

Ravenloft®

2nd Edition

Adventure

SERVANTS of DARKNESS



by Kevin Melka & Steve Miller

Adaptable
for use
with any
AD&D®
campaign
setting.

Barrenlands I



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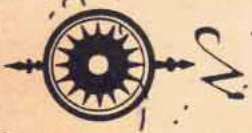
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The Dead Kingdoms



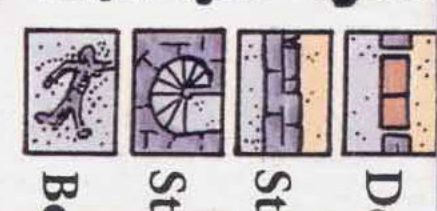
The Shadow Rift

Keening



- 1. Banshee's Lair
- 2. City of the Dead
- 3. East Passage
- 4. Lohr's Trail
- 5. Mount Lament
- 6. West Passage

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Viktal



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One Square = 30 feet

- 1. Constabulary
- 2. Homes (Fishermen)
- 3. Boat Repair Sheds
- 4. Homes (Goatherders)
- 5. Animal Pens
- 6. Fishing Boats
- 7. Cemetery
- 8. Wyan's House
- 9. Local Temple
- 10. Fisherman's Rest Inn
- 11. Stables

Castle Island

One Square = 10 feet



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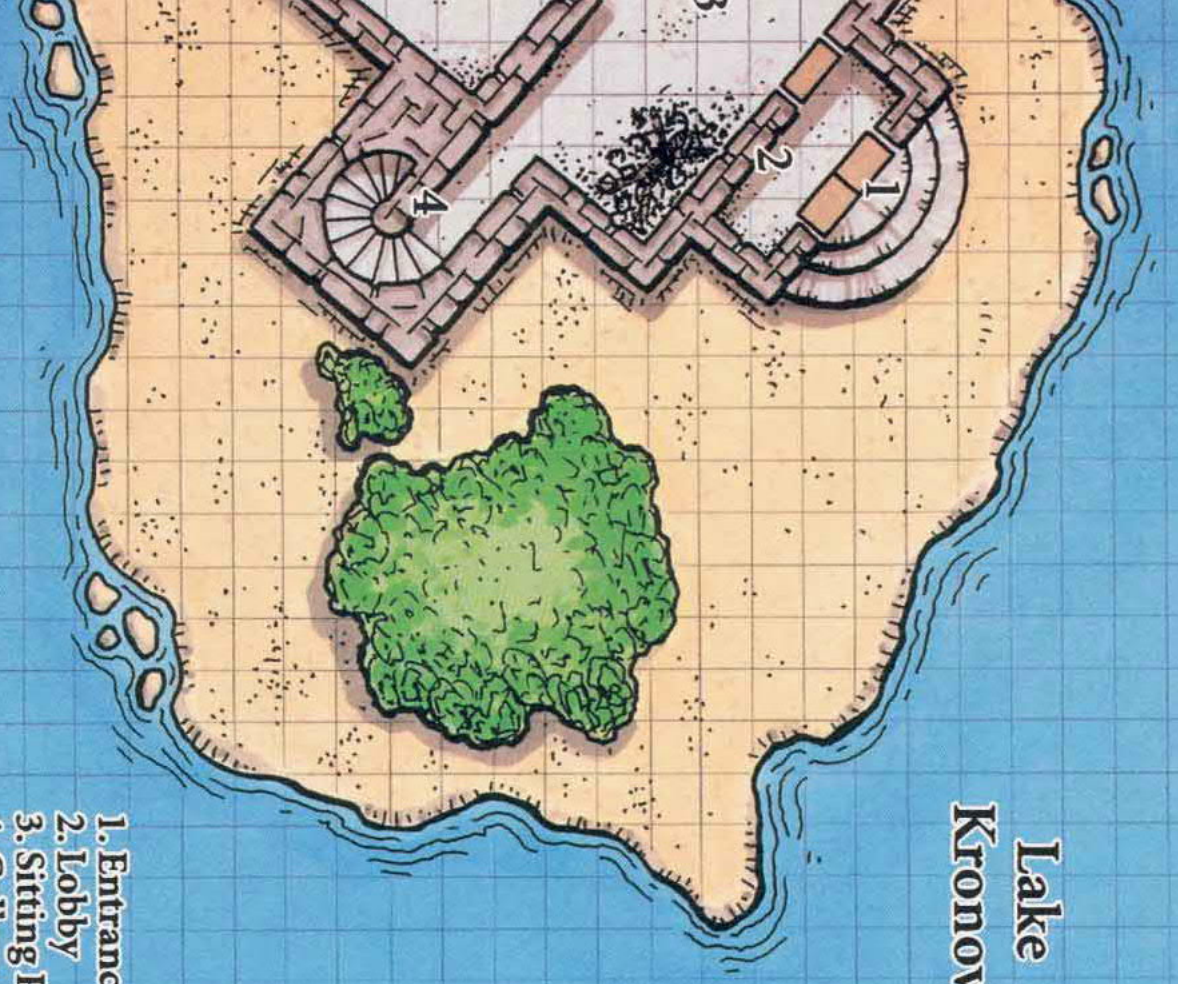
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Tepest

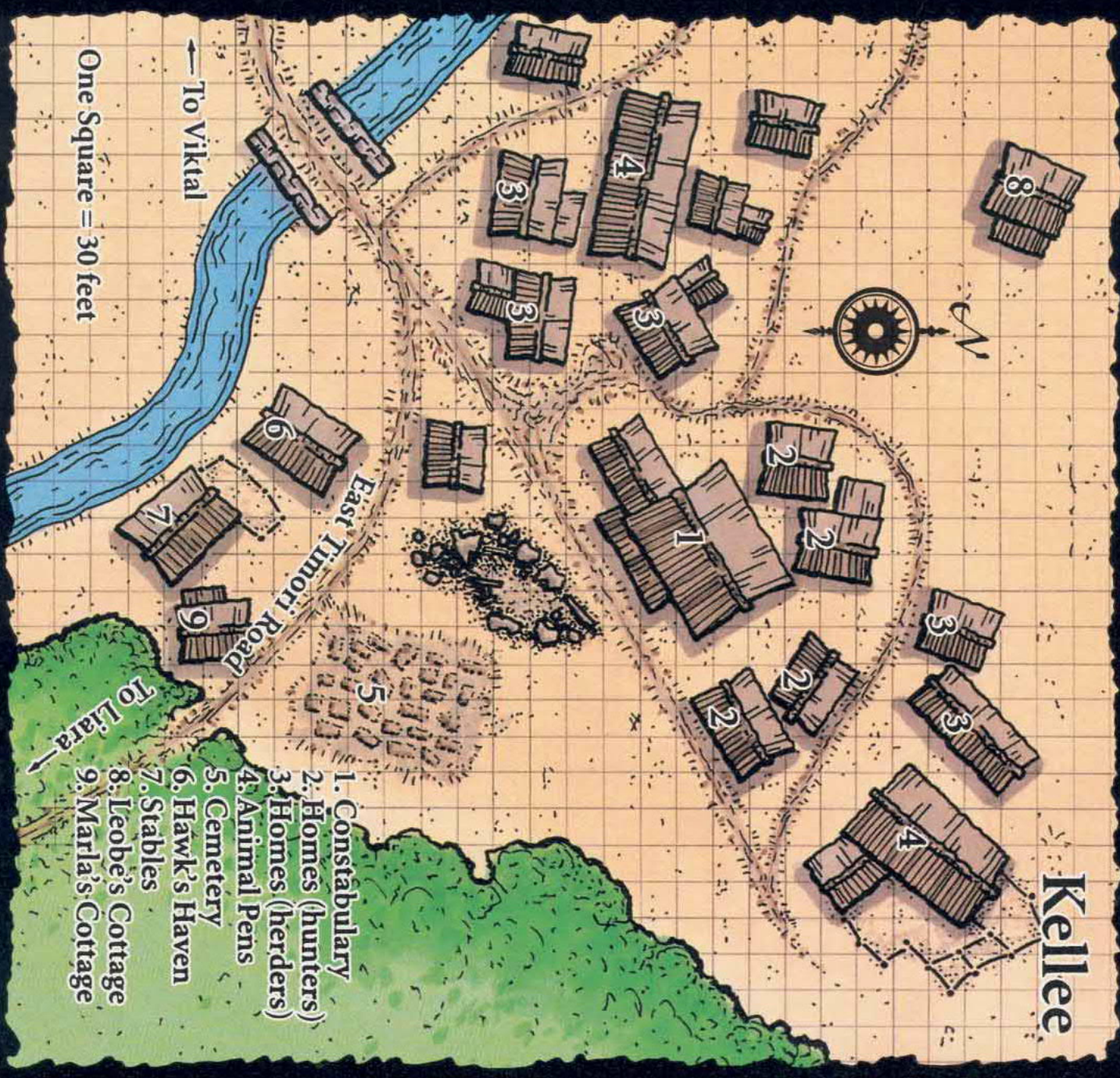
10 Miles

Lake
Kronov



- 1. Entrance
- 2. Lobby
- 3. Sitting Room
- 4. Gallery
- 5. Ballroom
- 6. Rubble

Kellee



← To Viktal

One Square = 30 feet

- 1. Constabulary
- 2. Homes (hunters)
- 3. Homes (herders)
- 4. Animal Pens
- 5. Cemetery
- 6. Hawk's Haven
- 7. Stables
- 8. Leobe's Cottage
- 9. Marla's Cottage

East Timori Road

To Liara

Servants of Darkness

by Kevin Melka & Steve Miller

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Introduction

Notes For the Dungeon Master

S*ervants of Darkness* is an adventure that begins in the domain of Tepest, concludes in nearby Keening, and involves some of the most corrupt residents of both lands. These events occur more than ten years after the Grand Conjunction, in the year 751 on the Ravenloft timeline. This adventure is designed for four to six characters of 4th to 6th level.

Over the course of the first part of the adventure, the heroes attempt to prove the innocence of a woman who stands accused of working evil magic on a supposedly blameless woman from the village of Viktal. The player characters must trek through the domain of Tepest in search of clues, eventually even confronting the darklords of that domain.

The second portion of the adventure sends the characters in pursuit of Loht of Arak (the former shadow elf domain). The trail of this evildoer leads the heroes into the domain of Keening, where they encounter Tristessa, the banshee who rules there.

The Dungeon Master should read the entire adventure before beginning play. Many of the hints and clues the heroes need to successfully complete this adventure can be obtained only through clever investigation and roleplaying encounters with the people and creatures of Tepest. It is recommended that the Dungeon Master be familiar with the information on Tepest and Keening presented in *Domains of Dread*. The *RAVENLOFT® MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM® Appendix III* is also helpful, as it contains detailed descriptions of two important creatures presented in this adventure: the boowray and the recluse.

Fear and Horror Checks

At points during the adventure, certain scenes may require fear or horror checks. These game mechanics are used to foster a specific reaction on the part of the heroes in direct response to terrifying situations.

At the Dungeon Master's discretion, these fear and horror checks may be considered optional. Should players adequately roleplay the horrific scene before them, the Dungeon Master can omit the need for the checks. If not, then the checks should be applied. The intense effects that these

checks have on characters should encourage most players to begin roleplaying the appropriate responses soon enough.

A Little Background

Tepest is a domain of simple people who live in whitewashed cottages, raise goats or sheep, and cultivate small farms. They are extremely superstitious and believe their land is infested with "hidden folk," whom they have termed "fey." It is a witch hunt against the fey that involves the heroes in the adventure.

Demihuman characters, especially elves, halflings, and other strange humanoids, may also find themselves accused of witchcraft by Viktal's overzealous Inquisitors. At the Dungeon Master's discretion, this may even prove true of wizards (a rare character class in Tepest) and natives of other strange worlds such as Athas or Mystara. Anyone beyond the scope of what most Tepestani consider "normal humans" may fall under a cloak of suspicion.

Techniques and Staging

The characters and events in this adventure should all have an air of mystery around them. If the Dungeon Master is careful about how the various events are presented (including the conflicting information given by the nonplayer characters), the heroes will face some extremely difficult choices. Are the witch-hunting fanatics who comprise the Inquisition more dangerous than the evil creatures they root out and destroy? Is the seemingly gentle Bryonna guilty or innocent?

If this adventure is run correctly, the heroes will almost certainly worry that they have made wrong decisions or that they are being led astray. However, the Dungeon Master should not allow this paranoia to get out of hand, or it will detract from the flow of the adventure. If handled properly, *Servants of Darkness* can become an adventure that the players and Dungeon Master alike will remember for some time to come.





Backdrops

Men perish because they cannot join the beginning with the end.

—Alcmaeon (c. 500 B.C.)

Tepest's two main villages, Viktal and Kellee, each have a population of around three thousand people (including nearby rural villas). Viktal is located on the southeastern shore of Lake Kronov, while Kellee is twenty miles east on East Timori Road.

The Tepestani are poor folk, who live in small whitewashed cottages with thatched roofs. As a matter of pride, they carefully adorn their cottage walls with intricate floral patterns. In summer the window boxes overflow with blossoms.

The Viktalians herd goats and sheep, or fish for sturgeon on the lake. The people of Kellee are much the same, but instead of fishing they hunt bear and wild boar in the forests to the south.

Tepest is home to an indeterminable number of goblin tribes. These humanoids lair in caves in the mountains and hills of the domain, preying on travelers and shepherds. The forests of Tepest also boast an assortment of supernatural creatures called "fey" by citizens of Kellee and Viktal. These include, but are not limited to, baobhan sith, boowrays, brambles, quicklings, and unseelie faeries. Still, none of the inhabitants of this domain are as gruesome or feared as the Three Sisters (see page 57).

Recent Changes

Not so long ago, the human residents of Tepest shut their doors tight against the night, huddling around their hearths in fear. Just over a decade ago, however, that mindset began to change in the town of Viktal.

In 740 on the Barovian calendar (see *Domains of Dread*), the stars shifted in the heavens, and two domains to the west and south of Tepest disappeared. In actuality, they merely moved to different parts of the Demiplane, but the Tepestani are not aware of that fact. Where G'Henna and Markovia had once been, they saw only an immense canyon filled with dark vapors.

The only explanation for this disappearance that presented itself was magic—evil magic. The superstitious folk of Tepest blamed the disaster on the vile magic of the fey. Fearful that the same thing might one day happen to them, the

Tepestani of Viktal all but declared war on the fey and those who consorted with them: a war led by Wyan and his Inquisitor priests.

Wyan has taken it upon himself to educate the folk about a variety of creatures of the night. Unfortunately, he is not the expert he believes himself to be. Much of his information is based on superstition, hearsay, and old wives' tales. Still, what he lacks in knowledge he makes up for in determination and charisma.

Despite its good intentions, however, the Inquisition has developed a darker side. Although Wyan and his followers deny it, several innocent bystanders have been targeted by these overzealous priests. All told, more than a dozen innocents have been convicted and burned at the stake over the last ten years.

Recently, a difficult case has arisen—one that involves a young woman named Bryonna and Wyan's own daughter, Lorelei. Despite clear evidence against Bryonna, many people of good character have come to her defense. Wyan knows that this is a dangerous situation and has vowed to see the case resolved fairly and justly.

The Evils of Jealousy

The difficult case that Wyan faces involves two young women from Viktal, Bryonna and Lorelei. These eighteen-year-olds were at one time the best of friends.

Lorelei, Wyan's daughter, is famed in Viktal for her beauty. She has received suitors from as far away as Liara in the domain of Nova Vaasa. The thought that his own daughter has fallen victim to the evil of the fey is nothing short of blasphemous in Wyan's mind.

Bryonna, an orphan who came to Viktal many years ago, is known for her kindness and charm. For her, however, suitors have been few and far between. As a child, her face was badly scarred by the goblins who killed her parents. Not many men have been perceptive enough to look beneath her rough exterior and see the flower that blooms within.

Despite their differences, however, the two girls became best friends. Until recently, each thought of the other as a sister.

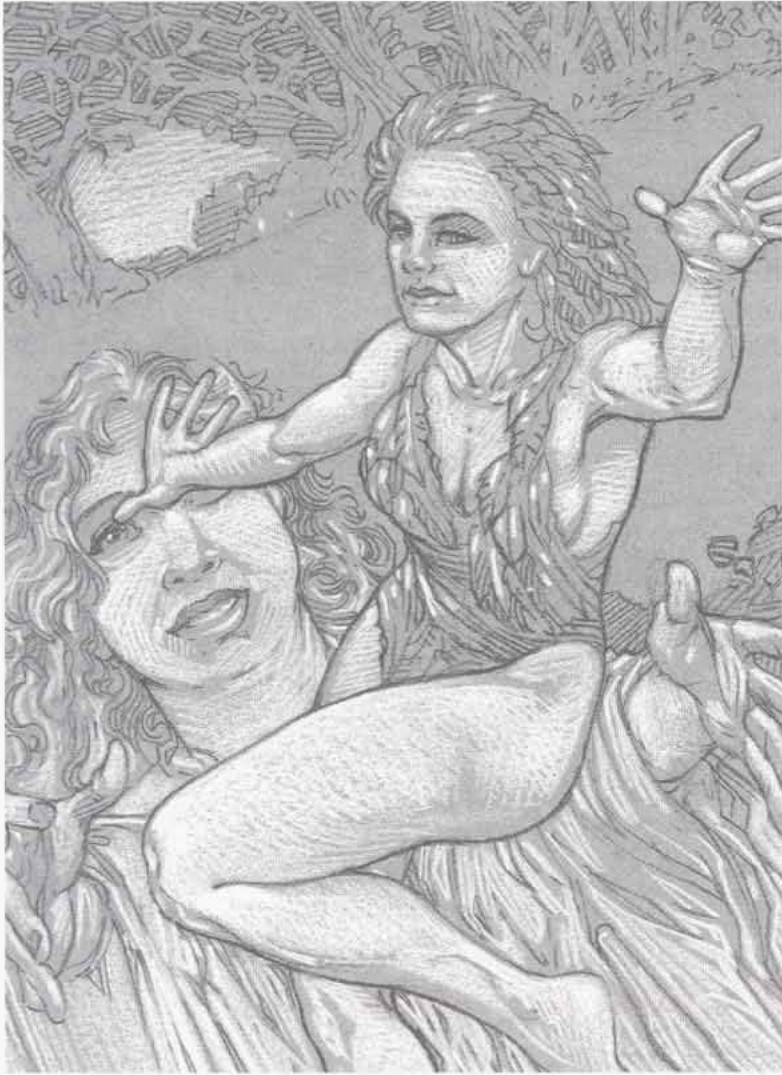
About six weeks ago, Bryonna finally met a man who recognized her inner beauty, and the two quickly fell in love. When he proposed marriage, she instantly accepted. Some of Bryonna's friends then arranged a celebration for the young woman at the local inn.

What should have been a night of revelry turned into disaster when Lorelei learned that





Introduction



Bryonna's betrothed was none other than Ivan D'Ogmai, her former suitor. She became hysterical, claiming someone with a face as scarred as Bryonna's could have caught Ivan's eye only through the use of witchcraft.

Lorelei beseeched Ivan to cast off the wicked spell, insisting that he was being manipulated by magic. Clearly, Bryonna had won his heart by means of some love potion or other enchantment. Bryonna and Ivan both begged her to stop, insisting that her claims were nonsense.

Suddenly, Lorelei froze with a panicked look on her face. She fell to the ground and was racked by a series of violent convulsions. This seizure continued for several minutes, during which time she suffered minor cuts, bruises, and abrasions. When she recovered, Lorelei insisted that she had been the victim of Bryonna's fey-spawned magic. The fact that she suffered similar seizures over the next several days backed up her allegations. This evidence convinced the residents of Viktal that Lorelei's accusations were true. Bryonna, they believed, had put a spell on Ivan and cursed Lorelei for revealing her secret.

As this belief spread, other evidence against Bryonna began to surface. Tales were spread

about children who fell ill when Bryonna walked by and animals who grew skittish when she was near. A few villagers even revealed that they had seen her consorting with the fey—performing dreadful rituals under the full moon.

On the day that Wyan went to Bryonna to discuss the growing charges against her, Lorelei had another seizure, this one so violent that she broke two fingers and dislocated her shoulder. Wyan immediately ordered Bryonna locked in the basement of the temple. No sooner was Bryonna deep below holy ground than Lorelei's seizures ceased. What better proof could he find?

Although the evidence against the girl seemed overwhelming, Wyan could not bring himself to consider the case closed. Many influential individuals in Kellee, where Bryonna had spent part of her childhood, sent messages vehemently asserting Bryonna's innocence.

Since that time, Bryonna has been locked under the temple. Lorelei's seizures have stopped, but Wyan remains uncertain in the matter. He has taken these past two weeks to consider a course of action.

