



# Of Roses and Thorns

Part 1 of *Beauty is Everlasting*

A One-Round D&D Living Kingdoms of Kalamar Adventure

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The Sun and the Moon shine over Pekal, but on the edge of the light creeps a foreboding shadow. As darkness seeps across the land, the lonely town of Vodun cries out for brave heroes. Under constant threat from wild creatures, villagers are killed in savage attacks night after night. Can you save Vodun from its animal problem before the shadow consumes them? An adventure for ATLS 1, 3, 5, and 7.

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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)**

LKoK 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 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> 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® 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 DM 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 that may be photocopied are also included. The DM 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.

### **ADVENTURE BACKGROUND**

Vodun is a small, unremarkable hamlet used to quiet times and peaceful contemplation. It is located near the Pipitul Woodlands, about 200 miles due east of Bet Rogala. The townspeople have little use for adventurers and those who would bring action, trouble, or both. Comprised mostly of farmers, the hamlet's sole unusual feature is the church of The Eternal Lantern nestled within an ancient tower whose builder and origins have been lost to antiquity. The new priest of the Sun Tower, as the place is called, is Pendras. Young and inexperienced, he is nonetheless devout and eager to tend to the spiritual needs of the townsfolk.

But there are dark clouds swirling around the place, and they threaten to consume Vodun and her peace-loving people.

Months ago, a cruel-natured peasant girl named Sylستا (sil-LEES-tuh) was mauled and killed by a vampire who was shapechanged into a dire wolf. Her killer left the area, but allowed his progeny to rise as a vampire spawn.

In life, Sylستا made advances towards the newest arrival in the hamlet, who happened to be Pendras. As the idealistic replacement for the old priest of Vodun, Pendras spurned her advances. Rebuked, Sylستا was nursing a broken heart when she was killed. Now, her anger is stoked by her undead hatred of life, of priests of the sun god The Eternal Lantern especially, and Pendras in particular. She has determined that killing or driving the townsfolk from Vodun will complete her revenge.

Sylستا has made a lair in the immediate area and has used her vampire powers to control Brynnstock, a local druid with a hatred for

civilization. Remaining under the sway of the vampire has since driven him totally mad.

But Sylستا is also wise enough to realize that she cannot alert anyone of a vampire menace, or she risks destruction. She decided on a plan to cover her activities forcing Brynnstock into enchanting the predatory animals of the area and using them as weapons against the townsfolk. These attacks have continued sporadically over the past few weeks, taking 16 other villagers, and scaring another 20 or so away from the hamlet.

Four days ago, Ducha, the harried mayor of Vodun, ordered a collection be taken up from the remaining townsfolk to hire a party of adventurers to root out the source of the attacks. Unfortunately, Sylستا got wind of the plan and sent Brynnstock to murder the courier, taking his gold meant for the adventurers. So imagine her surprise when *another* group of adventures shows up, oblivious to the darkness about to engulf the town...

The players happen across the body of the courier, apparently savaged by a wild animal. (In truth, Brynnstock, using *wild shape* to become a wolf, mauled him to death) They find the scroll inviting adventurers to journey to Vodun, as well as some odd tracks of a large wolf.

Upon arrival in Vodun, the players are welcomed with warmth by Ducha who believes them to be the adventurers they hired. They react to news of the courier's death with despair, but accept offers of help from the group. Ducha relates the violent animal attacks, and asks the characters to go forth and save the hamlet.

The characters actually have two different incidents to investigate, Brynnstock, and a group of refugees that passed through the town a few weeks ago. After these encounters, the characters return to the town, only to discover that Sylستا attacked Pendras while they were away.

The Judge must be careful not to reveal too much about Sylستا until the proper time. Part of this adventure is the characters solving different pieces of the puzzle to determine the true threat behind the attacks. The Judge is encouraged to take actions – short of lying or intentionally misdirecting players – to ensure the characters

follow the adventure as contained herein. Be creative, just don't give the ending away!

## **INTRODUCTION**

**DM Note:** The road the characters are on is a small one-lane cart road. It would not be surprising that the body could remain here for a few days without discovery.

Read the following introduction to the players:

***When you first nurtured dreams of becoming an adventurer, you never imagined that so much of your life would be spent simply going from place to place. About a week ago, a messenger from Lord Wanifer asked you to act as an escort for an expensive delivery to an elven commander in the Pipitul Woodlands. Though the pay was not extravagant, it was enough to entice you; after all, the favor of Lord Wanifer is itself worth quite a bit.***

***The journey back to Bet Rogala passes quickly on the small dirt paths that serve as roads in this part of the Eastern District. Cresting a small rise, a foul stench assails you. The smell of decay and rot hangs heavy in the air here. You have found death... or has death found you?***

***Through the tall grass, you notice a thick swarm of flies near the edge of the dusty road, nearly concealing a vaguely man-shaped lump. A decomposed hand stretches outwards towards the road, beckoning with withered fingers.***

Characters may recall Lord Wanifer from ***Making A Name***. He is a powerful noble who makes his money as a merchant of expensive and rare merchandise. Working for him would not seem odd for adventurers in Pecal.

The corpse is that of Jayme, a young man of Vodun sent to recruit an adventuring company. Sylستا ordered Brynnstock to assume the form of a wolf and maul him to death. An examination of the body reveals the following:

- A Heal or Survival check (DC 10) determines the body to be a human male, early 20s, mauled by an animal. It has been here for several days judging by its decomposition. DC 20 reveals the creature was a canine.

- Anyone with Track or Survival check DC 12 can pick out the footprints of a wolf leading off the road into the wild grass around the road (disappearing after 200 yards). DC 30 finds the faint outline of a booted human-sized footprint in the area near the body. Both sets of tracks were made roughly around the same time as one another.
- Jayme has been dead for 4 days. Anyone employing a *Speak with Dead* spell gets Jayme to describe his mission and his place of origin. He details how he was sent to hire a group of adventurers to deal with attacks by carnivorous animals on the town of Vodun. His last memory was of a large wolf assaulting him and tearing his throat out by the light of the full moon. (*Players may jump to the conclusion that it was a werewolf; don't discourage them*).

If Jayme's body is searched, a sealed scroll written on fine parchment is discovered. It has writing on one side and a map showing the area of Vodun on the other. Distribute **Appendix II: Player Handout 1**.

### **ENCOUNTER 1** **The Journey to Vodun**

Jayme's trail is easily followed leading up the narrow road of packed earth. The village is about four hours by foot, or an hour's travel if mounted. The terrain is rough and rocky, with grasses averaging three feet in height. It might occur to good characters that returning the body, or at least notifying the town of the death of one of their own, would be in order. Neutral characters might do the same in hopes of reward. Refer to **DM / Player Map #1 – Vodun**. Read the following as the characters arrive near town:

***You make your way up a short, rocky rise. There, the small hamlet of Vodun lies before you. It has seen better days. The squat buildings are painted a slate gray and look ill-cared for. Many of them are abandoned and look battered, yet appear to have been lived in until recently.***

***There are only two noteworthy structures within the hamlet. One is a square tower that seems to mark the center of the village. A battered bronze disk over the tower's main***

***entrance shows it to be a temple of The Eternal Lantern, god of the sun. The symbol looks as if it has been defaced with scratches and gouges. A hundred feet north of the tower, you spy a dilapidated two-story building. Hanging above its door is a sign that says "Grey Drake Inn and Hostel."***

***More ominously, every outlying building looks totally abandoned. Only the tower and the Inn show any signs of occupation.***

Anyone peering through the windows sees the buildings (except the Tower and Inn) are indeed empty. Searching the buildings reveals nothing of value; the homes have been evacuated and their valuables taken.

