this time loop as if they were incorporeal and had x-ray vision, they never, ever utilize the tactic of

submerging themselves safely in the ground and flailing at helpless PCs with their 10' reach tendrils. Not only do they lack the intelligence to think of it—they merely exist on an instinctual level—this abusive, cheesy tactic would set the Encounter Level through the roof.

Any PCs who are killed by a wisp or sentry are expelled from the time loop, their body and worn possessions returning to just outside the temporal portal at the point where they entered. The NPCs back 'on the other side' do not have the ability to raise the dead, so dead PCs are out of play until the rest of the party escapes the loop.

### **APL 2 (EL 4)**

**Stream Wisps** (3): Small elemental (time, lawful); hp 15, 10, 12; see Appendix 6.

### **APL 4 (EL 6)**

**Stream Sentries** (2): Small elemental (time, lawful); hp 42, 49; see Appendix 6.

### **APL 6 (EL 8)**

**Advanced Stream Sentries** (2): CR 6; Small-sized Elemental (Lawful, Time); HD 11d8+22; hp 70, 79; Init +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd Fly 80 ft. (perfect) (16 squares); AC 20 (+5 Dex, +1 Size, +3 natural, +1 dodge (*haste*)); Full Atk 3 Tendrils +14 melee touch (1d8 temporal); Base Attack/Grapple +8/+4; SA Temporal Damage (Su); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Blindsight, haste, DR 10/bludgeoning, immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, and stunning, not subject to critical hits or flanking; SR 0; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +12, Wil +3.

Str 10, Dex 20, Con 14, Int—, Wis 10, Cha 14.

*Feats:* Combat Reflexes<sup>B</sup>, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (Tendril).

SA: See Appendix 6.

### **APL 8 (EL 10)**

**Advanced Stream Sentries** (3): CR 7; Small-sized Elemental (Lawful, Time); HD 15d8+30; hp 92, 95, 99; Init +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd Fly 80 ft. (perfect) (16 squares); AC 20 (+5 Dex, +1 Size, +3 natural, +1 dodge (*haste*)); Full Atk 3 Tendrils +17 melee touch (1d8 temporal); Base Attack/Grapple +11/+7; SA Temporal Damage (Su); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Blindsight, haste, DR 10/bludgeoning, immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, and stunning, not subject to critical hits or flanking; SR 0; AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +14, Wil +5.

Str 10, Dex 21, Con 14, Int—, Wis 10, Cha 14.

*Feats:* Combat Reflexes<sup>B</sup>, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (Tendril).

SA: See Appendix 6.

## **From This Point on**

After the fight is over, the remainder of the adventure in the time loop is non-linear, although the same events happen at the same time with each cycle. Since important clues are found in the boxed text, paraphrasing is not recommended.

When the party enters a new room, they need to receive *both* the default description, found at the beginning of each respective area, and the time period-specific description. —At least the first couple of times the PCs enter the same room. After that, judges can forgo the now-familiar, merely reading the time period-specific descriptions.

The goal of the party while in the time loop is to figure out how to end it. That can only be accomplished by finishing Lahara's incantation for her in Area F after she falls unconscious. Once that is accomplished, go to Encounter Four: Back in the Present.

## **Area A: Farmhouse, Exterior**

***“The architecture of this two-story building suggests it is a farmhouse. Numerous windows grace its walls, and a large chimney comprises the northeast corner. A few small steps lead to a heavy front door.”***

**Getting Inside:** The only two ways to get into the farmhouse is through the front door (which Renadra opens during the 8:00 and 10:00 periods and Parvis opens at 2:00) and down the chimney.

The chimney is narrow, however, and only small-sized characters that make an Escape Artist check DC 10 can pass through. If an attempt is made to enter the chimney during the 8:00 and 9:00 periods, the Escape Artist check rises to 28, as the air becomes denser due to the smoke. The movement rate of PCs in the chimney when it is smoky is also reduced to 5, regardless of their normal movement rate.

PCs successfully entering the house via the chimney end up landing in the cooking pit. If it is the 8:00 or 9:00 period, the fire in the pit is going, and any PCs landing or passing through that space suffer damage according to the subsection “Adjudicating the Fire” at the beginning of Encounter Three.

**Listening/Watching through Windows:** The exterior of the farmhouse is a great place to observe the goings-on inside by peering through

and listening at the windows. Whenever a PC looks through a window, refer to that location's specific Area entry for the appropriate time period and paraphrase the box text as necessary to account for the unique perspective. The DC to Listen in on conversations from the outside is 5 + 1 for every 10 feet in distance for normal conversations and 30 + the distance modifier for whispered conversations.

**Note:** Even though the seven original people can see and interact with the PCs, unless the PCs initiate things the NPCs will continue to go about their normal business – in effect following their programmed actions. They will hardly notice that a PC is hanging out outside a second-story window for example.

**Climbing the Walls:** PCs may want to climb the exterior of the building to peer into the upstairs rooms. The Climb DC to get up there, as well as move laterally from window to window is 10.

#### **Area A, Exterior — 8:00 pm:**

*“The dark blue color of the evening sky is warmed by hints of orange from the setting sun. Luna is half and low on the horizon. Light and activity are visible through the downstairs windows of the farmhouse, and a plume of white smoke pours forth from the chimney. After a moment, the front door opens, and a middle-aged human woman (Renadra) gently tosses an orange and white calico cat outside. The woman then leans against the door frame, seemingly enjoying the cooler outdoor air, while the cat races off into distance.”*

[After 30 seconds]

*“Her break over, the woman heads back inside, closing the door behind her.”*

The cat runs beyond the bubble's barrier, preventing further pursuit. While it can still be observed from time to time, the cat doesn't do anything special, merely hunting for mice in the fields.

#### **Area A, Exterior — 9:00 pm:**

*“The dark blue color of the evening sky is contrasted by the brilliant stars of this clear night. Luna is half and somewhat low on the horizon. Light and activity are visible through the downstairs windows of the farmhouse, and a plume of white smoke pours forth from the chimney.”*

#### **Area A, Exterior — 10:00 pm:**

*“The dark blue color of the evening sky is contrasted by the brilliant stars of this clear night. Luna is half, illuminating the landscape softly. Faint light is visible through the downstairs windows of the farmhouse, and a moment later, the front door opens. A middle-aged woman (Renadra) stands in the doorway with lantern in hand and leans forward, making a few kissing sounds. ‘Here cat... Here cat...’ she then whispers several times as she seems to wait for it to arrive.”*

[30 seconds later]

*“Out of the darkness, an orange and white calico cat comes bounding into view. It runs through the door and inside the farmhouse. With a quick surveying glance, the middle-aged woman retreats inside and closes the door, a latch locking it securely.”*

#### **Area A, Exterior — 11:00 pm:**

*“The dark blue color of the evening sky is contrasted by the brilliant stars of this clear night. Luna is half and somewhat high in the sky, illuminating the landscape softly. No light is visible through the downstairs windows of the farmhouse.”*

#### **Area A, Exterior — 12 pm and 1 am:**

See previous entry (Area A, Exterior — 11:00 pm), except Luna is “high in the sky.”

#### **Area A, Exterior — 2:00 am:**

*“The dark blue color of the evening sky is sharply juxtaposed against the reddish flames that are engulfing the farmhouse. Fire fills two of the rooms on the upper floor, as well as throughout the lower floor. The front door opens, and an elven man with decorative facial tattoos (Parvis disguised as “Quial”) backs out. He remains in the doorway emptying the final contents of flaming liquid from a flask.”*

[12 seconds later]

*“His task complete, the elven man steps out and closes the door. He then takes a small wooden wedge from a pouch and jams it into the keyhole, testing the latch to ensure its malfunction.*

*The elf, wearing a backpack, traveling gear, and a few standard weapons, draws a short bow and nocks an arrow as he backs away from the building. Slowly panning back and*

forth, he aims his arrow at the upper floor windows.”

[50 seconds later]

**“Suddenly the elven man begins to sparkle luminously, and he looks at his hands in a state of confusion.”**

And then the clock resets to the 8:00 pm period.

## **Area B: Dining Hall**

**“The three large tables in this space suggest it is a dining hall. Four windows grace the walls, and a heavy door to the outside is on the west wall. A staircase leads up to the second floor, and the kitchen is clearly visible to the north.”**

### **Area B, Dining Hall — 8:00 pm:**

[Note: PCs initially enter the time loop at 9:00—not 8:00, so this encounter only occurs after the PCs have experienced the burning down of the inn.]

**“The sound of faintly clinking dining implements and murmured conversation float in the air. There are seven people in this room. At Table 1, an elderly woman (Lahara) eats quietly with a young half-elf woman (Jinelle). An orange and white calico cat is sitting on Table 2, licking its paws. At Table 3, a stout human lad (Adrean) is pouring over maps, architectural plans, and other documents with a male elf with decorative facial tattoos (Parvis disguised as “Quial”). Three other people, who appear to be related, are working here and in the adjacent kitchen, serving those seated. They include a middle-aged human woman (Renadra), a gangly teen boy (Nello), and a chubby teen girl (Mina).**

**‘Renadra,’ says the elderly woman politely, ‘another cup of mead if you don’t mind.’ The middle-aged woman nods with a smile and passes the request onto the chubby teen girl, calling her ‘Mina.’ Renadra then walks over to the cat and scoops it up. ‘It’s mice in the fields for you, cat,’ she says as she walks to the front door, opens it up, and gently tosses the feline out. She then leans against the doorframe for a while, seemingly enjoying the cooler outdoor air.**

[30 seconds later]

**“Her break over, the middle-aged woman steps back inside, closing the door and resuming her duties serving the guests.”**

### **Scrutinizing “Quial” and Adrean**

If the PCs specifically examine or listen in on the conversation between Adrean and “Quial,” the following additional information can be gleaned:

- The elf is addressed as “Master Quial” by the stout human lad.
- The architectural plans sprawled out on the table appear to be that of a waterfront town with notations for ‘Entertainment District,’ ‘Merchant District,’ and more.
- There is also a map of the Celadon Forest.
- The conversation between the two seems to pertain to harvesting lumber from the Celadon to build a new city on the Duntide. The lad is trying to convince the elf how lumber can be harvested in a responsible manner. [If any PCs indicate a suspicion of Quial, have them make the better of Knowledge (Nature) or Sense Motive check opposed by Parvis/Quial’s Bluff check, which is APL 2 +6, APL 4 +9, APL 6 +11, APL 8 +13. If the PCs succeed, they sense Quial doesn’t know what he is talking about regarding the forest.]
- If the PCs haven’t figured out by now the men are discussing what will eventually be Adrean’s Landing, have each make the better of Knowledge (Geography), Knowledge (Local-Nyrond), or an Intelligence check, all of which have a DC of 12. If they succeed, they realize what the plans are for.
- The elf briefly changes the subject to talk about how he enjoys pats of butter. [He is refreshing the glamer created by his *hat of disguise*, the lame command word of which is “butter pat.” As there is no discernable change or visual effect, the event goes unnoticed]
- Parvis/Quial is suspicious of any PCs that attempt to interact with himself or Adrean, and will do his best to get them to move on. He is a master of Bluff, however, so he will not attempt to draw suspicion to himself. Rather he’ll simply imply that he and Adrean are having a private conversation and hope that the PCs will move on.

- Adrean is very friendly and outgoing, and while he won't initiate conversation, ask questions or volunteer information, he'll be happy to answer the PCs' questions if they choose to ask any.

### Scrutinizing Lahara and Jinelle

If the PCs specifically examine or listen in on the conversation between Lahara and Jinelle the following additional information can be gleaned:

- The two are enjoying their meal in relative quiet with an occasional, 'pass the sauce' breaking the silence.
- The young half-elf woman (Jinelle) glances from time to time in coy interest at the human lad (Adrean) at table 3.
- Jinelle is too busy eating, paying attention to Adrean and attempting to hide her actions from Lahara, to really interact much with the PCs. She'll seem distracted and not really wanting to continue conversing.
- The elderly woman (Lahara) is eating some soup from a bread bowl, and leans forward to take a spoonful. The pendant on her necklace, a rounded hourglass of enameled black and white set on its side swings forward and gets in her way. She tucks it safely away behind her collar. PCs who see this can make a Knowledge (Religion) check of DC 15 to recognize the symbol as belonging to Cyndor, a lesser god of time, infinity, and continuity. Clerics of Cyndor, Labelas Enoreth, and Lendor automatically recognize the symbol.
- Lahara is the quiet matronly sort of older woman. She will be very short in her responses to the PCs, but she will answer any questions put to her in a friendly manner. She's just attempting to enjoy her soup.

### Scrutinizing the Staff

Renadra, Mina, and Nello go about serving food, and doing nothing out of the ordinary. They really have no idea what is going on, but are willing to explain a little about themselves should the PCs ask.

### Area B, Dining Hall — 9:00 pm:

***"A stout human lad (Adrean) sits at Table 1 with an elderly woman (Lahara) and a young half-elf woman (Jinelle). Table 2 is empty, and***

***Table 3 is covered in rolled up scrolls and sturdy tubes of varying sizes. Three other people, who appear to be related, are working here and in the adjacent kitchen, serving the trio. They include a middle-aged human woman (Renadra), a gangly teen boy (Nello), and a chubby teen girl (Mina).***

***The lad has apparently just finished a jest, as the young, half-elf woman emits a hearty yet feminine laugh, her hand touching his arm in approval. The elderly woman stands with a smile on her face, 'Well, I'll let you two young ones continue on without me. Time for bed.' The lad quickly rises to his feet good-manneredly, and the elderly woman departs, calling back to the young couple, 'I expect you upstairs soon, though, young lady.'***

***The stout lad takes his seat again, and he and the half-elf woman resume a conversation. They seem to be getting to know each other."***

### Scrutinizing Jinelle and Adrean

If the PCs specifically examine or listen in on the conversation between Jinelle and Adrean, the following additional information can be gleaned:

- As he wants to make a name for himself in courtly circles, the lad (Adrean) is planning on building a new city.
- He is currently on a trip, meeting with various advisors, engineers, architects, and planners.
- Jinelle works as an aide to the elderly woman whom she identifies as "Lahara."
- The lad identifies Jinelle by name, "Jinelle: that's a pretty name!"
- She twirls her hair quite a bit while talking and frequently comments, "You're so funny!" and "You're so smart!" [PCs may make a Sense Motive check DC 15 to realize she is flirting with him. Female PCs get a circumstance bonus +14 to the roll.]
- Both Adrean and Jinelle are willing to speak with the PCs, but they are really consumed with thoughts of each other and keep returning to their conversation as though the PCs weren't there.

### Scrutinizing Lahara

Lahara can be followed up to her room, where she opens the door, granting access. She is friendly and will talk briefly with the PCs but informs them that she is getting ready for bed.

However if PCs follow her inside her room, she seems not to notice.

### **Scrutinizing the Staff**

Renadra, Mina, and Nello go about cleaning the kitchen and otherwise doing nothing out of the ordinary. They really have no idea what is going on, but are willing to explain a little about themselves should the PCs ask.

### **Area B, Dining Hall — 10:00 pm:**

*“A lone lantern breaks up the darkness of this large room, carried by a middle-aged woman (Renadra). She heads towards the door and opens it. Standing in the doorway and leaning forward, she makes a few kissing sounds. ‘Here cat... Here cat...’ she then whispers several times as she seems to wait for it to arrive.”*

[30 seconds later]

*“After about 30 seconds, an orange and white calico cat comes bounding in from outside and heads into the kitchen, where it curls up into a ball in front of the now-extinguished fire pit. With a quick surveying glance outside, the middle-aged woman closes the door and latches it securely. The woman then heads upstairs, her lantern lighting the way.”*

### **Scrutinizing Renadra**

Renadra can be followed up to her room, where she opens the door, granting access. She is friendly and will talk briefly with the PCs but informs them that she is getting ready for bed. However if PCs follow her inside her room, she seems not to notice.