The Truth

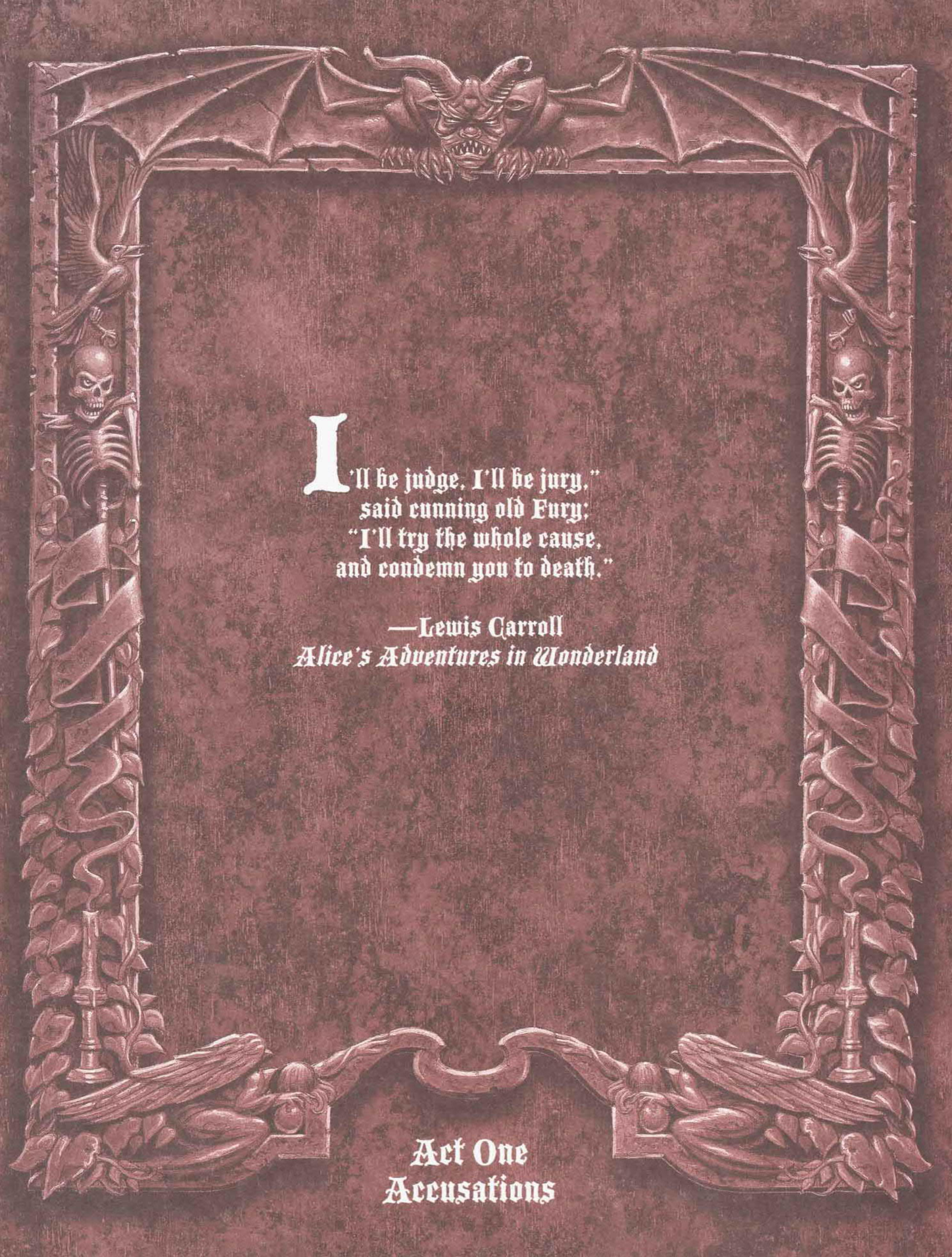
Bryonna is not now—and never has been—a fey, nor is she involved with them in any way. The truth of the matter is that Lorelei is a spoiled young woman who cannot stand the idea that someone chose Bryonna over her. When Ivan shunned her at the party, it was too much for her to bear. Overcome by rage, she had a hysterical fit.

Events might have ended there if Lorelei's actions had not attracted the attentions of a boowray. These evil spirits lead otherwise good folk astray. The boowray used its magical suggestions to convince the unstable Lorelei that she and Ivan were still lovers and that Bryonna had used evil magic to steal his affections.

The boowray continued to influence Lorelei, presenting more and more evidence against Bryonna. It even began slipping a mild toxin into the young woman's food, causing her to have sudden seizures without apparent cause. When Bryonna was confined beneath the church, the boowray stopped drugging Lorelei. This ended the seizures and made Bryonna's guilt even more apparent.

The boowray intends to continue this charade until Bryonna has been executed. It believes that this dark deed will drive Lorelei over the edge, making her as evil as any creature in Ravenloft.





I'll be judge, I'll be jury,"
said cunning old Fury;
"I'll try the whole cause,
and condemn you to death."

—Lewis Carroll
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Act One
Accusations



Accusations

Scene One: To the Rescue

Great crises produce great men and great deeds of courage.

—John F. Kennedy
Profiles In Courage

The heroes can enter this adventure in several ways. They could be traveling through the area when they meet up with Ivan, or the Mists could extend into wherever they happen to be, transporting them directly to Tepest. In any event, the adventure begins just outside of Viktal.

The adventure also assumes each hero has access to a horse, allowing for quicker travel. If they are on foot, the Dungeon Master should alter the boxed text to reflect this.

However they become involved, the heroes have spent a miserable few days on the road, since it has been raining nonstop. Playing through a portion of these dreary days can help establish the atmosphere. When it is time to start the adventure, the Dungeon Master can read the following boxed text aloud to the players:

The weather takes a turn for the worse as you set out this morning. Last night, the constant rain made it difficult to even find dry wood for the fire, and this morning, the landscape is swathed in a light fog. Rain still cascades from the iron-gray sky, and your damp clothes do nothing to keep out the chill.

As you ride, the sounds of your conversation and the beating of the horses' hooves become strangely muted by a thickening, oily vapor. In the hushed grayness of the morning, it seems as though the world consists of nothing more than the slick mud of the road, the bone-chilling rain, and the looming trees that surround you.

Goblins!

After giving the players a few moments to describe the futile efforts their characters make to stay dry and warm in this weather, the Dungeon Master should have the characters riding in front of the party each attempt saving throws vs. paralysis. Failure results in that character being knocked from his mount by a clothesline stretched across the road. Falling heroes each suffer 1d4 points of damage.

As soon as this happens, six arrows (three from either side of the road, just slightly ahead of the heroes) fly at the heroes. Immediately after this salvo, savage war cries pierce the air, and five worg-mounted goblins burst from the trees to attack. The Dungeon Master can read the following text aloud:

Even as the whistling of the arrows hangs in the air, growling war cries fill the forest. Dark creatures surge forward from the trees, charging at you from all sides. Your attackers are feral-looking little creatures, standing no more than a yard tall, with bulging black eyes and mouths full of jagged teeth. Their leathery skin makes them look like some cross between lizards and halflings. Each of these beast men wields a crude, stone-tipped spear and rides upon a great, slaving wolf with evil, intelligent eyes.

During this attack, the archers, who are hidden in the woods ahead, continue to pepper the heroes with arrows. Unless the heroes make a special effort to root out these snipers, they continue to menace the party throughout the skirmish.

Goblin Archer (6): AC 6; MV 6; HD 1-1; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short bow); SZ S (4' tall); ML avg (10); Int avg (8); AL LE; XP 15.

Mounted Goblin (5+): AC 6; MV 6; HD 1-1; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (spear); SZ S (4' tall); ML avg (10); Int avg (8); AL LE; XP 15.

Worg (5+): AC 6; MV 18; HD 3+3; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4 (bite); SZ M (4'-7'); ML steady (11); Int low (6); AL NE; XP 120.

To be sure, the heroes' horses are none too pleased about the worgs charging at them. As soon as the worgs enter melee range, all mounted heroes must make successful land-based riding checks to maintain control of their mounts.

Once half the goblin force has been slain, more enter the fray. This time, the goblins are on foot, and there are two of them for each party member. At this point, any surviving goblin archers begin firing at the party's horses to cut off their escape. Any mount not trained for battle





must make a successful morale check to avoid bolting each time it suffers damage.

Four rounds after the second group attacks, another wave of goblins leaps from the fog-bound trees (again, two per hero). The heroes should believe that they are surrounded by an effectively endless army of creatures.

As the characters start to despair at the number of goblins, a rider approaches and comes to their aid. The Dungeon Master can read the following text aloud to describe this encounter:



Despite their losses, the bestial creatures continue to press their attack. They hiss and snarl as each exchange of blows offers them another chance to stain their spears with your blood. The evil determination in their obsidian eyes makes it clear that they have no intention of allowing you to leave this place alive.

Then, above the din of battle, you hear the sound of a blaring bugle and hoofbeats drawing near. A sleek gray steed suddenly bursts from the fog, its rider clad in midnight hues and holding a gleaming saber aloft. His weapon comes down swiftly, cleaving one of the beasts in twain.

As he thunders past you, this mysterious rider cries out in a loud, clear voice. "This way, men—the goblins have taken the bait!"



At the sound of this shout, the goblins are taken aback. While they might be prepared to attack a group of travelers, they have no interest in exchanging blows with an armed force. Thus, any goblins not directly engaged in combat with the heroes flee at once, including the hidden archers. Those engaged in battle must make successful morale checks to continue fighting.

Meeting Ivan

Once the goblins have been driven off, the rider approaches the heroes, throwing back his hood and revealing himself to be a disheveled blond man in his early twenties. He immediately offers to help the heroes bandage their wounds. Though he is not a priest, he possesses the healing nonweapon proficiency.

This man is Ivan, a traveling merchant. (Ivan's stats appear on page 61.) He has no force of men with him, but knows from past experience that goblins are not especially brave and are easily frightened off.

Whether in response to a hero introducing himself, or as conversation while treating wounds, the dark-clad Ivan relates his story. He is a young, friendly man, with the firm voice of someone used to dealing with customers. The Dungeon Master should reflect this when reading Ivan's words:



"I'm Ivan D'Ogmai, originally of Darkon, though I've been calling Tepest home of late. I see by your dress that you're strangers here too. Well, let me warn you, there are worse monsters than those lowly goblins in Tepest. Mind your step when you deal with the folk around here as well. They're the most suspicious people I've ever met."

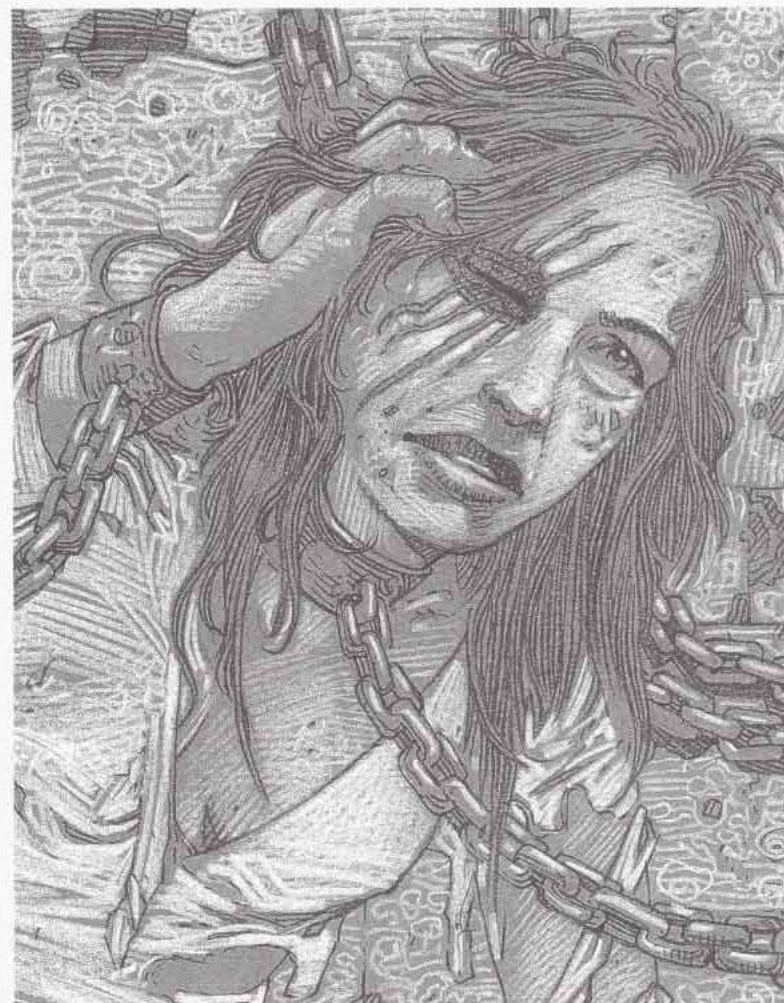


Questions and Answers

The course of the conversation from this point depends upon the questions posed to him. The following are the most likely topics for discussion and the answers that Ivan gives.

Q: "What brings you out in this storm?"

A: In a melancholy tone, Ivan tells them briefly of the events that have brought him to this place on so foul a day:





Accusations

Timeline of Events

The following is a timeline of events that occur prior to the beginning of the adventure and continue once the heroes become involved. Events that occur after the heroes meet Ivan are subject to the Dungeon Master's discretion.

- Day -42** Ivan comes to Viktal and meets Bryonna for the first time.
- Day -25** Ivan proposes to Bryonna, who immediately accepts.
- Day -24** A celebration is planned for Bryonna, who invites her best friend Lorelei to attend.
- Day -22** Lorelei discovers Bryonna is marrying her former suitor and throws a hysterical fit. The intensity of her tantrum attracts the attention of a boowray.
- Day -19** Lorelei, under the influence of the boowray, pretends to experience another fit in the presence of Bryonna. This attracts the attention of Wyan, Lorelei's father.
- Day -17** From the shadows, Lorelei begins to spread rumors of Bryonna consorting with the fey.
- Day -16** Lorelei's actions draw the attention of the dark powers, shifting her nature more towards evil.
- Day -15** Wyan locks Bryonna in the basement beneath the church, and Lorelei's fits cease.
- Day -14** In an attempt to prove Bryonna's innocence, Ivan travels to Kellee. There he finds friends of Bryonna's family, who insist she is innocent. Many of them are prominent citizens, which causes Wyan to rethink his judgment. For two weeks, he ponders this dilemma, while Lorelei slips further under the influence of the boowray.
- Day -2** Ivan attempts to free Bryonna from her prison under the church. He accidentally injures one of her guards in this attack, making himself a wanted man throughout Tepest.
- Day 0** Ivan begins searching for Bryonna's former guardian, Rima. He is searching the forest near Kellee when he encounters a group of goblin raiders. Enter the player characters.
- Day 2** Wyan receives a "vision" in his sleep. He is warned that Bryonna is growing stronger, and may soon be able to break through the holiness of the church and strike at Lorelei with renewed force. He rushes to his daughter's room after awakening, and finds her in the throes of a seizure.
- Day 7*** This is the day Wyan plans to pass final judgment on Bryonna. Unless the heroes intervene, she is burned at the stake.
- Day 8** Lorelei and the *Eye of Vhaeraun* are taken by Loht. Wyan immediately seeks out the heroes and asks them to save his daughter and return the item to prevent further turmoil.

*Should the player characters expedite their investigation, the Dungeon Master should insert the events from Day 7 whenever the heroes return to Viktal.



"The woman I love languishes in the city jail back in Viktal. I hoped to find evidence to save her, but it is no longer safe for me to enter any of the towns in Tepest. I tried to break my beloved free from prison and injured one of the guards by accident, so I am now a wanted man. In a few days, they'll be lashing Bryonna to a stake and . . ."



Ivan is unable to finish his sentence, as his voice is choked with emotion.

Q: "What did you mean about the folk here?"

A: After a brief hesitation, Ivan draws in a deep breath and offers a little bit of background information on Tepest and the witch hunts that have caused him so much trouble:



"Ten years ago, a terrible fate befell the lands of Markovia and G'Henna. Those two nations lie—used to lie—west of here. One day, the Mists rolled in, and they were gone. It was like they had never existed at all! The only thing left in their stead was a great chasm filled with churning black vapors.

"The people of Viktal believe that evil magic was behind the destruction of those lands. They think that the fey—that's their term for the creatures of the night—corrupted those lands and finally dragged them down into oblivion.

"Now, they're afraid that the fey have set about trying to destroy Tepest as well. Strangers to the land are instantly suspected of being in league with the fey. I've even seen some folk, elves and their kind, accused of being fey themselves. It's all the same in the end if the Inquisitors decide that you're guilty. I don't know how many folk they've burned at the stake up to now.

"I've never seen any evidence of the fey or their alleged plan to destroy Tepest. As far as I'm concerned, it's all a bunch of hysteria, and I was more or less ignoring it—until a few weeks ago."



Q: "Can you tell us more about Bryonna?"

A: This is a tough question for Ivan to answer. Only after he decides that he can—or must—trust the heroes does he respond:





“Bryonna and I haven’t known each other long, but she means the world to me. Now, however, it seems that our love is doomed. My betrothed has been falsely accused of calling on the fey to place a curse on Lorelei, the daughter of the priest in charge of the fey hunts. Lorelei and I were sweethearts once, before I learned that she’s nowhere near as beautiful on the inside as she is on the outside.”

“Lorelei claims that Bryonna has cursed her—and that she’s placed a spell on me to win my love. I tell you, that woman’s just a crazy, jealous shrew making up wild tales because she wants me for herself. She cannot accept that I’ve chosen Bryonna over her.”

“No one believes me, though, least of all Wyan. If I don’t prove to him that Bryonna is innocent, she’ll be burned at the stake, and I cannot let that happen.”

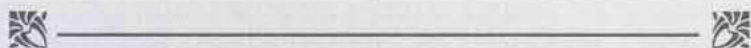


If the heroes press for more information, Ivan essentially relates the story presented under the heading “The Evils of Jealousy” (pages 3–4), characterizing Wyan as a lunatic who is about to execute his fiancée based on the groundless fantasies of a spiteful girl bent on revenge.

Ivan explains that Wyan has condemned Bryonna to be burned at the stake in seven days unless evidence can be presented to refute the Inquisition’s findings (which he would not share with Ivan, because Ivan was himself under a cloud of suspicion).

Q: “What is your plan?”

A: Ivan is attempting to find people to help him to clear Bryonna’s name. He tells the heroes the following tale in answer to these inquiries:



“I am looking for Bryonna’s former guardian, Rima, the Vistana. It’s a slight hope, but I simply don’t know what else to do. Unfortunately, the only people who know for sure where to find her live in Kellee or Viktal, and I cannot enter either.”

“In Kellee, there is a huntsman named Leobe. He brought Bryonna to live in Viktal when Rima decided that the girl should be around other people. In Viktal, of course, there is always Bryonna herself. In fact, Wyan himself may even know where Rima is. He seems to know a lot about what goes on around here.”



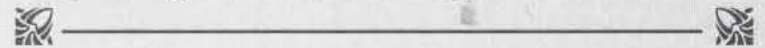
Q: “How can we help?”

A: Once Ivan has decided that he can trust the heroes, he is eager for their help. There is, after all, a lot that he cannot do. Now that he has met the heroes, he expresses his hope that they may help gather evidence to prove Bryonna’s innocence, and maybe even prove Lorelei to be the foul liar that she is.



“Well, you could go into Viktal or Kellee and look for evidence to prove Bryonna innocent. If you could do this for me, I’d be greatly indebted to you.”

“If you do go into Viktal, just remember that the people here don’t like strangers—especially those who ask questions.”



Q: “What do we get for helping you?”

A: If the heroes pose this mercenary question, it does not upset Ivan in the least. After all, he is a merchant and understands that the heroes might want to be paid. He looks a little sheepish, however, because he cannot afford very much:



“I’m not a wealthy man. Truth be told, I’ll be hard-pressed to support a wife once I’ve married. However, I have a few coins stashed away, and Bryonna has a dowry. I think I can find about a hundred gold pieces for you. Will that be enough?”



In all honesty, that is every penny that Ivan can lay his hands on. Still, if it saves his bride from her fate, he gives it gladly.

Even though this is not much money, Ivan can help out the heroes in other ways. He points out again that they are strangers in the land and may be condemned as fey themselves. Proving Bryonna is not an evil creature may help draw attention away from themselves. Ivan also is very knowledgeable about the domains of Ravenloft. If the heroes are looking for information on a certain place or subject, Ivan can be a very good source, in this and other adventures.

