



A Thorn in the Side

A 1-Round D&D Living Kingdoms of Kalamar[®] Adventure
Part Two of *Beauty is Everlasting*
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A creature of darkness stalks Pekal. But even such minions of evil sometimes feel the pangs of loneliness, and now a collection of innocents have only a group of heroes to stand between them and a fate literally worse than death. The sequel to *Of Roses and Thorns*, it is suggested that participants play that adventure before undertaking this one, though it is not necessary. For ATLS 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9.

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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. 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.

Calculating Average Table Level (ATL)

Living Kingdoms of Kalamar uses ATL rather than Average Party Level (APL) in an effort to offer challenging adventures without massacring smaller or imbalanced tables. What this means is that, to calculate the ATL for a table, the levels of all the player-characters are added together. That number is divided by six regardless of how many player-characters there actually are. This number constitutes the party's ATL (rounded to the closest integer). If that number is not offered in the adventure, the players may choose if they play up (a higher ATL) or down (a lower ATL). It is against the spirit of the campaign to deny a player an open spot at a table in an effort to maximize the treasure for the other players at the table. Twelve players should play in 2 tables of 6 not 3 tables of 4.

Once you calculate the ATL write it down here as you will need it later for setting the DC of certain skill checks.

ATL _____

ADVENTURE NOTES

This module is an official supplement to the Living Kingdoms of Kalamar campaign. It is designed for 4 to 6 characters ranging from 1st to 7th level. It is advised that PCs go through this adventure with a full party, as the challenges presented may overwhelm a small party of adventurers.

You, the Judge (the authority figure of the table and the administrator of the adventure), need a copy of the Dungeons & Dragons[®] 3rd Edition revised Player's Handbook and Dungeon Master's Guide (v.3.5) for this event. The adventure takes place in the Kingdoms of Kalamar setting in the Principality of Pekal. Therefore, the Judge should also have the Kingdoms of Kalamar[®] Core Sourcebook and the Kingdoms of Kalamar Player's Guide.

Specific statistics for key Non-Player Characters (NPCs) and other materials are included in the appendix at the back of this adventure as well as throughout the adventure text itself. Certificates are also included. The Judge should read this adventure entirely no less than once before playing in order to ensure a precise flow of events, as there are many aspects relating to the flavor and culture that are important to the Living Kingdoms of Kalamar campaign and to this adventure.

CALENDAR AND CLIMATE

The majority of this adventure takes place in Ek'Gakel, during the late autumn.. The climate in this area around this time is generally windy and cold, often with snow and ice covering shady patches of ground.

MODULE NOTES

This module is a sequel to *Of Roses and Thorns*. A summary of that adventure is provided in the first paragraph of the next section. This module takes place outside the areas of the world normally presented in Living Kingdoms of Kalamar in the city of Betasa. Information on this city in Ek'Gakel may be found in the Kingdoms of Kalamar Campaign Sourcebook pp 76-79. A review of the *vampire* and *vampire spawn* entries in the Monster Manual is also suggested.

BACKGROUND

In the adventure entitled *Of Roses and Thorns*, the PCs happened upon a messenger that had been savaged by wild animals. The victim had been sent by the mayor of a small hamlet that has been threatened by animal attacks of increasing ferocity. The PCs discovered that at the root of the problem was a newly-created vampire named Sylستا. Strangely, this vampire exhibited the blue flash of psionic powers. At the conclusion of that adventure, the vampire fled as the heroes were busy saving the village.

For those PCs that played *Of Roses and Thorns*, Berayne, the young Priestess who survived Sylستا's attack in the village, requests their help tracking down the vampire. Their information leads them to another small hamlet – one that did not have a group of heroes to protect it, with tragic results.

PCs that have not played *Of Roses and Thorns* have come upon the carnage Sylستا has

wrought and (presumably) have an interest in tracking down the culprit responsible.

Observant PCs notice that despite the many corpses lying about, no children are among the dead. This is because Sylستا has not yet totally suppressed some of her human urges, and in her loneliness has “adopted” the children as her own. She now travels towards Betasa, and the amount of carnage she could cause should she reach such a heavily populated area should propel the heroes forward with all haste.

When the PCs arrive in Betasa, they are contacted by a wizard named Nalar. Some of his research was disrupted recently, and wishes the PCs to investigate. Although he knows details about Sylستا and her plans, he is circumspect when dealing with the PCs for his own reasons.

Nalar offers the heroes some leads to finding Sylستا and the children she holds captive. The heroes may also find some evidence by investigating various murder scenes and/or speaking to witnesses. Their investigation eventually leads to a derelict brewery where the PCs find that Sylستا has already slain one or more of the children, turned them into vampires, and left them as guardians for the others.

An epilogue read to the PCs reveals some additional information “off camera” and sets the stage for future adventures.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Introduction:

The PCs arrive in Bipidu where they find all the townsfolk murdered and drained of blood – except that there are no children’s corpses to be found. The trail leads north...

Encounter 1:

Tragically, Sylستا’s vile thirst could not be satiated in the wilderness, and one of the children with her paid the price. The child’s corpse was haphazardly flung down a slope along the roadside. It has attracted a dangerous scavenger that would be pleased to add some fresh meat to their diets.

Encounter 2:

The PCs arrive in Betasa. They discover that a lovely woman entered the city. She was escorting a number of children and claimed that she and her charges were the last survivors of a vampire attack on Bipidu.

Once inside the city, some descriptive flavor gives the players a sense of the city of Betasa. In the streets, a commotion will be seen. A criminal is being subdued and carted away by the constabulary. He is screaming about “the woman of fog” (having seen Sylستا changing back from *gaseous form*). The PCs have a chance to question him briefly before his barred carriage is carted away.

Encounter 3:

As the PCs move around the city asking questions, they gain the notice of the local Thieve’s Guild. The thieves know of Sylستا, and seek to make a deal with the PCs for the information.

Encounter 4:

The PCs meet the thieves to get the information. Everything goes as planned, and though the PCs may expect an ambush, the thieves live up to their word. Unfortunately, several dominated thieves join the meeting, slaying several of their own members before turning on the PCs.

Encounter 5:

As they move through the city, a tiny, wrinkled creature with leathery wings flies up to the PCs. The homunculus states that its master, Nalar, wishes to speak to the PCs about a potential threat to the city, and believes he may be able to help.

Encounter 6:

The PCs investigate the brewery. The children are bound and inside one of the enormous vats. One or more of the children are already vampires, and use their *spider climb* abilities to treacherous effect against PCs fighting on the narrow edges of the vat. The vampires attempt to keep the children from being freed. If they are, the victims will reveal that Sylستا has made her lair in the madhouse outside of Betasa (the PCs may have already dealt with her).

Conclusion:

The PCs must decide what to do with the children, and what to tell Nalar.

INTRODUCTION

Summary: The PCs arrive in Bipidu where they find all the townsfolk murdered and drained of blood – except that there are no children’s corpses to be found. The trail leads north...

Check with each player as to whether or not their PC has played *Of Roses and Thorns*. If they have, distribute **Appendix III: Player Handout #1**.

If the players have not completed *Of Roses and Thorns*, distribute **Appendix III: Player Handout #2** (*the PCs find Lord Wanifer's nephew unharmed in Encounter 6; they may return him to Bet Rogala with another caravan, or themselves, as they desire*).

For the PCs that have not played *Of Roses and Thorns*:

If the DM has some players who have and other who have not played *Of Roses and Thorns*, allow the latter group to wander into the village and encounter the former. They can exchange information and (presumably) agree to join forces.

Also, the judge should take special care to make sure that only adults are found in the village – Sylستا took ALL the children with her. When describing the houses and buildings, judges are encouraged to add broken toy swords, dolls with missing eyes, and so forth as indications that children were present in the village. But the judge is strongly encouraged to give the players a chance to notice there are no children in the village before just telling them...

Rounding the last bend, Bipidu finally comes into view. But even at a quarter-mile away, the image of the quaint town seems somehow wrong. Even from this distance, it seems that the village is deserted, for no people or animals move about.

PCs may want to take precautions before entering Bipidu. Allow them to lay any plans they wish, and continue below, making adjustments to the presentation as necessary (for example, if one of the PCs scouts ahead, take them aside and let them know a few details, allowing the player to determine what/how to tell others at the table).

Hinges on doors squeal as a gust of wind blows through the village. Open doors seem to be the norm, and several bang against their frames as the breeze hits them.