### **Area B, Dining Hall — 11 pm, 12, 1 am:**

*“There is no one here, and all is quiet in the dining hall.”*

### **Area B, Dining Hall — 2:00 am:**

*“The dining hall is on fire, and streaks of flame snake through the room, illuminating it with hellish incandescence. The apparent source is an elven man with decorative facial tattoos who is backing up toward the front door while pouring and flinging flaming liquid from a flask, igniting the space around him. Reaching behind himself, he deftly unlatches and opens the door, pausing there while he finishes splattering flaming liquid to and fro.”*

[12 seconds later]

*“His task complete, the elven man steps out and closes the door.”*

[50 seconds later the clock resets to the 8:00 pm period]

Refer to the judge’s map of the downstairs section of the inn. The areas marked with smoke and fire hamper movement and cause damage as describe in the subsection “Adjudicating the Fire” at the beginning of Encounter Three.

### **Scrutinizing “Quial” (Parvis)**

Quial wears a backpack, traveling gear, and a few standard weapons, including a short bow. He grants access to the outside when he opens the door, and can be followed to Area A when he exits 12 seconds later.

In this instance, Parvis is completely focused on his duties of lighting the fire and watching for survivors. He will not target PCs, unless the PCs attack first.

## **Area C: Kitchen**

*“A large fireplace and cooking pit command attention in this otherwise modest kitchen. Shelves, utensils, cooking pots, and more are sprawled about. A large preparation table in the center holds more supplies. A curtain partially drawn grants access to a storage room in the back. Foodstuffs, extra kegs of mead, and hanging meat can be found here.”*

### **Area C, Kitchen — 8:00 and 9:00 pm:**

*“A cracking fire is in the fire pit, sending white smoke up the chimney.”*

Any PCs passing through the pit while the fire is burning suffers damage according to the subsection “Adjudicating the Fire” at the beginning of Encounter Three.

### **Area C, Kitchen — 10, 11, 12, 1 am:**

Nothing else of note occurs here during these periods.

### **Area C, Kitchen — 2:00 am:**

*“The kitchen is ablaze with fire. Flames leap up from the floor, shelves, and table, consuming dried herbs and other flammables. A trail of fire leads out into the dining hall.”*

[1 minute later, the clock resets to the 8:00 pm period.]

Refer to the judge's map of the downstairs section of the inn. The areas marked with smoke and fire hamper movement and cause damage as describe in the subsection "Adjudicating the Fire" at the beginning of Encounter Three.

## **Area D: Upstairs Hall**

***"A wide hallway runs the length of the farmhouse, doors on each side. Two old chairs with fraying upholstery rest against the wall in what appears to be a sitting area."***

There is a 1-inch gap beneath each door through which Diminutive-sized creatures can pass if desired.

### **Area D, Upstairs Hall — 8:00 pm:**

***"The sounds of clanking utensils and murmured conversation can be heard downstairs."***

### **Area D, Upstairs Hall — 9:00 pm:**

***"A hearty yet feminine laugh can be heard downstairs. Quieter conversation ensues, and a moment later, an elderly woman (Lahara) walks up the stairs and into the hallway. She illuminates her path with magic light radiating from her hand and enters the second door on the left."***

The time it takes Lahara to open the door, enter her room, and close the door behind her allows only 2 PCs total to scramble in or out. She is friendly and will talk briefly with the PCs but informs them that she is getting ready for bed. However if PCs follow her inside her room, she seems not to notice.

### **Area D, Upstairs Hall — 10:00 pm:**

***"The slight creaks of the farmhouse settling seem to be the only sounds readily audible up here in the hall."***

[1 minute later]

***"The sound of someone ascending the stairs is heard, accompanied by the dancing light of a lantern. A moment later, a middle-aged woman (Renadra) enters the hall and***

***walks to the end of it, entering the last door on the left."***

The time it takes Renadra to open the door, enter her room, and close the door behind her allows only 2 PCs total to scramble in or out. She is friendly and will talk briefly with the PCs but informs them that she is getting ready for bed. However if PCs follow her inside her room, she seems not to notice.

### **Area D, Upstairs Hall — 11:00 pm:**

***"The slight creaks of the farmhouse settling seem to be the only sounds readily audible up here in the hall. A moment later, the third door on the left opens up halfway with a slight squeak, and a young half-elf woman with disheveled hair (Jinelle) squeezes through the narrow opening carrying her shoes. She stealthily closes the door behind her and tiptoes to the second door on the left, opening it equally quietly. Entering the second room, she closes the door once inside."***

Because Jinelle is only opening the doors half way to avoid waking Lahara with the squeaky hinges, only 1 PC total can scramble through each time. If the PCs stop her on her way back to her room, she is friendly and will talk briefly with the PCs but informs them that she is really late for bed and needs to be back in her room. However if PCs follow her inside the room, she seems not to notice.

### **Area D, Upstairs Hall — 12:00 am:**

***"The slight creaks of the farmhouse settling seem to be the only sounds readily audible up here in the hall."***

### **Area D, Upstairs Hall — 1:00 am:**

***"The slight creaks of the farmhouse settling seem to be the only sounds readily audible up here in the hall."***

[30 seconds later]

***"With absolute silence, the door to the southern-most room opens, and an elf with decorative facial tattoos (Parvis disguised as "Quial") exits, leaving the door open. He makes no sound as he walks down the hall. Stopping at the third door on the left, he opens it still in utter silence. The elf draws a sickle from his side and walks in, closing the door behind him."***

The time it takes “Quial” (Parvis) to open Adrean’s door, enter his room, and close the door behind him allows only 2 PCs to scramble in or out. The door to Parvis’ room is left open, however, so PCs can pass freely in and out during this time period. Attempting to interact with Adrean or Parvis during the period of the fight has no result. The fight has already happened and any actions the PCs take seem to have no effect.

#### **Area D, Upstairs Hall — 2:00 am:**

***“Thick smoke fills the air, obscuring vision. Illuminated by bright flames from the burning floor, no heat seems to issue forth.”***

[1 minute later, the clock resets to the 8:00 pm period.]

The doors to Adrean’s and Parvis’ rooms (Areas G and E, respectively) are open. Unless PCs are standing right in front of those doors, however, they do not notice due to the obscuring smoke that blocks all vision beyond 5 feet.

Refer to the judge’s map of the upstairs section of the inn. The areas marked with smoke and fire hamper movement and cause damage as describe in the subsection “Adjudicating the Fire” at the beginning of Encounter Three.

### **Area E: Parvis’ Room**

***“Two simple beds on pallets of straw lie against the west wall beneath a closed window. A small table acts as a nightstand between them and supports a candle, washbasin, and pitcher of water. A chamber pot, armoire, and a series of coat pegs comprise the rest of the furnishings.”***

#### **Area E, Parvis’ Room — 8:00 pm:**

***“A closed backpack is leaning against the northern-most bed, and a traveling cloak is hung on one of the pegs. Otherwise, this room has no other remarkable features, contents, or occupants.”***

#### **Area E, Parvis’ Room — 9:00 pm:**

***“Illuminated softly by a candle on the nightstand, a pale human male with a bulbous nose and matted, short black hair (Parvis out of disguise) sits on the south bed while an open backpack leans against the other. A traveling cloak is hung on one of the pegs,***

***accompanied by a long brown wig and an off-white linen cap. On the bed next to the man are what appear to be two solid, putty triangles with one edge concave. The man dips a feathered quill into an inkpot on the nightstand and begins to write something in a book—most likely a journal of some kind. As he writes, he slowly pronounces the words, ‘Boland Thipp’ at one point.***

[30 seconds later]

***“He blots up excess ink with a stained rag and closes the journal.”***

Parvis has retired here after meeting with Adrean downstairs to discuss logging in the Celadon. His “Quial” wig makes him itch, so he has hung it on a peg until it’s time to kill Adrean at 1:00 am. He has also removed his putty elf ears. PCs who have already seen Parvis disguised as “Quial” can make the better of a Wisdom check or a Disguise check, both with a DC of 10, to realize it is the same color and length as the elf with decorative facial tattoos. PCs are certainly welcome to arrive at this conclusion on their own, however. If spoken with he is curt and terse, pointing out that he is writing some notes and would prefer to be left alone. If PCs continue to pester him he will slam the book closed and stick it under his shirt. A few seconds later he will return to his chair and resume writing.

#### **Scrutinizing the Journal**

To keep track of his assassination assignments, Parvis makes journal entries but keeps them encoded to ward against prying eyes. If the PCs read the open journal and what he writes in it, they see a jumble of letters, numbers, and unusual symbols. An Intelligence check or a Decipher Script check (both DC 30) is required to break the code and understand the writing. There is no Wisdom check for failure of the Decipher Script check—failing PCs simply cannot make heads or tails out of the nonsense.

Obviously there is little to no chance PCs at the lower APLs can make the high Decipher Script DC, and that is intentional. If they do break the code, however, they discover the journal is a logbook of assassination assignments, and that the latest target is a young noble named Adrean Talnith. A man named Boland Thipp hired Parvis, and there is a reference to the Scarlet Brotherhood. The year appears to be 589.



### **Area E, Parvis' Room — 10:00 pm:**

***“Illuminated softly by a candle on the nightstand, a pale human male with a bulbous nose and matted, short black hair (Parvis out of disguise) reclines on the south bed reading a hard, leather bound book. An open backpack rests on other bed, and a traveling cloak is hung on one of the pegs, accompanied by a long brown wig and an off-white linen cap. On the bed next to the man are what appear to be two solid, putty triangles with one edge concave.”***

Parvis is reading a copy of *Debauched: Secrets of the Bawdy House*, the title of which is prominently displayed on the cover. The page he is currently reading pertains to an indeterminate temple in Rel Astra. The putty triangles are part of his elf disguise, intended to go on his ears. If spoken with he is curt and terse, pointing out that he is reading and would prefer to be left alone.

### **Area E, Parvis' Room — 11:00 pm:**

***“Illuminated softly by a candle on the nightstand, a pale human male with a bulbous nose and matted, short black hair (Parvis out of disguise) reclines on the south bed reading a hard, leather bound book. An open backpack rests on other bed, and a traveling cloak is hung on one of the pegs, accompanied by a long brown wig and an off-white linen cap. On the bed next to the man are what appear to be two solid, putty triangles with one edge concave.”***

Parvis is reading a copy of *Debauched: Secrets of the Bawdy House*, the title of which is prominently displayed on the cover. The page he is currently reading pertains to late night strolls through the bushes of city parks.

Inside his backpack are standard traveling supplies and what appears to be a journal shoved inside. The putty triangles are part of his elf disguise, intended to go on his ears. If spoken with he is curt and terse, pointing out that he is reading and would prefer to be left alone.

### **Area E, Parvis' Room — 12:00 am:**

***“Illuminated softly by a candle on the nightstand, a pale human male with a bulbous nose and matted, short black hair (Parvis out of disguise) sits on the edge of his bed, eyes closed and fisted hands crossed in front of him. An open backpack rests on other bed,***

***and a traveling cloak is hung on one of the pegs, accompanied by a long brown wig and an off-white linen cap. On the bed next to the man are what appear to be two solid, putty triangles with one edge concave.”***

As a cleric of Nerull, Parvis prays at midnight. PCs making the better of a Knowledge (Religion) or Sense Motive check with a DC 10 recognize the action as praying, although ‘to whom’ is not revealed. The style of praying is not necessarily evil or even partial to clerics of Nerull; it is merely Parvis’ personal style. Parvis is, however, holding his silver symbol of Nerull (a skull and scythe) in his left hand, but it is very difficult to notice, due to his enclosing fingers covering it up almost entirely. PCs who succeed in a Spot check with a DC of 15 + APL notice it. PCs who actively search Parvis also notice it with a Search check of the same DC. If found, a Knowledge (Religion) check with a DC of 12 reveals it to be a symbol of Nerull, god of death, darkness, murder, and the underworld.

Inside his backpack are standard traveling supplies and what appears to be a journal shoved inside. The putty triangles are part of his elf disguise, intended to go on his ears. If the PCs attempt to interact with Parvis while he is praying, he ignores them. No actions by the PCs can affect his praying or prevent the recovery of his spells.

### **Area E, Parvis' Room — 1:00 am:**

***“Illuminated softly by a candle on the nightstand, a pale human male with a bulbous nose and matted, short black hair (Parvis out of disguise) gazes into a steel mirror propped up against a pillow as he attaches a putty triangle to his left ear to make it appear elvish, complimenting the right ear already done. He then puts on a wig of long brown hair, followed by an off-white linen cap. Uttering the phrase, “butter pat,” decorative designs that look like tattoos appear on his now-angular face, and the cap morphs into a feather; he has transformed into an elf (“Quial”).***

[Spellcraft roll DC 16 to recognize the *change self* spell coming into effect.]

***Next, this man gesticulates as he briefly incants some kind of spell and is suddenly plunged into utter silence. Opening the door to his room, he exits, leaving behind an open backpack, a traveling cloak on a peg, and a closed book on the bed.***

Parvis, disguised as “Quial” is heading to Area G - Adrean’s Room to assassinate him. He can easily be followed out, as the door remains open.

Inside his backpack are standard traveling supplies and what appears to be a journal shoved inside. The book on the bed prominently is entitled *Debauched: Secrets of the Bawdy House*.

The PCs are unable to get Parvis to notice them. He is completely consumed by his required actions and cannot be turned aside. Attacking, killing or even disintegrating Parvis will also have no effect, as he will simply reappear and continue along his programmed actions.

### **Area E, Parvis’ Room — 2:00 am:**

***“Thick, lurid smoke, illuminated by the flames engulfing this room, obscures all vision. No heat seems to issue forth, however.”***

[1 minute later, the clock resets to the 8:00 pm period.]

The door to this room is open, but unless PCs are standing right in front of it, they do not notice due to the obscuring smoke that blocks all vision beyond 5 feet. All gear of Parvis’ that may have been here earlier is gone.

Refer to the judge’s map of the upstairs section of the inn. The areas marked with smoke and fire hamper movement and cause damage as describe in the subsection “Adjudicating the Fire” at the beginning of Encounter Three.

## **Area F:**

### **Lahara and Jinelle’s Room**

***“Two simple beds on pallets of straw lie against the west wall beneath a closed window. A small table acts as a nightstand between them and supports a candle, washbasin, and pitcher of water. Drawing your eye the most, however, is a book resting on the table. Tiny motes of silvery light dance about it. A chamber pot, armoire, and a series of coat pegs comprise the rest of the furnishings.”***

[If Shandry has yet to be broken out of her stupor]

***“A young girl, maybe 7 or 8 years old is clutching her knees and rocking back and forth under the nightstand.”***

### **Dealing with Shandry**

Shandry is terrified and in a state of shock at having been chased here by the stream sentry and does not snap out of her daze until the party succeeds at a Diplomacy check of 20 + APL. The party may not take 10 or take 20. This Diplomacy check is made only once, and then bonuses and penalties are incrementally applied as follows: For each female in the party who enters the room add +2 to the roll. For every toy the party offers, such as the stuffed animals acquired at the *Lord Mayor’s Banquet* in 592, an additional +2 circumstance bonus is added to the roll. (For PCs to claim they have a toy, it must appear in the inventory section of their character sheet or be a certified item.) For every 10 continuous minutes the PCs remain in the room another +1 circumstance bonus is applied.

Each act of aggression towards Shandry imposes a -5 penalty to the check, as she slips deeper in her shock, and is considered a mildly evil act.

With enough coaxing over time, any party should be able to make the Diplomacy check. Once this occurs, Shandry then becomes an active, mobile NPC who will obey instructions from party members to the best of her ability hereafter. She is clingy, though, and scared, sticking to any female PCs like glue. If no female PCs are present, then she follows around the most charismatic male PC. With kind yet stern words, she can be convinced to stay in a particular area, although she fears the stream wisps will return.