If the characters venture to the Grey Drake, go to Encounter Two. If they choose to visit the Tower, go to Encounter Three.

### **ENCOUNTER 2** **The Grey Drake Inn & Hostel**

***Pushing the Inn's door open, you step inside and close it behind you. You find yourselves in a large common room dominated by a sizable hearth in the northern wall. Worn tables and chairs are scattered throughout the room, with perhaps a dozen peasants seated around the room. They are all leaning forward, speaking in hushed tones. As you enter, it seems every noise in the room stops, and all eyes suspiciously turn to your group. A few hands unconsciously stray to sheathed daggers at their sides, and you realize that every person here is armed.***

Any PC who is an obvious druid elicits a very strong reaction from the townsfolk. All characters should make a Sense Motive DC 10. If they succeed, they determine the druid is clearly the focus of a great deal of animosity. If the druid is unfortunate enough to bring an animal companion inside the building, the terrified peasants draw and load crossbows, flip over tables for cover, and scream as general mayhem briefly ensues. Things do not settle down until the animal is moved outside, or the character clearly demonstrates the animal is totally under her control.

Any non-druid PC who brings a non-domesticated animal gets a similar but far more

muted reaction. The peasants are fearful and more than one snarls for the character to “remove that filthy beast!”

Assuming no problems, or that there are no issues with an animal being brought inside, read the following:

**Clearly, the peasants do not trust you. But from behind the bar, one man’s face is not a mask of suspicion, but of hope. He is in his early fifties, balding, and a bit portly. “You!” he cries, and comes forwards, arms outstretched and smiling broadly. “Welcome to Vodun! Thank The Eternal Lantern that you’ve come. I am glad the tiny pittance our village was able to scrape together was enough to guide you to us! Oh, we are in terrible straits...” He continues speaking with great alacrity, and the other patrons begin smiling and even a few cheers are heard.**

The man is Ducha (DYOOK-uh), mayor of Vodun and the proprietor of the Grey Drake. All of Vodun’s townsfolk are here, having banded together for mutual safety in one defensible building. Of course, Ducha believes the group is answering the summons he penned and gave to Jayme.

**Ducha, male human Exp3: hp 11; skill checks made with +4 to the roll.**

If the group does nothing to correct Ducha’s misperceptions – perhaps simply to avoid dashing the hopes of these clearly desperate people – and they make no mention of Jayme’s death, skip to “White Lies” below.

If the group immediately comes clean with Ducha that he has the wrong group, or if they inform him of Jayme’s death (perhaps even by having returned the body), skip to “The Revelation” below.

### White Lies

**Drinks are brought to all of you, and tables pulled together. It looks almost as if a small town meeting is taking place. Wenches appear from the kitchen and bring out the best food and drink the Inn has to offer. When you have had a chance to unwind, Ducha speaks.**

**“Now as you know from my letter, we have been the subject to attacks from wild animals for many days...”**

**The entrance of a tall man dressed in leather armor and carrying a longbow interrupts Ducha. Clearly a tracker of some sort, he glares at your group suspiciously before walking quickly to Ducha and whispering in the mayor’s ear. As he does, Ducha’s eyes widen.**

Listen check DC 20 to overhear him tell Ducha that Jayme’s body was discovered.

This man is Jerica, the town’s best surviving ranger and tracker. He has come across the body of Jayme and the tracks surrounding it. Ducha realizes that the group can’t be the ones he hired – Jayme never made it to the city to hire them in the first place!

**Jerica, human male Rgr3: hp 11; skill checks made with +2 to the roll.**

**Suddenly, the tracker has an arrow pointed at you, and the mayor’s own dagger is drawn. Reacting to this, other peasants draw their daggers and even the wenches reach for pots and chairs. “Liars!” the mayor booms. “Damn your eyes! Are you agents of the evil that plagues us? You lie to us! Jayme’s body – poor, poor Jayme – has been discovered! He never had the chance to deliver his message! Who are you, and why are you lying to us?”**

Allow the characters to speak and to calm the suspicious villagers down. Once they provide a reasonable explanation, skip to “The Revelation” below. The DM should do whatever is necessary to keep the characters from getting into a combat with the villagers. Any combat here ends the module.

### The Revelation

After the group confesses to Ducha they are not who he believes them to be, or after they have been exposed by the discovery of Jayme’s body, read the following:

**Ducha sags into his chair. “The gold... to hire adventurers... it was all our people**

*had... We are undone!" He borders on sobbing as he wrings his hands.*

*Ducha stands, after a time, his jaw square and resolute. "The idea to hire you was mine alone, and it was I who convinced the people of Vodun to contribute their last coppers. I offer each of you twenty-five pieces of gold, as well as a single treasured family heirloom, to take up the quest to defeat the dark forces that plague us." He motions to a gleaming silver axe that hangs over the hearth.*

*"Ducha," one of the serving girls whispers, "So much gold... you will be ruined! And that axe has been in your family for centuries, you told me so..."*

*"All of that will mean nothing if we are in the bellies of wild animals by nightfall," he replies quietly, all the while looking directly at you. "What say you, then?"*

Good characters should be willing to take up the mantle and not want to bankrupt the innkeeper. However, a more mercenary group might want the gold and axe. Under no circumstances does Ducha allow the adventurers an advance on either of them.

If the PCs agree, read the following. If they do not, the adventure ends here as the Mayor asks the PCs to leave the village of Vodun.

*Ducha shakes your hand. The other villagers also nod approvingly. For the first time in a long while, it is obvious these villagers see a ray of hope. The mayor speaks, "Speak to some of the men and women here about what plagues us. Perhaps you can discover what we have not – who or what is behind these attacks."*

*"What I can tell you about past events is this: The attacks started a month ago. The first to be killed was Sylستا, the poor girl. She was the daughter of our late cobbler. She was quite the seamstress, and a real beauty, that one. Long red hair, and gray eyes that could freeze a man in his tracks. We found her with her throat torn out in the woods to the south of here. She'd gone to collect mushrooms and was attacked. Jerica, our best tracker, found wolf prints around her, but also some faint traces of human-sized boots. There was a lull for a short time after Sylستا's death, but then the attacks began coming day and*

*night. That was a few weeks ago. Since then, we've lost sixteen souls."*

## The Investigation

There are a couple of ways PC's might get leads about the druid Brynnstock's involvement with the attacks on the town.

- Any of the villagers can describe the events leading up to the adventurer's arrival (no roll needed, the PC need only ask how this all got started). They describe the attack on Sylستا with the same details as Mayor Ducha (see The Revelation, above).
- Jerica admits to finding the tracks around Sylستا's body, as well as similar sign near some of the other victims. Strangely, not all the attacks are the same – sometimes there are a few wolves, while other times only a single beast. The wolves also appear to be different sizes; some are large, and some are small, but there doesn't appear to be any order to the killings (i.e. the large wolf is not always by itself, sometimes it is, but other times it has pack-mates).  
  