Slowly, one building in particular gains your attention. Apparently a civic structure of

some kind, the two-story wooden building is attached to a stable on one side, with a squat silo on the other. Two empty wagons are parked outside the stables. Unlike other building in Bipidu, the door to this building is closed.

There are two doors, one in front and one in back. Both are shut, but not locked. The window shutters are also closed from the inside, so looking in is not possible.

Anyone arguing that “there has to be a crack in the wood to look into the building” should be told that this is the best constructed building in all of Tellene, and no such cracks exist. ☺

Back to the topic...

The only sounds heard (Listen DC 20) from inside are soft buzzing noises.

Once the doors are open, continue below:

As the light hits the inside of the building a strange sight greets your eyes. Tables and chairs cover the interior, and it seems the entire village population is seated within. Unmoving and eerily silent, they do not react to the sudden light pouring into the large hall. But their slumped bodies and lolling heads betray the truth...

Flies erupt throughout the room and the noise becomes incredible as several hundred insects move around the room. And the stench that hits you a moment after opening the door is unmistakable – only death remains in here.

There are approximately 50 men and women from Bipidu all seated in chairs around large bench tables. All have wounds around the throat and neck area, and **Knowledge (religion) DC 15** reveals that several have bite marks consistent with those of vampires.

Heal DC 10 indicates the bodies have been here for nearly two weeks, and all were killed within a few days of each other, if not at the same time.

Speak with dead reveals as much as the villagers know: a priestess of the Eternal Lantern came to the village to protect them from the vampire, but she was the first to die. (In reality, Sylستا pretended to be the priestess, but she

used *dominate person* to pull the people into the Town Hall and killed them there. The Judge may venture non-spoiler information here as needed, possibly mentioning the name of a loved son or daughter to encourage the PCs along that line of thought.

Search DC 20 finds that a storeroom at the back of the main room has been ransacked, and the odd thing is that several bottles of Shyta-no-Doby wine have been set aside away from the mess. There is nothing odd about these bottles, and the PCs would know they come from the north. Sylysta felt déjà vu when she saw these bottles, as the vampire that killed her smelled of this wine when he took her life. That is also why she moved so much father north – in an effort to find him.

If the PCs search the other buildings, **Search DC 20** finds the corpse of one old woman dead in one of the houses. The interior of the house seems destroyed, particularly around the kitchen area. Unlike other houses it appears that there is no food in the house. **Search DC 25** finds a pile of rotting food behind the house in large sacks.

The woman does not have any obvious injuries, but **Heal DC 15** reveals she had very bad joints, poor eyesight, and probably could not walk very far without aid. **Heal DC 25** reveals she probably starved to death. A sheaf of papers clutched has the words “red hair” written over and over again in scrawling print.

The woman was slightly mad, and though she tried to find food when nobody came back to take care of her, couldn’t ever get anything to eat. Already old and weary, she eventually lost the strength to get out of bed, and died in her sleep. Unfortunately, she did see Sylysta (who removed the food from the house as a sort of “mercy killing” after deciding not to slay the old woman outright).

PCs in the village will see a number of obvious small tracks, presumably children, walking with larger footprints (roughly human-sized). **Survival** checks glean information as noted below:

- **DC 5:** The larger prints were made by a booted foot. The smaller ones are evenly divided between shoes, sandals and bare foot tracks.

- **DC 10:** The space between the prints indicates that the group was moving at a leisurely pace.
- **DC 15:** The prints are more consistent with a human child as opposed to (for example) a Halfling.

Any PCs who use other means to travel may do so. Sylysta actually arrives in Betasa the same day that the PCs enter Bipidu.

Proceed to **Encounter 1** once the players have decided to leave the village.

ENCOUNTER 1 **The Littlest Victim**

Summary: Tragically, Sylysta’s vile thirst could not be satiated in the wilderness, and one of the children with her paid the price. The child’s corpse was haphazardly flung down a slope along the roadside. It has attracted a dangerous scavenger that would be pleased to add some fresh meat to their diets.

This encounter takes place roughly midway between the 14-day journey from Bipidu to Betasa.

Your journey is solemn for the first half of your trip. The group you follow stops often, and it seems likely you are making up for lost time as you journey. It is only as the evening gloom begins to encroach and you ready to hunker down for a meal do you hear a rustling noise. It is about thirty yards away, just off the road, down a gentle slope. Heavy brush that frames the edges of the road on which you travel obscures what might be making the noise.

Spot DC 14 reveals the bushes are moving as if something is doing it – not just a natural occurrence.

Spot DC 17 reveals what appear to be the remains of a small humanoid form on the ground near the brush.

Spot DC 21 reveals the creature as listed below.

Creatures: The casually discarded corpse of one of Sylysta’s child victims has been

discovered by a scavenger. The creature has not had the chance to savage the body. The PCs might be able to circumvent the combat if they are careful, but they will be attacked if they break the brush-line to investigate.

Tactics: The creature has found a free meal, and is not looking for a fight. The creature fights to defend itself and its meal, but is not needlessly aggressive. Once it is reduced below $\frac{3}{4}$ of its hit points, the creature attempts to flee by the quickest and most appropriate method possible.

If PCs choose, they may attempt **Handle Animal (DC 13 + HD of creature)** or **Survival (DC 18 + HD of creature)** checks to chase away the creature. There is no penalty for failing these checks, just that it does not affect the creature. PCs may not take 10 or 20, and each PC may only try one time. They may assist each other if they have ranks in either skill.

ATL 1 (EL 2)
Black Bear

ATL 3 (EL 5)
Brown Bear

ATL 5 (EL 6)
Girallon

ATL 7 (EL 7)
Bulette

ATL 9 (EL 10)
2x Dire Tiger

Development: The remains are utterly devoid of blood. A **Heal** check (**DC 10**) determines that the blood was drained from the body and that the scavenger that happened upon it did not have the chance to gnaw on the remains before the PCs arrived.

If a PC asks to search for them, a **Track** check (**Survival DC 13**) reveals the same group of tracks, headed to Betasa, but there is one fewer set of smaller footprints.

ENCOUNTER 2 **The Lunatic of Betasa**

Summary: The PCs arrive in Betasa. They discover that a lovely woman entered the city.

She was escorting a number of children and claimed that she and her charges were the last survivors of a vampire attack on Bipidu.

Once inside the city, some descriptive flavor gives the players a sense of the city of Betasa. In the streets, a commotion will be seen. A criminal is being subdued and carted away by the constabulary. He is screaming about “the woman of fog” (having seen Sylysta changing back from *gaseous form*). The PCs have a chance to question him briefly before his barred carriage is carted away.

Arriving in Betasa without any further incidents, you find yourself waiting on a long line to enter the city. A fair number of merchants wait as well, and the topic of discussion seems to be the price of wine – specifically the famous Shyta-no-Dobyo wines. Surprisingly, several merchants ahead of you seem to be from Pekal, all of them with cargo which seems to be apples, oranges, and other assorted fruit.

You are eventually ushered forward, and you are asked several questions by the guards.

The guards ask the following questions:

- “What is your name?”
- “Are you a citizen of any nation, and if so, which one?”
- “How long are you expecting to stay in Betasa?”
- “What is your profession?”

Dejy in the party are especially singled out, and questioned quite harshly. The guards might even impose a special tax for “foreigners” if there is a Dejy in the party. High **Diplomacy** rolls (ex. **20 + ATL** depending on role-playing of the players) result in the guards encouraging the Dejy PC in question to wear a hood and cover their faces to “safely move around” the city.

The City of Betasa, and the country of Ek’Gakel, has had very poor relations with Dejy nomads for some time, and these characters are in for a rough time. Nothing overt or threatening, but it

should be clear to them that they are not welcome.

If any PC mentions the destruction of Bipidu, asks about Sylستا and/or a group of children, the guards acknowledge that they are familiar with it, and provide the following information:

“Yes, we heard about Bipidu from a group of survivors that came through here several days ago. A group of children were led here by a very beautiful human woman. She’s the one that told us about the village. She was Fhokki by her skin, but had the red hair of a Kalamaran. Said that her home was savaged by a vampire, may the Lantern shine, and that she and the children were the sole survivors. We ushered her in and directed her to the orphanage down the way. Even sent out a patrol to see if they could catch the beast.”

Sylستا of course never took the children to the orphanage, and any efforts by the PCs to investigate that lead turn up nothing. She also killed the patrol the next night, and buried their remains – the PCs did not encounter any evidence of the patrol, nor would they have been able to without precisely- worded divination magic (i.e. outside the scope of this event).