Shandry, with only 2 hp can easily be killed if she happens to be standing in a fire square whenever the clock advances to 2:00, so be cognizant of where she is when that fateful time occurs.

**Shandry Armolis** (female human Com 1; hps 2).

### **Interacting with the Book**

The book in this room is the key to the entire time loop.

- The book is hardbound leather with a silver clasp and bears the image of a rounded hourglass on its side. (Knowledge (Religion) DC 15 to recognize it as the symbol of Cyndor, god of time, infinity, and continuity.
- If *detected*, it radiates “moderate” magic of transmutation. (Spellcraft check DC 21 needed to determine school.)

- The book projects an aura of temporal energy that keeps the time wisps and sentries at bay to a distance of 15 feet.
- It can be picked up, opened, and moved to a distance of 15 feet from the nightstand.
- If brought to a distance farther than 15 feet, it vanishes and reappears on the nightstand.
- The book cannot be manipulated during the 2:00 period with the exception of reading the final words.
- If the final words are recited outside the 2:00 period, there is no effect.
- If skimmed through, the book appears to be part journal / part clerical prayer book to Cyndor, god of time, infinity, and continuity. The owner is a cleric of Cyndor, Lahara Hestri.
- If a more thorough examination is desired, it takes 2 hours to read from cover to cover (more than three iterations through the entire time loop). Doing so, however, reveals the existence of a few specially researched clerical spells interspersed throughout the book, including the ritual magic that phased the farmhouse occupants out of time.

### **Area F, Lahara / Jinelle's — 8:00 pm:**

[Be sure to read the default description of this room, found at the beginning of Area F, since it mentions Lahara's book on the nightstand.]

***"In front of each bed is an open valise containing women's clothes and various traveling supplies. A couple of cloaks hang on pegs on the wall over some traveling boots. Otherwise, this room has no other remarkable features, contents, or occupants."***

None of the gear is identifiable as vestments of Cyndor.

### **Area F, Lahara / Jinelle's — 9:00 pm:**

[Be sure to read the default description of this room, found at the beginning of Area F, since it mentions Lahara's book on the nightstand.]

***"In front of each bed is an open valise containing women's clothes and various traveling supplies. A couple of cloaks hang on pegs on the wall over some traveling boots."***

[1 minutes later]

***"The door opens up and an elderly woman (Lahara) enters, magical light emanating from***

***her hand. She immediately removes her hat and shakes out her gray hair, which falls to her shoulders in frizzy locks. She then reaches behind her neck and with a slight struggle unties a fastener on her collar, allowing her cotehardie gown to slip off her shoulders and onto the floor.***

***Still covered in a modest, full length chemise (a nightgown-like garment), she steps out of the pile of fabric on the floor and picks it up, hanging it on a peg. She then pulls up her hair into a bun, pours some water from the pitcher into the washbasin, and splashes water on her face. Sitting on the edge of the bed, she dries off her face and proceeds to remove her shoes. After a rubbing her apparently sore feet for a moment, she flicks her wrist, and the magical light is extinguished. The elderly woman then climbs into bed, pulling the covers up tight."***

### **Scrutinizing Lahara**

While some of the more immature players might snicker, guffaw, and emit cries of "Ewww!" at the seeming 'old lady strip tease,' her modest disrobing is designed to present a conflict of ethics for the more lawful and gentlemanly of PCs, although there is no game mechanic for this; it is merely for flavor.

Only if they specifically scrutinize Lahara after she has removed her outer gown do they have a chance to spot her enameled holy symbol of Cyndor, a rounded hourglass of black and white set on its side. It is around her neck, but somewhat obscured by her chemise. A Spot check DC 15 + APL notices it. Any PCs specifically searching Lahara can make a Search check with the same DC to find the object. As Cyndor is an obscure deity, it takes a Knowledge (Religion) check of 15 to recognize the symbol as belonging to Cyndor, a lesser god of time, infinity, and continuity.

If the PCs try to talk with her, she is friendly and will talk briefly with the PCs but informs them that she is getting ready for bed. She seems not to notice that the PCs have followed her into her room, nor will she stop in her preparations in retiring.

### **Area F, Lahara / Jinelle's — 10:00 pm:**

[Be sure to read the default description of this room, found at the beginning of Area F, since it mentions Lahara's book on the nightstand.]

***"Someone with gray hair is sleeping in one of the beds, while the other bed is undisturbed.***

***In front of each bed is an open valise containing women's clothes and various traveling supplies. A couple of cloaks and a cotehardie gown (what Lahara was wearing earlier) hang on pegs on the wall over some traveling boots. Otherwise, this room has no other remarkable features, contents, or occupants."***

### **Scrutinizing the Gray-haired Sleeper**

Sleeping on her side with barely her face revealed, PCs can identify the gray haired sleeper as an elderly woman (Lahara) they may have seen earlier. The PCs will be unable to wake Lahara during this period.

### **Area F, Lahara / Jinelle's — 11:00 pm:**

[Be sure to read the default description of this room, found at the beginning of Area F, since it mentions Lahara's book on the nightstand.]

***"Someone with gray hair is sleeping in one of the beds, while the other bed is undisturbed. In front of each bed is an open valise containing women's clothes and various traveling supplies. A couple of cloaks and a cotehardie gown hang on pegs on the wall over some traveling boots."***

[After 30 seconds]

***A moment later, the door opens up halfway with a slight squeak, and a young half-elf woman with disheveled hair (Jinelle) squeezes through the narrow opening carrying her shoes. She stealthily closes the door behind her and tiptoes into the room, placing her shoes near her bed. She deftly pulls her dress up and over her head, revealing a full-length chemise (a nightgown-like garment), and successfully tosses it onto one of the pegs across the room. Without seemingly having awoken the occupant in the other bed, the lass climbs into her own bed and pulls the covers up tight."***

Because Jinelle is only opening the door half way to avoid waking Lahara with the squeaky hinges, only 1 PC total can scramble through before it is closed again.

### **Scrutinizing Jinelle**

Jinelle has just returned from a rendezvous with Adrean, although there are no telltale signs of the tryst aside from her disheveled hair. If the PCs stop her on her way back to her room, she is friendly and will talk briefly with the PCs but informs them that she is really late for bed and

needs to be back in her room. However if PCs follow her inside the room, she seems not to notice. If they continue to talk with her inside the room she is friendly and will talk briefly with the PCs but informs them that she is getting ready for bed. She seems not to notice that the PCs have followed her into her room, nor will she stop in her preparations in retiring.

### **Scrutinizing the Gray-haired Sleeper**

Sleeping on her side with barely her face revealed, PCs can identify the gray haired sleeper as an elderly woman (Lahara) they may have seen earlier. The PCs will be unable to wake Lahara during this period.

### **Area F, Lahara / Jinelle's — 12, 1 am:**

[Be sure to read the default description of this room, found at the beginning of Area F, since it mentions Lahara's book on the nightstand.]

***"Someone with gray hair is sleeping in one of the beds, while a blond haired figure is sleeping in the other. In front of each bed is an open valise containing women's clothes and various traveling supplies. A couple of cloaks, a cotehardie gown (what Lahara was wearing earlier), and a simpler dress (Jinelle's) hang on pegs on the wall over some traveling boots. Otherwise, this room has no other remarkable features, contents, or occupants."***

### **Scrutinizing the Sleepers**

Sleeping on her side with barely her face revealed, PCs can identify the gray haired sleeper as an elderly woman (Lahara) they may have seen earlier. Jinelle is sleeping on her back, so if the PCs scrutinize her, they clearly recognize her as a young half-elf woman they may have seen earlier. The PCs will be unable to wake either Lahara or Jinelle during this period.

### **Area F, Lahara / Jinelle's — 2:00 am:**

[Be sure to read the default description of this room, found at the beginning of Area F, since it mentions Lahara's book on the nightstand.]

***"The sound of hacking and coughing in this room pierces the relatively thin smoke that has seeped in from under the door. An elderly woman (Lahara) sits up in bed, awakening from a coughing fit. 'Jinelle' she wheezes as she addresses a blonde haired figure sleeping in the other bed. There is no response. The elderly woman then stands and staggers to the door, still coughing. She places her palm***

**against it as if to test something, and pulls it back quickly in horror.**

**Turning around, she heads for the nightstand and picks up the silver-clasped book. She plops the book on the bed and kneels before it, flipping through its pages desperately. She begins an incantation, passing her finger over the words as she reads them from the book. Almost immediately, however, she stops. Standing up with difficulty, she heads over to a cotehardie gown hanging on a peg and rips off a pouch attached to the sewn-in belt.**

**She returns to the book and starts the incantation over again, flinging gleaming diamond dust into the air. With increasing difficulty, she recites the words written on the page. Her entire being suddenly begins to sparkle luminously, and a harmonic humming starts emanating from the book. The blonde haired figure in the other bed also seems to sparkle. Before the elderly woman finishes the last sentence, however, she slumps forward into unconsciousness, her limp finger resting on the last word she uttered.”**

The PCs have 6 seconds to finish reciting Lahara’s sentence before the clock advances—well, resets—back to 8:00 pm. If they succeed, proceed immediately to Encounter Four: Back in the Present. If they fail, they’re stuck in the loop for another iteration. Lahara cannot be interacted with as this is a specific programmed action that cannot be interrupted.

### **Scrutinizing Jinelle**

Jinelle is sleeping on her back, so if the PCs scrutinize her, they clearly recognize her as a young half-elf woman they may have seen earlier. The PCs will be unable to wake Jinelle during this period.

## **Area G: Adrean’s Room**

**“Two simple beds on pallets of straw lie against the west wall beneath a closed window. A small table acts as a nightstand between them and supports a candle, washbasin, and pitcher of water. A chamber pot, armoire, and a series of coat pegs comprise the rest of the furnishings. A closed backpack is resting on one of the beds, and an**

**elaborate traveling cloak is hung on one of the pegs.”**

The cloak, if examined more closely, is embroidered with a heraldic shield. A PC who succeeds in a Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) check DC 15 recognizes it as the device of the Duchy of Woodwych. PCs gain a +2 on the check for each of the following they possess: the Savior of Adrean’s Landing Medal from *The Great Pie Fest*, Favor or Disfavor of the Barony of Woodwych from *Returned Mail*, and Proclamation of Hero also from *Returned Mail*. Those hailing from Woodwych recognize the shield immediately.

### **Area G, Adrean’s Room — 8, 9:00 pm:**

**“This room has no other remarkable features, contents, or occupants.”**

### **Area G, Adrean’s Room — 10:00 pm:**

**“Faint whispers and giggles can be heard from beneath the covers of one of the beds. Clothes for both a man and a woman are tossed haphazardly about the room, and scrolls and sturdy tubes of varying sizes cover the other bed. A plate of half-eaten scones is on the nightstand.”**

The clothes are recognizable as those belonging to Adrean and Jinelle if the PCs have seen them earlier. Both are currently under the covers, enjoying a tryst. They are completely covered by blankets, and only their whispering voices give them away as a male and female. Lascivious PCs who actively try to listen to the goings-on beneath the blanket must succeed at a DC 25 Listen check to pick up on the various whispered comments, which only prove that Adrean and Jinelle are having a romantic tryst. If you have particularly lascivious PCs, simply explain that this is a family oriented scenario and leave it at that.

### **Area G, Adrean’s Room — 11:00 pm:**

**“The sound of light snoring comes from a stout human lad (Adrean) lying in a bed. A young half-elf woman is neatly pulling up the covers to his neck. She has disheveled hair and is wearing a chemise (a nightgown-like garment) (Jinelle). She then picks up a dress from the floor and throws it over her head quickly. Shimmying to allow it to fall and drape about her properly, the lass then picks**

**up a pair of women's shoes and quietly tiptoes to the door.**

**With a slight squeak as she opens the door halfway, the young woman squeezes through the narrow opening and closes it behind her. Clothes for both a man and a woman are tossed haphazardly about the room, and rolled-up scrolls and sturdy tubes of varying sizes cover the other bed. A plate of half-eaten scones is on the nightstand."**

Jinelle is returning to her room in Area F. Because she is only opening the door half way to avoid waking Lahara with the squeaky hinges, only 1 PC total can scramble through before it is closed again. If the PCs stop her on her way back to her room, she is friendly and will talk briefly with the PCs but informs them that she is really late for bed and needs to be back in her room. However if PCs follow her inside the room, she seems not to notice.

### **Area G, Adrean's Room — 12:00 am:**

**"The sound of light snoring comes from a stout human lad (Adrean) lying in a bed. His covers are neatly pulled up to his neck. His clothes are tossed haphazardly about the room, and rolled-up scrolls and sturdy tubes of varying sizes cover the other bed."**

#### **Scrutinizing the Sleeper**

Sleeping on his back with only his head revealed, PCs can identify the sleeper as the young man (Adrean) they may have seen earlier. The PCs will be unable to wake Adrean during this period.

### **Area G, Adrean's Room — 1:00 am:**

**"The sound of light snoring comes from a stout human lad (Adrean) lying in a bed. His covers are neatly pulled up to his neck, and his clothes are tossed haphazardly about the room. Rolled-up scrolls and sturdy tubes of varying sizes cover the other bed."**

[After 1 minute]

**"Suddenly and with utter silence the door opens, and a male elf with decorative facial tattoos draws a sickle from his waist and enters. As he does, the silent, spectral image of 5 shaking hand bells appears over the lad's sleeping form, and he sits up immediately in bed, fully awake. The hand bells fade away and the elf grins evilly as he closes the door behind him."**

**The human lad tries to scream for help, but his cries are absolutely muted. As the menacing elf approaches slowly, the unclothed human lad desperately looks around for a weapon, grabbing the nearest object, a plate of half-eaten scones. He hurls the disc at the elf and misses, as food and crumbs fly about. The plate shatters silently against the wall, and the lad topples the nightstand over as his next line of defense. Water from the crashing pitcher spills onto the ground, accompanied by the washbasin and candle. The elf assassin merely chuckles in silence and closes in. A brutally violent struggle ensues. The stout human lad puts up a valiant fight, even wielding a pillow in desperation, but he is no match for his far superior opponent.**

**In less than a minute's time, the lad lies dead on the floor, his blood splattered about. The utterly depraved elf then spends a few more minutes at the scene dragging his sickle around in fascination with the blood on the floor."**

Depending on the maturity of the players gathered at the table, the DM is advised to tone down the graphic nature of the murder. It is included here for the emotional impact of this roleplaying scenario. The PCs cannot interact with either individual. This is a programmed event that has already occurred, and cannot be interrupted.

### **Area G, Adrean's Room — 2:00 am:**

**"Thick, lurid smoke, illuminated by the flames engulfing this room, obscures all vision. No heat seems to issue forth, however. While it is difficult to see through the haze, it is apparent there was quite a struggle here with toppled furniture, broken pottery, and blood splattered all over the place. The bloody body of an unclothed, stout human lad (Adrean) is slumped against the wall where the nightstand used to be. It has multiple, vicious slash wounds."**

[1 minute later]

**"Suddenly, the body begins to sparkle luminously."**

[And then the clock resets to the 8:00 pm period.]

The PCs cannot interact with Adrean's body. This is a programmed event that has already occurred, and cannot be interrupted.

## Area H: Renadra's Room

*"A large bed on a pallet of straw lies against the northwest corner beneath closed windows. A table nearby acts as a nightstand and supports a candle, washbasin, and pitcher of water. A chamber pot, armoire, and a series of coat pegs comprise the rest of the furnishings. This appears to be a permanently lived-in room, and various clothes and other mundane belongings are about."*

This is Renadra's personal quarters, and she lives here year round.

### Area H, Renadra's Room — 8, 9:00 pm:

*"This room has no other remarkable features, contents, or occupants."*

### Area H, Renadra's Room — 10:00 pm:

*"This room has no other remarkable features, contents, or occupants."*

[1 minute later]

*"The door opens and a middle-aged woman enters, carrying a lantern, filling the room with dancing light. She proceeds to get ready for bed."*

If the PCs try to talk with her, she is friendly and will talk briefly with the PCs but informs them that she is getting ready for bed. She seems not to notice that the PCs have followed her into her room, nor will she stop in her preparations in retiring.