Moving On

After their encounter with Ivan, the flow of the adventure depends on the player characters. Either they travel to Kellee or they return to Viktal in order to continue Ivan’s investigation. These options are covered in the following three scenes.





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Scene Two: Viktal

The lowest and vilest alleys of London do not present a more dreadful record of sin than does the smiling and beautiful countryside.

—Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes
(1891)



Viktal is a community in turmoil. On one hand, the people feel safer in their town than they did a decade ago, before Wyan's crusade against the fey started. However, since not even Wyan's own daughter seems to be safe, the old fears are returning, coupled with new suspicions and extreme paranoia.

Arrival in Viktal

As the heroes ride into Viktal, the Dungeon Master can read the following text to the players:

The village of Viktal is encircled by the foreboding palisades of a dark forest. Thatch-roofed houses, whose whitewashed walls are adorned with gaily-painted flowers, spread out beneath low-hanging, black clouds. To the north, a choppy gray lake stretches away from a shore lined with docks and fishing boats.

As the heroes enter town, they immediately detect the apprehension of the villagers. Mothers pull their children close when the heroes ride past, and the village men look at the heroes with guarded unease. If the party contains any obvious demihumans, gypsies, wizards, or other unusual characters, the streets actually clear as they pass.

If the heroes bring Ivan into town with them, they are immediately greeted by six Inquisitors and Wyan, who attempt to arrest Ivan.

Encounters

While the heroes are in Viktal, a number of encounters may occur. Each of these draws the heroes into the events of this adventure, advances the plot, and provides clues about Bryonna's guilt or innocence.

These encounters can happen at times that seem logical to the Dungeon Master, or they can be rolled randomly from the following table at the rate of two for each day the heroes spend in town.

Roll	Encounter
1d8	
1-3	None
4-5	Villagers
6-7	Inquisitors
8	Wyan

Villagers

Villagers are encountered in small groups of 1d4 persons and are typically male farmers or fishermen. Only 20% of those the heroes encounter will be women or children. In every case, the villagers tend to be suspicious of the heroes, imposing a -1 penalty to their initial reaction as indicated in the *DUNGEON MASTER® Guide*. All of the villagers are normal humans as described in the *MONSTROUS MANUAL™* tome.

The following are the most likely questions the heroes may present and the answers they receive. These replies are representational only, so the Dungeon Master should be prepared to ad-lib responses to other questions, as well as vary the replies given. All of the statements are true as far as the villagers are concerned.

Q: "Do you know Bryonna?"

A: "Of course! I thought she was one of the nicest girls in town—until she put a curse on Brother Wyan's daughter! Oh, what fools we were to trust such a hideous creature."

Q: "Do you know anything about Bryonna's parents?"

A: "Only that they were killed by goblins when she was very young. That's how her face got scarred. You know, I should have guessed there was something strange about her. Word is, she lived with a Vistana woman in Kellee for a couple of years. I've heard that those gypsies are in league with the fey."

Q: "Have you seen any evidence that Bryonna uses magic, or that she is an ally of the fey?"

A: "She did walk by a pregnant ewe once, and when it gave birth, the lamb had two heads!"

Q: "What do you know about Ivan?"

A: "He's a merchant who came here seeking his fortune. All he got was a hex put on him. How else can you explain why he'd pick Bryonna over





Lorelei? I mean, we all thought Bryonna was a nice girl, but have you seen her face? A man would have to be bespelled or blind to pick her over Lorelei!”

Q: “What do you think about Wyan?”

A: “He is the most righteous man in the world. He’s beating back the fey, making the land safe for us good folk. The world needs more folk like him.”

The villagers can also provide general information about Viktal, Lake Kronov, Tepest, and the village of Kellee.

If the party contains any demihumans, gypsies, wizards, or other unusual looking characters, the villagers report the possibility of fey folk in town after speaking with them. Shortly after this, the heroes receive a visit from the Inquisitors.

Inquisitors

These men are zealous priests who see themselves as protecting Tepest and all who live there from an insidious evil. They dress in drab brown robes and carry quarterstaves.

Inquisitor, hm, C1: AC 10 (robes); MV 12; HD 1; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (quarterstaff); SD spells; SZ M; ML steady (12); Int very (12); AL CG.

Personality: Judgmental and fanatical.

Special Equipment: Shackles, holy symbol.

Spells (1): 1st—*protection from evil*.

Initially, only 1d6+1 Inquisitors approach the heroes. In unpleasant tones, they demand answers to the following questions:

- ⊗ Where do you come from?
- ⊗ What is your name?
- ⊗ Do you have knowledge of spellcasting?
- ⊗ What god do you worship?
- ⊗ Have you ever consorted with fey folk?
- ⊗ How well do you know your traveling companions?

The Inquisitors may also ask other questions based on the appearance of the party. Should the heroes become upset over being interrogated, the priests assume they have something to hide. In this case, 2d10 appear the next time, and they try to take the heroes into custody.

Heroes who attempt to escape or battle the Inquisitors find themselves pursued by a crowd of angry peasants with torches. While they certainly do not want to be taken prisoner, the idea of



fighting innocent citizens ought to be fairly repugnant to the heroes. If this happens, they should probably get out of town quickly and continue their investigations in secrecy. Arrested adventurers are placed in the town jail, location 1 on the map of Viktal.

Wyan

The aging high priest of Viktal is not seen much outside the temple grounds these days, wanting instead to stay close to his ailing daughter. However, when reports reach him of the heroes and their inquiries into Bryonna’s guilt, he makes a point to seek them out. He either meets them on the street, comes to their rooms at the inn, or confronts them should they try to visit Bryonna.

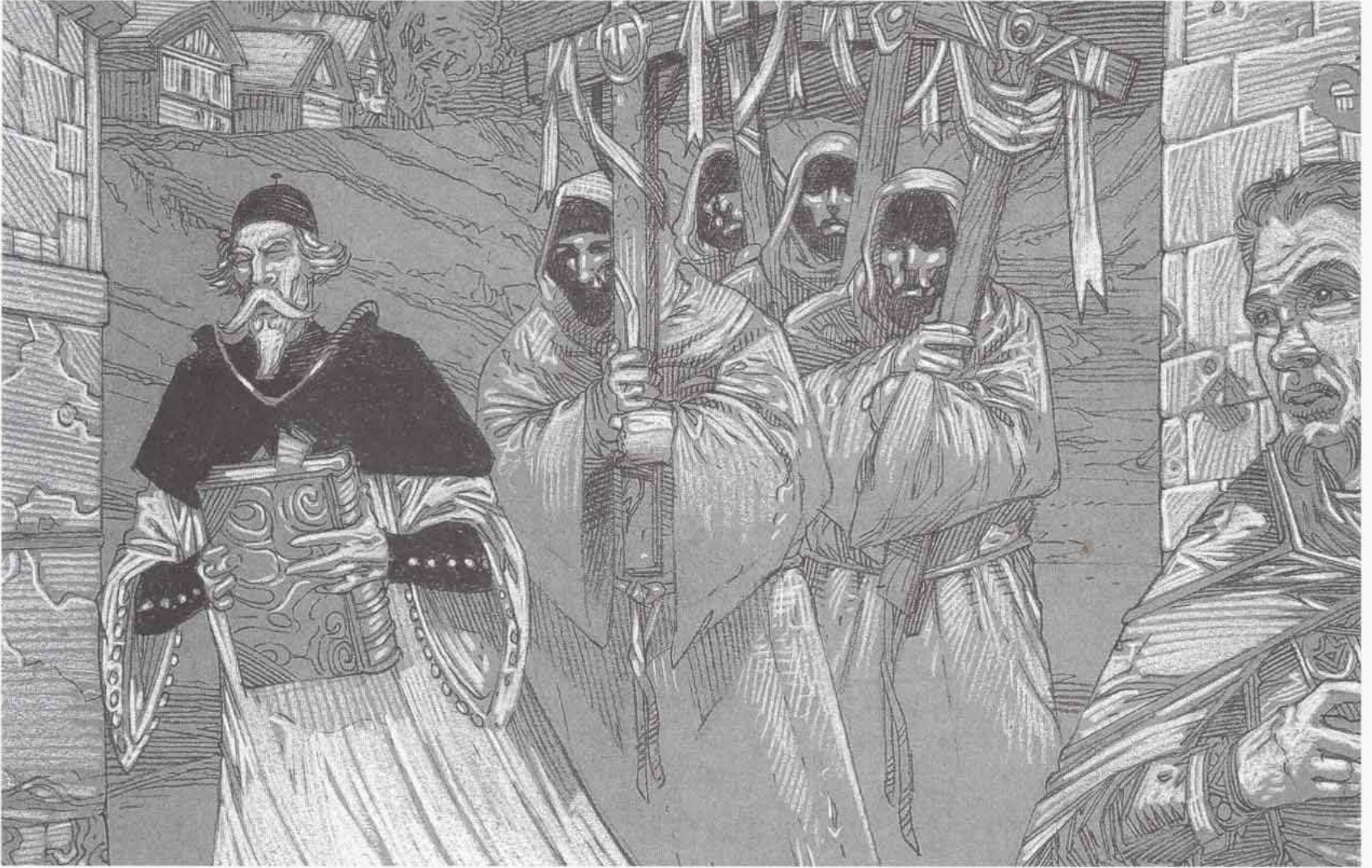
Wyan is always accompanied by 1d4 Inquisitors. His statistics appear on page 61.

Wyan does not reveal much information to the heroes, as he does not know them and trusts them very little. He just want to make sure they are not getting involved in a situation that he thinks they do not understand. While he insists on asking the questions, following the same lines of investigation that the Inquisitors did, he might be willing to answer a few himself. Assuming that the heroes are polite in their dealings with him, he provides the following answers:





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Q: “Who are the fey?”

A: “The fey are malevolent creatures who dwell in the wilds of the world. It was they who destroyed G’Henna and Markovia, and now they plot to do the same to Tepest. It is the duty of the righteous to oppose them.”

Q: “What do they look like?”

A: “The fey take many shapes. Some are small creatures, what many call the “wee folk.” Others are larger, looking almost like normal men and women.”

Q: “How has Bryonna been charged?”

A: “It is my belief that the girl is more than just a consort of the fey. I have reason to believe that she is fey herself—an agent of evil hiding in the midst of humanity and doing her sinister deeds in secret. I believe that the real Bryonna died in the goblin attack that killed her parents and that this creature was left in her place.”

Q: “How do you know Bryonna is a fey?”

A: “As you probably know, Bryonna is from Kellee, not Viktal. A weaver named Marla, who lives in Kellee, knew Bryonna when she was a baby. She claims that she witnessed Bryonna

change her shape. If that doesn’t prove that Bryonna is a fey, I don’t know what will.”

Q: “What evidence is there against Bryonna?”

A: “Several folk have come forward to help in our investigation. One local woman reported that her son fell ill right after Bryonna scolded him for throwing rocks at birds. Another local claims that he got a painful rash after he refused to accompany her to the harvest festival last year.”

Q: “What are Lorelei’s claims?”

A: “It sickens me to think that my own daughter has fallen victim to the magic of the fey. She is by far the most severely afflicted of Bryonna’s victims. Not only did that evil woman make Ivan forget Lorelei’s beauty, she cursed my daughter with horrible seizures. The seizures stopped the moment Bryonna was confined to the church cellar, so there she will stay until her trial and execution.”

Q: “What do you know about Ivan?”

A: “Ivan is not from Viktal, or even Tepest. He does not understand the danger of the fey. This is evidenced by the fact that he staunchly defends the creature who has bespelled him.”





Q: “Have you tried to lift the spell on Ivan?”

A: “Magical means do not reveal that Ivan is under the influences of any charms, but fey magic is not always detectable by purer forms of magic. Young Ivan is a sad example of what happens to those who are not wary of the power of the fey. Hopefully, he will be free of Bryonna’s spell when she is put to death.”

If the heroes wish to speak to either Lorelei or Bryonna, Wyan considers the matter carefully. Finally, he agrees to allow these visits, but only under certain conditions. They may visit Bryonna (location 8 of the guide to Viktal) if precautions are taken to protect them from her magic. They may meet with Lorelei (location 9) only if they promise not to upset her. In addition, Wyan tolerates no accusations against his daughter.

Wyan claims that the true reason he does not burn Bryonna now is that he is waiting until the coming of the new moon. He believes her powers are weakest then, making her death permanent. To execute her sooner might invite her vengeful spirit to return. (Actually, though, he is hoping for evidence to completely convince him of either her innocence or guilt.)

If the heroes insist on continuing their investigation, Wyan does not oppose them. In fact, if they seem extremely sure about Bryonna’s innocence, Wyan eventually confesses his own doubts:

“To be honest, I still have doubts about Bryonna’s guilt myself, but I cannot overturn her sentence without proof of her innocence. Besides, the evidence seems to prove that she is a fey consort, if not fey herself. If you can find facts to support your claims that she is innocent, I will happily let her go. If not, she will be executed in seven days.”

At this point, Wyan points the heroes in the direction of either Kellee (to see Leobe and Marla) or Rima’s campsite. He tells them that both places could hold clues about Bryonna’s case.

Guide to Viktal

This section provides details on Viktal, as well as encounters keyed to specific locations.

Should the villagers discover the heroes are trying to aid Bryonna, encounters with them are

less than friendly. If using the **Encounter Reaction** table in Chapter Eleven of the *DUNGEON MASTER Guide*, all such encounters with the villagers begin as cautious—bordering on threatening.

1. Constabulary

Town constable is a position filled by popular vote every three years. For the past forty-two years, the constable has been Mikhail Kraznik, a human male warrior who is rapidly succumbing to the ravages of old age. Kraznik has converted one of the two cells into his personal quarters, where he is found most of the time.

Like most Tepestani, Kraznik fears the fey. He opposes the witch hunts, however, and is uncomfortable with the way travelers are targeted by the Inquisitors. He believes some of the accused witches were nothing of the kind (Bryonna included). Still, given the fact that most of the village—including Wyan—believes she is guilty, Mikhail does not want to say anything. He is, after all, only one old man.

If any of the heroes should be confined to the lone cell by the Inquisitors or Wyan, Kraznik simply “forgets” to lock the door and leaves on an important errand. This is all the aid the party can hope to gain from Kraznik, since he believes himself too old to risk losing his position.

2. Homes (Fishermen/Craftsmen)

These structures house families of 2d4 human nonplayer characters. Two are typically adults, the rest children of varying ages. There is a 90% chance that the head of the household is male, and a 10% chance that the family is headed by a female. The household’s primary source of income is fishing, although one or more family member may be usually skilled in some craft that is also needed by the community at large.

3. Boat Repair Sheds

These one-room communal structures contain wood, pitch, and all the tools needed to build and maintain fishing vessels for the village. The tools are somewhat crude, but good enough to get the job done. A total of 1d2 boats wait here to be repaired by their owners. Should the heroes steal one, it starts taking on water three rounds after they cast off.

4. Homes (Goatherders/Craftsmen)

These homes are similar in size and occupants to those from location 2, but they specifically belong to goatherders and assorted craftsmen. The herders communally own 1d4 acres of





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grazing land just outside the village, and supply Viktal (and sometimes Kellee) with milk.

The craftsmen found here pass their family skill or trade down to their children. **Table 36: Secondary Skills** in the *Player's Handbook* can be used should an exact skill for a particular nonplayer character be needed.

5. Animal Pens

Every evening these pens hold the goats that are Viktal's major resource. As the sun sets, one of the Inquisitor priests from the temple performs a blessing over each pen to protect the livestock from the fey folk. During times of trouble and strife in the community (such as now), the priests stand watch over the pens in six-hour shifts. The guard always stands near a large bell, sounding it at the slightest sign of trouble.

On one of the nights the heroes stay in Viktal (should they choose to) a group of five goblins attempts to steal some of the livestock. These goblins have statistics identical to the worg-mounted goblins in the previous section, and have taken efforts to disguise themselves as fey. They sport leafy branches in their tangled hair and wear flowing, gossamer robes over their leather armor. One of them even plays a soft, almost inaudible tune on a flute carved of bone.

Should the heroes investigate the attack, they easily find the branches, flute, and other items used to disguise the goblins. This information lends credence to any arguments that, for the most part, the fey are hysterical hallucinations on the villagers' part.

6. Fishing Boats

In the evenings and during stormy days, Viktal's fishing fleet—comprising ten boats—rests here on the beach with the keels pointing to the sky. During the day, all but 1d3 boats are on the lake.

Each boat can safely hold up to six characters, if no room is needed for nets or the day's catch. Since the boats are the lifeblood of the fishermen, buying one costs five hundred gold pieces. Renting a boat costs less—around ten gold pieces for a day. If the heroes reveal that they intend to travel to Castle Island, however, this price soars to one hundred gold pieces per day, since the fisherman believes that he may never see his precious boat again. Alternatively, the heroes can steal one of the vessels, a simple task during the nighttime in Viktal.

7. Cemetery

Several generations of Viktalians are buried here in graves marked by simple headstones. Wyan

and his predecessors have always been very careful about performing funeral rites, so none of those buried here are undead.

8. Wyan's House

This is one of the few buildings in Viktal that has more than one story, not to mention more than two rooms. Two young acolytes who double as servants can be found here as well, though they sleep in the temple with the other priests under Wyan's charge. The heroes are admitted to his home only after they have met with Wyan through the normal encounter process.

Should the heroes request Wyan's permission to meet with Lorelei, the encounter takes place here. The following boxed text can be read aloud when the heroes first lay eyes upon her:



Lorelei is nothing short of stunning. She has bright eyes, a perfect smile, and moves with the grace of a lady. Her features are smooth, and her complexion fair. It is easy to see why the priest's daughter has won the hearts of so many.



Wyan does not allow the heroes to speak to his daughter unless he is present. He listens carefully to all of their questions and certainly does not allow them to cast any spells on her. Should they violate Wyan's restrictions, he cries out an alarm, and 2d6 Inquisitors arrive to arrest the player characters five rounds later. Arrested characters are hauled off to the jail (area 1).

The heroes are going to have to use their own instincts to determine whether or not Lorelei is lying. Until the heroes leave, the boowray hides in a room upstairs.

During their conversation with Lorelei, the heroes can learn many things. Whether or not they choose to believe her words is up to them. The following are the most like questions:

Q: "Will you tell us about your romance with Ivan?"

A: "Ivan and I met during one of his visits to Viktal. We were instantly attracted to each other, but Ivan insisted that we keep our relationship quiet. I think the poor dear was afraid that it might sully my reputation to be seen with him. We would meet outside of town and take long walks together in the woods or enjoy a quiet picnic away from prying eyes. I know that he was about to propose to me. Then, for no reason, he





told me that he didn't want to see me any more. I was shocked at the time, but now I understand what happened. I'm sure that we'll be together again once Bryonna's spell is lifted."

Q: "What happened at Bryonna's party?"

A: "When I heard that Bryonna had fallen in love, I was delighted. I was happy that she had found a man who could love her despite her scars. When I met her betrothed, though, I knew at once what had happened. What could explain Ivan's actions if not black magic? When I said this aloud, it must have angered Bryonna. I don't know how she did it, but somehow she cursed me. The next thing I knew, I was back home with father looking over me. They tell me that I had some kind of fit."

After telling her story, Lorelei breaks down into hysterical tears, so her father asks the heroes to leave. Wyan forbids the heroes from seeing her again and assigns a pair of Inquisitors to watch over his daughter until after the execution.

9. Local Temple

Viktal's temple is a blocky one-story building, with a single set of double doors leading in. It is starkly furnished, containing only a dozen wooden pews and an altar with a large sculpture of an eight-pointed star, the symbol of the god Lugh. This should not be taken to mean that the temple is dedicated to only that god, for the folk of Viktal worship all the gods of the Celtic pantheon. Two 1st-level priests are here at all times.

Bryonna is locked in a lightless cellar underneath the temple. The priests check on her three times a day, at which time they bring her food and water.