The guards allow a few more questions, but eventually it should be clear to the PCs that the men on duty didn’t question the group very closely. If this is pointed out, the guards seem a bit sheepish, but don’t really think it odd, or recall anything out of the ordinary. If asked, the guards remember that the group appeared at the gate right after sunset (Possibly the guards were *dominated*? Not a bad conclusion..).

Assuming the PCs give no inappropriate or suspicious answers, they are allowed inside. If the DM feels a guard might be suspicious of the PC, they will be ordered to wear a red armband ribbon (to distinguish themselves to the guards on the streets as deserving of extra attention) and to check in once a day with the city watch to report their activities.

If the PCs insist that Sylستا is a vampire, the guards immediately report the information to their superiors. The following evening, there is a marked increase in the size of guard patrols, and they all include at least one good-aligned cleric of The Raiser.

Having concluded your business with the guards, you proceed through the gate and onto the drab-colored pavestones of the main road. All about you, a mix of humanoids move about on their own business, though more than a few stare intently as you walk past. Unlike most cities of size, there are not many merchants on the streets, and very few children about. Most of the inhabitants wear rough leather jerkins or heavy tunics, and not a one wears anything that could be considered “royal.”

The buildings are all squat structures, rising only a few stories with small square windows and heavy wooden-framed doors. Some of the larger buildings have tiles on the roof, but most have thatch or straw. With the chill in the air, many of the smaller buildings have large carts of straw nearby with people working to fill in thin spots on the roofs.

It is then that you hear the crazed howling of a man from ahead. There are other shouts and cries, and the tumult seems to come from just beyond a group of citizens that seem to have gathered to view whatever spectacle is creating so much noise.

In the unlikely event that the PCs do not investigate, you may proceed to **Encounter 3**. If they check it out:

A quartet of guards has used a pole with a loop of rope at its end to lasso a crazed-looking man by the neck. He has a filthy beard, and looks like he has lived in the streets his entire life. His clothes are ill-fitting rags, and he appears to be a Kalamaran in his mid-sixties – tough to tell, given the grime that cakes his features. He is very strong, and two of the guards struggle to hang on to the pole while two more approach with saps. One swings the sap wide, the blow landing in the man’s stomach. He grunts and steps forward, and before his filthy nails can rake the man’s eyes out, a female guard slips past the lunatic and delivers a precise blow to the back of his knee. The man shrieks and crumples, and the guards have him bound in short order. They haul him off to a covered cart with a barred door. The whole time, the man screams about “the fog... the mist!”

This fellow's name is Andirov, and he witnessed a murder near the brewery when Sylستا left the scene in *gaseous form*. Seeing her shift form robbed this wretch of what little sanity he had remaining.

He went mad, and was arrested earlier in the week for assault on a red-haired woman in the market. He broke out of his cell this morning, and has just now been caught.

The guards speak amongst themselves discussing the event, and the lunatic grasps the door's bars and peers out into the crowd. If a PC wishes, they may attempt to sneak over to Andirov and speak briefly with him before the guards step in to get rid of the miscreant. After a time, two of the watch will resume foot patrols while the other two take Andirov away.

PCs with red hair who get near Andirov set him into a frenzy of screaming and jumping around the wagon, immediately alerting the guards.

The guards have +5 to Spot checks used to try and see PCs moving to speak with Andirov. Give modifiers for other PCs setting up diversions, etc. Questioning the guards is fairly useless as far as information is concerned; Andirov broke out of jail, and is being taken back.

Read the following if any of the PCs speak with Andirov. He won't respond to, or even acknowledge, questions put to him.

The man's eyes are dilated and his breath is foul. His grimy clothes are tattered and hanging on his slim frame by only the grace of the Gods. He reaches out towards you with blackened fingernails and filth-encrusted hands. "Mist... fog... they hide secrets... the mist is alive, you know... it walks like a woman... kills like a hunter..."

"Settle down, you!" snarls a guard, who cracks the whip in his direction. He spots you near the lunatic. "Step away from that man, or you'll end up in the cage with him!" The man leaps backwards into a corner, gibbering and wailing. The carriage forward lurches a moment later, headed out of town.

Ask PCs who approach the wagon for a **Spot (DC 10)** after the guard chases them away. Other PCs who did not approach may attempt at

DC 20. Success reveals that when the man jumped away from the bars of the carriage, they noticed a picture on Andirov's tunic of a sheaf of grain. It is difficult to make out because of the dirt and grime on his clothing.

Inquiries on a picture of a sheaf of wheat don't result in anything, as the picture could represent nearly anything; grain merchants, a tailor's personal mark, a brewery, any of several guilds (farmers, bakers, etc), foreign power (heraldry of another country or noble).

ENCOUNTER 3

Unwanted Attention

Summary: As the PCs move around the city asking questions, they gain the notice of the local Thieve's Guild. The thieves know of Sylستا, and seek to make a deal with the PCs for the information.

This encounter should take place after the PCs are allowed to move around the city and question various individuals or visit temples, orphanages, etc. The judge may use their imagination and information found in **Appendix II: Additional Rules** to flesh out the city of Betasa.

Hopefully, the PCs are asking about Sylستا using the "red hair" she is known for; if not, adjust the box-text below according to the lines of inquiry used by PCs in their questions.

A small boy clad in dirty leather pants tugs on your (pick a PC who looks big and strong) arm. Although short, his eyes are quick, and he seems quite at ease as he gets your attention.

"Hey there. One of my friends told me that he knows something about the lady with red hair! He prefers to keep his name a secret for now, but is willing to part with this information, as long as you are willing to part with some gold. You interested?"

Assuming the PCs ask some questions, give them **Sense Motive DC 15** to determine that the boy gives signs indicating he is part of the Thieve's Guild. Any rogues, brigands, or infiltrators in the party would not consider his behavior contacting them to be unusual – though trusting the Thieves' Guild may be difficult for some in the party to accept.

The boy answers questions as well as he can, though he really doesn't know much more. Gellen is a typical street scamp; he thinks he is very clever, and has a mouth if the PCs start getting rude or pushy. He does not try and antagonize them as his "brother" has instructed him to be polite.

Some sample questions and answers are below.

What is your name?

"They call me Gellen, sir. Quick as a rabbit, and twice as smart!"

Where do you live?

(Expansively waving all around) **"This entire city is my home!"**

Who is your friend?

"He's kind of like my big brother. He watches out for me, and has me run some errands."

Are you a beggar?

"Oh, sometimes, but mainly I just do chores."

Do you work for the Thieves' Guild?

"Thieves' what? I don't know what you're talking about." (Obviously lying)

Come on now! Are you a member of the Thieves' Guild?

"I really don't know what you mean!" (Without a doubt DC -2 lying)

Wouldn't you like to come home with me to <insert anything PCs may say to try and convince Gellen to leave the Thieves' Guild>?

"Why? I get fed, get to sleep under a roof, and have fun every day! Why would I want to go anywhere else?"

How much does this information cost?

"He said 200 gp."

What information does he have?

"He said to tell you that he knows when and where she sleeps. Something else about not liking sunshine..."

Answer other questions as needed, though his knowledge is very limited, and he knows nothing else about the woman with red hair, or the children.

If the PCs agree to the meeting, continue below.

If not, continue to **Encounter 5**.

"Great! I'll tell my brother that you'll be there. He expects payment on delivery. Meet him before sunset at the Siege Engines. Those are near the southwest corner of the city – you can't miss 'em."

The boy bows quickly, then scampers off.

Efforts to follow him fail, as several thieves are watching the exchange, and they cover his tracks. Assume these thieves have a **Hide** check of **34** as they took 20 knowing when and where the meeting was to occur.

Any efforts to ask questions about the siege engines or the southwest corner of the city reveal the following information.

Gather Information checks:

DC 10: The siege engines are four old catapults that were positioned outside the city years ago. They were supposed to be part of an army attacking Betasa, but they were never completed. The city eventually grew so much that the walls surrounded the siege engines. They're old and rotting now, covered in vines.

DC 15: Birds flock to the area for some reason, nesting among the vines and the rotting skeletons of the catapults. It is a popular meeting place, though it is a bit out of the way from the main roads.

DC 20: The southwest corner of the city is not very populated, though all the buildings are fairly new. The watch doesn't usually have problems in that area, and crime is generally pretty low.

DC 25: Rumors say that thief organizations have some of their hideouts in the area. That is why crime is low, and the watch tends to get in and out easily – the thieves don't want trouble on their own turf.

Once the PCs have finished asking questions, continue to **Encounter 4**.