### Area H, Renadra's Room — 11, 12 am:

*"A middle-aged woman with fiery red hair (Renadra) is sleeping in the bed here."*

#### **Scrutinizing the Sleeper**

Sleeping on her side with only her head revealed, PCs can identify the sleeper as the mother (Renadra) they may have seen earlier. The PCs will be unable to wake Renadra during this period.

### Area H, Renadra's Room — 1:00 am:

*"A middle-aged woman with fiery red hair is sleeping in the bed here."*

[1 minute later]

*"The wall suddenly lurches slightly as if something heavy was thrown into it from the other side, although no sound is heard with the exception of the armoire which is pushed forward an inch away from the wall. The scraping of the armoire seemingly awakens the woman in bed. She looks towards the wall angrily and mutters, 'Enough already!' A moment later, another silent slam impacts the wall, and a picture falls down. "By Merikka's hearth, give me rest, wonton ones," the woman mutters as she covers her head with a pillow."*

Tragically, Adrean is getting murdered in the next room, but Renadra thinks the disturbance is courtesy of Adrean and Jinelle. Renadra will not remove her head from under the pillow, and any attempt to interact with her will only get more exclamations of disgust over the two lovebirds.

### Area H, Renadra's Room — 2:00 am:

*"A middle-aged woman with fiery red hair (Renadra) is sleeping in the bed here, while smoke creeps in through the crack beneath the door."*

[1 minute later]

*"Suddenly, the body of the woman begins to sparkle luminously."*

[And then the clock resets to the 8:00 pm period.]

Sleeping on her side with only her head revealed, PCs can identify the sleeper as the mother (Renadra) they may have seen earlier. The PCs will be unable to wake Renadra during this period.

## Area I: Mina and Nello's Room

*"Two simple beds on pallets of straw lie against the east wall beneath a closed window. A small table acts as a nightstand between them and supports a candle, washbasin, and pitcher of water. A chamber pot, armoire, and a series of coat pegs comprise the rest of the furnishings. This appears to be a permanently lived-in room of children, and various clothes, toys, and other mundane belongings are about."*

This is Mina and Nello's personal quarters, and they live here year round. Nothing important ever happens here during the scenario.

### **Area I, Mina/Nello's — 8, 9:00 pm:**

*"This room has no other remarkable features, contents, or occupants."*

### **Area I, Mina/Nello's — 10, 11, 12, 1 am:**

*"Two children are sleeping in this room, one in each bed. The first appears to be a chubby teen girl (Mina) and the second is completely covered in blankets."*

The children are fast asleep and cannot be awoken during this period.

### **Area I, Mina/Nello's — 2:00 am:**

*"Two children are sleeping in this room, one in each bed. The first appears to be a chubby teen girl (Mina) and the second is completely covered in blankets. Smoke creeps in through the crack beneath the door."*

[1 minute later]

*"Suddenly, the body of the girl begins to sparkle luminously, and a slight incandescence can be seen beneath the covers of the other bed."*

[And then the clock resets to the 8:00 pm period.]

The children are fast asleep and cannot be awoken during this period.

## **Encounter Four: Back in the Present**

[If the transition dialogue has not yet been described]

*"You suddenly feel a tugging at your gut almost as if the wind has been knocked out of you. The air swirls about in a shimmer of silvery hues."*

[Then...]

*"A moment later, you find yourself back in the present time, dazed momentarily and surrounding the wisteria tree and ruined chimney amongst the tall grass. The bloody body of the unclothed, stout human lad is lying in a heap. He has multiple slash wounds and smolders slightly. The elf with decorative facial tattoos, wearing a backpack, traveling gear, and a few standard weapons, is holding a*

*shortbow, loosely nocked with an arrow, and appears quite confused. The entirety of your party is also here, along with the young girl Shandry and the five other people from the farmhouse, all of whom lie on the ground in their nightclothes, either sleeping or unconscious. The temporal prayer book is lying next to the elderly woman.*

*A wave of gasps and cries of surprise burst from the originally gathered townsfolk from the Briar Toad Inn. 'Shandry!' screams Volene. 'Renadra!' screams Kalia."*

Everyone returning from the time loop is dazed for one round and appears as indicated on the map "Back in the Present." The map gives instructions on how to place the PCs.

Before continuing, determine the local time. Each complete cycle of the loop (from 8:00 pm to 2:00 am) was 31 minutes, so groups who spent 6 complete cycles find themselves exiting 3 hours later. It is considered night if it is past 7:00 pm. (This scenario started at "just before noon.") If a fight with Parvis breaks out, and it is night, there is only enough illumination as provided by the full moon plus lanterns being held by Kalia and Zilus 40 feet west of the tree.

### **The Next Couple of Minutes**

The next couple of minutes are chaotic. Immediately, Volene picks up a rock and tosses it at the tree to see if the temporal portal is still there. Finding it is not, she rushes forward and picks up Shandry. Kalia also rushes forward and kneels near her sister, Renadra, checking to see if she is dead or alive, and Zilus comes to the aid of Mina and Nello. Other townsfolk continue crying out in surprise, joy, shock, etc. If the herb woman, Goody Percal, was present earlier, she has since left.

Depending on how many scenes the party witnessed in the time loop, they may or may not suspect "Quial"/Parvis of any wrongdoing. Indeed, it is certainly possible a "lucky" party ended the time loop during the first 2:00 am period before anyone witnessed dubious behavior from the glamered assassin. If that is the case, Parvis should get away this scenario.

Parvis and the other farmhouse occupants do not recall the time loop, and as far as his state of mind is concerned, no time has passed from when he was watching the inn burn down until now. While dazed in the first round after appearing in the present time, Parvis is quick to realize he was just subjected to powerful magic. He immediately



recognizes the other members of the farmhouse lying on the ground and realizes he needs to make a get-away rather soon.

### **Party Not Suspicious of Parvis**

If the PCs do not act like they are suspicious of Parvis, he uses his Bluff skill and pretends to have lost his memory of the preceding night, allowing the PCs to explain to him and the other townsfolk what has happened while he puts away his short bow. Only if the PCs specifically state they are using Sense Motive against him does his Bluff check come into play. (Parvis' Bluff check: APL 2 +6, APL 4 +9, APL 6 +11, APL 8 +13).

If questioned by the party, he states his name is Quial Thinodenn, and that he is an envoy from the Sipharel tribe of elves in the Celadon forest. Earlier that evening, he met with Adrean Talnith, the Baroness' son, to discuss harvesting wood from the forest to build a new city. [Sipharel is an actual tribe in the forest, and PCs who actually hail from the Celadon know this.]

Parvis is an accomplished assassin and bluffmeister. In no way does *ever* act suspicious. He appears genuine and honest at all times, and his unholy symbol of Nerull is tucked beneath his leather armor. Eventually, he thanks the party for rescuing him and offers to award them all the gold he is carrying. (See Appendix 1 for the specific amount, based on APL).

Whether or not the PCs accept the reward, "Quial" exclaims how he must return to his family after being gone for so long, adding how he has a craving for his favorite snack, a butter pat. He then leaves, using his *hat of disguise* to change his appearance to that of a common human traveler once out of sight of the party.

### **The Fight with Parvis**

In the more likely event the PCs outright attack or merely accuse "Quial" of killing Adrean and/or burning down the inn, he immediately attacks, hoping to catch the party off-guard. This is a fight to the death. Being a cleric himself, Parvis realizes he could be hounded for years by scrying, divinations, and more by these accusers, and seeks to kill everyone here to eliminate that threat, as well as take out the witnesses.

### **APL 2 (EL 4)**

**Parvis Thander as "Quial"** (male human Clr-3/Rog-1, hp 29; see Appendix 1 for full stats).

### **APL 4 (EL 7)**

**Parvis Thander as "Quial"** (male human Clr-3/Rog-3/Asn-1, hp 47; see Appendix 1 for full stats)

### **APL 6 (EL 9)**

**Parvis Thander as "Quial"** (male human Clr-3/Rog-5/Asn-1, hp 59; see Appendix 1 for full stats)

### **APL 8 (EL 11)**

**Parvis Thander as "Quial"** (male human Clr-3/Rog-7/Asn-1, hp 71; see Appendix 1 for full stats)

### **Tactics for APL 2 and 4:**

**Surprise Round:** If Parvis is merely accused of wrong-doing, and combat has not yet begun, he gets the jump on the party by channeling his *doom* spell into a spontaneously cast *inflict light wounds* and sneak-attacks the closest PC, avoiding obvious barbarians and rogues whom he knows never lose their Dex bonus. If he moves more than 5 feet, this attack must be a partial charge. The only way PCs may act in this round is if they had readied actions to do something if Parvis attacked.

**Round 1:** If Parvis succeeded in wounding a PC during the surprise round, and if he beats all PCs this round in initiative who threaten him, he invokes his Death domain 'death touch' ability on the same character, hoping to finish him off. On the other hand, if he failed to wound any characters in the surprise round, or if it is clear some PCs have beaten him in initiative and would get an attack of opportunity if he tried to use that spell-like ability, he instead Quick Draws his sickle and sneak-attacks the nearest PC who is still flat-footed, again avoiding the obvious targets who do not lose their Dex bonus.

**Round 2:** If he can cast *invisibility* safely (*i.e.*, taking a 5 foot step), he does. Otherwise, he does a double move away, tumbling if necessary.

**Round 3+:** Parvis continues trying to get his *invisibility* spell up so he can then cast *entropic shield* (only if there are archers) and then sneak-attacking a second time with another channeled *inflict* spell. He also tries to get his death touch attack in if not used yet, and later feints in combat as much as possible. He has an Intelligence of 14 and fights using the best tactics available; he is not afraid to use his scrolls and other one-shot items. His only downfall is his lust to kill people,

which is why he does not flee when obviously outnumbered or about to lose.

### **Tactics for APL 6 and 8:**

**Surprise Round:** If Parvis is merely accused of wrong-doing, and combat has not yet begun, he channels his *doom* spell into a spontaneously cast *inflict light wounds* and sneak-attack the closest PC, avoiding obvious barbarians and rogues whom he knows never lose their Dex bonus. If he moves more than 5 feet, this attack must be a partial charge. The only way PCs may act in this round is if they had readied actions to do something if Parvis attacked.

**Round 1:** If Parvis succeeded in wounding a PC during the surprise round, and if he beats all PCs this round in initiative who threaten him, he channels his *entropic shield* spell into another spontaneously cast *cause light wounds spell*, sneak-attacking again the same PC. On the other hand, if it is clear some PCs have beaten him in initiative and would get an attack of opportunity if he tried to cast a spell, he instead Quick Draws his magic sickle and sneak-attacks the nearest PC who is still flat-footed, again avoiding the obvious targets who do not lose their Dex bonus. At APL 8, he invokes the sickle's *poison* ability on the first attack that succeeds.

**Round 2:** Similar to feinting, he puts away his magic sickle as a move equivalent action—if it is out—and then sneak-attacks with it via the Flick of Wrist feat, partially charging if needed.

**Round 3:** If he can cast *invisibility* safely (*i.e.*, taking a 5 foot step), he does. Otherwise, he does a double move away, tumbling if necessary.

**Round 4+:** Parvis continues trying to get his *invisibility* spell up so he can then sneak-attack again, using his magic sickle against lightly armored opponents or a spontaneously cast *inflict light wounds* spell on heavily armored ones. He avoids sneak-attacking obvious barbarians and rogues whom he knows do not lose their Dex bonus. Once a PC has one-third or less of his maximum hit points, Parvis tries to use his Death domain 'death touch' ability on him. At APL 8, he invokes the sickle's *poison* ability on the first attack that succeeds with it. After these initial tactics, he resorts to feinting in combat as much as possible. He has an Intelligence of 14 and fights using the best tactics available; he is not afraid to use his scrolls and other one-shot items. His only downfall is his lust to kill people, which is why he does not flee when obviously outnumbered or about to lose.

### **Interrogating/Searching Parvis**

If, after the fight, the PCs search Parvis, they discover his unholy symbol of Nerull, his bloody sickle, his encrypted journal, and other damning evidence. (See Appendix 1 for his list of equipment.) If they interrogate him while still alive, he refuses to give up his employer unless he is successfully intimidated, charmed, or otherwise magically compelled. (He is saving that information as leverage to get a lighter sentence if brought before the Duchess). He does not know where his employer lives, his payment of 5,000 gp having been paid through a series of anonymous connections.

If Parvis is captured, the PCs will have to decide what to do with him. Taking him to Verin is the best route, although the party may decide to drop him off in Swan Bore. While having no ranks in Escape Artist, Parvis still tries to escape if tied up—especially when the party is camped during the 100-mile trip to the City of Woodwych. After his first defeat, Parvis is no longer interested in fighting to the death. He flees at the first opportunity, if given a chance. Adjudicate accordingly.

### **Reunions, Melodrama, and Thanks**

At the obvious time—either before or after the fight with Parvis, depending on how the party deals with him—the following occurs:

***“As the farmhouse occupants cough the last bits of smoke from their lungs and sit up in confusion, Kalía buries her face in her hands, sobbing with joy. She exclaims, ‘My sister is alive! Bless you. Bless you, all.’ While Renadra is pleased to see her sister Kalía, she has yet to understand she has been considered dead for years now.***

[If Shandry is alive]

***“Tears of joy also stream down Volene’s face as she hugs her child, Shandry. ‘Thank you, thank you so much,’ she exclaims. Shandry hugs her mother tightly in response.”***

[If Shandry was killed by the PCs or the fire]

***“Volene holds the limp and lifeless body of Shandry close to her bosom and screams in anguish, inconsolable.”***

After about 30 minutes, the remaining NPCs from the farmhouse are up and cognizant. While still not grasping the ramifications of what has happened—with the exception of Lahara, who understands well the flaw in her spell—they are all

nevertheless appreciative of the party's assistance.

Jinelle is saddened by the death of Adrean, and she identifies him to the party as the son of the Baroness of Woodwych. The following gestures of gratitude are then made:

- Despite being a 12<sup>th</sup> level cleric, Lahara is poor, having no desire for material possessions. What little wealth she did have was destroyed in the fire. As a reward, then, the only thing she can offer—and she offers it gladly—is to cast *continual flame* on any one object the PC desires, provided they supply her with the 50 gp worth of ruby dust. This is a permanent, certified effect.
- Lahara also offers to cast any other clerical spells of up to 6<sup>th</sup> level that do not have XP components, provided the party supplies the material components. If the party gives her a diamond to raise Adrean, however, the spell fails, his soul unwilling to return.
- Kalia, a master weaver from Mowbrenn, is delighted to have her sister back and offers to put the PCs in contact with a colleague of hers who crafts magical cloaks, unlocking access to purchase a *cloak of resistance* +2 and a *cloak of resistance* +3. Furthermore, her contact can upgrade an existing *cloak of resistance* from +1 to +2 or from +2 to +3, provided the PC pays the difference in cost.

See the adventure record (AR) for further details on item access and rewards.

### **What to Do Next**

The PCs now need to decide what to do next.

If they examine Adrean's body, a successful Heal check with a DC 15 reveals he died from multiple slash wounds from a small weapon. A Heal check of 25 identifies the wounds more specifically as having been made by a sickle. If the PCs cast *speak with dead* on Adrean, he gets a Will save (Will +2) if the caster is not Lawful Good. If asked about the killing, he identifies his killer as an elf named Quial from the Celadon. If the PCs try to *raise* him, the spell fails, Adrean's soul unwilling to return.

At some point in a lull, Lahara asks the PCs what they intend to do now. If they seem off-track or want to go searching for Boland Thipp on a wild goose chase, Lahara suggests they immediately

go see Duchess Verin Talnith, taking with them Adrean's body and any evidence they possess pertaining to his murder.