Jerica also tells the characters that he was unable to track any of the human-sized prints for any distance. It was as if they just faded away.
- A PC druid or ranger who questions any of the villagers about the attacks is able to determine that the animals did not behave in any sort of normal fashion and were probably being controlled by an outside force. Other characters may make a similar conclusion with Knowledge (nature) DC 20.
- A successful Gather Information roll (DC 10) jogs the memory of one farmer. *"You know... nah, couldn't be."* If pressed, the farmer shrugs and says, *"Well, there was a story our parents used to tell us of an old man who lived in the woods. We always thought it was just a tale, you know 'If you're bad, Brynnstock will get you!' The stories said he had skin like a tree, and could move through the woods like the wind. Heh, the stories were that if he caught a child wandering in the woods, he'd take the babe back to his evil altar, and turn it into an animal! None of us*

**ever really believe he exists, but you never know.”** (Nobody in town can verify if Brynnstock is real or not, though all have heard the story. Most think it is just a story parents use to scare their children from wandering around outside the village)

- The bartender, a skinny human male named Gat, cleans tankards with a washcloth as he chats with the group. **“Things haven’t been right since those refugees came through.”** If pressed for details, he’ll add, **“Well, a group of them folks came through here, right around the time the attacks began. They talked to Ducha about settling down here for a time. We don’t really have any extra here, ours is a small village, you see, so we told ‘em to keep going. I mean, that would have been 40 more people to feed, and no more grain and corn to do it. Anyway, the old woman in their group said she would curse us for our stone hearts. Now, I don’t put much stock in that stuff, but when the wolves started attacking, it turned me into a believer.”**
- Using spells like *Speak with Animals* reveals little. Animals within the village or its immediate area describes the attacking animals as savage and not behaving normally.
- The PC’s may decide to investigate Sylستا. Little is found. The small home where she lived is abandoned, nobody has entered since her death, and her body was buried in the woods a short distance to the north. The only thing of interest are four large rose bushes behind her house. It appears that someone is taking care of them, though the house is falling into disrepair. Nobody knows about who is maintaining her garden.

The DM should not spend a great deal of time on this; it is necessary for the plot to continue to unfold. If, after some time has elapsed, if the PC’s haven’t gotten the information, Ducha approaches them and asks them to come meet with him where he provides them the missing details.

After about an hour, Mayor Ducha tracks them down (if they haven’t already sought him out) and asks them what they have uncovered. If they mention Brynnstock or the refugees, the

mayor’s face takes on a thoughtful expression as he nods and scratches his chin. He urges the party back to the Grey Drake if they are not there already. Read **Bon Voyage** below.

## Bon Voyage

***The mayor brings you over to another table where a map of the area has been laid out. Vodun is clearly marked. A dashed line, presumably a trail, snakes northward on the map until it comes to a river. From there, the trail hugs the southern shore of the river, moving westward to a what appears to be a clearing of trees on the map, marked by a circle of standing stones. A second set of markings on the map, due west of that point, shows a series of crudely drawn tents.***

***“This marks the site of an ancient druid circle,” the mayor says, “if Brynnstock really exists, this may be the best place to start searching. Be warned, though, the stories about him have circulated since before I was born, so if he is real, he is likely very experienced in the ways of the wood.”***

***“Alternatively, Jerica followed the refugees a bit as they left town a few weeks ago. Since then, they have been living in a small clearing a few miles north of our village. They haven’t bothered us, so we’re content to have them as neighbors. However, the fact that the attacks commenced shortly after they moved through Vodun cannot be dismissed. I am not the superstitious type, to be sure, but if the old woman laid a curse on our village, we have to find some way to lift it.”***

***“What I ask of you is this. Travel to the Druid Circle and the refugee camp. See if you can determine if who is responsible for the attacks on the village. If they’re not, perhaps they might know who is. Will you go and speak to them?”***

If questioned about the refugees, Ducha (or Gat) can report that there were about five wagons, and about thirty to forty people in the train. There was an older, white-haired woman who seemed to be the matriarch of the group; it was she that laid the curse.

Assuming the party agrees to go, continue to the next Encounter. If they don’t, Ducha looks

disappointed and asks them to leave the village. If the PCs are so callous as to do so, they escape without further incident, but hear fearful tales months later of the destruction of the small hamlet and how a young vampire queen is now rumored to haunt the land, plaguing travelers. Worse, news about the party's leaving Vodun to her fate makes the rounds, and the adventurers are branded as heartless cowards or worse by their peers.

If characters wish, they may spend the night, but Ducha is adamant they should leave by tomorrow morning. If they spend the night, they get little rest, and the howling and roaring of a variety of wild animals can be heard. If the characters drop by the tower to see Pendas, go to **Encounter 3**.

If the characters leave for the druid's grove, go to **Encounter 4A**. If they decide to go to the refugee camp, go to **Encounter 4B**.

If they haven't done so already, Ducha suggests they see Pendas before they go, wondering if his prayers for guidance from The Eternal Lantern have produced any results. (See Encounter Three).

### **ENCOUNTER 3**

#### **The Tower of The Eternal Lantern**

Refer to **DM / Player Map #2 – Temple of the Eternal Lantern**. Read the following:

*The square tower seems far older than any other structures in the village. It certainly predates any settlement of the area. Creeping vines with huge thorns the size of a man's forearm surround the outside of the tower. A single door can be seen in the center of the eastern facing wall. The door looks battered and beaten, as if something tried to break down the door. The Eternal Lantern's holy symbol, attached to the tower above the doorway, also looks battered and abused.*

*Stepping inside, you see an altar against the far wall and several rows of long stone pews before it. A single sturdy-looking wooden staircase can be seen in the northwestern corner, extending upwards through an open trap door.*

*A human dressed in the garb of a The Eternal Lantern priest turns his attention away from the altar and towards you. He is remarkably handsome young man. Wispy blond locks of hair frame his fine, chiseled features. He is neither armed nor armored. Beside the altar, a plain-looking young priestess of The Eternal Lantern arches an eyebrow and regards you curiously as her counterpart approaches you.*

If the party came to the tower before visiting Ducha in the Grey Drake Inn, read the following additional text:

*The priest looks surprised but recovers his wits quickly. "Adventurers? Here? I am Pendas, and you must see Mayor Ducha at once!"*

Pendas doesn't want to interfere with what the mayor is doing and insists that they see him at the Grey Drake first. He agrees to answer any questions that the characters have, but only after they've spoken to Ducha first.

If the characters have already agreed to aid the town, read the following additional text:

*"I hear you've agreed to help us. We cannot thank you enough. Things have been terribly difficult here and it is all I can do to use my meager skills to help ease the need of the people of Vodun and keep their faith alight."*

*"So please, tell me how can I help you. Can I answer any questions?"*

**Pendas, Male Human Clr 3:** hp 21; skill checks made with +4 to the roll

**Berayne, Female Human Clr 2:** hp 15; skill checks made with +3 to the roll

The first floor of the tower is the sanctuary, the second floor contains Berayne's sleeping quarters, a small shrine, and some storage space for materials like candles, robes, and wood polish. The top floor contains Pendas' small room, and archives of the town's history (birth records, harvest yields, etc).