Encounter 4 **Honest Thieves**

Summary: The PCs meet the thieves to get the information. Everything goes as planned, and though the PCs may expect an ambush, the thieves live up to their word. Unfortunately, several dominated thieves join the meeting, slaying several of their own members before turning on the PCs.

See **Appendix II: Additional Rules Map #1** for information on the area.

The PCs may arrive at any time, though the thieves do not appear before the appointed hour (right before sunset). Allow the PCs to make searches of the area, Spot checks, etc as needed. They may even set up on buildings around the area if they desire. Not that players are paranoid or anything, but the Judge should expect some creative approaches to this encounter.

When they arrive read the following:

“Before you arrive at the location, the sound of birds – hundreds if not thousands of individuals – begins filling the air. Overhead, the air has become thick with the creatures, as they flit back and forth on their own avian errands. Rounding the corner, you see your destination, almost completed shadowed by a feathered mass of creatures that fly about in seemingly chaotic patterns. The noise increases in volume to the point where it becomes difficult to hear each other speak.

The siege engines are just as described: large wooden remains of several catapults, all aimed into the heart of Betasa. Vines, bushes, and wild grass have grown up all around the engines, creating a small forest of undergrowth.

Allow the PCs to make any preparations they want. They may try to chase some birds away, but it does no good – there are just too many coming and going for the PCs to have any impact.

All spells or psionics require a **Concentration DC 10** check to complete because of the noise. This is a separate check from any other Concentration check (i.e. from casting defensively). Failure on this check due to the noise results in the caster/psion making a mistake, and losing the spell/power.

After the PCs indicate they are ready for the meeting, continue below:

“As the sun lowers itself below the horizon, a group of three individuals come out from one of the side streets. Pausing momentarily, they continue once they catch sight of your group. A large male half-orc leads the way, flanked by a female human, and another male half-orc. All are dressed in dark clothing, though the glint of armor is evident in the fading light. All wear swords and daggers at their sides, and the woman carries a heavy crossbow.

Stopping 10 feet away, the male speaks, “You have my money?” The other male half-orc moves forward 5 feet and holds out his hand.

“The woman with red hair brought several children to the city eight days ago. You know what she is, so she needed to stash them somewhere away from the sun. She took them to an”

At that instant, several crossbow bolts slam into the half-orc’s back. His eyes register shock, then something else as he falls down, grabbing his throat, struggling to breathe.”

Initiative begins now. The dominated thieves have already had their surprise round, so combat begins normally. They were moving silently, and *invisible*.

The half-orc has taken 14 Con damage from poisoned bolts. He dies in the surprise round, and cannot be healed. **Heal** checks must be performed for the PCs to know this information, though it should be clear that he is suffering from fast-acting poison.

The other two thieves meeting with the PCs flee as quickly as possible. The dominated thieves allow them to leave, seeking to kill the PCs.

ATL 1 (EL 3)

3 Dominated Thieves (Rog 1)

ATL 3 (EL 5)

3 Dominated Thieves (Rog 2)

ATL 5 (EL 8)

4 Dominated Thieves (Rog 4)

ATL 7 (EL 10)

4 Dominated Thieves (Rog 6)

ATL 9 (EL 12)

4 Dominated Thieves (Rog 8)

The thieves do not say anything when they attack, nor do they surrender, ask for mercy, or anything else that may be considered normal if they begin losing the battle.

If the PCs attempt to determine whether or not the thieves are under some kind of compulsion, they are suffering the effects of a *dominate person* effect from Sylysta. See details on Sylysta in the **Appendix I: NPCs and Monsters** for more information about her special abilities.

Developments: When searched, one of the thieves has a large brass key, the handle of which is shaped like a sheaf of wheat. The key is of old manufacture, and appears to fit a large lock. The sheaf of wheat is very similar to the picture on Andirov's tunic from **Encounter 2**.

After the battle concludes, move to **Encounter 4**.

ENCOUNTER 5 **Meeting Nalar**

Summary: As they move through the city, a tiny, wrinkled creature with leathery wings flies up to the PCs. The homunculus states that its master, Nalar, wishes to speak to the PCs about a potential threat to the city, and believes he may be able to help.

The DM should feel free to allow the PCs to wander about a bit through Betasa, but at some point this encounter should occur after the attack in **Encounter 4**. Depending on time, this encounter may take place immediately after...

As you move through the hustle and bustle of the Betasa streets, you hear a scratchy, high-pitched voice cry out to you. "Adventurers!"

Flying through a break in the crowd is a tiny creature. Its skin looks leathery, and has wings resembling that of a bat. It is humanoid in appearance, naked and hairless. It is smiling, showing a mouthful of needle-like teeth.

"Master wishes to talk to you! Such lucky people, to speak with the Master! The big tower north of here, master is inside, yes!" The creature's voice dips to a conspiratorial whisper, and a sly look crosses its face. "Master says he knows much about city. Murders. Blood. Red Hair!"

The creature is a homunculus, a creation of Nalar's powerful alchemical magic. It is not very intelligent, but is a diligent servant.

All ATLS (EL 1)

Homunculous

The creature (who has no name; if asked for one, it will look dumbfounded and finally manage to come up with "Servant") does its best to persuade the PCs to accompany it to the tower to meet its master. A **Knowledge (arcana) DC 10** check reveals that the creature is a homunculus. The tower in question is white stone, three stories in height, and is clearly owned by someone of means. A sigil on the front door identifies the master of the tower as a wizard.

If the PCs can't be talked into coming along, the little construct flies away looking dejected, only to attempt to shadow the PCs and spy on them from a safe distance. If the creature is spotted and it realizes this, it flies off, never to return.

If the PCs choose to accompany the construct:

The odd little creature flits over to the doors and knocks once, then hisses something in that seems to have no meaning. The doors noiselessly part, and, with some effort, the little being tugs the large door open. When this is done, he beckons for you to enter.

The ground floor is a large living chamber adorned with all manner of arcane relics and books of magical interest. The room is lavishly appointed. A number of comfortable couches are arranged in the room. A stone stair leads up to a second floor.

"Master," your guide squeaks, as loud as he is able, "the guests are here!" It quickly zooms up the stairs. A moment later, a stately looking Kalamaran man of middle years descends the steps. He is handsome, with piercing eyes and a warm smile. He

descends to the bottom of the stairs and bows to you at the waist. "Honorable guests! Welcome to my home. Please, avail yourselves of my hospitality." As if on cue, a decanter and tray of fruit float noiselessly across the room and descend onto a low stone table in front of the couches. Large mugs full of frothing ale appear out of nowhere. The man takes a mug and sits down, motioning for you to do the same.

"I am Nalar, a wizard and scholar. Thank you for accepting my invitation. How shall I call you?"

Nalar waits patiently for the PCs to introduce themselves.

Very well. Several days ago, a young woman entered the city with a collection of children in tow. She told the gate guards that they were the last survivors of a vampire attack that had devastated their village. I have had the occasion to study undead on occasion. Vampires are nothing to be trifled with, as you all know.

Two nights ago, two bodies were discovered near the western wall of the city. As the guard knows I am well-versed in strange and arcane knowledge, I received a summons to attend the scene of the crime. When I arrived, I saw several clerics of various faiths with somber expressions on their faces. Once I saw the bodies, I learned why... Both had been drained of their blood, and each had wounds consistent with vampire attacks. On my advice, the guards kept the story silent so as not to panic the masses. The churches have been quietly searching the city, but so far they have not discovered anything. I have been attempting to turn my power to finding the fiend, but so far my divinations have not revealed much, though I confess I have never been very good at divinations."

As you may have guessed, my divinations have only returned one scene – when I try to determine when the vampire entered Betasa, I continued to get the image of the woman entering the city with the children.

In the meantime, my spies reported a band of armed adventurers, clearly foreigners, who arrived without any apparent reason for being here. This leads me to one of two

conclusions. Either you are hunting this vampire, or you are foreign mercenaries or adventurers. Which is it?"

Allow the PCs to tell their story a bit, and have Nalar listen intently. He does not seem surprised if told about Sylysta, as he had made that assumption. Some likely questions the PCs might have, along with suggested responses to be delivered by the DM, are given below.

Eventually, Nalar should hire them to find the children, then Sylysta. He offers to pay them:

- 200 gp each
- 3 vials of *silversheen* (total)
- Spellcasters may scribe one spell from his library (he has every spell from approved campaign sources) into their spellbooks.

Are you a scholar of these creatures?

"Not actually. I deal mainly with studies of other planes, although a vampire's strong connection to the negative planes makes it of academic interest to me. My main concern is the welfare of those children, and the citizens of Betasa."