### **Unexpectedly Finding Boland Thipp**

While outside the scope of this scenario, it is certainly possible the PCs locate Boland Thipp via *scrying* or by similar means. Adjudicate as follows:

- If scried upon, he is usually in his nondescript house, the location of which could be anywhere.
- If special abilities, such as underground contacts or more powerful divinations allow more specific information to be gleaned, the PCs learn he is in Swan Bore.
- The constabulary in Swan Bore refuses to act upon any information or evidence the PCs may present about Boland, since the Baroness herself already rejected a report years ago that Boland Thipp was involved in the murder of her son. (In a drunken stupor, Boland had blabbed how he had hired an assassin to kill Adrean, but the then-Baroness was hell-bent on believing it was the Brotherhood of the Bronze.)
- If the party confronts Boland, by *teleporting* to him, for example, he does not put up a fight if the PCs have authority to act on the government's behalf. (Licensed Adventurer is not enough!) He feels confident Verin is not going to change her suspicion of the Brotherhood, and he knows the constabulary won't do anything.
- Adjudicate other situations as needed.

**Boland Thipp** (male half-elf Com 7; hps 22).

## **Encounter Five: Visiting the Duchess**

***“Having traveled to the capital of the Duchy of Woodwych, you have found your way to where Verin Talnith is known to receive visitors. In addition to two liveried guards standing watch with halberds in-hand, a man wearing relatively expensive clothes sits at a desk. He looks up as you approach.”***

He is Hingred Vortossen, the Duchess' chamberlain. He immediately recognizes each PC who has the “Favor of the Barony of Woodwych”

from *Returned Mail* and greets them warmly by name, unless they are half-orcs, then he merely nods politely. He also recognizes any PCs who have the “Disfavor of the Barony of Woodwych” from *Returned Mail*, and gives a subtle signal to the guards, causing them to stand slightly more aggressively.

Either way, he asks what he can do for the party, adding that the Duchess is very busy this week, planning a wedding for a close friend of hers.

**Hingred Vortossen** (male human Exp 5).

**Liveried Guards** (2) (male human Ftr 9; hps 68 each).

Hingred is very protective of the Duchess and is extremely wary of any new stories pertaining to Adrean’s death disturbing her. Having seen Verin’s heartbreak time and again over the prolonged mystery of whatever happened to her son, Hingred absolutely refuses to allow any new unsubstantiated claims come to her attention. Therefore, this encounter requires great diplomacy on the part of the party for him to allow them to see Verin.

If the party refuses to tell Hingred why they wish to see the Duchess, he refuses them entry. Only when they give him a reason does he even consider granting audience.

The judge should allow the PCs to roleplay the interaction as much as they want with Hingred simply nodding poker-faced to each comment. When they are done, have the PC who spoke the most or the one with the highest Diplomacy score if there was an equal amount of speaking make the Diplomacy check for the party. To that roll, add the following modifiers, all of which stack with each other:

- +2 for each PC who successfully aided another in the Diplomacy check.
- +1 for each PC who has a “Chosen of Adrean’s Landing” medal (*The Great Pie Fest*);
- +2 for each PC who has a “Proclamation of Hero” (*Returned Mail*);
- +4 for each PC who has the “Favor of the Barony of Woodwych” (*Returned Mail*);
- +2 for any successful Intimidate check. This can only be obtained once. Further attempts to intimidate or to add on to a previous intimidate check will result in a new modifier of –10 to the roll. PCs may aid another in the initial check;

- +4 for respectfully presenting Adrean’s body, covered up. Head exposed is okay;
- +4 for mentioning “Boland Thipp” or having Parvis present alive;
- +4 for having successfully decrypted Parvis’ journal in “Area E, Parvis’ Room — 9:00 pm” and presenting it to Hingred;
- –4 for each player who has the “Disfavor of the Barony of Woodwych” (*Returned Mail*);
- –4 for presenting Adrean’s body in a cruel or disrespectful manner or allowing it to be seen completely uncovered.
- –1 for each half-orc present;
- –1 for each act of boorishness, such as vulgarity, belching, passing gas, or otherwise acting in an anti-social manner;
- –10 for each act of intimidation that fails;
- Hingred Vortossen counts as both a noble and a government agent loyal to the king for the purposes of any other special modifiers, such as the bonuses afforded a Swaggering Dilettante, Oerth Theater performer, member of the Royal Guard, etc.

The target Diplomacy check DC is 18 + APL.

### **Failure: End of Scenario**

If the party fails the Diplomacy check, Hingred keeps Adrean’s body (if it was presented) to verify its identity later, but he cannot allow the party to speak with Verin on the matter. The scenario is over for the party. Despite the failure of the party to see Verin, the truth about Adrean’s death does come out, now that new evidence is at hand, and Boland Thipp is eventually arrested. Unfortunately, though, the PCs do not receive the reward. Proceed to the Conclusion.

### **Dealing with Saboteur PCs**

If, however, the party fails the Diplomacy check but would have succeeded at the Diplomacy check were it not for certain PCs accruing penalties for boorishness, disrespectful treatment of Adrean’s corpse, or attempts at intimidation—all to the objection of the other PCs—then those PCs who sabotaged the group are ejected from the keep, and the scenario ends for them. The rest of the party is permitted to meet with Verin. Proceed to the next section, “Success: Visit with Verin.”

## **Success: Visit with Verin**

If the PCs succeeded in the Diplomacy check with Hingred, read or paraphrase the following:

***“At long last the Duchess’ chamberlain states after some contemplation, ‘Very well, I am convinced. I will notify Her Grace at once. Please wait here.’ He then excuses himself and passes through the heavy door flanked by liveried guards, closing it behind him.”***

[If Adrean’s corpse was presented to Hingred]

***“Two minutes later, three servants enter the chamber. They gently pick up the corpse and carry it back through the guarded door.***

***“About 20 minutes after that, a stately woman of middle age wearing an elaborate gown and steeped headdress enters. Her face is somewhat grim but resolute.”***

[PCs who have met her before recognize this woman as Verin Talnith, the Duchess of Woodwych. For each PC who has the “Favor of the Barony of Woodwych,” she nods respectfully toward them in greeting, addressing them by name.]

***“I am told you have discovered what happened to my dear son, Adrean. For that, I am extremely grateful. While I have yet to fully take in all this information, I wanted to thank you kindly for putting my wounded heart at ease. My investigators will be sure ferret out all who were involved, and my treasurer is compiling a reward for you as we speak. Please accept it as my gratitude.”***

At this point, the PCs may roleplay as much as they desire. Verin does not wish to chitchat too long, however, as her raw emotions are still near the fore. If any PC disrespects Verin or makes cruel remarks about Adrean or his corpse—even if they think they’re being cute or funny—the Duchess leaves in a silent, dignified manner. She then instructs her treasurer to withhold that individual PC’s reward, and no amount of backpedaling or apologizing changes her or the treasurer’s mind.

If everything goes smoothly, however, Verin eventually states:

***“Now if you will excuse me, I need to be alone. I shall send my treasurer in. Thank you again for everything you have done, and I bid you good day.’ With that, she smiles graciously and departs, the train of her gown gliding behind her.”***

[2 minutes later]

***“A short while later, a stern-looking man with a short beard enters the chamber, holding individual bags of gold. He hands them out almost with sadness as if the gold clinking within them was begging to stay.”***

## **The Reward**

For providing enough proof regarding the cause of death of Adrean (*i.e.*, having made the Diplomacy check to get to see Verin), each party member receives:

APL 2: 150 gp

APL 4: 200 gp

APL 6: 250 gp

APL 8: 300 gp

For bringing Adrean’s body to the City of Woodwych, each party member receives:

All APLs: 25 gp more

For providing evidence implicating Boland Thipp, including bringing Parvis as a prisoner, each party member receives:

All APLs: 25 gp more

### **Total Reward Possible:**

APL 2: 200 gp

APL 4: 250 gp

APL 6: 300 gp

APL 8: 350 gp

After the party receives their reward, they are politely escorted out. Proceed to Conclusion.

## **Conclusion**

***“A few weeks have passed since the events surrounding the farmhouse occurred.***

***Word spread quickly throughout the Duchy that Boland Thipp, the head of a merchant house in Swan Bore with connections to the Scarlet Brotherhood, was arrested for hiring an assassin to kill Adrean Talnith back in 589. Apparently, Adrean had an idea to build a new city on the Duntide, which the merchant feared would cause greater scrutiny to fall upon his smuggling operation from Nessermouth. His villainy has now ended once and for all, though.***

***Sadly, resurrection spells have failed to revive the slain Adrean, his soul seemingly unwilling to return. Having buried her son in The City of Woodwych, the Duchess is quite dispirited but ultimately relieved at being able to close this painful chapter in her life.***

*The Briar Toad Inn is enjoying prosperity from all the attention it garnered surrounding the events of last week. While the temporal portal is now closed, curiosity seekers come to see the place nevertheless, hoping to maybe catch a glimpse of what lies beyond the wisteria tree.”*

**The End**

## Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience awarded. Award the total value to each character.

### In the Time Loop: Attack of the Sentries

Defeating the stream wisps or sentries:

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP

### In the Time Loop: Helping Shandry

Succeeded in the Diplomacy check that brings Shandry out of her state of shock before the end of the time loop *and* prevented her from getting killed by the flames thereafter.

APL 2	20 XP
APL 4	30 XP
APL 6	43 XP
APL 8	58 XP

### In the Time Loop: Overcoming the Fire

Surviving the obstacle that is the burning farmhouse in order to complete Lahara’s ritual:

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP

### Encounter Four: Back in the Present

Defeating or capturing Parvis:

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP
APL 8	330 XP

### Encounter Five: Visiting the Duchess

Handed over incriminating evidence against Boland Thipp, including Parvis himself, to either Hingred or Verin:

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	50 XP
APL 8	50 XP

Made the Diplomacy check, gaining audience with Verin Talnith:

APL 2	40 XP
APL 4	60 XP
APL 6	87 XP
APL 8	117 XP

### Total Possible Experience

Remained in character, behaved in a manner befitting alignment, and otherwise added to the enjoyment of others through roleplaying:

APL 2	450 XP
APL 4	675 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1,125 XP

## Treasure Summary

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a “treasure” section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter’s treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use

them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

### **Treasure Key:**

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

### **Encounter Four: Back in the Present**

APL 2: L: 192.5 gp; C: 7.5 gp; M: 1,000 gp  
APL 4: L: 192.5 gp; C: 832.5 gp; M: 1,075 gp  
APL 6: L: 39.5 gp; C: 732.5 gp; M: 2,228gp  
APL 8: L: 39.5 gp; C: 132.5 gp; M: 5,228 gp

### **Encounter Five: Visiting the Duchess**

APL 2: L: 0 gp; C: 1200 gp; M: 0 gp  
APL 4: L: 0 gp; C: 1500 gp; M: 0 gp  
APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 1800 gp; M: 0 gp  
APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 2100 gp; M: 0 gp

### **Total Possible Treasure**

APL 2: 2400 gp  
APL 4: 3600 gp  
APL 6: 4800 gp  
APL 8: 7500 gp

Note that this is the total possible treasure for the party. The amount listed on the AR is correct and is the above totals divided by six (6).

### **Special**

- *Continual Flame*. For rescuing her, Lahara Hestri, a cleric of Cyndor, has offered to enchant the following item owned by the character with a *continual flame* spell at caster level 12: \_\_\_\_\_ . This item must be chosen at the end of the scenario, and the PC must pay 50 gp for

the material component. Frequency: Adventure.

- *Magic Item Access and Upgrade*. Kalia, a master weaver from Mowbrenn, is delighted to have her sister back and offers to put the PCs in contact with a colleague of hers who crafts magical cloaks, unlocking access to purchase a *cloak of resistance +2* and a *cloak of resistance +3*. Furthermore, her contact can upgrade an existing *cloak of resistance* from +1 to +2 or from +2 to +3, provided the PC pays the difference in cost. Frequency: Regional.
- *Luddy's Hat of Disguise* (1,800 gp). The chubby, little gnome who crafted this magic hat, which appears as an off-white linen cap normally, set the command word to "butter pat" in homage to his love of the fatty staple. It otherwise acts as a normal *hat of disguise*. (Faint illusion; CL 1st; Craft Wondrous Item, *disguise self*; Price 1,800 gp). Frequency: Adventure.
- *Divine Scroll of Invisibility* (150 gp). The assassin at the heart of this mystery was a cleric whose domains included Trickery. As such, he possessed a divine *scroll of invisibility*. (Faint illusion; CL 3<sup>rd</sup>; Scribe Scroll, *invisibility*; Price 150 gp; Cost 75 gp + 6 XP). Frequency: Adventure.
- *Sickle +1 of Venom* (8,306 gp). This is a black +1 *sickle*, the pommel of which is crafted into a skull. It allows the wielder to use a *poison* effect (as per the spell, save DC 14) upon a creature struck by the blade once per day. The wielder can decide to use the power after he has struck. Doing so is a free action, but the poison effect must be invoked in the same round that the sickle strikes. (Faint necromancy; CL 5<sup>th</sup>; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *poison*; Price 8,306 gp; Cost 4,306 gp + 320 XP). Frequency: Adventure.

# APPENDIX 1: Stats and Equipment of Parvis Thander

## APL 2 (EL 4)

**Parvis Thander, male human Clr-3/Rog-1:** CR 4; Medium-sized Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 3d8+1d6+8; hp 29; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+3 Dex, +2 armor); Atks +6 melee (1d6, MW sickle) or +2 melee (1d6§, sap) or +5 ranged (1d6/crit x3, short bow); SA Rog sneak attack 1d6, clr death touch, clr spells, spontaneous *inflict* spells; SQ Clr spells; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Wil +4.

Str 10, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Bluff<sup>1</sup> +6, Disguise<sup>1</sup> +6, Hide<sup>1</sup> +10, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen<sup>1</sup> +5, Move Silently<sup>1</sup> +7, Open Lock +7, Search<sup>1</sup> +6, Sense Motive<sup>1</sup> +5, Spellcraft +4, Spot<sup>1</sup> +5, Tumble +7; *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse (sickle).

SA: *Death Touch*—A granted power of the death domain and usable once per day, a death touch is a spell-like ability that is a death effect. You must succeed at a melee touch attack against a living creature. When you touch, roll 3d6. If the total at least equals the creature's current hit points, it dies. *Sneak Attack*—1d6.

Equipment: masterwork sickle, rapier, dagger, shortbow, 20 arrows, sap, silver pendant of a skull and scythe (unholy symbol of Nerull), disguise kit, an encrypted journal, a book entitled *Debauched: Secrets of the Bawdy House*, other mundane traveling supplies, divine *scroll of silence*, divine *scroll of cure light wounds*, divine *scroll of shield of faith*, *Luddy's hat of disguise*, and 7 gold, 5 silver.

Cleric Spells Prepared (Dom: Trickery and Death):

0<sup>th</sup> *cure minor wounds, detect magic, light, resistance.*

1<sup>st</sup> *cure light wounds, doom, entropic shield, cause fear* (domain).

2<sup>nd</sup> *silence, invisibility* (domain).

## APL 4 (EL 7)

**Parvis Thander, male human Clr-3/Rog-3/Asn-1:** CR 7; Medium-sized Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 3d8+4d6+14; hp 47; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 or 16(+3 Dex, +2 armor, +1 Dodge if dodging that opponent); Atks +8 melee (1d6, MW sickle) or +4 melee (1d6§, sap) or +7 ranged (1d6/crit x3, short bow); SA Death attack (DC 14), rog sneak attack 3d6, clr spells, spontaneous *inflict* spells; SQ Clr

spells, rog uncanny dodge, rog evasion; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Wil +5.