If the characters ask, Pendas and Berayne allow them to search any part of the tower they wish. Nothing of importance is found.



Pendras and Berayne aren't able to provide much in the way of material help. Berayne defers to her superior, and lets Pendras do most of the talking while she lights incense and attends to sundry duties of the temple. If questioned, she has only recently arrived – about two weeks ago, assigned by the High Priest in Bet Rogala to help Pendras since he needed an assistant.

Pendras offers to heal injured party members and makes his spells at their disposal (assume 3 *cure light wounds*, and 2 *cure moderate wounds* per day). He explains that he has only been here a short time, first as an assistant, then as a replacement for an older priest who died a few months ago (of natural causes). He is content with his assignment, as he has grown to love the people of Vodun, and it breaks his heart to see them so put upon by the machinations of evil. He confirms or states the same details that Ducha provided about the history of the animal attacks against the people of Vodun. Pendras is unwilling to accompany the adventurers, nor does he permit Berayne to; the tower needs both of them to protect it.

Pendras knows little about the history of the tower itself. It was once the home of a powerful hermit mage who was reputed to be an expert in magical transmutation. Local lore says that he cast a spell so mighty that he became locked in some savage alternate form, and terrorized the countryside before he was slain. (This is another red herring and old wives' tale. The mage died in his sleep, and a bitter apprentice formulated the rumor.)

Pendras has no objection to adventurers speaking to Berayne. Unfortunately, she only arrived in Vodun a few weeks ago, so while she doesn't have any additional information to add, she does offer them two *potions of cure light wounds*.

Pendras won't mention Sylستا himself. If one of the characters asks about Sylستا, read the following:

***Pendras looks down at the floor, suddenly sullen, and heaves a sigh. "Sylستا. Yes, she was the first to die in these savage attacks. She... was very much smitten with me. On the day she was murdered, she came to me and professed her love. But I am this community's spiritual advisor, and must***

***remain above such things. I tried to break it to her as gently as I could, but... she took it badly and ran off into the woods to be alone. That's where she was killed. If I'd just said things a little differently, perhaps..." His voice trails off.***

The priest speaks no more about the issue, ignoring questions about her; he's clearly upset that it was brought up.

Read the following if the players ask about the attacks against the temple:

***"I can only assume that some evil power is behind these attacks. Many nights, the creatures – I've only seen wolves – come straight for the tower and begin to try an break through the front door. It pains me to see the symbol outside defiled, but I am not skilled enough to fix the damage. Many attacks have been directed against this tower, but so far its defenses have held, thank The Eternal Lantern. Berayne and I remain here each night in case something does happen that we must defeat the vile creatures inside this holy place."***

Defenses being a stout oak door, shutters on the windows, and construction that seems to ignore the ravages of time. If a character casts *detect magic*, the walls of the Tower radiate strong transmutation magic.

If the PCs ask about the refugees:

***"A tragic misunderstanding in hindsight," Pendras sighs. "We should have been more hospitable. The few refugees we have had in the town prior to this most recent incident made themselves unwelcome guests. There was an old woman, a matriarch, among this most recent group that cursed the town. Ill tidings have befallen us since. I pray the Eternal Lantern will keep us safe, but... well, perhaps this is a test of faith, and a reminder of our duties as hosts to weary travelers."***

If the characters leave for the druid's grove, go to **Encounter 4A**. If they decide to go to the refugee camp, go to **Encounter 4B**.

## **ENCOUNTER 4**

### **The Druid's Grove / Refugee Camp**

Read the following if this is the FIRST time the PCs are leaving Vodun:

*As you leave, all of the remaining people of Vodun, including Pendras and Ducha, are there to see you off. Pendras leads you all in a short prayer and blesses each one of you. Seeing all of their fearful faces, you realize that these people are surely doomed should you fail in your mission.*

#### **4A: The Druid's Grove**

The following boxed text describes the PCs' trip to the grove.

*You begin your journey to the river, following the trail marked on your map. You estimate the journey at a full day of travel by foot, or but a few hours by horse. The journey to the river is thankfully uneventful, and soon you find yourself on the southern banks of a relatively narrow, clear river.*

*Pausing to refresh yourselves with the river's clean waters, you then swing west, following the shoreline and threading along the edges of the woods. After pausing again for a meal and to rest, you at last spy a clearing in the otherwise dense woods. There, you see a circle of standing stones. Moving cautiously down the gentle slope that leads to the circle, you prepare yourselves for the meeting with Brynnstock.*

Refer to **DM Map #3 – Ancient Druid Circle**. Characters traveling off the road find it to be difficult terrain (as explained in the *Player's Handbook* section on movement).

The PCs cannot surprise Brynnstock, as several animals (a cadre of various mundane birds; his animal companions) have reported the imminent arrival of the adventurers. Since that time, he has been using the grove's magic pool to scry on the movements of the adventurers.

*As you enter the clearing, you see a thin, cadaverous looking man in green and brown hide armor, standing in the center of the grove. He is a feral-looking human of medium height, with bark-like skin, a wild*

*growth of snow-white hair and a full, long beard. He stands beside a circular pool of water within a marble font, studying it. Large stone monoliths ring the area, creating a fifty-foot diameter area.*

*The man looks up, and he giggles like a madman. "Came they did, mistress, like you said they would! Seeking to carve me like a tree cuts biscuits! Oh, would that I could get the bugs out of my hair!" His voice suddenly becomes shrill. "YOU! You are the bug-bringers the mistress warned me about!"*

**ATLs 3 – 7**

**Brynnstock the Dark Druid**

See **Appendix I: NPCs and Monsters** for stats

Sense Motive DC 15 reveals Brynnstock appears mad.

**Tactics:** Keeping the font between himself and the adventurers affords the druid cover. Brynnstock's first spell is *entangle*, attempting to mire the party down as much as possible while he casts other spells. *Entangled* fighters in metal armor are targets for *chill metal*, while archers attempting to stand off and attack with missile weapons see their bows subjected to a *warp wood* spell. He uses *dominate animal* spell against any worthwhile animal companions the party may have, or against animals summoned to help with the combat. He attempts to heal himself if reduced to ten hit points or less, either by *wild shape* or spells. As he is desperate to impress his "mistress," the druid does not flee.

If captured, the madman bites off his own tongue and swallows it rather than betray the secret of his beloved mistress Sylستا. Brynnstock in no way aids the adventurers, and seeks to run off into the woods at the earliest opportunity. If someone attempts to *charm* him, the caster realizes that a power is controlling the mad druid already, and that power is stronger than the caster's.

When Brynnstock is defeated, the characters may examine the area. He is wearing a few items of note as presented in the stat block and **Awards** section.

The druidic circle is ancient. Any druid PC in the party instinctively knows the circle was meant to focus the power of moonlight from the heavens,

using its light to grant insight and wisdom. Other than that fact, there is little of interest in the grove, even to another druid. The *scrying pool* was magically linked to the druid of the grove; with Brynnstock's death, it becomes nothing more than a font of non-magical pure water.