Any advice on how to combat her?

"Most of the legends about the weaknesses of vampires you may have heard from the wagging tongues of bards are accurate, for the most part. Sunlight is anathema to them, and they can be dispatched with a stake of wood through the heart. Flame and holy water are effective weapons against them, as are consecrated or blessed objects."

Do you know anything about the interior of the brewery?

"There are one or more large central vats in which the beer was brewed, and there are numerous casks and barrels all about as you might imagine.."

We have some evidence that the vampire might be at the jail...

"Interesting. I think that a group of children within the jail would have been noticed by now. Although she may very well be there, the children may be imprisoned at the brewery. Frankly, I think the security of the kidnapped children is more important at this moment."

Mind if we borrow your little spy, there?

"You may not."

Why don't you handle this yourself if you're such a powerful wizard? / Why don't you help us by scrying on her magically? (Etc.)

"I am hiring you to undertake this task on behalf of the city. Tracking down a vampire is a dangerous affair, and while I am eager to see this menace terminated, I am not willing to put my own life in jeopardy. To be frank, I can hire other adventurers, but I doubt that any of you could protect the city as I could if the situation becomes dire enough. If you are not willing to do so, either, then you are free to decline my offer."

At an appropriate time, or when the PCs are nearly finished asking questions, have them make Wisdom checks. This is a non-calculated DC – the PC with the highest result gets the following:

As your friends speak with Nalar, you notice something. When your comrade raises his mug to take a drink of the fine ale, you barely catch sight of the sheaf of wheat engraved on the bottom of the mug.

Other mugs have similar engravings, and all seem fairly worn, though still in very fine shape.

If questioned about the mugs, Nalar responds:
These mugs? They are nice, aren't they! They were a gift from Dorin Cragrunner, owner of the Ghaeldrol Brewery. I journeyed for a time with Dorin and when we decided to end our adventuring careers, he decided to make beer using his clan's recipe. Unfortunately, his father was killed in an attack by duergar raiders, so Dorin had to return to his home to avenge his loss. I asked to go with him, but he would hear none of it. But before he left, he made these mugs for me, and bade me keep them safe until his return.

If questioned about the brewery:
Well, Dorin did not leave anyone in charge, he simply boarded the place up and left town. He didn't have any other clandestine operations in Betasa, and he surely wouldn't trust any others to run his brewery.

Assuming the PCs draw the conclusion that the brewery may be a good place to investigate:
He pauses. "The brewery would be a logical choice; it is large enough to hide a sizable

number of creatures, and the entire bottom is totally enclosed and protected from sunlight."

When the PCs have finished their dialogue with Nalar, they are free to accept or decline as they wish. The PCs (assuming they are heroes!) will have to deal with Sylستا regardless, and there is nothing wrong with seeking some compensation for doing something that they would have done anyway.

ENCOUNTER 6

The Brewery

Summary: The PCs investigate the brewery. The children are bound and inside one of the enormous vats. One or more of the children are already vampires, and use their *spider climb* abilities to treacherous effect against PCs fighting on the narrow edges of the vat. The vampires attempt to keep the children from being freed.

Refer to **Appendix II: Additional Rules Map #2**.

The Ghaeldrol Brewery was owned by a master dwarf beer-maker until his death several years ago. With no heirs, the building's ownership reverted to the city of Betasa, who has yet to decide what to do with it. In the meanwhile, Sylستا has used it as a place to hide her children. Because she cannot be in two places at once, she has taken two steps to ensure that the children do not escape while she is not present. First, she has murdered one or more of the children and made them into vampire spawn, and set them to guarding the other children. Second, those children that are not vampires have been *dominated* into obedience. As a result, ALL of the children in the brewery will fight tooth and nail to avoid being taken away by the PCs.

A note on morality: The PCs are faced with some very difficult and tragic decisions to make at the juncture. Any of the vampire children will probably need to be dispatched, while those that are still human might need to be beaten for nonlethal damage for their own sakes. The DM should use these choices as a catalyst for roleplaying, but you should try and avoid letting an in-character debate on the consequences of

a given course of action degenerate into a morality argument.

The brewery is a large building with a basement. The ground floor doubled as a small office and general warehouse and workshop. The basement features two large brewing vats (in which the children are concealed) with a catwalk that stretches over them.

Read the following when the PCs get their first look at the exterior of the building:

This squat, ugly building is slab-shaped and has a look of neglect. A faded sign hanging above the door shows a beer barrel and the words “Ghaeldrol Beers.” All of the building’s windows have been boarded shut. Pigeons and gulls roost everywhere, their guano ruining everything. The derelict warehouses on either side of the structure seem uncommonly desolate.

There is a wooden stair, now somewhat rickety, that connects all three floors. Alternatively, the PCs could lower themselves into the basement using the pulley elevator.

A PC that makes a **Track check DC 15** can make out crisscrossing footprints of several children all around the ground floors and near the staircase, as well as all over the basement. No tracks are on the upper floors.

When the PCs reach the basement:

The basement of the brewery seems to be where the creation of spirits took place. The large open area is dominated by large vats that stretch several feet short of the ceiling, itself some thirty feet from the ground. The scent of the spirits that were brewed here is still vaguely discernable.

The twelve remaining children are all hidden in the long-dry bottom of the vats. They will aggressively attack the first PC that they see (although they will wait until a PC comes into view so as to maximize surprise if at all possible). Remember the innate *spider climb* ability of the vampire spawn.

Combat on the Vat:

Combat on the rim of the vats can be very dangerous (if it even occurs – it’s entirely possible that an airborne PC or familiar will give warning of the vampires lurking within). It is

barely three feet in width, and presents a challenge to PCs fighting on it (but not to the vampire spawn, thanks to their smaller size and *spider climb* ability).

Fighting on the Edge: A small-sized PC fighting on the lip of the vat suffers no risk of falling unless struck (see below). Medium PCs must make Balance checks (DC equal to the ATL – ATL 1 PCs might still need to make the check if they are wearing armor with an armor check penalty) while fighting or risk a misstep. On a failed skill check, the PC may make a Reflex save (DC 10 + ATL) or tumble into the vat.

Vampires are very strong and might attempt to bull rush PCs on the edge.

Being Struck on the Edge: Any non-vampire struck for damage must make a Balance check (DC equal to the damage taken) or be forced to make a Reflex save as noted above.

Bull rushes and trips: A successful bull rush will move a target as normal (and probably cause a fall). A target that is tripped must immediately make a check as described in *Fighting on the Edge*, above, or suffer a fall. Note that Small-sized creatures that are tripped do not risk a fall.

Consequences of Falling: A falling combatant falls into the vat or off the edge (50% chance of either). A fall to the ground inflicts 3d6 damage; a tumble into the vats is more of a rough slide and isn’t nearly as far, doing only 1d6 damage. PCs may make a Tumble check (DC 15) to reduce the damage by 1d6 as per the rules in the *Player’s Handbook*.

Tactics: The vampire spawn fight like wild animals, swarming up the vat and attempting to maul PCs. At the highest ATLs, the forces of Sylستا are bolstered by vampire fighters, Fhokki mercenaries that Sylستا abducted, murdered and bent to her own needs.

All vampires attempt to keep the combat on or in the vat where they have the advantage, but fight the PCs elsewhere if the characters refuse to engage them there.

DM Note: The combat situation favors the vampires, making the combat +1 EL higher. Players will have to capitalize on superior tactics and a foreknowledge of the weaknesses of vampires to even the odds. PCs also have the

option to flee - the vampires will not pursue out of the basement unless the PCs entered at night. (If the PCs went at night to fight vampires, well...)

All ATLS (EL 0)

Children, male and female Com1 (number varies; 12 minus the number of Children of the Night present): hp 3 each

ATL 1 (EL 4)

Child of the Night

ATL 3 (EL 6)

2x Child of the Night

ATL 5 (EL 8)

4x Child of the Night

ATL 7 (EL 10)

**4x Child of the Night
Vampire Guard**

ATL 9 (EL 11)

**4x Child of the Night
2x Vampire Guard**

Development: The remaining children (twelve, minus the number of Children of the Night present in the encounter) are huddled, cowering, in the bottom of the vat. The children have been through a number of horrific ordeals and are at first terrified of the PCs. Once the PCs have established that they are there to rescue the

children, they throw themselves onto the PCs, literally clinging to them, and refuse to leave them. The children can relate what has happened to far since the razing of Bipidu. They note that once Sylستا deposited them here, she transformed some of them into vampires in order to guard the others.