Str 10, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Bluff<sup>1</sup> +9, Disguise<sup>1</sup> +9, Hide<sup>1</sup> +13, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen<sup>1</sup> +6, Move Silently<sup>1</sup> +13, Open Lock +10, Search<sup>1</sup> +7, Sense Motive<sup>1</sup> +8, Spellcraft +4, Spot<sup>1</sup> +7, Tumble +11; *Feats:* Dodge, Improved Initiative, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse (sickle).

SA: *Death touch*—A granted power of the death domain and usable once per day, a death touch is a spell-like ability that is a death effect. You must succeed at a melee touch attack against a living creature. When you touch, roll 3d6. If the total at least equals the creature's current hit points, it dies. *Death Attack*—An assassin ability, if you study your victim for 3 rounds, attack that target within another 3 rounds, then make a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, you can paralyze or kill the target if they fail a Fortitude save (DC 14); *Sneak Attack*—3d6. *Uncanny Dodge*—Retains Dexterity bonus to AC even if flat-footed or unable to see opponent; *Evasion (Ex)*—On a successful Reflex save against a magical attack, takes no damage.

Equipment: masterwork sickle, rapier, dagger, shortbow, 20 arrows, sap, silver pendant of a skull and scythe (unholy symbol of Nerull), disguise kit, an encrypted journal, a book entitled *Debauched: Secrets of the Bawdy House*, other mundane traveling supplies, divine *scroll of silence*, divine *scroll of invisibility*, divine *scroll of cure light wounds*, divine *scroll of shield of faith*, *Luddy's hat of disguise*, and 80 pp, 32 gp, 5 sp.

Cleric Spells Prepared (Dom: Trickery and Death):

0<sup>th</sup> *cure minor wounds, detect magic, light, resistance*

1<sup>st</sup> *cure light wounds, doom, entropic shield, cause fear* (domain)

2<sup>nd</sup> *silence, invisibility* (domain)

Assassin Spells Prepared:

1<sup>st</sup> *obscuring mist*

## APL 6 (EL 9)

**Parvis Thander, male human Clr-3/Rog-5/Asn-1:** CR 9; Medium-sized Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 3d8+6d6+18; hp 59; Init +8 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 or 17 (+4 Dex, +2 armor, +1 Dodge if dodging that



opponent); Atks +10 melee (1d6+1, *sickle* +1) or +5 melee (1d6§, sap) or +9 ranged (1d6/crit x3, short bow); SA Death attack (DC 14), rog sneak attack 4d6, clr spells, spontaneous *inflict* spells; SQ Clr spells, rog uncanny dodge, rog evasion; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +11, Wil +5.

Str 10, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills*: Bluff +11, Decipher Script +3, Disguise +11, Forgery +5, Hide +16, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +8, Move Silently +16, Open Lock +11, Search +8, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +4, Spot +9, Tumble +14; *Feats*: Dodge, Flick of the Wrist\*, Improved Initiative, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse (*sickle*).

\*See appendix for description of Flick of the Wrist

SA: *Death touch*—A granted power of the death domain and usable once per day, a death touch is a spell-like ability that is a death effect. You must succeed at a melee touch attack against a living creature. When you touch, roll 3d6. If the total at least equals the creature's current hit points, it dies. *Death Attack*—An assassin ability, if you study your victim for 3 rounds, attack that target within another 3 rounds, then make a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, you can paralyze or kill the target if they fail a Fortitude save (DC 14); *Sneak Attack*—4d6. *Uncanny Dodge*—Retains Dexterity bonus to AC even if flat-footed or unable to see opponent; *Evasion*—On a successful Reflex save against a magical attack, takes no damage.

Equipment: rapier, dagger, shortbow, 20 arrows, sap, silver pendant of a skull and scythe (unholy symbol of Nerull), disguise kit, an encrypted journal, a book entitled *Debauched: Secrets of the Bawdy House*, other mundane traveling supplies, *sickle* +1, divine scroll of *invisibility*, divine scroll of *silence*, divine scroll of *cure light wounds*, divine scroll of *shield of faith*, *Luddy's hat of disguise*, and 70 pp, 32 gp, 5 sp.

Cleric Spells Prepared (Dom: Trickery and Death):

0<sup>th</sup> *cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *light*, *resistance*

1<sup>st</sup> *cure light wounds*, *doom*, *entropic shield*, *cause fear* (domain)

2<sup>nd</sup> *silence*, *invisibility* (domain)

Assassin Spells Prepared:

1<sup>st</sup> *obscuring mist*

## **APL 8 (EL 11)**

**Parvis Thander, male human Clr-3/Rog-7/Asn-1**: CR 11; Medium-sized Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall);

HD 3d8+8d6+22; hp 71; Init +8 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 or 17 (+4 Dex, +2 armor, +1 Dodge if dodging that opponent); Atks +12/+7 melee (1d6+1, *sickle of venom*) or +7/+2 melee (1d6§, sap) or +11/+6 ranged (1d6/crit x3, short bow); SA Death attack (DC 14), *poison* spell via *sickle*, rog sneak attack 5d6, clr spells, spontaneous *inflict* spells; SQ Clr spells, rog uncanny dodge, rog evasion; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +12, Wil +6.

Str 10, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 8.

*Skills*: Bluff +13, Decipher Script +3, Disguise +13, Escape Artist +7, Forgery +8, Hide +18, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +10, Move Silently +18, Open Lock +11, Search +11, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +4, Spot +10, Tumble +14; *Feats*: Dodge, Flick of the Wrist\*, Improved Initiative, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse (*Sickle*).

\*See appendix for description of Flick of the Wrist

*Death touch*—A granted power of the death domain and usable once per day, a death touch is a spell-like ability that is a death effect. You must succeed at a melee touch attack against a living creature. When you touch, roll 3d6. If the total at least equals the creature's current hit points, it dies. *Death Attack*—An assassin ability, if you study your victim for 3 rounds, attack that target within another 3 rounds, then make a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, you can paralyze or kill the target if they fail a Fortitude save (DC 14); *Sneak Attack*—5d6. *Uncanny Dodge*—Retains Dexterity bonus to AC even if flat-footed or unable to see opponent; can no longer be flanked, except by a level 11 rogue; *Evasion*—On a successful Reflex save against a magical attack, takes no damage.

Equipment: rapier, dagger, shortbow, 20 arrows, sap, silver pendant of a skull and scythe (unholy symbol of Nerull), disguise kit, an encrypted journal, a book entitled *Debauched: Secrets of the Bawdy House*, other mundane traveling supplies, *sickle* +1 of *venom*, divine scroll of *invisibility*, divine scroll of *silence*, divine scroll of *cure light wounds*, divine scroll of *shield of faith*, *Luddy's hat of disguise*, and 132 gp, 5 sp.

Cleric Spells Prepared (Dom: Trickery and Death):

0<sup>th</sup> *cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *light*, *resistance*

1<sup>st</sup> *cure light wounds*, *doom*, *entropic shield*, *cause fear* (domain)

2<sup>nd</sup> *silence*, *invisibility* (domain)

Assassin Spells Prepared:

1<sup>st</sup> obscuring mist

## APPENDIX 2: Default Room Descriptions of the Farmhouse

(To be followed by time-specific descriptions as listed in the text)

<b>Area A Exterior</b>	“The architecture of this two-story building suggests it is a farmhouse. Numerous windows grace its walls, and a large chimney comprises the northeast corner. A few small steps lead to a heavy front door.”
<b>Area B Dining Hall</b>	“The three large tables in this space suggest it is a dining hall. Four windows grace the walls, and a heavy door to the outside is on the west wall. A staircase leads up to the second floor, and the kitchen is clearly visible to the north.”
<b>Area C Kitchen</b>	“A large fireplace and cooking pit command attention in this otherwise modest kitchen. Shelves, utensils, cooking pots, and more are sprawled about. A large preparation table in the center holds more supplies. A curtain partially drawn grants access to a storage room in the back. Foodstuffs, extra kegs of mead, hanging meat can be found here.”
<b>Area D Upstairs’ Hall</b>	“A wide hallway runs the length of the farmhouse, doors on each side. Two old chairs with fraying upholstery rest against the wall in what appears to be a sitting area.”
<b>Area E Parvis’ Room</b>	“Two simple beds on pallets of straw lie against the west wall beneath a closed window. A small table acts as a nightstand between them and supports a candle, washbasin, and pitcher of water. A chamber pot, armoire, and a series of coat pegs comprise the rest of the furnishings.”
<b>Area F Lahara &amp; Jinelle’s Room</b>	“Two simple beds on pallets of straw lie against the west wall beneath a closed window. A small table acts as a nightstand between them and supports a candle, washbasin, and pitcher of water. A book is also resting on the table. A chamber pot, armoire, and a series of coat pegs comprise the rest of the furnishings.” [If Shandry has yet to be broken out of her stupor] “A young girl, maybe 7 or 8 years old is clutching her knees and rocking back and forth under the nightstand.”
<b>Area G Adrean’s Room</b>	“Two simple beds on pallets of straw lie against the west wall beneath a closed window. A small table acts as a nightstand between them and supports a candle, washbasin, and pitcher of water. A chamber pot, armoire, and a series of coat pegs comprise the rest of the furnishings. A closed backpack is resting on one of the beds, and an elaborate traveling cloak is hung on one of the pegs.”
<b>Area H Renadra’s Room</b>	“A large bed on a pallet of straw lies against the northwest corner beneath closed windows. A table nearby acts as a nightstand and supports a candle, washbasin, and pitcher of water. A chamber pot, armoire, and a series of coat pegs comprise the rest of the furnishings. This appears to be a permanently lived-in room, and various clothes and other mundane belongings are about.”
<b>Area I Mina &amp; Nello’s Room</b>	“Two simple beds on pallets of straw lie against the east wall beneath a closed window. A small table acts as a nightstand between them and supports a candle, washbasin, and pitcher of water. A chamber pot, armoire, and a series of coat pegs comprise the rest of the furnishings. This appears to be a permanently lived-in room of children, and various clothes, toys, and other mundane belongings are about.”

## APPENDIX 3: Cyndor and Nerull

### Cyndor

**(Keeper of Infinity, the Illimitable One), LN lesser god of Time, Infinity, and Continuity**

Cyndor (SIN-dohr) has three duties: meditate upon how manipulating time-space alters the universe, record the actions of every creature on Oerth in his *Personal Libram*, and guard the time-stream from powerful beings that might alter it to their advantage. This Oeridian god endorses the concepts of predestination, although his prospective differs from that of Istus or even his sometime ally (and superior) Lendor. He is shown as a towering man-form with no features and blocklike limbs of terrible strength, representing the unknowable and inevitable advance of time. His symbol is a rounded hourglass of black and white set on its side, much like the symbol for infinity.

*Time is not a static thing, but rather something liquid that stretches from the forgotten past to the present and into the distant future. Events of the past cause events in the present, which have consequences that last far beyond the lifetimes of their progenitors. There is no need to worry about the choices one makes in life, for all actions are determined and your fate is set based upon those choices. Augury is useful only as a moral balm to allow realization and acceptance of one's place in the stream of life.*

Clerics of Cyndor converge near sites of pending importance or disruption in the time-flow. They study old lore to plot the course of history and learn the future, and many work as advisors or seers. They debunk charlatan fortune-tellers and other false prophets. They travel with people whom they perceive will have interesting futures.

**Domains** Law, Protection Travel; **Weapons** sling.

### Nerull

**(The Reaper, Foe of all Good, Hater of Life, Bringer of Darkness), NE greater god of Death, Darkness, Murder, and the Underworld.**

Nerull (NEH-rul) is an ancient Flan god; few anywhere do not know and fear his name. He is a rust-red skeletal being with thick, blackish-green hair, a cowl and cloak of rusty black, and eyes, teeth, and nails the color of poisonous verdigris. His sablewood staff *Lifecutter* forms a scythelike blade of red force that slays anyone it touches. Fiends answer his call out of fear rather than loyalty, for he hates all life and is not above destroying servants out of displeasure or spite. His symbol is a skull and scythe. Of all other divine beings, the only one he tolerates is Incabulos, whose gifts send many to his realm.

*All are equal in Nerull's cold realm. Every living thing is an affront to the Reaper, and every death brings a dark spark of joy to his long-dead heart. Those who pray to Nerull to appease him only attract his attention and their own doom. Those who kill in his name shall be rewarded.*

Clerics of Nerull are secretive and solitary, as few sane people would tolerate their presence. Except in the most evil lands, no organized church of Nerull exists. Nerull's clerics commit murder as offerings to their god; when their actions are discovered, they flee their hiding places and move far away to carry out their evil deeds, appearing innocent while occasionally killing wayfarers on their long journey.

**Domains** Death, Evil, Trickery; **Weapons** scythe (m), dagger, quarterstaff, sickle.

## APPENDIX 4: NPC Descriptions

<p><b>Adrean</b> “a stout human lad”</p>	<p>This is a stout human lad of Oeridian descent just entering manhood. He possesses an air of good breeding and refinement, tempered with youthful exuberance. Thick hair of sable brown falls to just above his shoulders in a pageboy style. One of his bushy eyebrows seems perpetually arched, giving his otherwise rounded face some interest. [When not in bed] He wears a long, red tunic that reaches to his thighs and is belted at the waist. It is well tailored, as are his breeches of a lighter hue of red. Indeed, these are the expensive clothes of someone of wealth or station. At his side is a short sword and dagger.</p>
<p><b>Jinelle</b> “a young half-elf woman”</p>	<p>Straight, dark blonde hair crowns this young half-elf woman’s slight frame. It reaches to her mid-back and moves easily at little provocation. Her human side appears to be of Suel descent, while her elvish features create an even more angular look. Eyes of ice blue and lightly tinted lips are quite striking against her porcelain skin. [When not in bed] She wears a simple dress of pale green with yellow trim. A delicate silver chain is around her neck, bearing a citrine pendant. A dagger is at her side.</p>
<p><b>Lahara</b> “an elderly woman”</p>	<p>Lines of wisdom wrinkle this elderly, charismatic woman’s visage. Her jowly jaw line and waddle undulate a bit as she moves. [When not in bed] She wears a simple yet attractive hat up into which her grey hair has been gathered. Her cotehardie gown has a high collar and fits her well, the angel sleeves draping prettily. A dagger is at her side.</p>
<p><b>Mina</b> “a chubby teen girl”</p>	<p>A chubby teen girl, she has a sweet countenance and a shy demeanor. She keeps her long brown hair pulled up into a pony tail. [When not in bed] She wears a frumpy brown dress with a few small and worn out shoes.</p>
<p><b>Nello</b> “a gangly teen boy”</p>	<p>Having entered that awkward stage of life, this gangly teen boy is all arms and legs. A high-rising upper lip exposes his gums and crooked teeth, which are accompanied by his bad complexion. [When not in bed] He wears a boy’s tunic and breeches that are both too small for his height, as well as worn out shoes.</p>
<p><b>Parvis (out of disguise)</b> “a pale human male with a bulbous nose and matted, short black hair”</p>	<p>This pale human male is rather unattractive with a bulbous nose and matted, short black hair. He is wearing blackened leather armor and carries a dagger, rapier, a sickle, and short bow.</p>
<p><b>“Quial” (Parvis disguised)</b> “an elven man with decorative facial tattoos”</p>	<p>Decorative tattoos about his face are the most obvious characteristic of this somewhat unattractive elf. He has long brown hair with a slight wave into which has been woven a large eagle feather. He wears leather armor and carries a dagger,</p>
<p><b>Renadra</b> “A middle-aged woman with fiery red hair”</p>	<p>Pulled up into a wide bun, the fiery red hair on this middle-aged woman screams for attention. She has a plump figure, which she carries well, and freckles dot her fair skin. [When not in bed] She is wearing an apron</p>
<p><b>Shandry</b> “A young girl of about 7 or 8”</p>	<p>This girl of about 7 or 8 years in age has light brown hair, parted in the center, and braided down each side. She wears a simple blue linen dress with an embroidered flower on the bodice.</p>