## 4B: Refugee Camp

Refer to **DM Map #4 – Refugee Camp**. The refugee encampment is in a clearing about fifty feet in width. Four clusters of four tents, each aligned in the cardinal directions around a roaring campfire, can be seen. There are a total of twenty people in the camp. A pair of guards is always on watch, armed with crossbows and signal whistles.

The encampment has clearly seen better times, and the nerves of everyone in the place are frayed to the breaking point. The reason for this is that nearly half of the refugees have been killed or eaten – by one of their own number, Andreas who has been cursed with a wolf-like form.

ATLs 1 – 7  
Refugees, male and female humans  
Andreas Morbeau, The Beast  
Nadya Morbeau, Matriarch of the Refugees

See **Appendix I: NPCs and Monsters** for stats

***Viewing the refugee encampment from a safe distance, it seems clear something is dreadfully amiss. Four clusters of four tents, each aligned in the cardinal directions around a roaring campfire, can be seen. There are a total of twenty people in the camp. A pair of guards is on watch, armed with crossbows. If you were so inclined, sneaking down into the camp might be difficult.***

*If the PCs attack*, run the combat. All the defenders absolutely fight to the death. Such brutal methods earn NO EXPERIENCE POINTS whatsoever – these are innocent people! In addition, Andreas emerges from his grandmother's wagon and seeing this as the perfect chance to finish off the rest of his deadly work, waits until one side or the other has won before changing into his wolf form and tearing the remaining victors apart.

*If the PCs approach peacefully*, they are received hospitably, but cautiously, with guards covering them with several crossbows at all times. They are brought before Nadya. The PCs have little recourse but to meet her – the alternative is for the PCs to be ordered out of the camp. If PCs behave in a belligerent manner, the guards call out to others and attack the characters.

***Having agreed to speak to the matriarch, you are led to a wagon. It was once a gaily-colored affair, but the colors on the carriage have been muted by weather and time. The guards remain to your sides, and do not take their eyes off of you. Inside the large covered wagon, you see simple furnishings that consist of a bed, a washbasin, and a small round table upon which rests a crystal ball. Seated behind the table is a human woman of perhaps eighty years. She watches you with an appraising glance as you enter. Beside her stands a young man, probably her grandson based on the resemblance between them.***

***“So,” the woman says, in a scratchy voice, “you have come to avenge yourselves upon us? Any curse I laid upon your village pales in comparison to what has happened in this camp.”***

Nadya genuinely believes that the PCs have come to destroy the camp, and she is desperate to make a bargain. Should the PCs reassure her that they're not there to harm the refugees and seek only the lifting of the curse, she becomes MUCH more friendly – and desperate for aid.

Threats against Nadya bring an immediate attack from the guards present inside and outside the carriage (see above).

If she is spoken to reasonably, Nadya shares the following pieces of information.

- The group consists of refugees from Tokis. Kalamaran soldiers raided their village and killed most of their kin. They escaped through the Pipitul Woodlands to Pekal in hopes of starting new lives for themselves and their families.
- The people in the caravan are mainly farmers and simple tradesmen. They do not have any warriors among their group.

Luckily, they have been able to subsist so far, and the land here is good for growing crops. Soon, though, they must move on as they have no right to settle anywhere in Pekal without permission from Bet Rogala.

- Nadya was angry the group wasn't treated better, but she admits that she has no power to lay a curse upon anyone, especially an entire village. What is happening in her camp, on the other hand, is all too real.
- Not long after leaving Vodun, a huge wolf began making nocturnal attacks against the camp. The few survivors are all that is left of the original caravan, which originally numbered over 40 people. (Strangely, it was only one large wolf, no smaller ones have been sighted)
- The wolf seems to shrug off crossbow bolts and sword blows, and its eyes glow red. The thing is clearly beyond the means of the refugees to defeat.
- Nadya contemplated taking the caravan back to Vodun for safety, but she feared the wolf would follow and endanger the people of the village as well.

Nadya pleads with the PCs for aid in stopping the beast that is plaguing them. If the PCs agree to stay the night and help protect the camp (she is sure the creature will attack that evening – it has every evening since passing Vodun), she promises to reward them handsomely (though she does not reveal exactly what she has in mind – 50 gp each).

The beast is actually Andreas, though he is only partially aware of what is happening. After being turned away from Vodun, he called to the gods for power to have vengeance on those who had harmed his family. Unfortunately, a malicious Power heard him, and granted his wish. Andreas now turns into a powerful wolf every night, and is driven to kill whatever creatures it encounters.

Andreas is NOT a were-creature, this curse is more akin to a *polymorph* spell, though enhanced a bit through the God's power.

Andreas does not say much, and the DM should make him as unassuming as possible. He does not radiate evil if it is detected.

Nadya does *not* volunteer what she knows about Sylستا until the PCs have aided her against Andreas (see below).

Alternatively, the PCs may recommend the refugees return to Vodun. Nadya is hesitant but agrees. However, they must take their goods with them, and the soonest they can leave is the next morning.

If the PCs accept, she leaves it to the PCs to devise a method of defending the camp. She notes the creature stalks into the camp unseen and without leaving tracks as it comes and goes – a clue to thoughtful PCs that the attacker might already be *within* the camp.

If the PCs refuse, they continue on the adventure, and receive no xp for this section.

### Defending the Camp

After nightfall, Andreas falls into something near a trance and exits his wagon (determine randomly). Depending on the characters' preparations, he may simply walk around behind the wagon and change form. If possible, he attempts to move into the forest before attacking.

Andreas does his best to attack with the element of surprise. He does NOT harm Nadya, but all the others in the camp are fodder for his murderous rage and appetite for blood.

Ideally, he waits until the PCs have separated to set up a perimeter (if they assume the attack is coming from outside the camp) and then attacks lone PCs. *He looks to attack the most physically formidable and toughest looking opponent first.* Once he attacks, there is enough racket that anyone in the camp hears the noise of battle.

The DM should do his or her best to make this scene dramatic. The moon is full, and wolf howls can be heard in the distance. The howling seems to come closer, and a PC catches a glimpse of a normal wolf, eyes glittering in the campfire, before moving off. *Then* the screams as the wolf attacks, mere yards away from where the PCs stand...

Andreas is full of bloodlust in his wolf form, and fights to the death. If slain, Nadya harbors no ill will towards the party, though she grieves mightily for her grandson. If the PCs somehow

take Andreas alive, he reverts to his humanoid form when unconscious. Should the PCs have the means to cure him of his ailment, and do so, they have earned the lifelong friendship of the surviving refugees, Nadya and Andreas himself. Curing him requires a *remove curse*.

Andreas wears the *Signet of the Worg*, which was, unfortunately, the impetus for the form chosen for him by the twisted God that cursed him.

If the PCs are unable to cure Andreas themselves, Nadya assures them her band can restrain him for a short time to transport him to Bet Rogala to be cured. If the characters care to, they may help escort Andreas after the threat to Vodun is defeated.