CONCLUSION

Eventually, the PCs should make their way back to Nalar for their reward. He does not want to care for the children, but he finds a place for them (at a local orphanage).

I see you have found the children; it is too bad the vampiress was not there herself. Please rest here the night, and in the morning, we shall discover her resting place, and wipe her unholy form from the face of Tellene..

Awards

TREASURE

This is where treasure is listed. Items that have been stripped off bodies will be listed at prices for which they may be sold. Treasure is broken down by Encounter to aid the judge in determining if characters are awarded specific items. The amount may be more or less than what is listed in the PHB as the economy may fluctuate.

Encounter 4: 6 *Bolts of Striking* – sell for 170 gp (each)

Rapier – sell for 11 gp

Dagger – sell for 1 gp

Light crossbow – sell for 18 gp

Studded leather – sell for 11 gp

Encounter 5: 3 vials of *silversheen*

Encounter 6: Spiked chain – sell for 13 gp

Breastplate – sell for 115 gp

Conclusion: 200 gp per PC

For those PCs who received Player Handout #2, they get an additional 25 gp since they found Lord Wanifer's nephew unharmed.

OTHER AWARDS

Bolt of Striking

This magic crossbow bolt has been enchanted with the power of a *true strike* spell. When fired, the PC gains a +20 insight bonus to the attack roll. While this bolt is magical, it does not function as a +1 bolt. It does not count as magic for DR purposes, though it does detect as magic (per the spell *true strike*).

Silversheen

This item may be used to coat a melee weapon or 20 units of ammunition for 1 hour. It replaces any other special property the weapon had and functions as alchemical silver. A complete description of this item may be found in Core Rulebook II, pg. 266.

Experience Points and Day Units

EXPERIENCE	CHARACTER LEVEL	
	1-4	5-9
Introduction: Discovering there are no children in the village without Judge prompting	50 xp	100 xp
Encounter 1: Driving animals away/killing the animals	25 xp	50 xp
Encounter 2: Discovering the sheaf of wheat picture	55 xp	110 xp
Encounter 3: Defeat the rogues	50 xp	100 xp
Find the sheaf of wheat key	20 xp	40 xp
Encounter 6: Defeat the vampire guards	100 xp	200 xp
Discretionary Experience for Role Playing	100 xp	200 xp
Total	400 xp	800 xp

Experience in Living Kingdoms of Kalamar is gained depending on the level of the PC. Regardless of ATL, experience should be awarded by character level, even if some PCs at the table receive different amounts.

Appendix I: NPCs and Monsters

NPCs

Sylستا

Sylستا was a young woman in a small village located in eastern Pecal. Though beautiful beyond measure, her heart was black as night. Using her charm, wit, and good looks, she trampled on other villagers' as she might small insects in a garden. As luck would have it, a young cleric of the Eternal Lantern arrived in the village, and Sylستا immediately set out to entice him as she had so many others. He, unlike so many men before, would have nothing to do with her, and sent her away.

As she ran deep into the woods, stung by the cleric's refusal, she was taken by a vampire in the dark forest. Thinking to leave her for dead, the vampire drained her, and left her body sprawled out among the undergrowth. But Sylستا did not die...

Unknown to everyone, she contained psionic power... The horrible encounter that should have ended her life that night instead forced her latent abilities into action – she became something more than a vampire spawn, but less powerful than a true vampire. As a result, many of her abilities function similar to, but slightly different than, many typical vampires.

The only power encountered in this adventure is her *dominate person* ability. This functions the same as the spell, at a 12th-level caster ability. The Will save DC is 16, and she may deliver this as a gaze attack, or a touch attack.

As Sylستا is not encountered in this adventure, this information is presented simply to explain some of the unique features to this villain.

ENCOUNTER 1

ATL 1 (EL 2)

Black Bear: CR 2; medium animal; HD 3d8+6 (19 hp); Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 12; BAB/Grp +2/+6; Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.; Atk Claw +6 melee (1d4+4); Full Attack: 2 claws +6 melee (1d4+4) and bite +1 melee (1d6+2); SA —; SQ Low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Climb +4, Listen +4, Spot +4, Swim +8; Endurance, Run.

Skills: A black bear has a +4 racial bonus on Swim checks.

ATL 3 (EL 4)

Brown Bear: CR 4; large animal; HD 6d8+24 (51 hp); Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 15 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grp +4/+16; Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.; Atk Claw +11 melee (1d8+8); Full Atk 2 claws +11 melee (1d8+8) and bite +6 melee (2d6+4); SA Improved grab; SQ Low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 27, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +4, Spot +7, Swim +12; Endurance, Run, Track.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a brown bear must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Skills: A brown bear has a +4 racial bonus on Swim checks.

ATL 5 (EL 6)

Girallon: CR 6; large magical beast; HD 7d10+20 (58 hp); Init +3; Spd 40 ft., climb 40 ft.; AC 16 (–1 size, +3 Dex, +4 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp +7/+17; Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.; Atk Claw +12 melee (1d4+6); Full Atk 4 claws +12 melee (1d4+6) and bite +7 melee (1d8+3); SA Rend 2d4+9; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 22, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Move Silently +8, Spot +6; Iron Will, Toughness (2)

Rend (Ex): A girallon that hits with two or more claw attacks latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an extra 2d4+12 points of damage.

Skills: A girallon has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

ATL 7 (EL 7)

Bulette: CR 7; huge magical beast; HD 9d10+45 (94 hp); Init +2 (Dex); Spd 40 ft., burrow 10 ft.; AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 20; BAB/Grp +9/+25; Space/Reach 15 ft. / 10 ft.; Atk Bite +16 melee (2d8+8); Full Atk Bite +16 melee (2d8+8) and 2 claws +10 melee (2d6+4); SA Leap; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent, tremorsense 60 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 27, Dex 15, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump +18, Listen +9, Spot +3. Alertness, Iron Will, Track, Weapon Focus (Bite).

Leap (Ex): A bulette can jump into the air during combat. This allows it to make four claw attacks instead of two, each with a +15 attack bonus, but it cannot bite.

ATL 9 (EL 10)

2x Dire Tiger: CR 8 ; large animal ; HD 16d8+48 (120 hp); Init +2; Spd: 40 ft.; AC 17 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 15; BAB/Grp +12/+24; Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.; Atk Claw +20 melee (2d4+8); Full Atk 2 claws +20 melee (2d4+8) and bite +14 melee (2d6+4); SA Improved grab, pounce, rake 2d4+4; SQ Low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +13, Ref +12, Will +11; Str 27, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +7*, Jump +14, Listen +6, Move Silently +11, Spot +7, Swim +10; Alertness, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Improved Natural Attack (bite), Run, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (claw).

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a dire tiger must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake.

Pounce (Ex): If a dire tiger charges, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.

Rake (Ex): Attack bonus +18 melee, damage 2d4+4.

Skills: Dire tigers have a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. *In areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth, the Hide bonus improves to +8.

ENCOUNTER 4

Important Note: All these rogues are under a *dominate person* effect, except that *protection from evil* (and similar spells) do not impede Sylysta's orders from affecting the thieves. The effect may be dispelled as normal (*dispel magic*) against a 12th-level caster.

ATL 1

Dominated Thief (Rog1): CR 1; medium human; HD 1d6+2 (6 hp); Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+3 Dex, +3 studded leather), touch 13, flat-footed 13; BAB/Grp +0/+2; Atk Rapier +3 melee (1d6+2) or heavy crossbow (1d10); SA sneak attack +1d6, trapfinding; SQ -; AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Balance +7, Climb +7, Escape Artist +7, Hide +7, Intimidate +7, Jump +7, Listen +7, Move Silently +7, Spot +7, Tumble +7

ATL 3

Dominated Thief (Rog2): CR 2; medium human; HD 2d6+4 (12 hp); Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+3 Dex, +3 studded leather), touch 13, flat-footed 13; BAB/Grp +1/+3; Atk Rapier +4 melee (1d6+2) or heavy crossbow (1d10); SA sneak attack +1d6, trapfinding, evasion; SQ -; AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Balance +8, Climb +8, Escape Artist +8, Hide +8, Intimidate +7, Jump +8, Listen +7, Move Silently +8, Spot +8, Tumble +8

ATL 5

Dominated Thief (Rog4): CR 4; medium human; HD 4d6+8 (24 hp); Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+3 Dex, +3 studded leather), touch 13, flat-footed 13; BAB/Grp +3/+5; Atk Rapier +6 melee (1d6+2) or heavy crossbow (1d10); SA sneak attack +2d6, trapfinding, evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; SQ -; AL CN; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Climb +10, Escape Artist +10, Hide +10, Intimidate +7, Jump +10, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Spot +10, Tumble +10