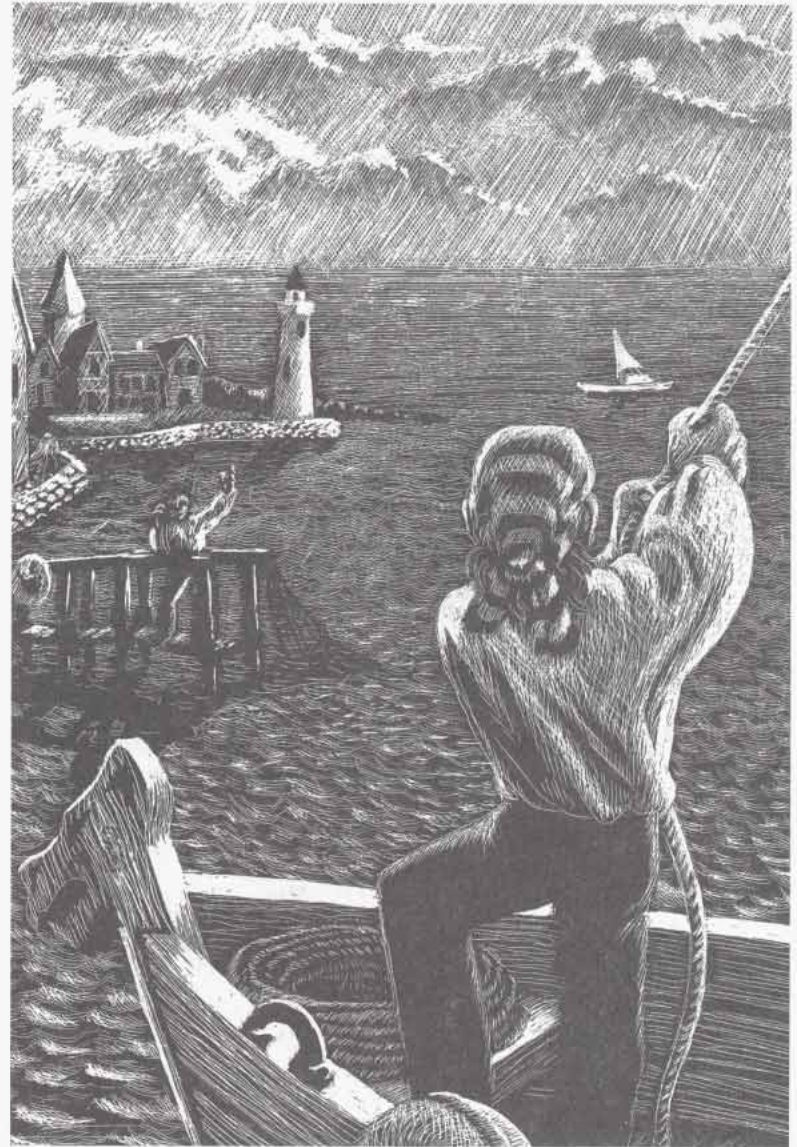
The only way to see Bryonna is with the permission of Wyan. He insists upon remaining with the heroes during any visit with Bryonna. Further, he demands that they take precautions against her magic. At the very least, this means casting a *protection from evil* spell.

When the heroes enter her cell, the following text describes their first sight of Bryonna:

The sight of Bryonna is nothing short of pitiful. She is dirty, and her hair is thickly matted against her head. Her clothes are a filthy mass of wrinkles and tatters. She does not look up as you enter, keeping her face buried in her hands.

When the player characters approach and first speak to her, she gives no reply. The tragic events that have brought her to this place are taking their toll on Bryonna, and her sanity is gradually slipping away. If anyone moves forward and touches her, she starts crying and pleading for mercy. She whimpers that she is not a fey and keeps repeating that she and Ivan truly are in love. If the heroes mention that Ivan asked them to help, she calms down considerably. Once that is accomplished, she answers their questions in a halting fashion.

By now, the heroes have probably heard so much about Bryonna's disfigurement that they want to see it with their own eyes. As she speaks with them, Bryonna's tangled hair covers her face entirely, and she is reluctant to sweep it back. Should she be asked to uncover her face, the Dungeon Master can read the following text aloud:





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Bryonna moves slowly, drawing back the tangled knots of her filthy hair very reluctantly. As she tilts her head back, the meager light of the cell falls across a face thickly smudged with dirt. Bryonna might be described as pretty if not for the four jagged scars that mar her features. These gruesome lines run from her forehead to her cheek, across the empty eye socket where her right eye once was.



The following are the mostly likely questions the heroes ask and the answers she gives:

Q: “Tell us about yourself.”

A: “I was born in Kellee. My parents died in a goblin raid. I don’t remember them or the attack, since I was only two at the time. Somehow, I survived and was found by a Vistana woman named Rima. She healed my wounds, and I lived with her until I was nine. That was when Rima decided that I needed to live among other folk. She asked Leobe, a woodsman from Kellee, to find me a home. He did, though it was in Viktal, not Kellee. I’ve lived here since then. My new parents died last winter. It’s been hard, but I’ve managed to support myself doing washing and that sort of work.”

Q: “How do you feel about Ivan?”

A: “When I met Ivan, he showed me kindness like I’ve never known. Immediately, we fell in love. Even though I have known him only a short time, he already means the world to me. I don’t know why Lorelei is telling these horrible lies. I thought she was my friend and would be happy that someone would marry me.”

Q: “What do you know about the fey?”

A: “Not a blessed thing. I mean, I’ve heard all the same stories everyone in town knows about them. But I haven’t been consorting with them, and by the gods I’m certainly not one of them.”

Q: “What do you think of Lorelei?”

A: “We’ve been friends for a very long time, and she has always been like a sister to me. I can’t imagine why she’s acting like this. Even if she and Ivan were sweethearts before, that’s over and done with. It’s me he loves now, not her.”

Q: “What do you think of Wyan?”

A: “He’s a fine man. He’s done so much good for the village. I don’t understand why he is treating me like this.”

If the heroes tell Bryonna they are looking for evidence to clear her of the charges, she urges them to seek out either Rima or Leobe (and she can give directions to find both). Further history on Bryonna appears in “Backdrops.”

10. Fisherman's Rest

Fisherman’s Rest is the only hostelry in Viktal. It is a rustic two-story building with an attached stable. Each of the four simple rooms rents for one gold piece per week, which includes an evening meal each day. The innkeeper, Greabo, is a horribly overweight man who breathes with a constant wheeze. His wife is equally large and does all the cooking. As long as the heroes are generous with tips, the couple is generous with information.

Any information that other nonplayer characters in the town can tell the heroes can be related by this couple as well. However, there is a 40% chance that some key piece of information is wrong since they are indefatigable gossips, and most of their information is second- or third-hand.

Both Greabo and his wife think that Bryonna is definitely a fey, and Greabo tells the heroes the horrifying tale of how all his milk and butter went sour when she came to drop off some laundry. Both are glad she will be burned at the stake in a few days so that Viktal can return to normal.

11. Stables

This small, low-ceilinged stable can hold up to ten mounts. Stabling at the inn is free for those who rent rooms, but it costs one copper piece per day for others. The five horses currently stabled here are for sale. They cost one hundred gold pieces each—though Greabo accepts fifty gold pieces with a little haggling.

The stable is maintained by Am, Greabo’s teenage son. Am is a strapping young lad who shows little interest in anything other than becoming a great warrior some day. If approached by a warrior player character, Am listens eagerly to any stories of adventure the hero has to offer.

Moving On

From this point, the heroes could continue on to Kellee to question Marla and Leobe, or they could go into the forest and search for Rima. These options are covered in the following three scenes.





Scene Three: East Timori Road

Now he goes along the dark road,
thither whence they say no one returns.
—Gaius Valerius Catullus
Carmina

Traveling along the East Timori Road is the quickest way for the heroes to reach Kellee from Viktal—a twenty-mile journey. If they travel on horseback, the journey takes less than a day.

Encounters

The Dungeon Master can either roll these encounters randomly on the following table (one for every three hours the heroes spend on the road or one each time they enter the forest), or place them at strategic points as they travel.

Roll	Encounter
1d10	
1–2	No Encounter
3–4	Old Camp Site
5	Cave Bear
6–7	Goblin Hunting Party
8–9	Human Hunting Party
10	Special

Old Camp Site

The heroes discover this location only if they keep an eye on the roadside as they travel. Any character acting as a scout can attempt a tracking proficiency or Wisdom check to spot it. This small, crude campsite is partially shielded from the rain, providing a perfect place to rest.

Cave Bear

This aggressive creature is extremely hungry and decides the heroes should make a suitable dinner. This encounter can occur only once. If it is rolled again, another woodland predator appears.

Cave Bear: AC 6; MV 12; HD 6+6; hp 41; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1d8/1d8/1d12 (claw/claw/bite); SA hug; SD endurance; SZ H; ML avg (9); Int semi (3); AL N; XP 650.

Notes: *Hug*—If both claw attacks hit with an 18 or better, the bear hugs, inflicting an additional 2d8 points of damage. *Endurance*—The bear can continue to fight for 1d4 melee rounds after reaching 0 hit points, though at –9 or fewer hit points it dies immediately.

Goblin Hunting Party

These goblins lie in wait beside the road, so the players must make surprise checks. Once these checks are made, the attack begins with a volley of arrows. If half or more of the goblins are slain, the rest must make successful morale checks or flee. The goblins speak only their native tongue.

Goblin Hunter (1d8): AC 6; MV 6; HD 1–1; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short bow or short sword); SZ S (4' tall); ML avg (10); Int avg (9); AL LE; XP 15.

Special Equipment: Quiver of 10 arrows.

Human Hunting Party

This encounter occurs during the day, and only if the heroes venture away from the safety of the road. This group of 2d4 humans is from either Viktal or Kellee, whichever village the player characters are nearest to at the time.

Hunter, hm, F2 (2d4): AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 16; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long bow) or 1d6 (short sword); SZ M; ML steady (11); Int avg (8–10); AL LN; XP 65.

Special Equipment: Quiver of 12 arrows.

Initially, the hunters are cautious. If demi-humans (especially elves or halflings) form the party majority, the hunters become threatening, demanding to know who the heroes are. Any intimidating moves by the heroes cause this encounter to turn immediately hostile.

If befriended (or at least persuaded to parley), the hunting party can direct the heroes toward either village. Otherwise, the hunters have no other useful information for the party.

Special

This encounter can be serve a few different purposes. If the heroes fall behind, they could encounter Leobe here. After he learns of their plight, Leobe can lead them directly to Rima.

If the players are having an easy time of it, this encounter could remind them just how miserable the weather is. This could include a dangerous mud slide, a lightning strike, or a flash flood. As the road between Kellee and Viktal requires the heroes to cross the Dnar river, they might even find that the bridge is out, forcing them to ford the swollen and dangerous river.



Scene Four: Kellee

I was gratified to be able to answer promptly, and I did. I said I didn't know.

—Mark Twain
Life on the Mississippi

If the heroes decide to run with the information given to them by Ivan, they travel the East Timori Road to the village of Kellee.

Kellee is the only other human settlement of substantial size in Tepest. It is doubtful the heroes are going to spend much time in Kellee during this adventure, so the Dungeon Master needs only the diagram found on the enclosed poster map. In order to play up the subtle differences between Tepest's two villages, here is a list of things that make Kellee slightly different from Viktal:

- Kellee has no fishermen, as it is some distance from Lake Kronov. Instead, the community supports itself with hunting and trapping.



- The local hostel, Hawk's Haven, also serves as the home of the village's mayor, Gerald Ferrier. Ferrier is a man of Falkovnian origin who is away on business in Nova Vaasa for the duration of this adventure. A friend of the family is watching over affairs at the inn until he returns. Rates at the inn are comparable to those at the Fisherman's Rest in Viktal.
- The town's well-organized and well-equipped militia consists mainly of 1st-level fighters. Gerald Ferrier usually serves as their commander. An acne-scarred young man named Xeleen (a 3rd-level fighter) is in charge while Ferrier is out of town.
- Kellee's church burned down a number of years ago and has not been rebuilt, the main reason being that the mayor is more concerned with maintaining the militia. The village priest, a rather insecure young woman named Tala (1st-level cleric), holds weekly services in the common room of the inn, and rents a room above the trading post.
- Wyan's Inquisition has no regular presence in this community, although they have visited occasionally at Tala's request. Though the locals here used to be just as paranoid of the fey as the Viktrilians, recent events have caused the citizens to rethink their positions. Mayor Ferrier no longer allows any witch trials in his city, since he is not convinced that Kellee is directly threatened by the fey. For his part, Wyan thinks that Ferrier is being dangerously naive.

If Ivan tries to enter Kellee, Xeleen and four militia members try to arrest him.

No other encounters are provided for Kellee, as the heroes are here only to search out a couple of specific characters. Any villager can direct them to the individuals they seek. The remainder of this section deals with information that can be garnered from Leobe, the hunter who brought Bryonna to Viktal, and Marla, the weaver who has presented damning evidence against Bryonna.

Leobe the Hunter

Leobe lives on the edge of the village, and is known to all inhabitants of Kellee. When the heroes arrive, he is seated on his front porch repairing a broken bear trap. The Dungeon Master can read the following text aloud at this point:



Leobe's cottage is not as carefully maintained as the others in the village. The white paint has peeled in several locations, revealing gray and rotting boards underneath. Weeds sprout up in several places, and one of the building's two windows has a broken pane. All in all, it would be easy to dismiss the place as abandoned.

A brawny, unkempt man sits on the front porch. His weathered face is almost lost behind a bushy, gray-streaked beard and a wild mane of hair. Perhaps the best word to describe him is "uncivilized."

With grim determination, this unkempt man tinkers with what appears to be a broken animal trap. He seems to take no notice of you, not even looking up to acknowledge your arrival. As you approach, however, he growls in a strong voice. "I'm busy. Go away."



Leobe pays the heroes little mind and provides only threatening grunts and very terse answers—until they explain they are there on Bryonna's behalf. At that point, he puts aside his work and finally pays attention to them:



At the mention of the girl, the large man puts his work aside and looks up with wide eyes. Despite their hardness, they look oddly compassionate. "I knew Bryonna when she was a wee one. I've heard what's going on in Viktal. That priest, Wyan, has it all wrong. How can I help ya?"



Leobe answers any questions the heroes might have to the best of his ability. Leobe's statistics appear on page 61. Obvious questions and their answers appear below:

Q: "What do you know about Bryonna's childhood?"

A: "She was born eighteen years ago, the daughter of a good friend o' mine. Don't you believe any nonsense ya might hear 'bout her bein' a fey. I helped change her diapers a few times, and that kid's as human as I am. Her parents were killed by goblins when she was two. Rima, a Vistana who lives in the woods

t' the north, managed to rescue her. Bryonna lived with her 'til she was nine, but Rima thought it best fer the child t' grow up with normal folk then. She sent fer me, an' I took Bryonna to live with some folk o'er in Viktal."

Q: "Who is Rima?"

A: "She's one o' the kindest, gentlest individuals I know. It's little wonder she's called it quits 's far as us 'civilized' types go. She mighta gone a bit strange 'cause she's always alone in the forest, but she's got so much heart that even that Wyan fellow could see she ain't no fey."

Q: "What do you know about Wyan?"

A: "Not much. I think he mighta been a woodsman like meself. He certainly carries hisself like one. These days, he fancies himself some kind o' fey hunter, near as I can tell. Folks who come this way from Viktal speak highly of him, but he's got this business with Bryonna all wrong."

Q: "What do you know about the fey?"

A: "Ain't nothin' more than a fancy name Wyan created for the evil creatures of the forest. They ain't got no use for us. That's why they live in the woods!"

Q: "Why have you not gone to help Bryonna?"

A: "I tried, but the priests started askin' me what my relations with the fey was. All that time I spent in the woods, they was beginning t' say I must deal with them somehow, too."

If the heroes state they wish to speak with Rima, Leobe can take them to her most recent campsite. The encounter with her is detailed in "Scene Five: Pact of the Vistana."

Marla the Weaver

This elderly spinster lives in a meticulously kept cottage. She shames the men of Kellee into maintaining it for her, as she claims to be "a poor ailing widow who has only a short time to live." However, most believe Marla may well outlive everyone in the village.

Marla is a small, frail-looking woman, her grandmotherly features topped off with a bun of white hair. When the heroes arrive, they find Marla at a loom in the cottage's front room. She is very curt with the heroes—threatening to beat them for tracking mud into her home. When they state they wish to talk about Bryonna, though, her tone changes to a conspiratorial whisper:



“I told ‘em Bryonna was one of the fey, years ago. Her mother—poor thing—asked me to watch her one day as she took lunch to her husband in the pasture. So, watch her I did, except for five minutes where I went to put a kettle of water on the fire to make myself some tea. I might be doin’ a friend a favor, but I was still going to have my noontime tea. When I came back to Bryonna’s cradle, she was gone. Just gone!

“I know infants just don’t get up and walk away. I looked all around the house, just in case this infant somehow could, but she was nowhere to be found. Then, I heard a sound from Bryonna’s cradle. Now, I knew she hadn’t been there a moment before, but I looked anyway, and what I saw nearly made my heart stop. There was something in there that was about the size of a baby, but it had eyes the size of saucers, sickly green skin, and needle-sharp teeth. Even worse, I then saw it change into Bryonna!

“Needless to say, I ran to get the militiamen! But when I came back with them, the monster baby vanished, and the cradle was empty again. The impertinent militiamen blamed me, and told me to stop making up stories and find the baby. That’s when we heard crying from the bedroom—and Bryonna was lying on the bed!

“I knew from that day that she wasn’t natural! When her parents died, I knew exactly who, not what, really killed them. It had to be Bryonna—but no one here would listen! At least now she’s been exposed. Hopefully, Mayor Ferrier will have enough sense to let Wyan’s priests come to town and ferret out others like her who are still hiding here.”



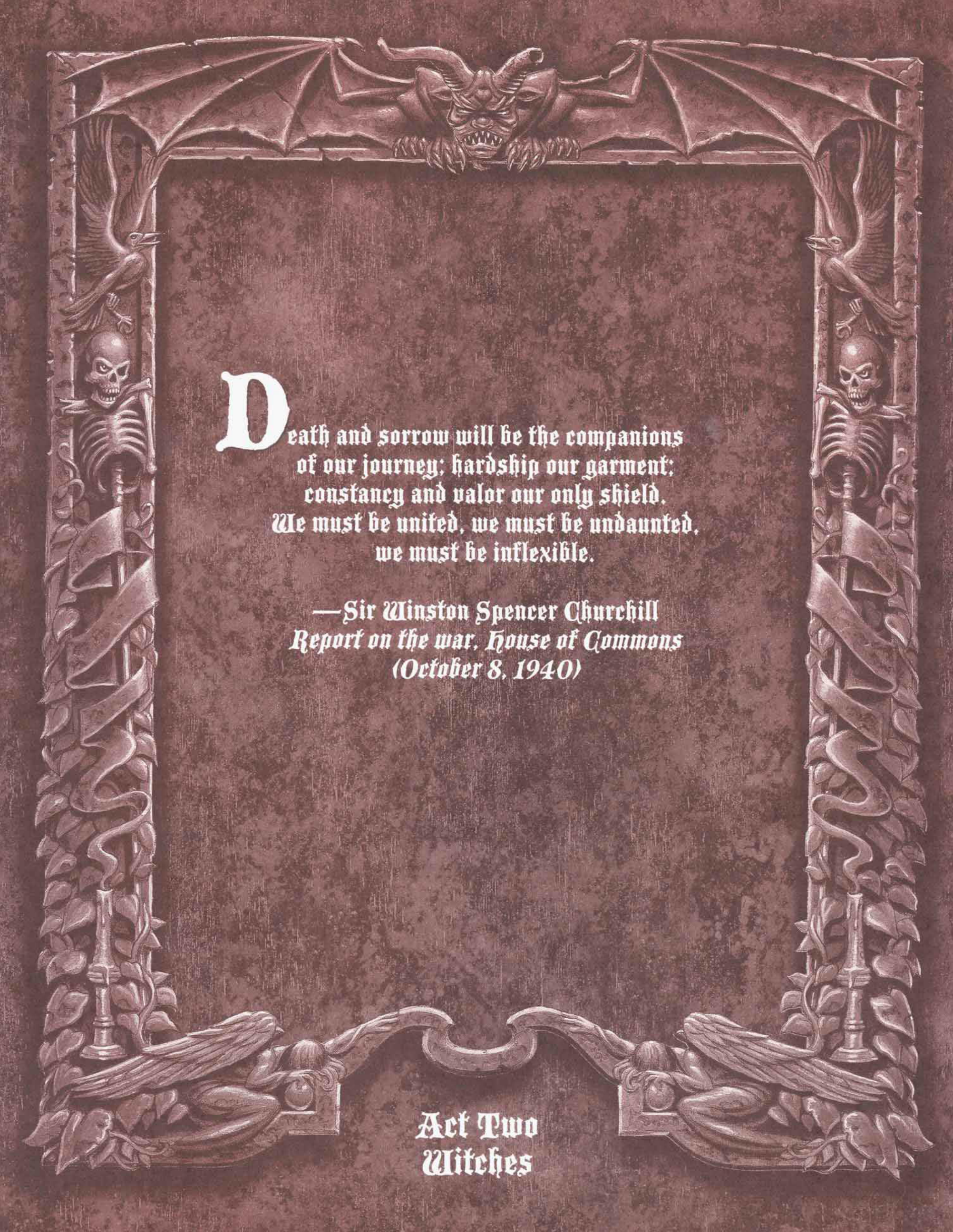
The only problem with investigating Marla’s words, however, is that she herself has grown to believe them. Years of telling the same story have combined with a failing memory to create her own reality. Because this is not an intentional deception, spells like *detect lie* fail to uncover the falsehood.