## APPENDIX 5: NPC Matrix - Where They Are and When

	<b>ADREAN</b>	<b>JINELLE</b>	<b>LAHARA</b>	<b>MINA &amp; NELLO</b>
<b>8:00</b>	Area B (Dining Hall), talking with Parvis	Area B (Dining Hall), eating with Lahara	Area B (Dining Hall), eating with Jinelle	Area B (Dining Hall), serving guests
<b>9:00</b>	Area B (Dining Hall), talking with Jinelle	Area B (Dining Hall), talking with Adrean	Area B (Dining Hall), leaving and going Area F (her room)	Area B (Dining Hall), serving guests
<b>10:00</b>	Area G (his room having a tryst with Jinelle)	Area G (Adrean's room having a tryst with Adrean)	Area F (her room), sleeping	Area I (their room), sleeping
<b>11:00</b>	Area G (his room), sleeping as Jinelle sneaks out	Area G (Adrean's room), leaving and going to Area F (her own room)	Area F (her room), sleeping	Area I (their room), sleeping
<b>12:00</b>	Area G (his room), sleeping	Area F (her room), sleeping	Area F (her room), sleeping	Area I (their room), sleeping
<b>1:00</b>	Area G (his room), awakened as Parvis enters; fights with Parvis silently and is killed	Area F (her room), sleeping	Area F (her room), sleeping	Area I (their room), sleeping
<b>2:00</b>	Area G (his room), dead	Area F (her room), unconscious while Lahara incants her spell	Area F (her room), incanting the temporal spell and falling unconscious	Area I (their room), sleeping

	<b>PARVIS</b>	<b>"QUIAL"</b>	<b>RENADRA</b>	
<b>8:00</b>	→	Area B (Dining Hall), talking with Adrean	Area B (Dining Hall), letting out the cat to Area A (Exterior) and serving guests	
<b>9:00</b>	Area E (his room), reading incriminating evidence	←	Area B (Dining Hall), serving guests	
<b>10:00</b>	Area E (his room), reading a book	←	Area B - (Dining Hall), letting in the cat from Area A (Exterior) and going to Area H (her room)	
<b>11:00</b>	Area E (his room), reading a book	←	Area H (her room), sleeping	
<b>12:00</b>	Area E (his room), praying to Nerull	←	Area H (her room), sleeping	
<b>1:00</b>	Area E (his room), using his <i>hat of disguise</i> to change into "Quial" and then... →	Area E (his room), casting <i>silence</i> and then going to Area G (Adrean's Room) to kill Adrean	Area H (her room), getting annoyed by the thumping in Area G (Adrean's room)	
<b>2:00</b>	→	Area B (Dining Hall), exiting to Area A (Exterior) as he tosses his last alchemist's fire inside	Area H (her room), sleeping	

## Appendix 6: New Rules, Items, and Monsters

### New Feats

#### **Flick of the Wrist:**

With a single motion, you can draw a light weapon and make a devastating attack.

**Prerequisite:** Dex 17+, Quick Draw

**Benefit:** If you draw a light weapon and make a melee attack with it in the same round, you catch your opponent flat-footed (for the purpose of this attack only). This feat works only once per combat.

**Source:** *Song and Silence*, p. 39.

### New Magic Items

#### **Medium Sickle of Venom:**

This is a black, medium-sized +1 *sickle*, theommel of which is crafted into a skull. It allows the wielder to use a *poison* effect (as per the spell, save DC 14) upon a creature struck by the blade once per day. The wielder can decide to use the power after he has struck. Doing so is a free action, but the poison effect must be invoked in the same round that the sickle strikes.

Faint necromancy; CL 5<sup>th</sup>; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *poison*; Price 8,306 gp; Cost 4,306 gp + 320 XP.

Frequency: Adventure.

#### **Luddy's Hat of Disguise:**

The chubby, little gnome who crafted this magic hat, which appears as an off-white linen cap normally, set the command word to "butter pat" in homage to his love of the fatty staple. It otherwise acts as a normal *hat of disguise*. (Faint illusion; CL 1st; Craft Wondrous Item, *disguise self*; Price 1,800 gp). Frequency: Adventure.

### New Monsters:

See following page:

## Stream Wisp

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### Small Elemental (Lawful, Time)

**Hit Dice:** 2d8+2 (11 hp)

**Initiative:** +3

**Speed:** Fly 50 ft. (perfect) (10 squares)

**Armor Class:** 14 (+3 Dex, +1 Size), touch 14, flat-footed 11

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +1/−3

**Attack:** Tendril +5 melee touch (1d3 temporal)

**Full Attack:** Tendril +5 melee touch (1d3 temporal)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Temporal damage

**Special Qualities:** Blindsight, damage reduction 5/bludgeoning or spells or elemental effects, elemental traits, lawful traits, time traits

**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +0

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 14

**Skills:** —

**Feats:** Weapon Finesse

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**Environment:** Raw time-streams

**Organization:** Solitary or gang (2–4)

**Challenge Rating:** 1

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Always Lawful Neutral

**Advancement:** 3–6 HD (Small)

**Level Adjustment:** —

*A whining nimbus of pale blue light approximately 1 foot in diameter floats in the air. Scintillating rays emanate from it an additional 12 inches in all directions.*

Stream wisps are mindless creatures that exist only in the raw time-stream and other places of alternate phase. Scholars disagree as to how stream wisps came to be, although most believe they are the creation of one of the gods of time, most likely Cyndor. Regardless of their origins, the motives of wisps are indisputable: to expel any and all who venture into alternate phases or the raw time-stream itself.

A stream wisp appears as a floating nimbus of pale blue light approximately 1 foot in diameter. It emits scintillating rays to a distance of 12 inches, making its total space about 3 feet in diameter. They are composed of temporal energy, constantly emitting a hum.

### COMBAT

Patrolling continuously, stream wisps assault anything not of their ilk in an attempt to purge it from their realms. When first engaging in combat,

they always attack the nearest creature they sense, lashing out with a tendril of temporal energy (see below) until that creature is dead (not just unconscious), thus purged from the alternate phase.

While mindless, they still instinctually utilize attacks of opportunity, but do not otherwise engage in more sophisticated tactics, such as disarming, sundering, intentionally flanking, or coups de grace. Unconscious creatures are still attacked as normal, however, until dead. Then the stream wisp turns its attention to the next closest foe.

Unattended objects not belonging in the alternate phase are also attacked but only after all other animated and living targets are purged from the area.

**Temporal Damage (Su):** Any creature hit by a stream wisp's tendril attack has a portion of its essence purged from the alternate phase. Anyone killed by temporal damage is returned to the time and place where they originally entered the alternate phase, their corpse seemingly undamaged but still very dead. Temporal damage can be healed normally in or out of the alternate phase. Unattended objects brought to 0 hps from temporal damage are likewise returned whence they came.

**Blindsight (Ex):** Using sensitivity to vibrations, stream wisps maneuver and fight as well as a sighted creature. Invisibility, darkness, and most kinds of concealment are irrelevant.

**Damage Reduction (Ex):** The first 5 points of damage from piercing or slashing weapons are negated due to the time wisp's unique physiology. Bludgeoning weapons affect it normally.

**Elemental Traits:** Darkvision out to 60 ft.; immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis and stunning; not subject to critical hits or flanking; cannot be *raised*.

**Lawful Traits:** A creature with the lawful subtype overcomes damage reduction as if its natural weapons and any weapons it wields were lawful-aligned.

**Time Traits:** A creature with the time subtype can only exist in the raw time-stream and alternate phases, such as time loops. They can never be conjured, called, dismissed, or banished and are immune to both *slow* and *haste* spells.



## Stream Sentry

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### Small Elemental (Lawful, Time)

**Hit Dice:** 7d8+14 (44 hp)

**Initiative:** +7

**Speed:** Fly 80 ft. (perfect) (16 squares)

**Armor Class:** 19 (+4 Dex, +3 Natural, +1 Dodge (haste), +1 Size), touch 16, flat-footed 14

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +5/+1

**Attack:** Tendril +11 melee touch (1d6 temporal)

**Full Attack:** 3 tendrils +11 melee touch (1d6 temporal)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./10 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Temporal damage

**Special Qualities:** Blindsight, haste, damage reduction 10/bludgeoning or spells or elemental effects, elemental traits, lawful traits, time traits

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 18, Con 14, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 14

**Skills:** —

**Feats:** Combat Reflexes<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (Tendril)

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**Environment:** Raw time-streams

**Organization:** Gang (2–7)

**Challenge Rating:** 5

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Always Lawful Neutral

**Advancement:** 8–21 HD (Small)

**Level Adjustment:** —

*A whining nimbus of pale blue light approximately 1 foot in diameter floats in the air. Scintillating purplish rays swirl about from it in all directions. Most of the tendrils are about 2 feet in length, although a few rogue ones seem to writhe about in excess of 10 feet.*

Stream sentries are mindless creatures that exist only in the raw time-stream and other places of alternate phase. They are more powerful manifestations of stream wisps (*q.v.*) and always travel in groups.

A stream sentry appears as a floating nimbus of pale blue light approximately 1 foot in diameter. It emits writing rays of purple to a distance of 2 feet to 10 feet. The longer tendrils give the creature reach, which it deftly utilizes with its Combat Reflexes. These tendrils cannot be severed.

Sentries are composed of temporal energy, constantly emitting a hum.

### COMBAT

Patrolling continuously, stream sentries assault anything not of their ilk in an attempt to purge it

from their realms. When first engaging in combat, they always attack the nearest creature they sense, lashing out with a tendril of temporal energy (see below) until that creature is dead (not just unconscious), thus purged from the alternate phase.

While mindless, they still instinctually utilize attacks of opportunity and try to flank foes when possible. Unless they charge, they always close to within 5 feet of an opponent, so they can take attacks of opportunity against those who try to leave their 10 foot reach, but do not otherwise engage in more sophisticated tactics, such as disarming, sundering, or coups de grace. Unconscious creatures are still attacked as normal, however, until dead. Then the stream sentries turn their attention to the next closest foe.

Unattended objects not belonging in the alternate phase are also attacked but only after all other animated and living targets are purged from the area.

**Temporal Damage (Su):** Any creature hit by a stream sentry's tendril attack has a portion of its essence purged from the alternate phase. This attack overcomes damage reduction of any type. Anyone killed by temporal damage is returned to the time and place where they originally entered the alternate phase, their corpse seemingly undamaged but still very dead. Temporal damage can be healed normally in or out of the alternate phase. Unattended objects brought to 0 hps from temporal damage are likewise returned whence they came.

**Blindsight (Ex):** Using sensitivity to vibrations, stream sentries maneuver and fight as well as a sighted creature. Invisibility, darkness, and most kinds of concealment are irrelevant.

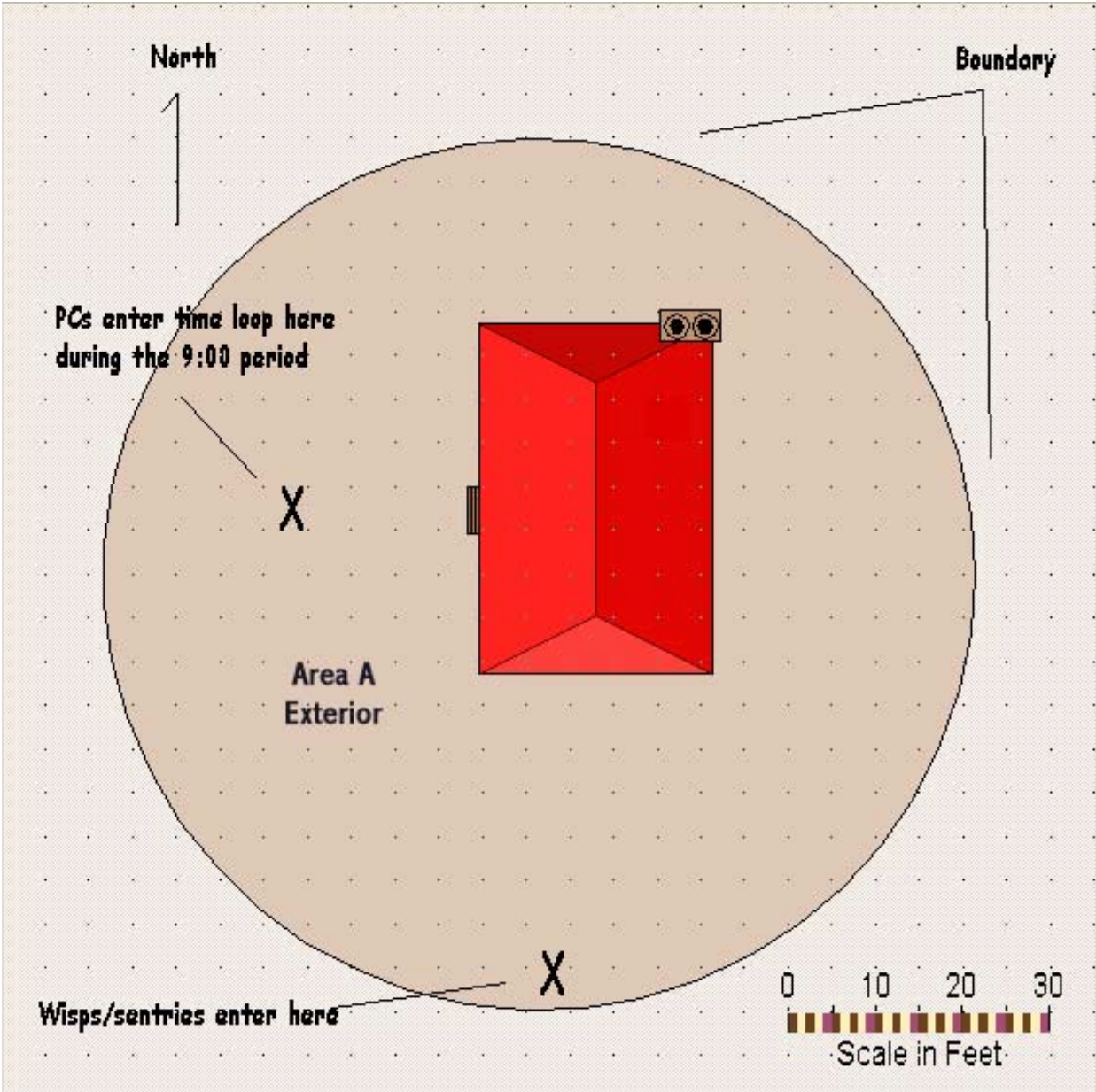
**Haste (Ex):** Being an entity of time, a stream sentry is always under the effect of a special kind of haste effect that grants a +1 bonus on attack rolls and a +1 dodge bonus to AC and Reflex saves. Additionally, when making a full attack action, a stream sentry may make one extra tendril attack, as already reflected in the Full Attack entry.

**Damage Reduction (Ex):** The first 10 points of damage from piercing or slashing weapons are negated due to the time sentry's unique physiology. Bludgeoning weapons affect it normally.