ATL 7

Dominated Thief (Rog6): CR 6; medium human; HD 6d6+12 (36 hp); Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+3 Dex, +3 studded leather), touch 13, flat-footed 13; BAB/Grp +4/+6; Atk Rapier +7 melee (1d6+2) or heavy crossbow (1d10); SA sneak attack +3d6, trapfinding, evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; SQ -; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Balance +12, Climb +12, Escape Artist +12, Hide +12, Intimidate +7, Jump +12, Listen +7, Move Silently +12, Spot +12, Tumble +12

ATL 9

Dominated Thief (Rog8): CR 8; medium human; HD 8d6+16 (55 hp); Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+4 Dex, +3 studded leather), touch 14, flat-footed 13; BAB/Grp +6/+8; Atk Rapier +10 melee (1d6+2) or heavy crossbow (1d10); Full Atk Rapier +10/+5 melee (1d6+2) or heavy crossbow (1d10); SA sneak attack +4d6, trapfinding, evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge; SQ -; AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Balance +15, Climb +14, Escape Artist +15, Hide +15, Intimidate +7, Jump +14, Listen +7, Move Silently +15, Spot +14, Tumble +15

ENCOUNTER 6

ATL 1 (EL 4)

“Children of the Night,” Vampire spawn: CR 4; small undead; HD 4d12+3 (29 hp); Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, +1 size), touch 13, flat-footed 14; BAB/Grp +2/+5; Atk Slam +5 melee (1d4+3 and energy drain); SA Blood drain, domination, energy drain; SQ +2 turn resistance, DR 5/silver,

darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 2, gaseous form, resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, spider climb, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 14, Con --, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Climb +8, Diplomacy +4, Hide +14, Jump +7, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Search +8, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11. Alertness, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness.

Blood Drain (Ex): A vampire spawn can suck blood from a living victim with its fangs by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round. On each such successful drain attack, the vampire spawn gains 5 temporary hit points.

Domination (Su): A vampire spawn can crush an opponent's will just by looking onto his or her eyes. This is similar to a gaze attack, except that the vampire must take a standard action, and those merely looking at it are not affected. Anyone the vampire targets must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or fall instantly under the vampire's influence as though by a *dominate person* spell from a 5th level caster. The ability has a range of 30 feet. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a vampire spawn's slam attack gain one negative level. The DC is 14 for the Fortitude save to remove a negative level. The save DC is Charisma-based. For each such negative level bestowed the vampire spawn gains 5 temporary hit points.

Fast Healing (Ex): A vampire spawn heals 2 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, it automatically assumes gaseous form and attempts to escape. It must reach its coffin home within 2 hours or be utterly destroyed. (It can travel up to nine miles in 2 hours.) Once at rest in its coffin, it is helpless. It regains 1 hit point after 1 hour, then is no longer helpless and resumes healing at the rate of 2 hit points per round.

Gaseous Form (Su): As a standard action, a vampire spawn can assume gaseous form at will as the spell (caster level 6th), but it can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability.

Spider Climb (Ex): A vampire spawn can climb sheer surfaces as though with a spider climb spell.

Skills: Vampire spawn have a +4 racial bonus on Bluff, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Search, Sense Motive, and Spot checks.

ATL 3

Children of the Night: See above

ATL 5

Children of the Night: See above

ATL 7

Children of the Night: See above

“Vampire Guard,” Vampire Bar3/Ftr3: CR 8; medium undead; HD 6d12 (54 hp); Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; AC 25 (+5 armor, +4 Dex, +6 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 25); BAB/Grp +6/+13; Space/Reach 5'/5' (10' with spiked chain); Atk Spiked chain +14 melee (2d4+10) or slam +13 melee (1d6+7 and energy drain); Full Atk Spiked chain +14/+9 melee (2d4+10) or slam +13/+8 melee (1d6+7 and energy drain); SA Blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate, energy drain; SQ +4 turn resistance, alternate form, DR 10/silver and magic, fast healing 5, fast movement, gaseous form, rage 1/day, resistance to cold and electricity 10, spider climb, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 24, Dex 18, Con --, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Balance +6, Climb +21, Intimidate +10, Jump +17, Listen +18, Survival +8. Alertness, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Spiked Chain), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack.

Special Attacks: A vampire retains all the special attacks of the base creature and gains those described below. Saves have a DC of 15 unless noted otherwise.

Blood Drain (Ex): A vampire can suck blood from a living victim with its fangs by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, the vampire gains 5 temporary hit points.

Children of the Night (Su): Vampires command the lesser creatures of the world and once per day can call forth 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms, or a pack of 3d6 wolves as a standard action. (If the base creature is not terrestrial, this power might summon other creatures of similar power.) These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve the vampire for up to 1 hour.

Dominate (Su): A vampire can crush an opponent's will just by looking onto his or her eyes. This is similar to a gaze attack, except that the vampire must use a standard action, and those merely looking at it are not affected. Anyone the vampire targets must succeed on a Will save or fall instantly under the vampire's influence as though by a *dominate person* spell (caster level 12th). The ability has a range of 30 feet.

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid or monstrous humanoid slain by a vampire's energy drain rises as a vampire spawn (see the Vampire Spawn entry) 1d4 days after burial. If the vampire instead drains the victim's Constitution to 0 or lower, the victim returns as a spawn if it had 4 or less HD and as a vampire if it had 5 or more HD. In either case, the new vampire or spawn is under the command of the vampire that created it and remains enslaved until its master's destruction. At any given time a vampire may have enslaved spawn totaling no more than twice its own Hit Dice; any spawn it creates that would exceed this limit are created as free-willed vampires or vampire spawn. A vampire that is enslaved may create and enslave spawn of its own, so a master vampire can control a number of lesser vampires in this fashion. A vampire may voluntarily free an enslaved spawn in order to enslave a new spawn, but once freed, a vampire or vampire spawn cannot be enslaved again.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a vampire's slam attack (or any other natural weapon the vampire might possess) gain two negative levels. For each negative level bestowed, the vampire gains 5 temporary hit points. A vampire can use its energy drain ability once per round.

Alternate Form (Su): A vampire can assume the shape of a bat, dire bat, wolf, or dire wolf as a standard action. This ability is similar to a polymorph spell cast by a 12th-level character, except that the vampire does not regain hit points for changing form and must choose from among the forms mentioned here. While in its alternate form, the vampire loses its natural slam attack and domination ability, but it gains the natural weapons and extraordinary special attacks of its new form. It can remain in that form until it assumes another or until the next sunrise. (If the base creature is not terrestrial, this power might allow other forms.)

Damage Reduction (Su): A vampire has damage reduction 10/silver and magic. A vampire's natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Fast Healing (Ex): A vampire heals 5 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, it automatically assumes gaseous form and attempts to escape. It must reach its coffin home within 2 hours or be utterly destroyed. (It can travel up to nine miles in 2 hours.) Any additional damage dealt to a vampire forced into gaseous form has no effect. Once at rest in its coffin, a vampire is helpless. It regains 1 hit point after 1 hour, then is no longer helpless and resumes healing at the rate of 5 hit points per round.

Gaseous Form (Su): As a standard action, a vampire can assume gaseous form at will as the spell (caster level 5th), but it can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability.

Resistances (Ex): A vampire has resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10.

Spider Climb (Ex): A vampire can climb sheer surfaces as though with a spider climb spell.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A vampire has +4 turn resistance.

ATL 9

Children of the Night: See above

Vampire Guard: See above

Appendix II: Additional Rules

This section contains maps, notes, special or new items/spells/rules, as well as any generic campaign rules as needed. Authors are responsible for maps and/or descriptions of their creations (items, spells, etc).

Betasa

Full details about Betasa may be found in the Kingdoms of Kalamar Campaign Sourcebook. A selection of that data is included below.

Population: 11,000 individuals; most human, some elves, gnomes, halflings, dwarves. Very few Deji.