Marla has a lot more to tell the heroes, but it is all vicious gossip with little or no truth to it. If the heroes have not spoken with Leobe yet, Marla might make a remark that causes them to do so, claiming that Leobe is likely working with the fey as well. Should the heroes bring up Rima, Marla condemns the Vistana as a worshiper of evil who is best avoided.

Moving On

At this point, the heroes could continue on to Viktal to question Wyan and meet Bryonna and Lorelei, or they could go follow Leobe to Rima’s cave. These options are covered in “Scene Two: Viktal” and “Scene Five: Pact of the Vistana.”

Marla’s story is simply not true. She made it up to cover her own mistakes at the time. After moving the baby from the crib, she absentmindedly forgot where Bryonna was and panicked. She told her tale to avoid appearing foolish.



Death and sorrow will be the companions
of our journey; hardship our garment;
constancy and valor our only shield.
We must be united, we must be undaunted,
we must be inflexible.

—Sir Winston Spencer Churchill
Report on the war, House of Commons
(October 8, 1940)

Act Two
Witches



Scene Five: Part of the Vistana

With the ancient is wisdom; and in the length of days understanding.
—Job 12:12

In this scene the heroes meet the woman who rescued Bryonna from the goblin attack, a Vistana named Rima who has forsaken her own people for the company of spirits and woodland beings. Rima holds the key to proving Bryonna's innocence, which she gives to the heroes after they perform a small task for her.

The Recluse

With the assistance of Leobe (or on their own if they received directions from Wyan or Bryonna), the heroes can find Rima's current camp just outside of Kellee. The Vistana has sought shelter in a cave about five miles north of Kellee, an area very close to some of the smaller goblin lairs.

Leobe himself knows very little about Rima's history. He encountered her in the forest about fifteen years ago, alone and battered. She refused his help, and because she was obviously one of the Vistani (Leobe is wisely cautious when it comes to dealing with them), he let her be. Her injuries eventually healed, and she proceeded to lead a nomadic existence in the forest, rarely interacting with other Tepestani. She has never revealed why she does not return to her tribe.

About a year ago, Wyan and his priests decided she was "consorting with the fey" and captured her. After several weeks of interrogation Wyan set her free, proclaiming that she was not consorting with the fey of the forest. Leobe openly tells the heroes he thinks Rima secured her freedom by putting a spell on Wyan. He also concedes that the priest may have freed her out of fear of Vistani curses. In any case, Rima is one of the few people in recent years to escape Wyan's biased brand of justice.

First Impressions

The following text gives the heroes' first impression of Rima's home:

After some travel, the forest eventually gives way to a rocky ridge. Through the smothering gray of the endless rain, you can see a steep incline that ends at the mouth of a cave. Inside is the faint, reddish flicker of a fire.

Meeting Rima

The heroes reach the cave without difficulty, though the path is slick from the rain. When they step through the narrow mouth, the Dungeon Master can read the following text aloud:

The first thing you notice in this cave is the small cooking fire that dances at its center. Coils of gray smoke roll through the air, rising through a narrow hole in the cave's roof. Glowing embers swirl in the air, tossed about by unseen breezes. You see no furniture in this place save for a worn straw sleeping mat.

Sitting cross-legged near the campfire is a veiled woman. Her clothes are as old and worn as she is, their once bright colors faded and muted. With trembling hands, she lays out a pattern of cards on the stone floor before her. With each card, she mutters a few words in a strange language, sometimes chuckling to herself.

A man dressed in a embroidered shirt, leather breeches, and mud-spattered riding boots sits at the fire across from her. His eyes focus on the tattered cards, and his grim face is sternly set.

Neither of these individuals takes any notice of the characters entering the cave. Attempts to attract their attention meet with a curt gesture for silence from the old woman. The man does not respond to anything the heroes do, keeping his eyes fixed on the cards at all times.

For several minutes the old woman continues to turn cards and place them before her. Finally, she nods, and a grin spreads across her weathered features. Only then does she speak to the heroes:

"Come closer," says the old woman in a dry, crackling voice. As she speaks, her bony hands begin to gather up the cards from the floor. With practiced ease, she forms them into a neat pack and sets them face down before her. "Please sit and warm yourself by my fire. I am Rima. I've been waiting for you."

Only when you draw nearer to the blaze do you realize that the sparks in the air are not born of the campfire. In actuality, they are tiny creatures, minute men and women with gossamer wings that flash in the firelight.





Their bodies are slender and delicate, like those of young children, and their fine features are dominated by large, round eyes.



Rima makes no mention of the little creatures as the heroes gather around the fire. Should the player characters bring up the matter, she looks around at her diminutive visitors. Smiling as if she had only just noticed them, she says the following:



"My little friends are the wee folk of the forest. There are more of their kind in Tepest than ours, you know. Call them fairies, pixies, sprites, or what have you, but don't fear them. These are not the fey that frighten Wyan so much. Dark creatures reside in these woods, that much is certain, but he doesn't begin to know them as well as he thinks."



These fairies are the first solid evidence encountered by the heroes that Wyan and the people of Tepest are not just being simple-minded, superstitious peasants. They may find it unnerving that the woman who is supposed to

provide proof that Bryonna is not a fey openly associates with them. The Dungeon Master should play upon such suspicions to make this scene more interesting, but should not allow them to dominate this encounter.

If the heroes ask her how she knew that they were coming, Rima smiles knowingly. With a wave of her hand, she indicates the deck of cards stacked neatly before her.



"The tarokka tells me many things. Through the cards, I have spoken with the spirit of Bryonna's long-departed mother. She warned me that her daughter was in trouble. Further, she told me to expect a visit from a group of strangers who were trying to help Bryonna."



Meeting Aroun

Soon after the accusations against Bryonna arose, Rima located Aroun, a man she has determined is somehow tied to what is happening to Bryonna—though at this time she does not know how. In the form of a geist, Aroun has only a portion of his life's memories. Once his memory is restored, Aroun should be able to add another piece to the puzzle Rima is trying to unravel.





When the heroes are introduced to Rima's companion, the Dungeon Master should read the following boxed text aloud:



Rima gestures to the man across from her. "This is Aroun. Like the fairies, he has also come to ask for my help."

At this, the man lifts his gaze from Rima's cards for the first time. Without a smile or the faintest hint of emotion, he looks at your party. Although he says "hello," his voice is so faint that it is almost lost against the snapping fire and buzzing fairies. There is something very odd about this man; his eyes are as vacant as his words. In addition, something about the way in which the firelight plays upon his features is simply not right.



Though the heroes probably do not realize this, Aroun is a geist. He suffered a fatal stab wound to the heart, but the trauma of his death has tied him to the world of the living. The Dungeon Master should allow inquisitive heroes to piece together Aroun's nature by casually examining him. For example, a character with good eyes might notice that he is rather transparent and casts no shadow on the cave wall; another may notice that he does not seem to breathe at all.

The Task

If the heroes ask for her help, Rima asks that they first complete a task for her. The heroes have little choice but to agree to whatever terms Rima puts forward. Unless they have wasted great amounts of time getting to this point, they should have sufficient time to complete their assigned mission. In fact, the task she is about to give them directly affects their mission, although they do not realize this until later.

If the adventurers agree to Rima's terms, the adventure continues with the following text:



"Aroun here has run into a bit of trouble. To be specific, he has died. What you see before you is his spirit. Do not be alarmed by this. He poses no threat to you.

"I believe that Aroun knows something about what has happened in Viktal. In his current condition, however, his mind is very

weak and unable to recall the information we need. I believe that his memory will return when his spirit is reunited with his body. The cards have told me that his body lies on Castle Island, a barren place surrounded by the stormy waters of Lake Kronov. Even the tarokka has been unable to tell me anything of his killer, though. Perhaps you will find this information with Aroun's mortal remains.

"While you are gone, I will consult the cards. By the time you return, I should know more. This, combined with Aroun's memories, should provide you with the information you need to prove Bryonna's innocence. Be swift, though, for time is of the essence."



Everything Rima tells the heroes is the truth, should they question her sincerity. At this time she does not possess all the information she needs to clear Bryonna of Wyan's wrongful charges, but expects to have it upon their return.

Rima is a rare Vistana who is able to commune with the spirits of the land, good or evil, through the use of tarokka cards. Since Bryonna's conviction over two weeks ago, Rima has searched unsuccessfully for what she believes is an evil spirit or creature responsible for Bryonna's situation. Currently, she suspects either Wyan or his daughter is behind what is going on in Viktal. She does not, however, share these beliefs with the heroes until she has more evidence.

If the heroes do not want to accompany Aroun, Rima tells them that the only other possibility is to visit the Three Sisters (see the Appendix) because they usually keep track of events that transpire within Tepest. If the heroes choose this route, she gives them the same information about the sisters from "Moving On" in "Scene Seven: Return to Rima." In this case, there is no reason to return to Aroun's portion of the adventure. The hags will give the *tincture of midnight* to the heroes, and Rima can help them discover what to do with it without the geist's input.

Moving On

If the heroes choose to accompany Aroun, he leads them to Lake Kronov in an attempt to locate his body. He does not speak with the heroes, nor does he offer any type of assistance. In this instance, the adventure continues with "Scene Six: Castle Island."

If the heroes choose to visit the hags, the adventure continues with "Scene Eight: The Three Sisters."





Scene Six: Castle Island

Phantoms in general are nothing more than trifling disorders of the spirit: images we cannot contain within the bounds of sleep.

—Luigi Pirandello
Henry IV (1922)

From the eastern shores of the lake, Castle Island is visible from a mile off on even the gloomiest day. Only the shroud of night can totally obscure the island from view.

Tepestani steer clear of this new pocket domain in Lake Kronov, claiming that a mournful ghost lures people to their deaths with her beautiful voice. Still, many residents disagree as to whether the island is actually inhabited by a ghost or the fey. Despite popular belief, Castle Island is not haunted by either, but something nearly as bad—an evil sirine. Though she possesses stunning physical beauty, underneath her exterior hides a spirit of corruption and hate. The sirine rules her secluded island and its surrounding waters, including the ruined castle from which the isle gains its name.

The Lady of the Lake

The sirine, whom locals have named the Lady of the Lake, has been cursed to inhabit the island forever. If she ventures more than a quarter mile from it in any direction she is suddenly teleported back to its shore.

Since she cannot leave the island, the sirine delights in luring men there. She then uses her charm abilities to make them submissive, and takes her frustrations out on the victims by slowly starving and torturing them to death.

As mentioned before, the locals adamantly avoid the island, but so far, enough people have crossed over to the island to keep the sirine amused. Such was the case with Aroun and his companion, who decided to explore the ruined castle several weeks ago.

As the heroes near this island, the Dungeon Master should read the following text aloud to the players:

Castle Island is little more than a jagged crest of rock breaking the clawing waves of Lake Kronov. Bitter wind drives the chop hard against the coast, shrouding the place

in a heavy mist. Rising from the gloom and stone is a shattered fortress. The worn and broken walls comprising this keep are covered with tangles of ivy.

Gulls and terns dance about in the air, their raucous calls shrill against the rumbling waves. They seem to be warning you away from this place. At the same time, however, another sound fills the air. Although it is impossible to hear clearly, a delicate melody haunts the air around the island. The song sends shivers of fear down your spine, though it is oddly inviting at the same time.



When the heroes reach the shore of the island, the adventure can continue with the Dungeon Master reading the following text aloud:

After some effort, you finally reach the shore of Castle Island, your mysterious companion still in tow. You immediately notice that Aroun's usually placid look is gaining a bit of life. In a voice stronger than he has used before, the shade says, "I died not far from this place."

As if in response to Aroun's words, a heavy mist begins to boil out of the air around you. It is cold and thick, quickly obscuring everything with a billowing wash of macabre yellow-green vapors. Beyond this spreading cloud, the shrieks of the gulls sound oddly like mocking laughter.



The Lady's Attack

At this point, the Lady of the Lake is ready to make her move. Under cover of her *improved invisibility* spell, she has moved close enough to attack. Having cast her *fog cloud* spell, she is confident that the heroes cannot survive even if they somehow resist her magical song. After the heroes have had a moment to react to the sudden fog, the Lady begins to sing. The following text describes this attack:

As the steady wind claws at the sickly fog, a gentle sound begins to fill the air. At first, the sonance is impossible to discern against the crying of the sea birds. With each second, however, it grows louder until you recognize it as the singing of a young woman.





In the notes of this wordless tune you hear promises of happiness, contentment, and eternal bliss. Immediately, your cares begin to drift away, swept out of existence by this sweet music.



At this point, each hero must make a successful saving throw vs. spell or fall under the sirine's charm. Those who planned ahead and took steps to deafen themselves (with a *silence* spell, for example) need not make this roll.

Any characters who fail the roll are charmed by the sirine, just as if a *charm person* spell had been cast on them by an 11th-level wizard. Those heroes who are not charmed almost certainly attack the sirine. When this happens, any charmed heroes leap to her defense.

Should everyone in the party be charmed, the Dungeon Master should allow them to spend a few days as slaves of the sirine. During this time, they are treated as worthless slaves, starved, and tortured. Finally, Aroun (who is not affected by the Lady's song) appears and provides one of the characters with just enough encouragement to break the spell.

Battling the sirine should not be easy. She remains invisible for the duration of the battle (imposing a -4 penalty on all attacks targeted at her) and wields a *short sword of quickness*. If the battle is going against her, she uses her *polymorph* ability to become a gull and fly away.

Lady of the Lake (Sirine): AC 3; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 7; hp 40; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+2 (*short sword of quickness* +2); SA song, spell-like abilities, touch; SD see below; MR 20%; SZ M (5' tall); ML steady (12); Int high (14); AL CE; XP 5,000.

Notes: Song—The sirine's song can charm all within 30 feet (if they can hear), even those engaged in combat with her. Victims must save vs. spell or suffer the effects of a *charm person* spell. Spell-like Abilities—The Lady of the Lake can cast each of the following spells once per day as an 11th-level wizard: *fog cloud*, *polymorph self*, and *improved invisibility*. Touch—Victims touched by the sirine must save vs. poison or their Intelligence drops to 2. The touch automatically succeeds on charmed individuals, but requires an attack roll for others. A successful *dispel magic* (against 11th-level casting) restores the victim's Intelligence, as does the sirine's touch if she so wills it.

Sirines save as 11th-level wizards, with a +2 bonus against poisons. They are immune to all gas attacks, can breathe either water or air, and have 120' infravision.

Special Equipment: *Short sword of quickness* +2 (which allows her to strike first in every round of combat), agate worth fifty gold pieces.

Once the sirine is defeated, all charmed characters return to normal. Should she be somehow subdued and addressed, the sirine has little to say to the characters. She attempts to flee to the safety of the water at her first opportunity, and does not return until the heroes are gone.

Should the heroes survive their encounter with the sirine, they are free to explore the rest of the island. At this time Aroun can lead them directly to his body in area 4.

The Curse

Lastly, should the heroes actually slay the sirine, the Dungeon Master could opt to have her curse the character who deals her the killing blow. The following text (which assumes that the sirine remains invisible for the duration of the battle) describes this event:



At the instant your blow lands, a sudden change seems to come over the island. The gulls fall silent and even the rumble of the waves seems muted. At your feet, the body of a woman gradually begins to form out of thin air. She has the blue-white skin of a drowning victim and hair that might easily be mistaken for kelp. Thick green blood dribbles from her wounds. As gold-flecked eyes look deeply into yours, she gasps out a few words: "You take from me my life this day, but are not free to go your way; when'er the sound of waves you hear, your heart shall know its greatest fear!"



With that, the sirine dies. In game terms, her curse should give the character a great fear of the sea or large bodies of water. Considering the fact that the party is now on an island, this can be a big problem. If the curse takes effect, the character can be assumed to have thalassophobia (fear of the sea). Both the chance of the curse taking hold and the effects of a phobia should be determined by the Dungeon Master. Rules on curses can be found in *Domains of Dread*.

Exploring the Castle

This section describes the interiors of the ruined castle. It can be used when the heroes explore it after defeating the sirine, or possibly when they are brought in as her slaves.

The majority of the castle is nothing more than a collapsed pile of broken stone and debris. As such, only a small area remains passable. This is where the sirine has made her lair.





Each of the following descriptions contains a brief portion of boxed text. This should be read aloud by the Dungeon Master when the heroes first enter a given region.

1. Entrance

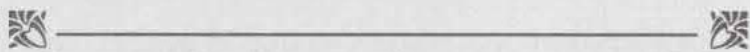


Three wide steps lead up to a pair of weathered iron doors. The doors are artfully crafted to resemble the faces of hideous, fanged beasts. Their lolling tongues curl into knockers, which long ago rusted into place. The hinges are likewise corroded, though they show signs of occasional use.

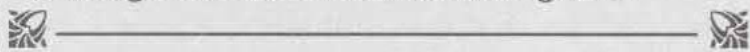


This door is neither locked nor trapped. It opens with difficulty, requiring a combined Strength score of at least 20 points. As the portal is pulled open, the hinges groan loudly in protest.

2. Lobby



The crumbling walls of this room are painted with fading blue and white swirled patterns. The floor is covered with a mosaic that depicts a maelstrom of water draining into the gaping maw of some unknown monster. All that is seen of the monster are its fangs and the darkness of its gullet.



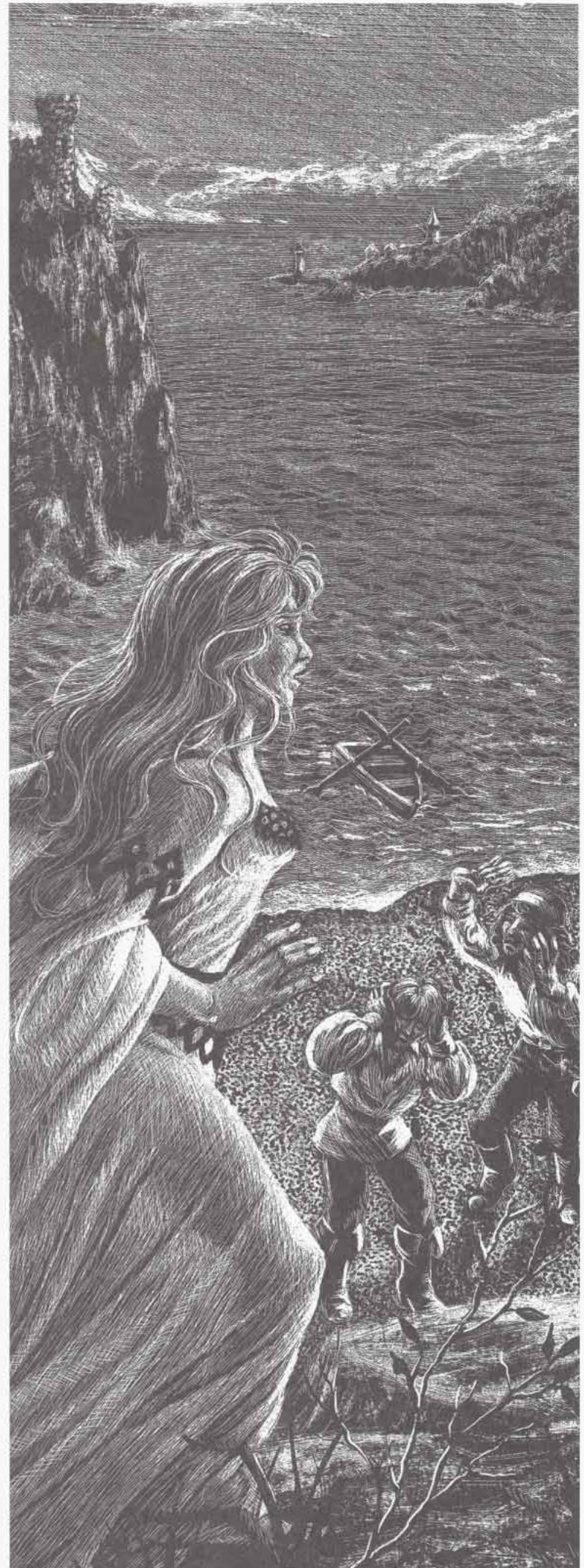
The heroes have to cross this maw in order to reach Aroun's body in the next room. Although they may be nervous about this, the picture itself is not dangerous. Of course, the Dungeon Master need not let the heroes know that. A few die rolls and scribbled notes can make the players very nervous here.

If the heroes examine the floor closely, they notice brown droplets spattered randomly across the mosaic. Two lines have been scraped in the dust on the floor, running from the center of the blood marks to the closed doors on the far wall.