If the PCs stood in the defense of the camp, Nadya thanks them:

***“What can my meager words say to thank you, heroes? You have stood against a great evil, one borne of my own house, and triumphed. Know this, my friends. My beloved grandson plagued this camp, but not Vodun. Of that much, I am certain. As for the plight of Vodun, let us see what the ball tells us.”***

***She peers into her crystal ball. Her eyes scan the surface of the sphere, but no motion is seen within the globe, at least not to your own eyes. Then she looks puzzled, and finally pushes away from her table. “So strange. When seeking evil, I see only a vision of a wilted rose. How odd.”***

PCs might believe that the rose refers to the druid Brynnstock; it actually refers to Sylستا (and her red locks matching the color of the rose).

## **ENCOUNTER 5** **A Heroes' Welcome**

**IMPORTANT DM NOTE:** After the PCs return having investigated both Brynnstock and the refugee camp, continue with this Encounter. Until both threats have been faced, Ducha encourages them to investigate all possibilities.

Having heard of the heroes' defeat of Brynnstock from her bat spies in the woods,

Sylستا has decided that it is time to take direct action. While the characters were gone, she has laid plans to kill Pendras and Berayne.

(The village temple is considered a public place; Sylستا is therefore not bound by the restriction on vampires that requires them to be invited into a home or edifice before they enter)

Read the following as the characters make their way back to Vodun:

***With the defeat of the dark druid and your investigations of the refugee camp, you return from whence you came. Your spirits should be light – you have saved Vodun from the animals of the forest, as well as the wolf in the midst of the refugees. But as you enter the small town, you sense something is not right. Perhaps your nerves are still raw from the confrontations with a cursed man and a dark druid – or is it the latter's ramblings about his mysterious mistress?***

Ducha hurries outside when the characters arrive in town. Depending on the way the module has played, the characters may have questions or ideas – perhaps even to start looking for more clues. At this point, Ducha doesn't have anything more to offer, but he does ask questions about what they have discovered.

After the scene has played itself out a bit, continue below. Ducha is convinced that having a feast will lift the spirits of the townsfolk, so even though he (and the characters) may have some reservations, the feast happens that night.

***“Wonderful! For all this, we shall have a grand feast tonight!” Ducha exclaims. “Please, you'll be our guests, won't you?” he asks expectantly.***

If the characters do not stay, they receive only the Masterwork Silver Battle Axe, and the adventure is over for them. Assuming the characters agree to stay:

***It is a tranquil night as you sit down to the feast. Large tables have been brought outside, and are filled with a variety of vegetables, breads, meats, as well as the occasional tankard of ale. All the townsfolk appear to be there, except for Pendras and Berayne who have not yet appeared. Happy voices and jubilant laughs bring a cheery atmosphere to the impromptu festival. The***

***festivities are brought to an abrupt halt as, shortly before you can get settled, a woman's scream echoes throughout the village!***

The sounds remind the characters (with an Int check DC 10) of Berayne, the priestess, and the screams are clearly coming from the direction of the Tower.

A Spot check (DC 20) reveals there are a number of bats circling the tower – many more than would be normal, and their behavior seems odd.

The front door is locked.

<b>Reinforced Wooden Door:</b> 3 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 20; AC 2; Break DC 26.
---

Alternatively, characters may try to climb the walls of the tower to gain access to the second or third floor windows. It takes a Climb check DC 25 to scale the wall (equal to a “brick wall”). PCs must climb 30 feet to reach a shuttered window.

Once at the windows, characters find the shutters are locked.

<b>Reinforced Wooden Shutters:</b> 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 15; AC 7; Break DC 22.
---

Read the following when the characters make it inside the tower:

***Within the flickering torchlight you can just make out a strange scene in the temple. You see Berayne standing over a crumpled body as she raises a longsword above her head, and brings it crashing down with a horrible sound into the still form on the floor.***

***Moving into the Tower, Berayne again brings the sword up into position. Right as she starts to swing down, you notice the crumpled form on the floor is that of Pendas!***

Berayne is *dominated*. Using the priestess as bait, Sylستا lured Pendas into a trap where she killed him. Berayne is now following commands to mutilate the body.

The PCs may have a variety of actions at this point. Berayne does not resist if grappled, and if

attacked, immediately falls down and begins sobbing – the *domination* now broken (she makes her saving throw). Two fang marks are still bleeding on Berayne's neck (she has lost 2 Con). As the PCs gain control of the situation, or begin looking around, read the following:

***Feminine laughter rings out from behind you. The laughter eases as a slow and sultry voice echoes from thin air, “Poor Pendas, he shouldn't have been so callous when I offered him my love. To crush such a precious flower, but roses have thorns, even though he was too foolish to see them. Your interference was annoying, but pointless as you can see – I got what I wanted in the end – I always do, you know.”***

If the characters want to converse, Sylستا answers their questions, but always twisting things to make it seem as if she was a victim (i.e. “Pendas made a fool of me when he spurned my love” and “the townsfolk all treated me like dirt because my father was the cobbler”). None of it is true, but her selfishness and undeath have warped her perceptions and memories. She is vain and arrogant – for good reason. Sylستا radiates moderate evil if detected.

Sylستا is neither stupid nor inexperienced. She is concerned primarily with her own survival now that Pendas is dead. Every effort should be taken for her to escape – she should not fight to the death in any circumstance.

At some point, either the characters insult her, or want to start some kind of combat. She is quite happy to oblige, and won't hesitate to attack them if they do ANYTHING that seems hostile.

When that happens, give the characters a Spot check DC 53 to see her near the doors. Sylستا he is currently invisible. If the characters fail, Sylستا gains surprise and uses *Mind Blast* on them.

***Appearing out of nowhere is a beautiful young woman with pale skin, full red lips, and long dark red tresses. Her once-gray eyes are now filled with a malevolent light that seems to flicker in the shadows. A pert smile appears on her perfect face, obviously a calculated gesture designed so you can just glimpse her fangs.***

***As you stare in horror, the very air around her agitates and is violently pushed aside, as if she is conjuring a cone of pure force. As the wave of air hits you, sudden pain erupts behind your eyes as your head feels as if it is going to explode!***

Spellcraft DC 25 or Knowledge (arcana) DC 30 to determine this is NOT a magical effect. Psicraft DC 10 to know it is *Mind Blast*.

Will Save DC 15 for psionic characters, 19 for non-psionic characters.

Sylستا does not have statistics. For some reason, /turns/ do not have any effect on her...

*If all (or most of) the characters are stunned, have her gloat a bit, threaten to kill a stunned character if non-stunned characters don't retreat, kiss paladins, admire an attractive bard, etc. She doesn't attack them at this point, just gloats over their defeat. After a few rounds, she drinks her *potion of invisibility*, moves outside the tower, and assumes her gaseous form to escape down into a crack next to the Tower's foundation. She continues underground for a few hundred feet, following small cracks and holes in the ground, and finally moves into the woods.*

Judges are encouraged to have fun here – EVIL HAS WON! (for now, at least) Be insufferable, insult the characters; they should hate the fact that Sylستا got away. Just be careful to maintain the balance between in-game and out-of-game behavior. It's all fun to make fun of the silly Lawful Good fighters, but not so much to make fun of that character's player. If necessary, console them by making sure they understand this is only Part 1 of the series...

*If most of the characters are not stunned, she immediately drinks her *potion of invisibility* which she already has in her hand. On her next action, she turns to gaseous form, and flies straight down into a crack next to the Tower's foundation. She continues underground for a few hundred feet, following small cracks and holes in the ground, and finally into the woods.*

Some characters may insist on tracking her, and may be able to do so. If they are able to track her through the ground, and into the woods, give them hints that they shouldn't, like Jerica following them and telling them to return, etc.