Religion: *Temples:* Church of the Life's Fire, House of Solace, Order of the Passionate One

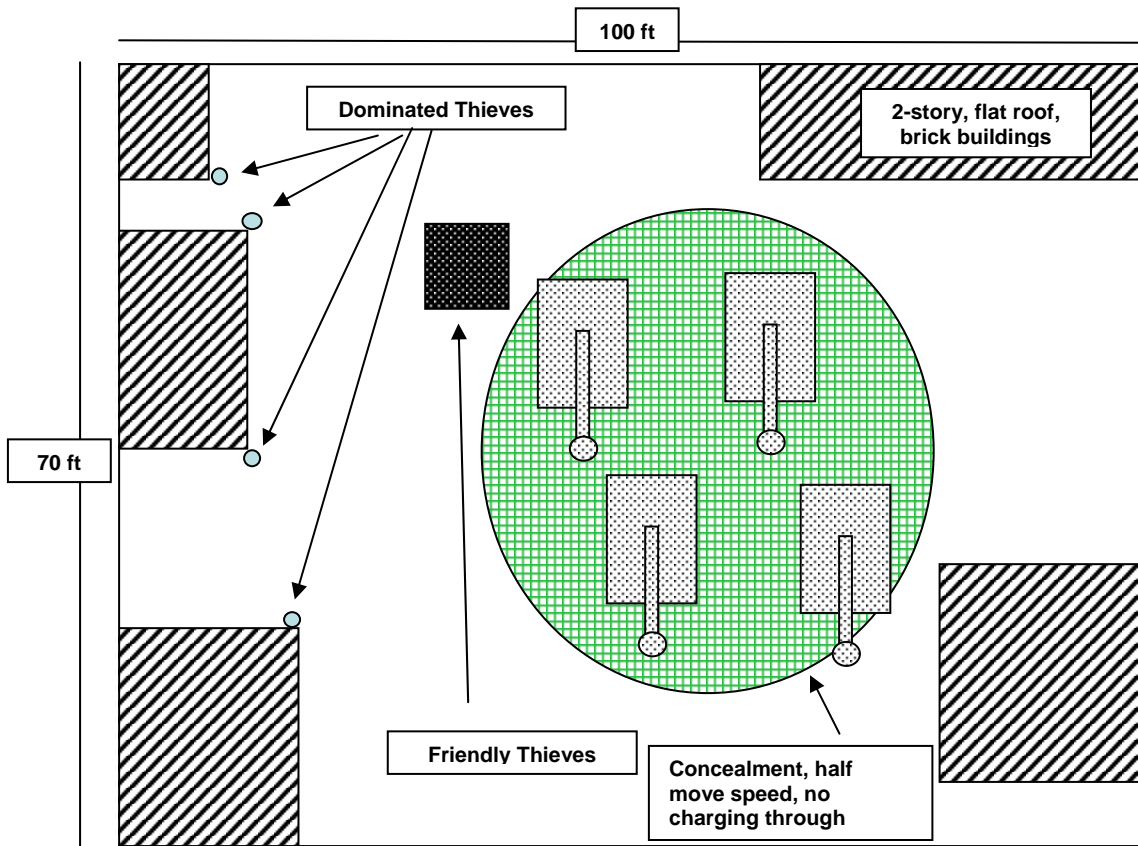
Shrines: Knight of the Gods, Pure One, Landlord, Seller of Souls

General Information: Ek'Gakel is mainly open countryside, and many ranchers and sheperds call the area home. The wool market is strong, and this industry is second only to wine-making.

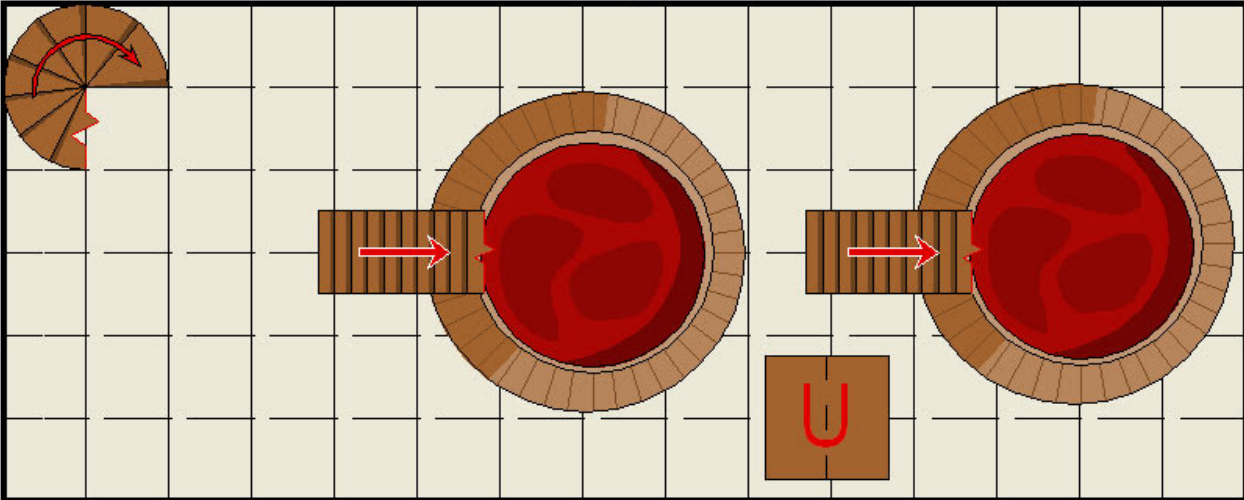
The area is tolerant of most races, though outsiders in Betasa are looked down upon. For many years, the Deji and the citizens of Ek'Gakel have been at war with one another. Though began for reasons more to do with stupidity and ignorance than any real insults or threats, the government of Ek'Gakel has effectively declared war on the entire race of Deji. For this reason, visitors to Betasa of Deji descent are sure to be shunned, if not insulted. Though likely stopped many times during their travel in the city, the guards are not to the point where they would molest a simple visitor without cause, though requiring them to wear a special armband is not out of the question.


Betasa is in the northern lands, and citizens tend to have a rugged independent quality to them. Pretentiousness carries no weight in this land, and those who appear to hold themselves above their fellows better be able to back that up by physical and/or mental strength – nobility in Betasa is as likely to get one thrown into the street as a nicer room at the inn.

Map #1: Siege Engines



Map #2: Brewery Basement



 Dumbwaiter

One Square = Five Feet

APPENDIX III: Player Handout #1

A great deal of an adventurer's life often deals with unfinished business. Some time ago, you happened upon a dead messenger who had been torn apart by wild animals. He had carried with him a plea from the mayor of the small village of Vodun. You traveled to the beleaguered town and discovered that things were not as they seemed. The town's travails were ultimately caused by Sylستا, one of the town's residents that had been turned into a vampire. You longed to end her menace and existence, but she escaped while you held off the wild animals that threatened to slaughter the villagers.

It seems like years ago that you found that Kalamaran merchant, near-death and his caravan in ruins, along the northeastern border of Pekal. He told a tale of encountering an achingly beautiful woman with hair the color of flame wandering by the side of the road. The woman was crying, seemingly lost, and nearly mad with grief. Taking pity on her, the caravan master allowed her to ride inside one of the large covered wagons.

But then the workers and animals began disappearing. By the third night, the caravan master was convinced the woman was cursed, and thought to get rid of her. As he approached and raised his club to drive her away, her hands shot out and broke his neck.

One by one, the flame-haired demon hunted them down, and their screams wailed through the night sky. When morning came, the woman left going north, taking a small boy with her...

You took up the hunt, eager to defeat the vampire once and for all. Your journey led you deep into Paru'Bor. The trail continued north, staying near the road, but never venturing too close. Small animals drained of blood were common on your trek, though luckily, you never found the body of a boy.

A few days pass until the trail leads into a clearing...

APPENDIX III: Player Handout #2

House Wanifer, a powerful and popular merchant family in Bet Rogala, was happy to have you working for them. “A few quick gold pieces” you thought, are always better than sleeping outside, or going hungry. House Wanifer had a fairly easy assignment for you: track down a missing caravan that was headed from Bet Rogala to Betasa in Ek’Gakel.

It was later in the day when you found out that this caravan was special – one of Lord Wanifer’s nephews was on the caravan, a young boy of 13 summers. This was his first trip with the caravans to Bet Rogala, and Lord Wanifer was sick with worry.

A week or so later, you were heading toward Betasa, the nominal capital of Ek’Gakel, when you came upon a ghastly scene of carnage. A merchant caravan had been all but destroyed. The marks on the wagons and destroyed cargo were indeed those of House Wanifer. Bodies lay everywhere; ominously, they were devoid of blood. One merchant looked like he had escaped the devastation, and that he had been tended to in some fashion by passing travelers, but he died not long afterwards. Oddly, you did not find the remains of a young boy, only a trail of small footprints leading north. You pressed onward, as eager to leave the sight behind as you were to find the nephew of Lord Wanifer.

A few days later, you come upon a village of the dead....