All of these marks were made by Aroun and his companion when they first came to the island. The brown splashes are Aroun's blood. These mark the location where his companion, who had been charmed by the sirine, murdered him. The twin lines were made by Aroun's heels when his lifeless body was dragged through the doors and into area 5.

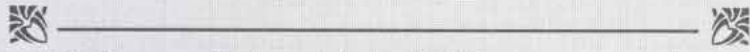
3. Sitting Room

The door to this chamber from area 2 is locked, but the mechanism is quite old and primitive. Any attempt to open this lock is made with a +10%





bonus. Breaking down the door is easy enough to do, requiring only a successful Strength check. When the door is opened, the Dungeon Master should read the following to the players:



It is impossible not to wrinkle your nose in disgust as you examine this room. The air here is heavy with an oily smell of filth and decay. Bloated black flies buzz to and fro, seeming to revel in this offensive stench.

The frayed remains of what was once a fine rug cover the center of the floor of this chamber. A table and three chairs stand in one corner, all gray with rot. To the south, a short hallway draped with spider webs ends at a battered door. Heading west, farther into the ruins, is a wide archway. A moldering burgundy tapestry hangs across this portal, held in place by rusted hooks that look about to collapse.



Nothing dangerous awaits the heroes in here. The furniture is rotted, worthless, and unsafe to sit on. The tapestry is likewise worthless. If the Dungeon Master wishes to add some menace to this room, he can assume that the spider web in the southern hall is actually a living web (as described in the *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM Annual Volume Three*).

4. Gallery



Even a casual glance makes it clear that this was once an elegant tower. The floor is a cracked and faded pattern of green, blue, and white tiles. The shattered remains of an elegant spiral staircase wind upward along the outer wall, stopping short where the top of the structure seems to have been sheared off smooth, as if by a gigantic knife.

A pair of bodies, both long dead and decayed to little more than skeletons, lay just past the doorway to this room. Both wear the crumbling remains of studded leather armor and hold rusting scimitars in their mummified hands.



These two men are victims of the sirine, and have been dead for nearly a year. A rusted dagger is driven deep into one body's left eye socket, while the other's throat was slit (though this is difficult to tell because of the condition of the corpse). One of the bodies has a bone drinking

horn tied to its belt. The fluid in this smells like bitter lemon juice, but it is actually a *potion of extra-healing*.

5. Ballroom

When the heroes enter this room, the Dungeon Master should read the following to the players:



The instant that you enter this room, a terrible stench of rot and offal washes over you. It is impossible not to gag and retch as this odor threatens to overwhelm you. Nearly as revolting as the smell is the droning of flies—legions of which take wing upon your arrival.

The source of this odor is impossible to miss. Two rotting bodies lie against the far walls. Their skin is dotted by sickly white maggots and black flesh-eating beetles.



To emphasize the stench in this chamber, the Dungeon Master should have any character with a Constitution score below 12 make a saving throw vs. poison. Failure indicates that the odor proves more than his stomach can bear. The character spends the next round on his knees disgorging his last meal.

Anyone who takes a close look at these bodies realizes that one of them is Aroun's. As soon as he is brought into the chamber, he recognizes this fact himself. When this happens, the Dungeon Master should read the following text aloud:



Aroun quickly makes his way toward his mortal remains. He kneels beside the corpse and frowns at its appearance. "I remember what happened now. The other body belongs to Eldrak. We came to this place in search of treasure. He fell victim to the Lady's song and stabbed me when I tried to attack her. It wasn't his fault; I know that now."

Then, with a shrug, he smiles and gradually begins to fade like the last colors of a sunset. Just as he vanishes completely, you hear his voice in the air.

"Terrepopolo! Seek the terrepopolo!"



The Dungeon Master should give the heroes a few seconds to think about Aroun's last words. In fact, if the party contains any half-Vistani





characters, they may recognize the term “terrepopolo,” which means roughly “people of the land” (or “boowray”). After this pause, the adventure can continue with the following text:

A low moan, one that speaks of endless pain and suffering, fills the air. Whirling, you see that it comes from the other corpse. With great, sobbing gasps, Eldrak turns towards you and lifts his hand slowly. Maggots drop from the revolting figure as he turns his baleful eyes on you. Although it seems impossible, the movement of this rotting creature makes the air in this place even more difficult to breathe.

The Dungeon Master may want to rule that any heroes viewing the body must make fear checks at this revolting sight. Almost certainly, they will believe that this is some manner of zombie rising to attack them. In actuality, this is not the case. Unlike Aroun, Eldrak is not dead.

When the sirine tired of Aroun’s companion, she took delight in tormenting and torturing him for a time. When even that grew tiresome, the Lady of the Lake sealed him in this chamber and forgot about him. The Dungeon Master should provide the players with a few clues (like the mention of gasping breath in the boxed text) that allow them to figure out that Eldrak is not undead.

Upon realizing that he is an innocent, tortured living human and not an undead creature, the heroes must make immediate horror checks. Any hero who failed the previous fear check receives a –2 penalty to this check.

Eldrak is on the verge of death. Should the heroes attack him, he has an Armor Class of 10. He is so weak that even a single point of damage kills him instantly. If magical healing is available, it might be possible to restore his body. If no medical attention is given to him, Eldrak dies in twenty-four hours. His stats appear on page 61.

Depending on how the heroes deal with the tortured man, powers checks may be required. Checks should certainly be asked of anyone who refuses to waste spells on an obviously dying man or decides to “put him out of his misery” rather than transport him back to Viktal.

Should Eldrak be returned to civilization for treatment, the fate of the sirine determines his

fate. If the Lady of the Lake survived her encounter with the heroes, Eldrak is still held in the grip of her charm. He speaks often of his love for her, convincing the people of Viktal that he is a dangerous ally of evil. If this happens, he is arrested, tried, and convicted of consorting with the fey, in which case he is burned at the stake.

If the Lady was slain by the heroes, Eldrak appears to recover fully. In truth, however, he has become a dangerous maniac. His experience with the sirine has left him with a deep, burning hatred of all women. He has failed several madness checks and suffers from schizophrenia (as described in *Domains of Dread*). Dungeon Masters should keep this in mind and use him as a Jack-the-Ripper-style villain in future adventures.

6. Rubble

The corner of the ballroom is nothing more than a pile of broken stone and rotting timbers. Here and there, in the dark recesses of this debris, you catch glimpses of scurrying bodies and the gleam of feral eyes. Odd scratching and squeaking sounds can be heard from time to time.

The creatures in this rubble are common rats, as described in the *MONSTROUS MANUAL* tome.

What treasure the sirine has is buried beneath this rubble. If they spend 1d4 turns digging, the heroes find an iron strongbox containing one hundred twenty copper pieces, forty-four gold pieces, a rough cut sapphire (worth twenty gold pieces), a *ring of protection +1*, and an *elixir of madness*.

Moving On

Once they escape the trials of Castle Island, the heroes should immediately return to Rima’s cave. Even if they pause to deliver Eldrak into the hands of a healer, their business with the Vistana is so pressing that they certainly must make haste to visit her again. If they have done everything correctly, Aroun has been reunited with his body, revealing an important clue about Bryonna’s case before disappearing. Most likely, the adventure should continue with “Scene Seven: Return to Rima.”





Scene Seven: Return to Rima

Man is learning all his life and yet he dies in ignorance.

—Yugoslavian Proverb



In the heroes' absence, Rima has been consulting the tarokka to gather information with which to prove Bryonna's innocence.

Aroun's Clue

After they make the journey back to the Vistana's cave, the Dungeon Master can read the following text aloud:



The Vistana's cave appears just as you left it, with the fire burning bright and the air alive with dancing fairies. Rima sits where you left her, with her eyes closed and her tarokka cards neatly stacked before her. Upon your approach, her bright eyes open quickly, and a small wan smile comes to her thin lips.

"I am glad you've survived the trials of Castle Island, though the spirits warn of greater dangers ahead. Tell me, was Aroun able to offer you any advice?"



If the heroes repeat the word "terrepopolo" to Rima, she pauses briefly. Rima knows the Vistani term, but she does not know its Tepestani translation. Even if the term "boowray" is spoken, Rima does not recognize it without further description. When Aroun's final words are reported to her, Rima responds with the following:



"Most curious," says Rima with a worried look on her face. "That word is one my people use to describe an evil creature of the forest. I have suspected the presence of such a danger for some time now, but have been unable to locate its source. Perhaps the cards can tell us more about our adversary."



With that, the old woman reaches out to pick up her cards. As she shuffles them, she invites the heroes to sit with her, forming a circle. Once each of the player characters is in place, she passes the deck around the circle, instructing them each to say the word "terrepopolo" over the deck before handing it to the next hero.

The Card Reading

When the deck returns to Rima, she begins to play the cards out on the floor. If the Dungeon Master has a deck of tarokka cards, he should use these to simulate this reading. If not, a normal deck of cards can be used. In this case, face cards count as a fifth suit (the High Deck), not connected to the other four.

To simulate Rima's card reading, the Dungeon Master should draw one card for each hero. Their exact pattern is unimportant, as long as they are clearly being played in some sequence. As the following cards appear, the Dungeon Master should read Rima's comments aloud.

Any Sword (Club)



"Your weapons will be of little use against this enemy. Although diminutive, it is a creature of magic. Let your blades follow rather than lead."



Any Glyph (Heart)



"The power of the terrepopolo lies in the heart and mind. It lives to spread evil, relishing the taste of the corruption that it implants. Heed not the terrepopolo, for its words are death."



Any Star (Spade)



"Your enemy is cunning and elusive. It can move about in daylight, yet remain unseen by the eyes of mankind. Never assume that it is not among you, for the terrepopolo is an insidious creature."



Any Coin (Diamond)

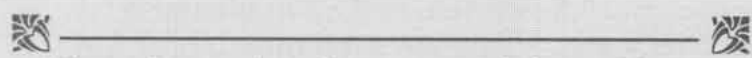


"The terrepopolo speaks in whispers, its vile words carried on the drifting wind. Quiet and seductive is the voice that has already befouled the ears of the innocent."

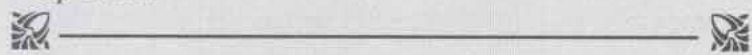




Any Crown (Face Card)



"There is another force at work here. The terrepopolo has a master whose presence we cannot yet see. His is a darkness so great that even the cards can shed no light upon it."

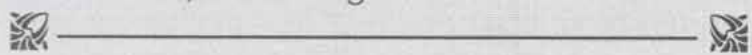


Moving On

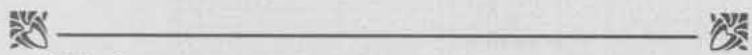
Once all five of the above clues have been given, the reading comes to an end. Once that is done, Rima makes a final proclamation:



"I believe that Aroun and his friend may also have been victims of the terrepopolo. They heard the words of the creature, promises of wealth and power, and followed it to Castle Island. There, of course, they found only betrayal and death. Be careful that their fate is not your own."

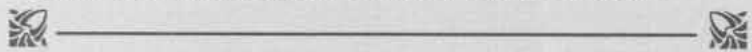


After that is done, Rima begins to gather up the cards. As she does so, she turns a sorrowful face to the heroes:



"While you were on Castle Island, the cards told me something else. At the time, I did not understand it. Now, however, I see the meaning. If your enemy does indeed possess the ability to cloud your eyes, then you must find some means of discovering its hiding place. I believe that your best hope lies in a magical elixir known as tincture of midnight."

"I know of only one place in all the land where you can obtain so valuable a concoction. You must seek out the Three Sisters."

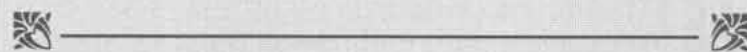


If the players are not familiar with the trio of hags who rule Tepest, Rima tells the party what she knows. Because she is very knowledgeable in the lore of Ravenloft, this essentially gives the players much of the information presented about the hags in the Appendix, including the location of their cottage.



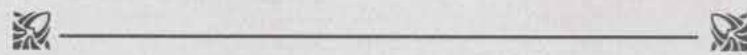
Rima does not pretend that the heroes' encounter with the hags will be a pleasant one. There is a good chance that the sisters will slay them before giving them the chance to state their business. Still, the heroes seem to have no other options at this time.

Rima offers the following advice to the heroes about their meeting with the hags:

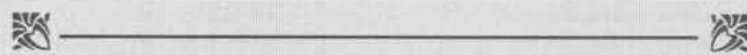


"Do not show the sisters your fear. Bargain as if you hold the power to defeat them in your hands. But be careful: If you are too presumptuous, they will destroy you and feast upon your marrow."

"The three hags will almost certainly demand some payment or service of you in exchange for the tincture. Luckily for you, they delight in tormenting each other. When you've accomplished what they ask, your escape may depend on exploiting this weakness."

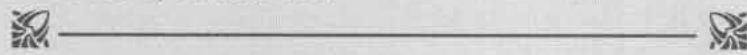


As the heroes are about to depart Rima's cave, the Vistana says the following:



"One last warning to you, my children," Rima whispers, "the terrepopolo and the Three Sisters are not the only evils found in Tepest. The cards have warned us of another. I have seen his hand, but not his face. There is a method to the evil that is plaguing our land, and it seems that the Mists have chosen you to set things right."

"Do not dawdle. Make haste, for the fate of my little one is in your hands. When you clear Bryonna's name, return to me and we shall see what can be done to thwart this Prince of Shadows."



Rima elaborates no more on her cryptic statement. The heroes will come to understand more of this mysterious enemy when they reach Act Three. At this point, the adventure should continue with "Scene Eight: The Three Sisters."





Scene Eight: The Three Sisters

It is good to be civil, as the old wife said when she beckoned the devil.

—Scottish Proverb

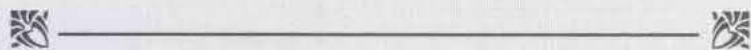
This section details the heroes' encounter with the darklords of Tepest. They must make a deal with these hags to obtain the *tincture of midnight* needed to expose the fey in Viktal.

This section should be a roleplaying encounter with the hags. Some players may consider attempting to attack the hags and take the tincture by force. Those foolish enough to believe that they can accomplish this should be reminded that the Three Sisters are incredibly powerful, very evil, and diabolically cunning. Any characters who attack the hags are likely to end up as their main course.

The Cottage

When the heroes reach the hags' cottage, they can easily walk up to the front door. The hags take no precautions to keep travelers away. After all, they enjoy having visitors for dinner!

When the heroes reach the cottage, the Dungeon Master should read the following text:



The dark woods part before you to reveal a simple cottage standing in the middle of a weed-choked clearing. This small, unpainted structure has a thatched roof and no windows. Smoke rises from a chimney made of rough-hewn stones. All in all, it looks to offer warmth and shelter from the steady drizzle that seems always to fall in Tepest.

As you draw nearer, you notice a foul odor hanging in the air. Although partially obscured by the rain and smell of smoke, the stench of rotting flesh is impossible to miss. Almost lost among the tangle of weeds and tall grass around the cottage are the bones of several dozen creatures. Bits of decaying flesh still cling to these bones, hinting that even the scavengers of the forest avoid this place.



Should the heroes knock, they hear a short pause followed by a command to enter. The Dungeon Master should always use his best "wicked witch"

voice when speaking for the hags. Phrases like "my pretty" and "sweet morsel" can make these condescending creatures even more horrifying.

When the heroes enter the cottage, the Dungeon Master should read the following text:

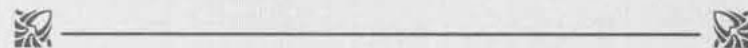


The cabin is as rustic inside as out, with unpainted walls and rough floorboards. A fire roars in the stone hearth, filling the air with a smoky haze, but even this is not enough to obscure the horrid scene before you.

The room is scattered with bits of bodies, all of which have been partially eaten, and the floor and walls are stained almost black with blood and ichor. Beneath the acrid smoke hangs the sickeningly sweet smell of decay.

Seated at a table in the middle of the room are three hideous creatures. These rather skinny, hunch-backed old women have wrinkled, baggy skin and long, pointed noses. Jagged black teeth fill their thin-lipped mouths, and warts cover their oily skin.

On the table before them lies the partially eaten body of a goblin. Its legs and arms are missing, but its torso and head are as yet untouched. As you watch, the creature's head lolls over limply, allowing its jaundiced yellow gaze to fall upon you. Only when its mouth moves in a gurgling whimper do you realize that the tortured beast is still alive!

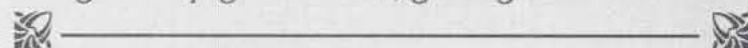


At this point the Dungeon Master should require horror checks. After all, the scene before them is extremely revolting—especially considering that it may well represent the fate of the heroes.

After that unpleasantness is dealt with, the Dungeon Master should continue by reading the following text aloud:



"It appears we have company for dinner, we do," says the largest of the crones as you enter. Looking up from her horrid feast, she licks the blood from her cracked lips and turns her revolting countenance toward you. "We always welcome guests for dinner. But I'm wondering what brings such fine looking folk to our home, I am. Speak quickly and ye might keep your heads, ye might!"





Now, the heroes can come forward with their request. At the Dungeon Master's whim, a pause of more than a few seconds here could be fatal, causing the hags to succumb to their endless hunger and attack the party. Should a combat erupt, the hags are detailed in the Appendix.

If the adventurers boldly request the *tincture of midnight* from the hags, the sisters gather together for a chattering, hissing conversation. Now and again, words like "tasty" and "tender" can be heard along with giggles and snickering. After a minute, the one of the hags replies to the heroes:

—
"You are very brave to come here, pretties, very brave. Ordinarily, we would not hear your words, but these are not ordinary times. You present us with an interesting opportunity, you do. This tasty goblin was supposed to retrieve something for us, and was foolish enough to fail. If you can obtain what he could not, we shall give you what you ask, we shall. Well, pretties, can you best a few goblins for your precious tincture?"
—

If the heroes came here without having known about the tincture, the hags merely offer the

heroes "what you need" in exchange for retrieving the ring. They refuse to give any further explanation, and begin to lick their lips hungrily if the heroes dawdle too much.

The characters should realize that the hags are not telling the whole story. However, as the sisters do not disclose anything else, the heroes must make their decision based on the information presented to them.

If the heroes agree, the hags point them toward the goblin's lair a few miles to the east in the hills. One of the hags gives the following directions when the heroes are ready to go:

—
"In a cave to the east you'll find a shiny thing, you will: a shining ring of gold and silver set with a brilliant emerald. Bring us this ring.
"If you do not return, pretties, we will find you. And when we do, you'll envy our little goblin friend here, you will.
"Go now, and be quick. Our patience is not as enduring as our beauty, you know. And if you don't want us to eat you anyway, you might want to bring us another goblin or two as a snack, you might!"
—





So saying, the hags begin to cackle like howling jackals. Their sinister laughter fills the cottage, fairly driving the heroes out into the rain. Long after they have left the hags behind, this mocking laughter will ring in their ears.

The Goblin Nightmare

As the heroes approach the goblin cave, the Dungeon Master should read the following text:

Moving through the dark forest, you almost trip over a pair of bodies. A brief examination of these horribly mutilated forms convinces you that they are goblin corpses. They are so badly torn and lacerated that it is impossible to say for certain what type of creature attacked them. Broken spears and bent daggers show that the goblins tried in vain to defend themselves.

As the characters continue on, they come upon more goblin bodies. Like those described above, these corpses have been torn apart by some savage predator. When the heroes reach the mouth of the goblin cave, the Dungeon Master should read the following text aloud:

The woods come to a sudden end at the edge of a large, circular clearing. Some fifty feet away, on the other side of a slick, muddy expanse, is a stone outcropping. Crude masons seem to have carved the rock into the primitive shape of a skull. The mouth of this stone death's head hangs open, clearly offering entrance to some underground chamber.

The rain falls steadily, drenching the dozens of goblin bodies strewn around the muddy clearing. Unlike the other remains you have seen, these are not warriors and hunters. Here you see the bodies of goblin women and children. Clearly, the beast that destroyed them has no capacity for mercy.

The Cave

The heroes now stand at the mouth of the goblin vampire's lair. They must enter and face the creature to retrieve the gold and silver ring. When the heroes enter the cave, the Dungeon Master should read the following text aloud:

Your footsteps echo hollowly as you tread upon the stone floor of the cave. Trickles of rain fall from cracks in the ceiling to form muddy puddles. No fewer than a dozen mutilated goblins litter the floor just ahead of you.

As you move farther into the chamber, a low growl fills the air, sounding like the warning snarl of a wolf, but with an almost reptilian hiss. Then, in a blur, something terrible and deformed charges out of the darkness.