After a few hours of tracking Sylستا, she turns grows tired of the characters and decides to lead them into a trap.

There is a small cave a few miles west of town, near the river. It is 5 feet wide, and about 100 feet long. She leads them inside about 50 feet, then goes straight up and outside through a crack in the ceiling. Once there, she activates a trap that causes the entrance to the cave to collapse.

It takes approximately 5 hours to dig through the rubble without spells or items aiding the characters. Sylستا's trail is gone when they escape.

**Cave Entrance Trap:** CR –; from entrance of the cave to 15 feet down the tunnel; the cave ceiling collapses, anyone caught in the cave takes 2d6 points of damage, and is stuck (as per the *web* spell); Ref save avoids the damage (DC 14) Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 20). NOTE: Search and Disable Device only work outside the cave, 40 feet past the entrance.

### **The Coffin in the Rose bed**

Some characters may choose to dig up Sylستا's rose bed. If this happens, read the following at the appropriate time:

***Moving around the side of the house, it is obvious the ground under the rose bushes has been disturbed, as if something underneath the dirt was causing it to shift about.***

The characters need to dig down to the coffin, thankfully buried just two feet below the surface. Unless they are very foolhardy, expect the PCs to take a few minutes preparing to open the coffin. They may set off a trap when the top is opened. Inside the coffin is a single red rose, and nothing else.

**Dust Cloud Trap:** CR 1/2; 10 ft radius emanation from coffin; *blinded* for 1 round; Ref save resists (DC 14) Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 20).

### **CONCLUSION**

***Though the threat of Sylستا still exists, the townsfolk are still pleased with your efforts. This excitement is a bit muted as the reality***

*of the situation and all they have lost continues to weigh on the minds of the people. Nevertheless, Ducha thanks you all and rewards you as he had promised he would.*

*“Meager compensation, to be sure, for your tasks, heroes,” he says quietly. “Know that you are welcome in this village at any time. I have a plan for rebuilding this place, if the gods allow it. This was once a beautiful place; it grieves me that you have only seen it as it is now.”*

*“Unfortunately, Berayne is no longer fit to care for herself. We are sending her back to the main temple in Bet Rogala in hopes that someone there can help her. We are also sending a request for some more priests to come here as soon as possible. With Sylستا moving about, I fear we need more protection than we can provide for ourselves.”*

**DM Note:** If the characters refuse payment, Ducha insists they take the axe, as well as the following:

*Ducha looks at you for a long second before nodding slightly. “Yes, you may be the ones I’ve waited for... Follow me!”*

*He leads you toward the barn at the back of the inn. Throwing the door open, he enters and marches toward the back wall. Once there, he drops heavily to his knees as he begins pushing hay away from the floor. “There we go!” he exclaims as he pulls a couple of loose boards away from the floor.*

*Leaning forward, he reaches into the hole to pull up a small keg. Setting it down, he removes the top, reaches in, and pulls out a burlap covered item. Unwrapping it reveals a shining gauntlet, gleaming as if it was made of pure light.*

*“Put this on – there is something we have to do,” he says holding the gauntlet out to you.*

Any of the characters works for this situation

*Unwrapping another gauntlet, he places the metal glove on his hand. Grasping your gauntleted fist, he looks on all of you with misty eyes. “This suit of armor belonged to my grandfather who fought beside Prince Kafen’s father in the war with Kalamar. It was passed to my father, then to me. I only had daughters – no sons – and all of them are men who care for their families, but do not possess the abilities to do more. I think you do. I would like to give you this armor, if you agree to take an oath with me. You must take the oath to receive the armor, and you are then bound to it until you can find someone else to take the same oath. Do you agree?”*

The characters may have questions, answer them as needed, using the cert for information. Once they agree, continue:

*Please repeat this oath: “I swear to protect the people of Pekal from evil, in whatever form it appears.”*

*Upon speaking the words, you feel a tightness in your chest, then it releases leaving you relaxed and calm. Ducha removes the gauntlet and hands it to you. “You have not only saved my town, but upheld my family’s honor. Please, take care of yourselves – heroes such as you are needed in these times. The Eternal Lantern guide your steps, and shine on your path.”*

**DM Note:** Some characters may offer to stay and help protect the village until help arrives.

Under no circumstances does Ducha ask them to stay as he already believes they have done enough for his village. Should they offer, however, he gladly accepts. If the characters ask for anything, he informs them there is nothing left to give.

Alternatively, characters may choose to accompany Andreas, Berayne, or both to Bet Rogala, or just leave the town to its fate.



## Awards

### **TREASURE**

#### **Introduction:**

25 gp per character (for completing the job for Lord Wanifer)

#### **Encounter 3:**

Scroll of *Cure Light Wounds* x2; 50 gp value (30 if sold)

#### **Encounter 4B:**

50 gold (from Nadya)

Signet of the Worg; 2,750 gp value (1,900 if sold)

#### **Encounter 5:**

The Radiant Order, Canon of The Eternal Lantern; 100 gp value (80 if sold)

#### **Conclusion:**

*ONLY for heroes who did not ask for compensation:*

Mithril Banded Mail; 9,000 gp value (cannot be sold)

#### *All heroes:*

Masterwork Silver Battle Axe; 400 gp value (250 if sold)

Favorable notice of The Eternal Lantern; N/A

Favorable notice of the church of The Eternal Lantern; N/A

25 gp per character

NOTE: If characters turn down payment, they only receive the 25 gp from the Introduction and 50 gp from Nadya, they do not receive the 25 gp listed in the Conclusion.

## Experience Points and Day Units

### EXPERIENCE POINTS

	<u>ATL 3</u>	<u>ATL 5 – 7</u>
Encounter 1: Finding any tracks (wolf, man, or both)	25	50
Encounter 2: Conducting a logical investigation	100	200
Encounter 3: Asking Pendas about all three topics (25/50 each)	75	150
Encounter 4A: Defeating Brynnstock	50	100
Encounter 4B: Defeating Andreas without harming other refugees	50	100
Encounter 5: Getting inside the tower in 4 rounds or less	50	100
Discretionary Experience for Role Playing	50	100
Total possible xp award:	400	800

### DAY UNITS

These rewards come at the expense of 5 Day Units.

- If characters stay in the village until help arrives, they spend an additional 10 Day Units.

## Appendix I: NPCs and monsters

### **Ducha, Mayor of Vodun**

Ducha is a human male in his mid-fifties. He is balding and somewhat portly, but he is charismatic and has a tendency to speak quickly. He serves the interest of the tiny hamlet of Vodun with zeal. Although he does not know it, Ducha is the descendant of the templar that smashed the death cultist in the strangled tree caves; the heirloom axe that Ducha possesses was used in that very endeavor. Ducha is lawful good.

### **Pendras of the Tower of The Eternal Lantern**

The ill-fated Pendras is a pleasant and handsome young human male with a kind expression. He cares deeply about the people of Vodun. Like Ducha, he takes his responsibilities very seriously. Pendras is remarkably handsome, with thin blond hair and chiseled features.