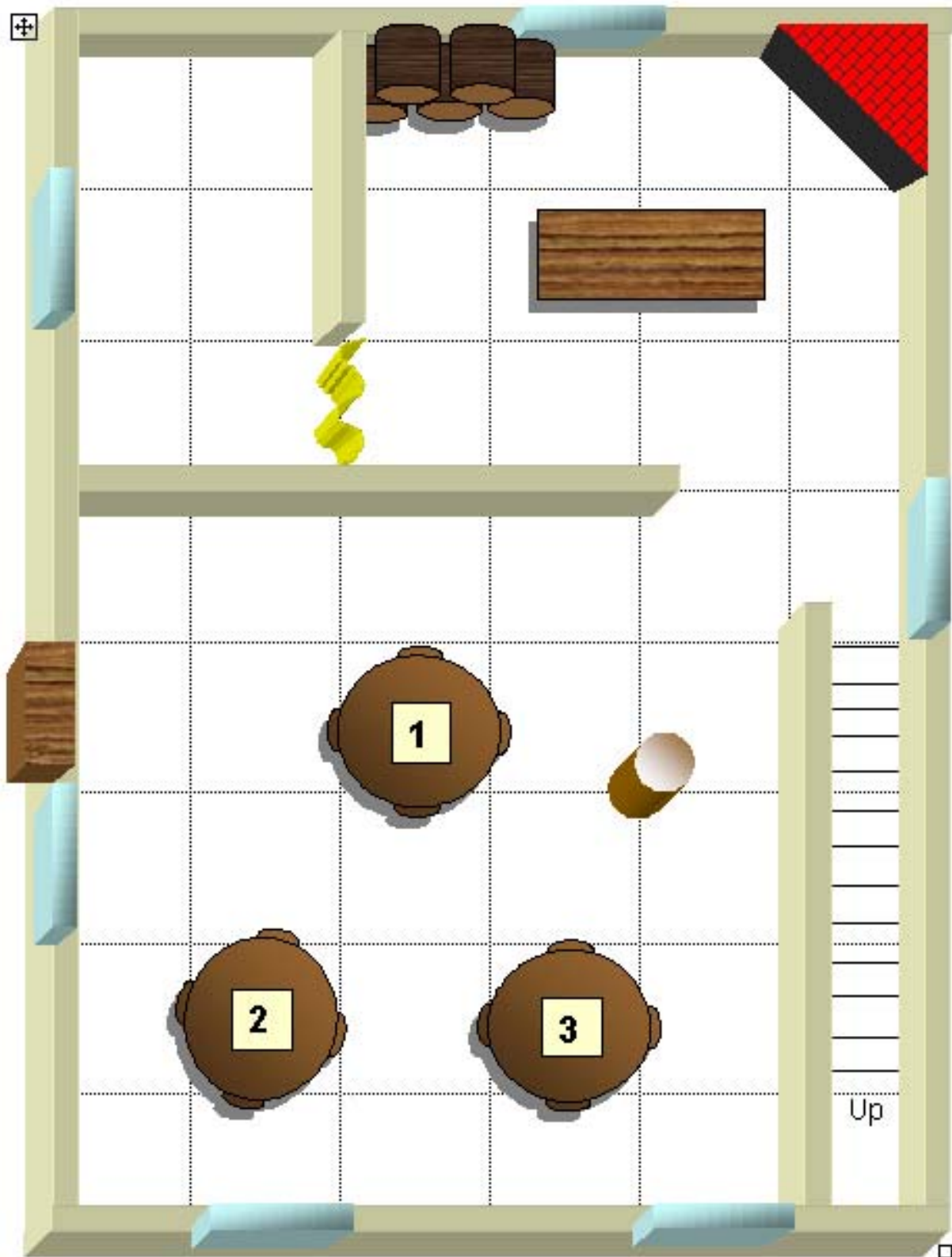
**Elemental Traits:** Darkvision out to 60 ft.; immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis and stunning; not subject to critical hits or flanking.

**Time Traits:** A creature with the time subtype can never be conjured, called, dismissed, or banished and are immune to both *slow* and *haste* spells.

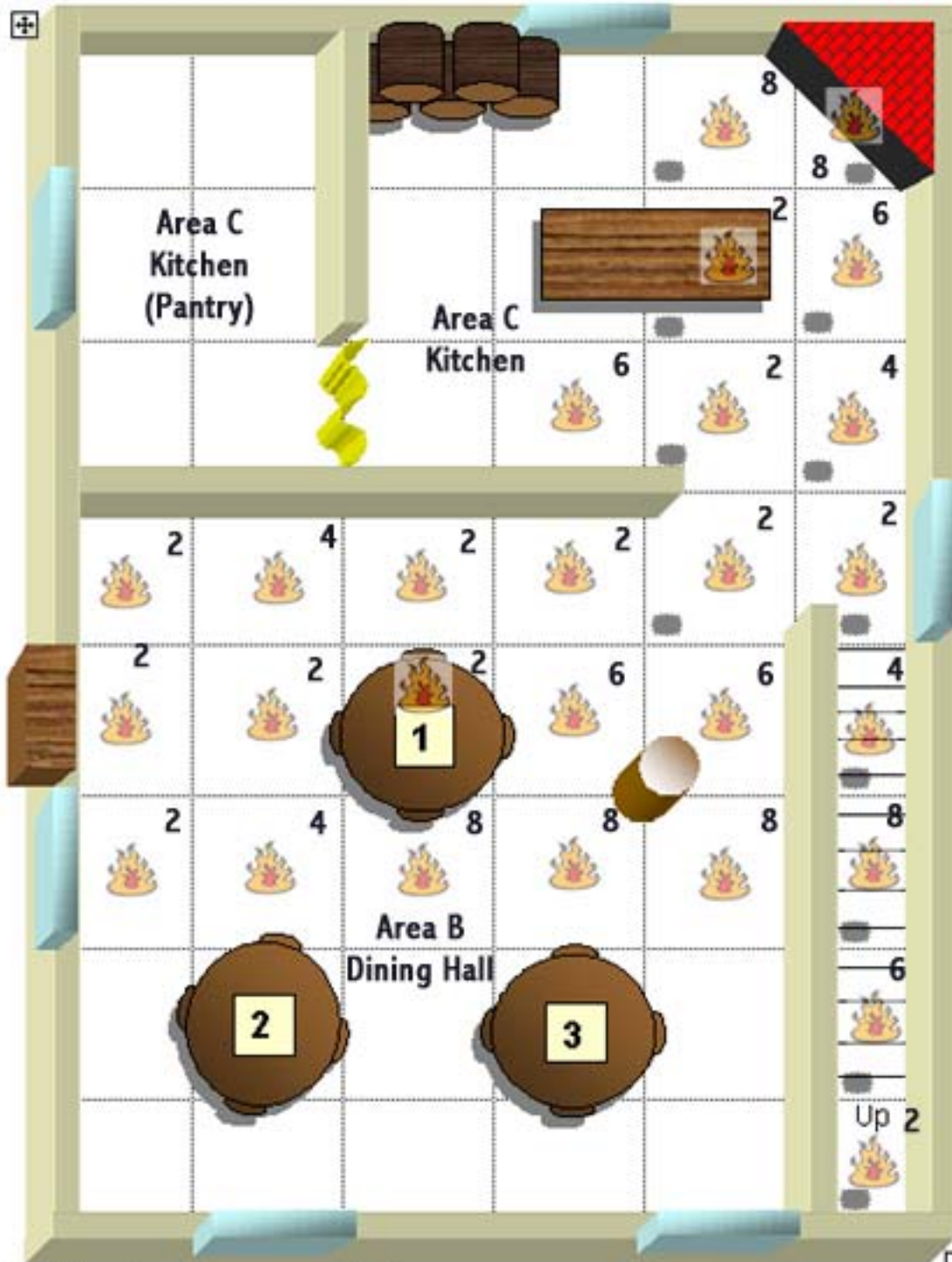
# APPENDIX 7: Farmhouse Exterior (Area A) - Judge's Map



## APPENDIX 8: Farmhouse Downstairs - Player's Map



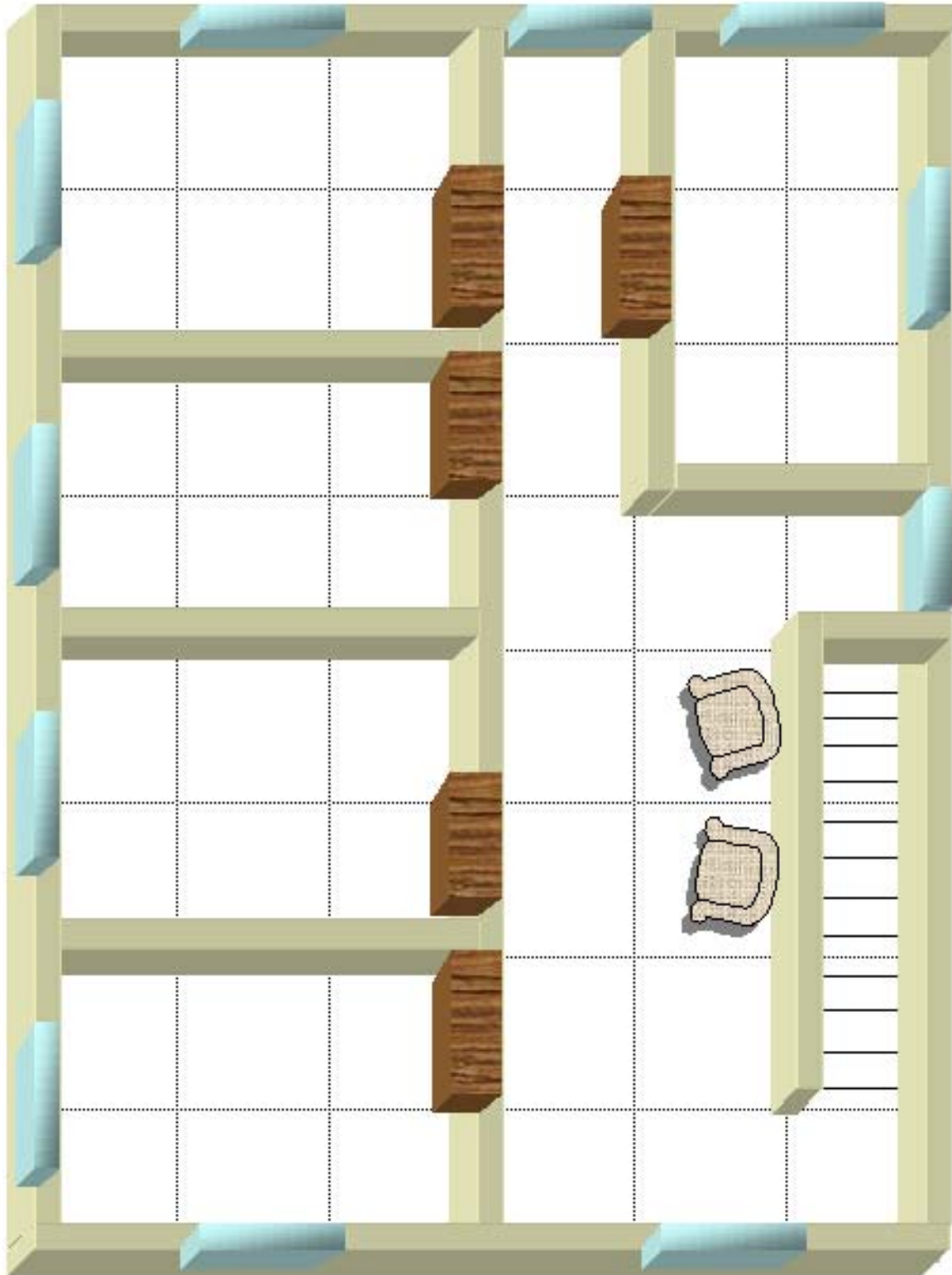
## APPENDIX 9: Farmhouse Downstairs - Judge's Map



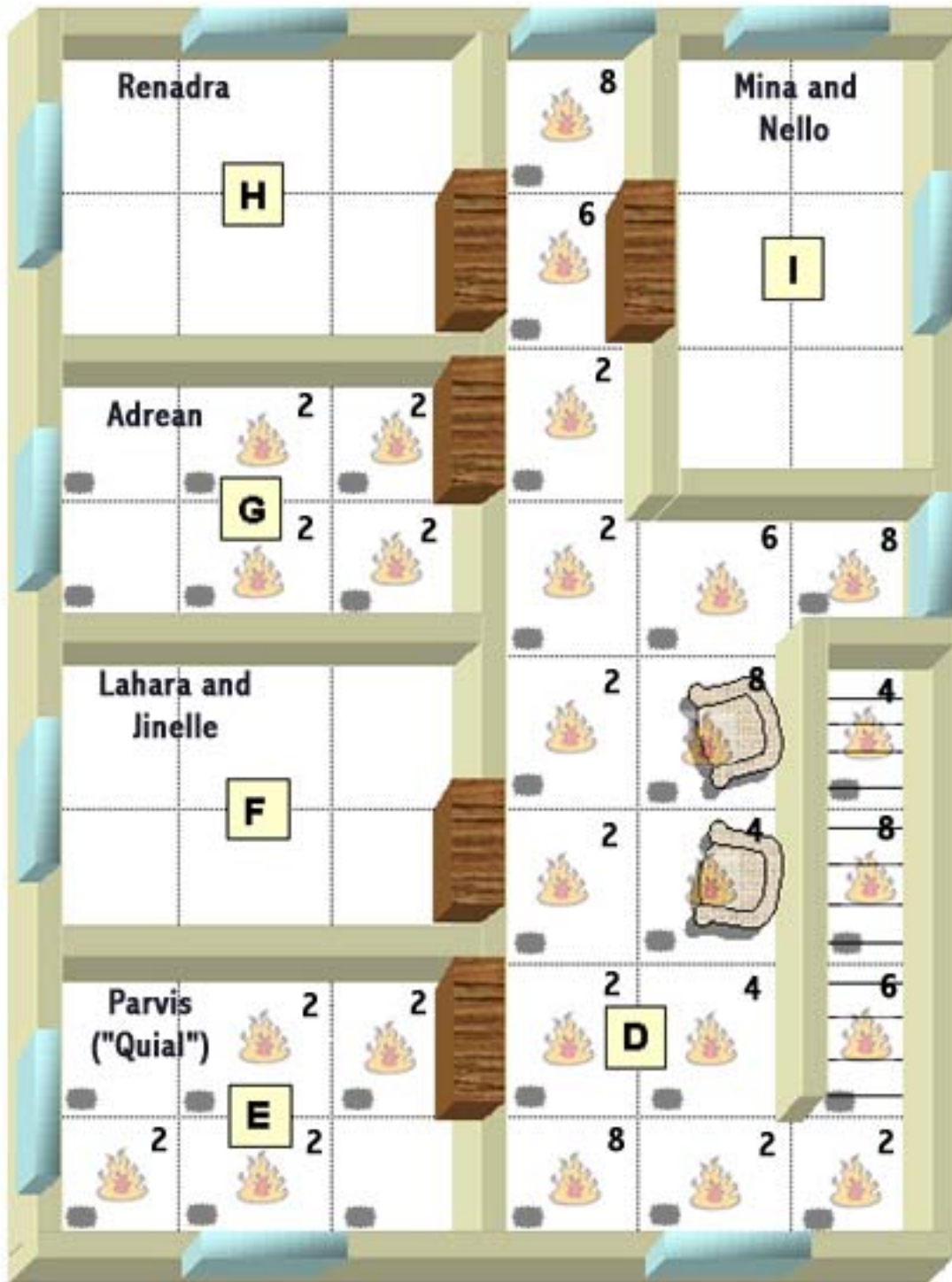
■ = Smoky square, all APLs

To determine which squares are on fire during the 2:00 period at a given APL, reference the numbers in the squares with the fire icons. APLs of that number \*and above\* are on this fire.

## APPENDIX 10: Farmhouse Upstairs - Player's Map



## APPENDIX 11: Farmhouse Upstairs - Judge's Map



■ = Smoky square, all APLs

To determine which squares are on fire during the 2:00 period at a given APL, reference the numbers in the squares with the fire icons. APLs of that number \*and above\* are on this fire.

## APPENDIX 12: Back in the Present: Where PCs and NPCs appear after the time loop ends

Other 6	PC 6	PC 1		Parvis
Lahara	Adrean			Mina
Renadra	PC 5			Nello
Other 5	Shandry	PC 3	PC 2	Other 1
PC 4	Other 4	Jinelle	Other 3	Other 2

Randomly number PCs from 1 to 6 and assign them to the appropriate squares on the board. If there are not enough PCs to fill all the PC squares, those unused squares remain empty.

Squares designated as "Other" are for animal companions, mounts, etc., as needed.