Compared to a normal goblin, the one before you is monstrously misshapen and twice the usual size, its yellow fangs reaching roughly halfway down its chest. Its hands are blackened and shriveled, with the gore of fallen victims caked beneath the long, jagged fingernails. Most importantly, hunger flashes in its bulbous, orange eyes.

After viewing the approaching goblin vampire, each character must make a fear check—failure making the vampire even stronger. (This fear check should not be optional.) For each failed check, the creature's eyes grow brighter.

Though the creature's combat statistics appear below, the Dungeon Master should still read the full description in the Appendix.

Goblin Vampire: AC 3; MV 12; HD 3 base, 10 max (5 at the start of encounter); hp 30 (at the start of the encounter); THAC0 16 base, 10 max (14 at the start of encounter; HD + Strength bonus); #AT 2; Dmg 1d6+3/1d6+3 (claw/claw); SA fear aura, gore; SD spell immunities; SW moonlight, holy water, turning; MR 25%; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (17); Int low (5); AL CE; XP 3,000.

Notes: *Fear Aura*—Opponents who meet the vampire's gaze must make fear checks, even if previously exposed. For each failed check, the goblin vampire gains one HD. The duration of this temporary increase is equal to the HD of the victim. *Gore*—If both of the claws hit in a single round, the creature automatically gores victim, inflicting an additional 2d6 points of damage. *Spell Immunities*—Immune to poisons, disease, and mind- and life-affecting spells such as *hold* and *charm*. *Moonlight*—Inflicts 1d4 points of damage each round. *Holy Water*—Inflicts 1d6+1 points of damage. *Turning*—As spectre.

Special Equipment: *ring of regeneration.*

After the goblin vampire has been slain, the heroes find the ring they are searching for on one of the creature's distorted fingers. This *ring of regeneration* once belonged to the hags, but it





was lost when an unusually brave goblin sneaked into their cottage and stole it. In order to punish the thief, the hags put a curse on their treasure.

Leaving the Cave

Once they have retrieved the ring, the heroes can return to the hags' cottage. If any of the characters do as the hags requested and bring them a "goblin or two for a snack," the Dungeon Master should require immediate powers checks. The fact that goblins are revolting, evil little creatures makes no difference. Turning anyone over to the hags is an undeniably evil act.

Hags Once More

Now the heroes should make their way back to the hags' cottage. If the characters have taken considerable time in reaching this point in the adventure, Ivan appears before them to check on their progress and move them along.

When the heroes return to the hags' cottage to trade the ring for the *tincture*, the Dungeon Master should read the following text aloud:

Your previous exposure to the hags does nothing to ease your nerves as you move closer to their hovel. The front door of their cottage creaks open as you draw near, and a horribly twisted hand beckons you forward.
"Come in, pretties, come in."

Additional fear or horror checks are necessary only for characters who failed their checks on the last visit. Once someone enters the cottage, the Dungeon Master should read the following text. If the heroes did not ask for the tincture by name, the words "what you need" should be substituted for "your precious tincture."

The three hags stand around their bloody dinner table, though all signs of their goblin feast are gone. Where once were grisly remains now sits a small wooden box.
"I smell the ring, pretties," says the largest of the hags. "Give it to us now, and you'll have your precious tincture, you will."

If the heroes hand over the ring to the hags, the Dungeon Master should read the following:

"Thank you, pretties, for bringing back to us our sparkling ring," says one of the sisters. "We have missed it, we have—especially at dinner." At that, the hags begin to laugh as if some terrible joke had been made, but you hear nothing cheerful in their malevolent cackling.
"No one leaves before we have our dinner, pretties."

The hags are willing to hand over the tincture only after they have a new meal set before them. They plan to claim one of the adventurers, force the *ring of regeneration* on him, and feast upon his living body for days, weeks, or even months.

If the heroes were callous enough to bring the hags a captured goblin, they can trade it now to complete the pact and obtain the tincture.

However, condemning even a lowly goblin to such a fate is certainly an evil act, requiring the players to make powers checks.

Alternatively, one of the characters could offer to sacrifice himself for the good of Bryonna and the others. This truly noble deed earns the tincture, but it spells horrible pain and torture (and probably madness checks) for the victim.

The third, and best, option here is a clue given to the heroes by Rima. It was clearly stated to them that the hags are greedy and spiteful creatures who love to taunt and torment each other. Resourceful players can use this to their advantage. While the sisters are thus distracted, the heroes can grab the *tincture of midnight* and escape. The hags fight amongst themselves for several days and do not pursue the fleeing party.

A yellowed label on the side of the vial of tincture bears an inscription in an unsteady hand:

*To discover what you cannot see,
 apply a drop and count to three.*

Moving On

One way or another, the heroes should now have gotten their hands on the *tincture of midnight* and left the cottage of the hags behind. At this point, the adventure continues with the next scene, "Justice Served."

If the heroes are unsure what to do with the tincture, they could visit Rima again. She tells them that they must decide who, if anyone, is being influenced by an evil creature, and splash the liquid on that person.





Scene Nine: Justice Served

*For love is strong as death;
Jealousy is cruel as the grave. . . .*

—Song of Songs 8:6



As long as the heroes return to Viktal by Day Seven, they still have a chance of exposing the boowray and saving Bryonna. If it looks like the heroes are going to be late, the Dungeon Master can send Ivan to speed them along. If they return to Viktal early, the Dungeon Master should advance the timeline so that they still arrive just as Wyan is about to light the fire.

The Dungeon Master should be prepared to improvise in this scene, especially if one or more of the earlier events took an unusual course.

To begin this scene, the Dungeon Master should read the following text aloud:



As you near the fringes of Viktal, the rain begins to slacken. Over the course of a few minutes, the steady cascade that has fallen on you for the last several days finally comes to an end. Overhead, the gray expanse of clouds begins to break up, exposing azure skies beyond. Here and there, brilliant shafts of sunlight stab downward to grace the long neglected landscape.



The Judgment

When the heroes arrive back in Viktal, they immediately notice the residents all moving to the center of town. If asked, they reveal that Wyan is about to carry out Bryonna's final judgment.

When the heroes reach the center of town, the Dungeon Master should read the following text:



At the center of the village square is a tall wooden pole, around which firewood and kindling have been piled. Oil glistens on the timber, showing clearly that this is an inferno in the making. Lashed tightly to the stake is the sobbing figure of Bryonna.

Four people stand near this pyre. Two are Inquisitors, dressed in the plain robes of their order. The others are Wyan, who holds a heavy tome of scriptures in his hands, and Lorelei, her features looking oddly cold in

the light of the blazing torch she clutches.

When Wyan slowly holds up his hands, the crowd falls silent. In a loud voice, he proclaims Bryonna's fate: "For consorting with the fey, bespelling the merchant Ivan, and cursing my own daughter, I condemn you to burn at the stake! If any here doubt the righteousness of my decision, look to the skies. The sun shines upon us; the gods are pleased."



Saving Bryonna

The heroes have several actions open to them at this point in the adventure. The following ones are the most likely.

If Lorelei attempts to carry out her father's sentence at any time during this scene, the heroes will have their hands full trying to rescue Bryonna from the hungry flames. While the fire does not harm Bryonna on the first round, it quickly becomes lethal. On the second and subsequent rounds, the fire inflicts 1d3 points of damage to everyone within it.

The heroes are left with few options at this point. Magic, like an *affect normal fires* spell, can battle the flames. If this is done, the fire is assumed to be the equivalent of a large bonfire some twenty feet in diameter. These methods of battling the blaze bring with them the same hazards described later under "Using Magic."

Attempting to rescue Bryonna once the blaze is going instantly draws the wrath of the Inquisitors. They do not attempt to battle characters who plunge into the flames to save the young girl, however. Instead, they merely try to keep such heroes from escaping the blaze.

Presenting Their Evidence

It is very likely that the heroes rush in and call for a halt to the proceedings. At this point, they can present their findings to Wyan and the assembled townsfolk. As most of this is nothing more than hearsay, however, their words are unlikely to carry much weight. Even the words of Rima, whom Wyan seems to respect, do little to help.

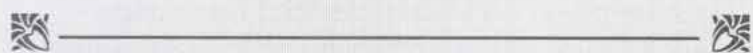
Should the heroes say that they believe an invisible spirit has been affecting Wyan or Bryonna, the townsfolk are momentarily silent. During this time, murmurs of suspicion and fear ripple through the crowd.

If the heroes direct accusations at Wyan, he denies their charges. Should they press the matter, he calls upon the Inquisitors to arrest the heroes. The townsfolk, who have a great deal of faith in Wyan, side with him in this matter.



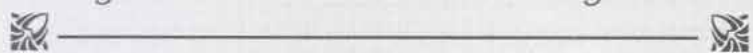


Should the finger of suspicion be pointed at Lorelei, however, things take a different course. The Dungeon Master can read the following text aloud to describe her reaction:



For several seconds Lorelei is very still. She looks distracted, as if she were listening to a voice you cannot hear. Then, as a cruel smile twists her features, she calls out in a voice bitter with indignation: "Let the sentence be carried out! Let the witch burn!"

So saying, she throws the blazing torch at the base of the stake. No sooner does it touch the oil-soaked lumber than a brilliant blaze erupts. Over the crackling of this blaze, the sounds of Bryonna's screams mingle with Lorelei's diabolical laughter.



Using Magic

By now the characters should have guessed that Lorelei is the host of the boowray. They can certainly detect the creature via a *detect invisibility* or similar spell. However, this does not expose the creature to the rest of the village, only to the caster. Any character who claims to be able to see invisible things is likely to end up in the custody of the Inquisitors himself.

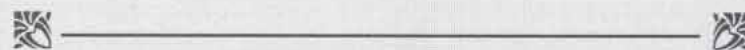
Another important consideration at this point is the negative reaction that the crowd has to anyone who uses spells. As soon as any character begins to cast a spell, the crowd becomes an angry mob. The heroes suddenly find themselves faced with 4d6 townsfolk and 2d4 Inquisitors attempting to capture them.

During any sort of skirmish like this, Lorelei sets the pyre aflame. If the heroes are to save Bryonna now, they have to do so in accordance with the guidelines previously presented.

Using the Tincture

The magical elixir that the heroes obtained from the hags is not difficult to use. The *tincture of midnight* is an oily blue-black ink in a small glass vial. This vial holds only one ounce of the precious fluid, so they should be careful with it.

In order to reveal the presence of the invisible fey, the heroes need only get a minute drop of tincture on it. The easiest way to do this is by splattering the contents of the vial on Lorelei. Should the heroes succeed, the Dungeon Master can read the following text aloud to the players:



The dark fluid splashes into the air, spattering on Lorelei's clothes, skin, and hair. Slowly, another dark shape becomes apparent. On Lorelei's shoulder sits a tiny green woman with bright yellow eyes. In a hushed voice, you hear Wyan hiss out the word "boowray."



Evil Unmasked

Once the boowray has been discovered, it has little interest in remaining with Lorelei. If the heroes do not immediately attack it (in which case, it immediately attempts to flee), the Dungeon Master can read the following text to describe the fey's response:

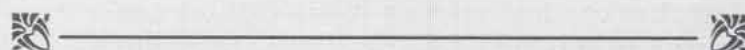


"Oops!" proclaims the boowray, looking at its suddenly visible arm. "They've found us out, love. The Prince will have to find another girly to do his work, won't he? Bye!"

With that, the little spirit leaps into the air and begins to quickly fly off toward the forests that surround Viktal.



As soon as the boowray departs, Lorelei begins to run after it, screaming in protest:



Lorelei lets out a sobbing shriek as the boowray leaves. "No!" she yells, "Come back here! We have to kill Bryonna! You promised to make Ivan love me! You can't leave yet! You still need me!"



Of course, Lorelei has just effectively cleared Bryonna of all charges. No one, not even Wyan, doubts what they have just seen. In addition, Lorelei has convicted herself of consorting with the evil fey.

The heroes have a chance here to stop the fey before it gets away. The boowray is not surprised when the heroes throw the tincture, so it can act immediately, using its great speed to get out of melee range. Thus, only a spell or well-aimed missile can bring it down. The Dungeon Master should give each hero one action before it is completely out of sight.





Witches

Boowray: AC 2; MV 12, FI 24 (B); HD 4; hp 19; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (bite); SA suggestion; SD +1 or better magical weapon to hit, invisibility; SW dispel evil; SZ S (2' tall); ML champion (15); Int very (12); AL LE; XP 1,400.

Notes: *Suggestion*—The boowray can cast a *suggestion* spell once per day. *Invisibility*—It is usually invisible but can become visible at will. Opponents suffer -4 penalty to attack rolls while it is invisible. *Spell Immunities*—Boowrays are immune to all mind-affecting spells such as *charm* and *command*. *Dispel Evil*—The boowray can be driven off through the use of *dispel evil*, and victims gain temporary relief from its whisperings with *silence*.

Wrap-Up

Assuming that the heroes manage to complete their mission successfully, they still have a few loose ends to tie up at this point.

Lorelei

Still tormented by the seeds of evil planted within her by the boowray, this mad, twisted woman wants nothing more than the death of Bryonna and all those who helped her.

Believing that he is doing what is best for everyone, his daughter included, Wyan imprisons Lorelei. He hopes to free her from the evil influences that have transformed her into the crazed woman she has become. If she cannot be helped, though, he will have no choice but to burn her at the stake.

Wyan

Given the realization that his daughter has become that which he has fought to destroy, Wyan falls into a crippling depression. The Inquisitors look to him for guidance in searching out more fey hiding in the village, but he refuses. His sermons are uninspired, and he has lost all interest in the effort of the crusade. Wyan spends most of his time in the temple praying for guidance and mercy.

This may or may not end the witch hunts in Viktal. If the Dungeon Master wishes to keep the spectre of witch trials and fey hunting alive in Viktal, one of the other Inquisitors can step forward to replace Wyan.

Ivan and Bryonna

Ivan and Bryonna cannot thank the heroes enough for what they have done. He gladly honors any deal that he made with them at the start of the adventure.

The People of Viktal

The villagers are impressed with the work done by the heroes. An invitation to take up residence in Viktal is offered, provided that the heroes are willing to protect the village from the evil fey.

This scenario has the potential for a truly sinister turn of events here. If the heroes agree to lead the battle against the fey, they may well end up replacing Wyan as the master of the Inquisition. The Dungeon Master should then have an excellent opportunity to set up an adventure where the heroes discover that they have become the very things they opposed.

The Boowray

Although the players will certainly feel that they have completed a major task, this adventure is not at an end. There is still the matter of the boowray's unknown master.

If the boowray is captured, it is imprisoned in the town jail (area 1). If the heroes attempt to interrogate the creature, it reveals very little about Loht's insidious plan. Through any number of methods, the characters may be able to get some information from the boowray, though unusually cruel methods may require powers checks. By whatever means, the heroes should eventually be able to get the following statement from the boowray:



"The master wants something that the silly wrinkled priest has. I don't know what it is, only that the old man keeps it locked away somewhere in his little temple. I was persuadin' that pretty Lorelei to find out where it was and turn it over to me when you all messed everything up."

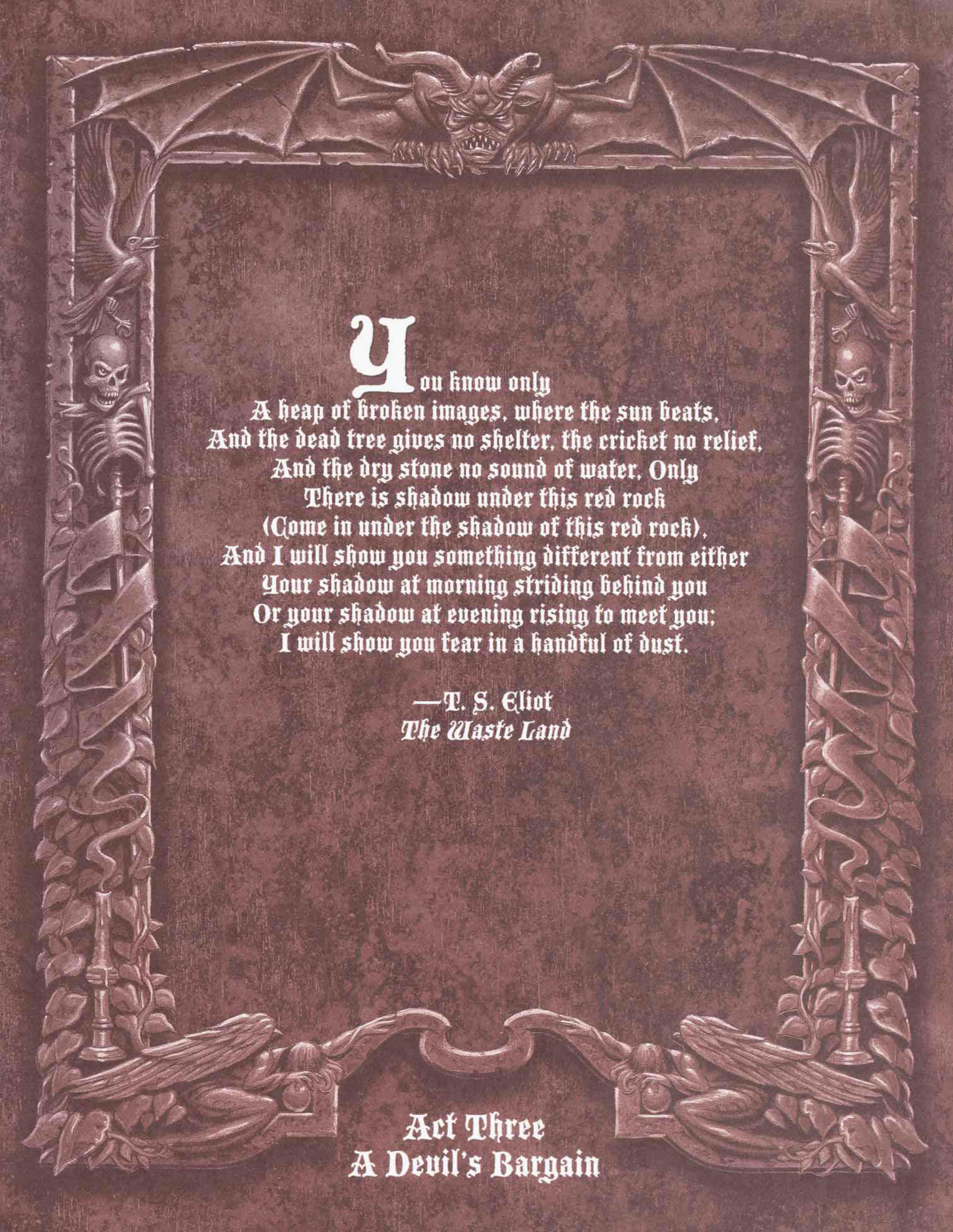


If the heroes mention this to Wyan, he does not know what the creature is talking about. If they persist, he eventually realizes that the boowray is referring to the *Eye of Vhaeraun*. Still, he feigns ignorance, because he feels that it is dangerous to reveal the item's existence.

Moving On

After this scene has been resolved, the adventure can continue with Act Three: A Devil's Bargain.





You know only
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
And the dry stone no sound of water. Only
There is shadow under this red rock
(Come in under the shadow of this red rock),
And I will show you something different from either
Your shadow at morning striding behind you
Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;
I will show you fear in a handful of dust.

—T. S. Eliot
The Waste Land

Act Three
A Devil's Bargain



A Devil's Bargain

Scene Ten: Fortunes

For I dipp'd into the future, far as human eye
could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder
that would be;

—Alfred, Lord Tennyson
Locksley Hall (1842)



In this part of the adventure, the heroes try to rescue Lorelei from the hands of Loht, the Prince of Shadows. This quest brings the heroes across the borders of Tepest and into the dreaded land of Keening where they face both Loht and the mournful banshee Tristessa.

The Vistana

The heroes should return to Rima after clearing Bryonna's name. Her help in continuing this investigation enables them to pick up Loht's trail. If the heroes are at a loss here, Leobe arrives in Viktal on Day Eight (or the day after Bryonna is saved from the flames if the timeline is moved forward) and hands the heroes a message:



*My friends,
I am indebted to you for helping my beloved Bryonna. Among my people we have a saying that translates into your language as "No debt is easier to discharge than one of gratitude."
With that in mind, I ask you to return to my home. I believe that I can offer you information about the Prince of Shadows that will repay at least a fraction of the debt that I owe you.*

—Rima



Rima's Assistance

Rima's cave looks exactly as it did the last time the heroes were here. As soon as they arrive, she welcomes them and invites them to be seated. When everyone is comfortable, she unwraps the square of silk in which her tarokka cards are kept and begins to shuffle them. While she is doing this, she tells the heroes the following:



"I did not sleep last night. Instead, I sat outside and watched the stars move across the sky. My people believe that the best time to learn the secrets of the heavens is in the wake of a long storm, when the skies do not yet realize that they are again visible to mortals.