### **Berayne of the Tower of The Eternal Lantern**

Young and impressionable, the newly ordained priestess of the tower is quiet, deferential to Pendras, and efficient in her clerical duties. She is somewhat frumpy in appearance, being slightly overweight and a bit nervous around strangers. She has romantic feelings for Pendras that she would never admit – to him or to others.

### **Brynnstock, the Dark Druid**

Ragged and disheveled, the already sociopathic druid has been driven hopelessly mad by the continuous domination of Sylsta. He sees animals and the forces of nature as nothing but tools to bludgeon and smash every vestige of civilization. Even other druids are fair game, as he thinks – when able – like a predatory animal. Brynnstock is exceedingly thin and feral-looking, wearing brown and green hide armor smeared in dirt. He is of medium height, with snow-white hair and a full long beard. He giggles and curses at random, scratches himself until he bleeds, and does other things befitting the behavior of a lunatic.

#### ATL 1

**Brynnstock the Dark Druid**, Male human Dru3: Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d8+3; hp 19; Init +6; Spd 20 ft. (4 squares); AC 15 [17 *barkskin*] (flat-footed 13 [*barkskin* 15], touch 12); Atks club +3 melee [+4 *shillelagh*] (1d6 damage [1d10 *shillelagh*]); SQ Nature sense, wild empathy, woodland stride, trackless step; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 8.

Skills & Feats: Concentration +7 [+11 feat], Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +5, Heal +8, Knowledge (nature) +7, Spellcraft +2, Survival +8. Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (Club).

Possessions: Club, hide armor, large wooden shield, spell component pouch with components.

Spells (5/4/2 per day; DC 13 + spell level): L0 - Cure Minor Wounds x3, Detect Magic, Light. 1<sup>st</sup> - Entangle, Faerie Fire, *Shillelagh*, Obscuring Mist. 2<sup>nd</sup> - *Barkskin*, Chill Metal

#### ATL 3, 5, 7

**Brynnstock the Dark Druid**, Male human Dru5: Medium humanoid (human); HD 5d8+10; hp 31; Init +6; Spd 20 ft. (4 squares); AC 15 [17 *barkskin*] (flat-footed 13 [*barkskin* 15], touch 12); Atks club +4 melee [+5 *shillelagh*] (1d6 damage [1d10 *shillelagh*]); SQ Nature sense, wild empathy, woodland stride, trackless step, resist nature's lure, wild shape 1/day (**cannot use wild shape due to domination**); AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +7. Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 8.

Skills & Feats: Concentration +9 [+13 feat], Diplomacy +7, Handle Animal +7, Heal +8, Knowledge (nature) +7, Spellcraft +6, Survival +8. Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (Club).

Possessions: Club, hide armor, large wooden shield, spell component pouch with components.

Spells (5/4/3/2 per day; DC 13 + spell level): L0 - Cure Minor Wounds x3, Detect Magic, Light. 1<sup>st</sup> - Entangle, Faerie Fire, *Shillelagh*, Obscuring Mist. 2<sup>nd</sup> - *Barkskin*, Chill Metal, Warp Wood. 3<sup>rd</sup> - Cure Moderate Wounds, Dominate Animal

See below for additional animals found with Brynnstock at various ATLs.

#### ATL 5 ONLY

Dire Wolf, page 65, Monster Manual v.3.5

### ATL 7 ONLY

Dire Bear, page 63, Monster Manual v.3.5

#### **Nadya Morbeau Patriarch of the Refugees**

Female human Com1: hp 2 (noncombatant)

**Refugees**, male and female human War1 (10): CR ½; medium-size humanoid (human); AC 13 (touch 11, flat-footed 12); HD 1d8+1; hp 11; Move 30 ft. (6 squares); Init +1; Atk +2 melee (longsword, 1d8+1) or +2 missile (light crossbow, 1d8); AL CN; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1. Str 13, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills & Feats: Craft (various) +2, Listen +4, Spot +4. Alertness.

Possessions: Leather armor, light crossbow, case with 20 bolts, longsword.

#### **Andreas Morbeau “The Beast”**

*Human Form War1*

CR ½; medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d8+1 (11 hp); Move 30 ft. (6 squares); AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 leather armor), touch 11, flat-footed 12); Init +1; BAB/Grp +1/+2; Atk longsword +2 melee (1d8+1) or light crossbow +2 ranged (1d8); AL CN; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1. Str 13, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills & Feats: Craft (various) +2, Listen +4, Spot +4. Alertness.

Possessions: Leather armor, light crossbow, case with 20 bolts, longsword.

*Beast Form – Cursed Wolf*

#### ATL 1-3

Magical Beast; CR 3; HD 3d10+6 (22); AC 14 (+4 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 10); Move 40 ft. (8 squares); Init +4; BAB/Grp +3/+5; Atk bite +5 melee (1d6+2); SA – ; SQ Damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, immune to enchantment and charm effects; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +3. Str 14, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 5, Wis 14, Cha 5.

Skills: Jump +7, Move Silently +9, Hide +9

Feats: Dodge

Note: ATL 1 may use “14” hit points, and “DR 2/bludgeoning” if the judge determines it is necessary due to a low number of players at the table, or a low-combat oriented group of characters.

#### ATL 5-7

Magical Beast; CR 7; HD 8d10+6 (57); AC 18 (+5 Dex, +3 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 13); Move 40 ft. (8 squares); Init +5; BAB/Grp +8/+10; Atk bite +11 melee (1d6+2); SA – ; SQ Damage reduction 10/bludgeoning, immune to enchantment and charm effects; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +4. Str 14, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 5, Wis 14, Cha 5.

Skills: Jump +8, Move Silently +12, Hide +12

Feats: Dodge, Weapon focus (bite), Mobility

#### **Sylستا the Vampire**

Already a mean-spirited girl who used everyone and got whatever she wanted through her good looks, her change to a vampire has made her a locus of hatred against everything in Vodun – especially Pendas, who spurned her advances. Every action she takes is calculated to serve her own interests, preferably at the expense of others. Her cruelty knows no depths, and she relishes being feared. Once she is finished torturing and crushing Vodun, she dreams of sucking the life of every place of peace and light in which she can get herself. She is truly evil. Sylستا has pale skin, full red lips, and fiery red tresses. She is as beautiful as she is depraved.

## **Appendix II: Player Handout 1**

A crisp vellum scroll recovered from an intact scroll tube. A map showing the location of a village is found on the back of the scroll. The face reads:

*Noble adventuring company,*

*The Hamlet of Vodun pleads for aid! We are under attack by wild animals attacking night and day. Many lives have been lost. The people of this hamlet have gathered together our last coppers in the hopes that we can hire you to rid us of these depredations. Jayme, our courier, will pay you half in advance with the balance upon the removal of the threat. Jayme will escort you here.*

*In the event that Jayme and your company somehow become separated, I have scribed on the back of this parchment a rough map showing the location of our small hamlet. Please hurry! Every day, we lose more and more of our numbers to the jaws of hungry animals!*

*With Humility,*

*Ducha, Mayor of Vodun*



**DM / Player Map #2 – Temple of the Eternal Lantern**



**DM Map #3 – Ancient Druid Circle**





**DM Map #4 – Refugee Camp**