"At first, I learned nothing that we did not already know. As dawn approached, however, a series of falling stars told me that your destiny lies to the north. I am afraid that if you are to see matters to their conclusion, you must travel into the land of Keening, domain of the banshee Tristessa."



At this point, the heroes can ask Rima about Tristessa and Keening. Depending on their questions, the heroes can assemble a fairly complete understanding of that domain and its lord. Rima's answers can come from the information presented in *Domains of Dread* and in the Appendix of this book.

Once the heroes have had a few minutes to converse with Rima, she is ready to begin reading her tarokka cards. This reading works very much like the last one, with the cards being passed from hero to hero before Rima lays them out. Again, those Dungeon Masters who do not have tarokka decks can use normal playing cards. As before, all of the face cards should be considered an independent suit without individual numeric values.

The Dungeon Master should deal out ten cards face down in a circle and read the following text:



Moving slowly and with great care, Rima begins to flip cards from the top of her deck. She says nothing as each is set on the stone floor before her. One after another, the cards are placed until ten of them have been dealt face down in a circular pattern. With a heavy sigh, the reclusive gypsy places the deck in the center of the circle.

"I have asked the questions," she says, "now let us see what the cards have answered."

With that, her hands move clockwise around the circle, turning the cards over. With each new revelation, her expression grows darker and her eyes more fearful. When the last card is revealed, she shakes her head.

"The cards have few words of comfort this day, my friends."





Many things can be gathered from the cards at this time. The following sections detail the information that the cards reveal to Rima.

Totaling the Cards

The Dungeon Master should add the numeric value of all the cards together. If normal cards are being used, face cards have no numeric value; if an actual tarokka deck is being used, the four archetype cards count for five points each.

Low Cards

If the total value of the ten cards is less than twenty, the Dungeon Master should read the following information to the players:

—
“The cards tell me that the powers of life are in ascendance here, and the powers of the dead and undead are waning. Let the fires of life lead your way in places dark and forlorn.”
—

If this fortune is read, the heroes have a better chance of turning undead for the rest of this adventure. All attempts at turning undead are made at two levels higher. Thus, a 6th-level priest would turn undead as a 8th-level priest.

Medium Cards

If the total value of the ten cards is between twenty and forty, the Dungeon Master should read the following information to the players:

—
“The cards favor neither good nor evil, light nor darkness. There is a balance here between the forces of life and death. While this does not favor you, it does not oppose you either. Rely on skill and knowledge rather than luck in the coming days.”
—

This reading results in no game effect.

High Cards

If the total value of the ten cards is greater than forty, the Dungeon Master should read the following information to the players:

—
“The cards tell me that the power of evil is in ascension at this time. You battle great odds and face darkness at its strongest hour. Do not despair, but know that this is a time when death holds sway over the land. You challenge it at your own peril.”
—

If this result is indicated by the cards, the heroes suffer a penalty when attempting to turn undead. Any attempts to do so during the rest of this adventure are made at two levels lower. Thus, a 6th-level priest attempting to turn undead would do so as a 4th-level priest.

Dominant Suits

Once the Dungeon Master has totaled the values of the cards, he should note the number of cards from each suit. The most prevalent suit is considered the dominant one, and Rima will present the appropriate information. If two or more suits are equally represented, all such entries apply. Any hero affected by the magic of the tarokka feels a slight tingling sensation when the entry is read.

Swords Dominant

If the cards reveal more swords (clubs) than any other suit, Rima says the following:

—
“This is the warrior's hour. By blade and battle axe, by sword and spear, it is his hand that must lead the way.”
—

If the suit of swords is dominant, the Dungeon Master should note that all warrior characters gain a +2 bonus on their attack rolls for the duration of this adventure.

Coins Dominant

If the cards reveal more coins (diamonds) than any other suit, Rima says the following:

—
“This is the rogue's hour. It is his stealth and guile that will lead you through the darkness and into the light.”
—



A Devil's Bargain

If the suit of coins is dominant, the Dungeon Master should note that all rogue characters gain a +10% bonus on their thieving skills for the rest of this adventure.

Stars Dominant

If the cards reveal more stars (spades) than any other suit, Rima says the following:

—
"This is the wizard's hour. Rely upon his power and supernatural knowledge to triumph over the enemies that you will face on the road to victory."

If the suit of stars is dominant, the Dungeon Master should note that anyone making a saving throw to resist the effects of a spell cast by a wizard player character suffers a -2 penalty for the remainder of the adventure.

Glyphs Dominant

If the cards reveal more glyphs (hearts) than any other suit, Rima says the following:

—
"This is the priest's hour. His faith and devotion should be both a comfort and an inspiration to you in the darkness ahead."

If the suit of glyphs is dominant, the Dungeon Master should note that anyone making a saving throw to resist the effects of a spell cast by a priest player character suffers a -2 penalty for the remainder of the adventure.

Crowns Dominant

If the cards reveal more crowns (face cards) than any other suit, Rima says the following:

—
"This is a time of grim despair. The Prince of Shadows nears the hour of his triumph. He will allow nothing to stand in his way, and the Mists appear to favor him. Beware his power and the evil that burns in his heart."

If the suit of crowns is dominant, the Dungeon Master should note that anyone making a physical attack on Loht suffers a -2 penalty for the duration of the adventure.

Crowns

Almost certainly, at least one card from the high deck (the suit of crowns or face cards) appears in the circle. Each of these cards gives the heroes some bit of background information about Loht.

Each entry includes all of the information that precedes it as well. Thus, if one crown appears, the heroes will be told the information under "no crowns" also.

No Crowns

If the circle contains no crowns, Rima wrinkles her brow and tells the characters the following:

—
"The Prince of Shadows has many secrets, and he guards them so well that even the cards cannot root them out. His ties to darkness are strong, however, and he seems to be able to travel only by night. If this is the case, his journey may take longer than he hopes."

One Crown

If the circle contains one crown, Rima gives the heroes the following information:

—
"Be warned that the Prince of Shadow is not wholly a creature of flesh and blood. His body has somehow been infused with the essence of darkness itself. He fears not the steel blade nor that which is without some manner of enchantment."

Two Crowns

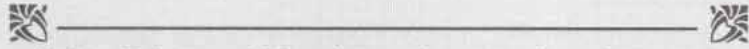
If the circle contains two crowns, Rima tells the players the following:

—
"The Prince of Shadows travels into a land of death and the undead. Do not believe that he does so free of peril, however. He is not kin to the walking dead and fears them as any living man must. He knows something of the magic of the grave, but his powers do not equal those of the banshee that roams that land."



Three or More Crowns

Should the circle contain three or more crowns, Rima looks rather concerned before telling the heroes the following:



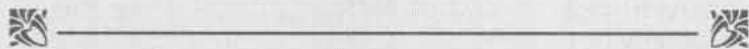
"The Prince of Shadows has a plan that extends far beyond this land. He hungers for power, but that is not his final goal. There is yet another player in this game. A creature who is darkness incarnate. In the end, it is he who must decide Loht's fate and Loht who must decide his."



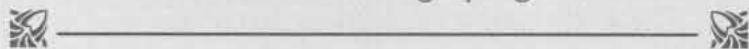
The Missing Eye

As soon as the reading is finished, Wyan rushes into Rima's cave. Between breathless gasps, he tries to relate to the heroes what has happened since they left town. First of all, he tells them that Lorelei is missing. She somehow escaped (or was taken) from her cell without alerting the Inquisitors watching over her.

After allowing this information to sink in, Wyan then tells the heroes the rest of the bad news: The *Eye of Vhaeraun* (the item that the boowray was talking about) is also missing. Wyan tells the heroes that he did not reveal the item's existence to the heroes before only because he feared its evil would affect them as it has so many others. The Dungeon Master can read the following text when Wyan describes the item:



"Several months ago, the Eye of Vhaeraun was drawn from the waters of the lake in a fisherman's net. The two men who recovered it nearly killed each other in their desire to obtain sole possession of it. When I heard their stories, it became apparent to me that evil magic was at work. I sent my men to recover the thing, only to discover that it had a similar effect upon them. I very nearly lost three of my most faithful followers to that evil thing. I don't fully understand the Eye, but its name, at least, has been revealed to me through prayer."



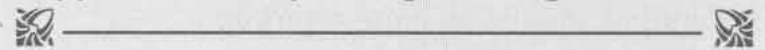
Wyan would like the heroes both to recover the item so it can no longer spread its evil influence, and to bring back his daughter. He is still hopeful that the boowray's control over Lorelei can be broken, and she will return to normal.



Rima readily agrees with Wyan. She would like to see the item recovered so that it can be destroyed. Rima also has some words of warning about the *Eye*, which she has heard of only in legend:



"When you see this item, you must brace yourselves. Each of you will see it differently, of that I am certain. But whatever form it appears to take will be a lie. The Eye of Vhaeraun is nothing more than a gray crystal the size of your fist. Like many evil things, however, this stone has the ability to appear far more pleasing to the eye."



Moving On

At this point, Rima says a few last words before sending the heroes on their way:



"Once again, you find yourselves opposed by the sand in the hourglass. The Prince of Shadows has already begun his journey to Keening. If you make haste, you can yet beat him to the heart of that dark land."



The heroes should now depart for Keening if they plan to thwart Loht's plans by retrieving both the *Eye of Vhaeraun* and Lorelei. The adventure continues with "Scene Eleven: The Dark Land."



Scene Eleven: The Dark Land

The boundaries that divide Life from Death are at best shadowy and vague. Who shall say where the one ends, and the other begins?

—Edgar Allan Poe
The Premature Burial

If the heroes attempt to follow Loht (and Lorelei) into the domain of Keening, they have many hours of travel ahead of them. No significant encounters occur on the road from Rima's cave to the border between the two domains.

Domain of the Banshee

Keening is a dead land where night is feared by all who travel there. This expanse of tortured rock and scrub forests has no wildlife of its own.

When the sun dips from the sky, Tristessa the banshee emerges from her lair to search for her baby. As the night goes on, the banshee's wail can be heard as far as five miles away.

As the heroes enter Keening, the Dungeon Master can read the following text aloud:

Leaving behind the verdant forests of Tepest, you enter the mysterious land of Keening. A greater contrast would be difficult to imagine. Tepest was a living place, full of wildlife and lush vegetation. Keening, on the other hand, is still and cold. Though beautiful and serene in its own way, a deathlike silence blankets the land like a grim shadow.

Brooding over this forlorn domain is the snow-capped peak of Mount Lament. As you first catch sight of the distant crag, a stiff wintry wind sweeps a chill of apprehension down your spine. No doubt, the course you have chosen seems to lead to the heart of death itself.

Time of Day

Keeping track of day and night at this point in the adventure is extremely important. The largest

drawback to traveling in Keening after sunset is the prevalence of undead in this domain. However, since the heroes are pursuing Loht, they probably have little choice but to continue.

Loht's Trail

Loht is extremely sly and covert in his travels. Normally, only the greatest skill and luck would enable the heroes to follow his trail. At the moment, however, he is towing Lorelei behind him. Being far less nimble than he, she slows him down and makes his trail easier to spot. Also, Loht does not realize he is being pursued, so he is not trying to cover his tracks. Anyone with the tracking proficiency or a similar ability can pick up the trail. Regardless of how quickly the heroes travel, they should still not encounter Loht before he reaches Tristessa.

Encounters in Keening

This section presents two encounters for heroes traveling in Keening. The first encounter assumes that the heroes race toward Mount Lament at night, while the second occurs if they travel during the day.

If desired, the Dungeon Master could even present both encounters. One can occur while the heroes make their way to Mount Lament, and the other can manifest during their retreat.

The Umbra

If the heroes cross the surface of Keening at night, they encounter a group of umbra. These undead are one of five patrols Tristessa sends out nightly in search of her missing babe (see the Appendix).

To begin this encounter, the Dungeon Master should read the following text aloud:

The beauty of the dark forests of this land only emphasizes the mantle of death draped over it. No crickets or other insects buzz in the silence of the night, and neither the hooting of owls nor the howling of wolves hangs in the air. With each passing mile, this stillness grows more and more pronounced. Thus, it comes as a great surprise when a loud voice calls for you to halt.

After each character takes one action, the Dungeon Master should read the following text aloud to describe the umbra:



You catch a sudden glimpse of movement in the darkness ahead. As if materializing from the night, a slender woman steps into view.

She first impresses you with a sense of grace and beauty. Her fine features and slight stature resemble those of an elf maiden, though her skin is a shade of violet so dark that it might easily be called black and her white hair shines like spun silver.

As you look closer, however, dread creeps into your heart. Her flesh is taut and desiccated, stretched over her bones like a drum. In her eyes burns an ebon glow that has the hypnotic effect of a midnight sky.

"You are trespassing in the land of the dead," she says in a hollow, emotionless voice. "Your fate is sealed."



At this point, the players should all make fear checks. Once that is resolved, the umbra attack.

Under cover of their *invisibility*, the umbra have formed a circle around the heroes. It was the leader of this patrol who materialized before them. Following her lead, the other umbra attack.

These beings have no interest in bargaining with the characters, for their orders are simple enough. They have been instructed to search for Tristessa's babe. Any intruders they come upon are to be destroyed if they are not traveling in the company of the child.

Umbra Patrol (1 per hero): AC 5; MV 12; HD 4+4; hp 28; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d6/1d6 (claws); SA strike shadows, hypnotic stare; SD invisibility, spell immunities; SW sunlight, holy water; MR 20%; SZ M (6' tall); ML fearless (20); Int low (5); AL CE; XP 975.

Notes: *Strike Shadows*—In lieu of the two normal claw attacks, an umbra can attack its opponent's shadow. This imposes a -2 penalty on the attack roll, but inflicts double damage on the victim. *Hypnotic Stare*—Anyone looking into the eyes of an umbra must save vs. paralysis or stand frozen in terror for 1d4 rounds. *Invisibility*—All umbra can become invisible at will. They use this ability to get close to their victims, imposing a -4 penalty to opponents' surprise checks. *Spell Immunities*—Umbra are immune to life- or mind-affecting spells, *charm*, *hold*, death magic, and cold- or ice-based attacks. Poisons and diseases also pose them no threat. *Sunlight*—Inflicts 4 points of damage each round. Also, bright light of any kind blinds them for 1d2 rounds. *Holy Water*—Inflicts 2d4 points of damage.

Once the umbra are defeated, the characters can continue on their way. If they are traveling toward Mount Lament, this brings them to the caves of the umbra.

Carrion Stalkers

This encounter occurs only if the heroes make their way to or from Mount Lament during the day. It begins when the party finds a corpse lying near the center of a clearing. At this point, the Dungeon Master should read the following text:



On the ground before you lies a moldering corpse. Clearly human, it is garbed in torn leather armor and the tattered remains of a green cape. A stout long bow lies broken on the ground beside the body, and an empty quiver is strapped to its back. The cruelty of this poor traveler's death shows in the strange angles of his twisted limbs.



As soon as someone comes within fifteen feet of the body, the carrion stalker within it attacks. Eight stringy tendrils, rather like the strands that dangle beneath a jellyfish, leap outward from the corpse to strike at the victim. The creature's full description appears in the *RAVENLOFT MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM Appendix III*.

Carrion Stalker: AC 2; MV 9; HD 4; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 1 or 1d4+5; Dmg 1d6 (tendrils) or special; SA paralysis, spawning, surprise; SD immune to poison and disease; SZ T (12" long; tendrils can be up to 15' long); ML avg (10); Int non (0); AL N; XP 650.

Notes: *Tendrils*—Carrion stalkers attack first with their eight tendrils. Each of these must strike the same target but requires its own attack roll. Victims who resist the creature's paralysis attack must make a bend bars roll to escape the entwining tendrils. Those who do not escape will be attacked again on the next round. Each tendril that has already hit the victim remains affixed and inflicts 1 additional point of damage each round. *Paralysis*—Each time a tendril hits, the victim must save vs. paralysis or be rendered immobile. A -1 penalty is applied to this roll for every tendril that scores a hit. Paralyzed victims are dragged toward the carrion stalker at a rate of 3 feet per round. *Spawning*—A victim dragged to within 3 feet of the carrion stalker is sprayed with a cloud of 1d6+3 larvae. These creatures have an 8 AC, 1 hit point, and inflict 1 point of damage per round to their host. Anyone trying to free an entangled victim is sprayed with 1d4 larvae. Most attacks made on the larvae divide their damage evenly between the grub and the host. *Surprise*—Opponents suffer -2 penalties on surprise checks.

Moving On

After dealing with the carrion stalker, the heroes can continue with their mission. At this point, the adventure continues with "Scene Twelve."



Scene Twelve: The Umbra Caverns

The dead are all holy, even they that were base and wicked while alive.

—Thomas Carlyle
Biography

In this part of the adventure, the heroes must make their way through a series of haunted caverns to reach their final showdown with Loht and Tristessa.

Important Considerations

As the characters explore the umbra tunnels, the Dungeon Master should keep in mind the darkness, general construction, and inhabitants of these caverns.

Darkness

Since the umbra can see clearly in darkness, these caves contain no light sources. If the heroes do not bring their own lights, they must travel in the dark. By bringing lights into the caverns, of course, the heroes draw unwanted attention to themselves. The Dungeon Master should keep this in mind when requiring surprise checks or other such rolls.

General Construction

The caverns of the umbra lead deep into Mount Lament. All of the ceilings range from ten to fifteen feet in height. The walls and floors are rough, unfinished stone.

The rugged nature of these tunnels can greatly affect the progression of this scene. There are plenty of crevices and grottos in which characters (and monsters) can hide.

Noise and Echoes

While the heroes are not the only ones in the cavern making noise, the few other living residents of these caves have learned that noise causes the umbra to come investigate. Those who cannot move silently have been weeded out over the years. For their part, the umbra make no noise as they move about, unless they choose to do so.

Any noises the heroes make echo for some time. For most normal sounds, this should serve to make the heroes paranoid and nervous without actually drawing the attention of the umbra. However, a patrol of 2d6 umbra arrives 2d6 rounds later to investigate any loud disturbances.

Loht and Lorelei

The darkness of these caves does not hinder Loht. The Prince of Shadows sees as well in absolute darkness as the umbra themselves. Lorelei, however, is not so lucky.

Lorelei trips and stumbles frequently in the darkness. Her weakened mental state has also left her prone to mumbling and occasional shrieks. Loht has managed to elude the umbra after such outbursts only by moving quickly and hiding frequently.

Loht is well aware that he could make better time and travel more safely if he abandoned Lorelei, but he still believes that she can be of value. If a situation arises where he must choose between his own survival and the girl, however, he will not hesitate to sacrifice her.

Entrances and Exits

On the southern slopes of Mount Lament, two caverns lead into the mountain. Other tunnels exist on the mountain's other faces, but these are beyond the scope of this adventure.

If the heroes follow Loht's trail, it leads them to the eastern passage. This is the safest of the two, though Loht chose it simply because it was the first one he came upon. If the heroes do not follow Loht's trail, they come upon the western tunnel. Following an umbra patrol back to Mount Lament also leads them to the western passage.

Eastern Passage

This tunnel is roughly a quarter mile in length and is never narrower than ten feet across. As the heroes move through this corridor, the Dungeon Master should read the following text aloud:

Your heart skips a beat when a sudden glint of light flashes in the tunnel ahead. Almost at once, however, you recognize that your concern was unfounded. The flash you saw was nothing more than light playing on the surface of a silver brooch and scarlet shawl that lie upon the rough stone floor ahead.

This discovery should serve to persuade the heroes that they are on the right track. Anyone who makes a successful Wisdom check or employs some means of enhancing his recall remembers seeing these items on Lorelei.

This passage opens into Level Three of the umbra caverns near the torture chamber.

A Devil's Bargain



Western Passage

This second tunnel also leads to the chambers of the umbra. The passage is just over a half mile in length, twisting and turning, with a gradual incline.

A horrible wraith-spider guards this passage, allowing umbra to enter and leave at will. Unfortunately for the heroes, it attacks any living creatures it sees.



In the darkness ahead you catch a faint glimmer of green light. As your eyes soak up more of the wan illumination, it becomes clear that the passage ahead is blocked. A lattice of thick strands, each glowing with a faint emerald light, stretches across the tunnel. The more you look at it, the more you recognize its similarities with a great net or spider's web.



The wraith-spider's web is very dangerous. Anyone who touches it suffers 1d4 points of damage from the deadly cold that infuses it. In addition, touching the web requires the character to make a successful saving throw vs. paralysis or be unable to move for 1d6 rounds. Those who fail this save continue to suffer 1d4 points of damage each

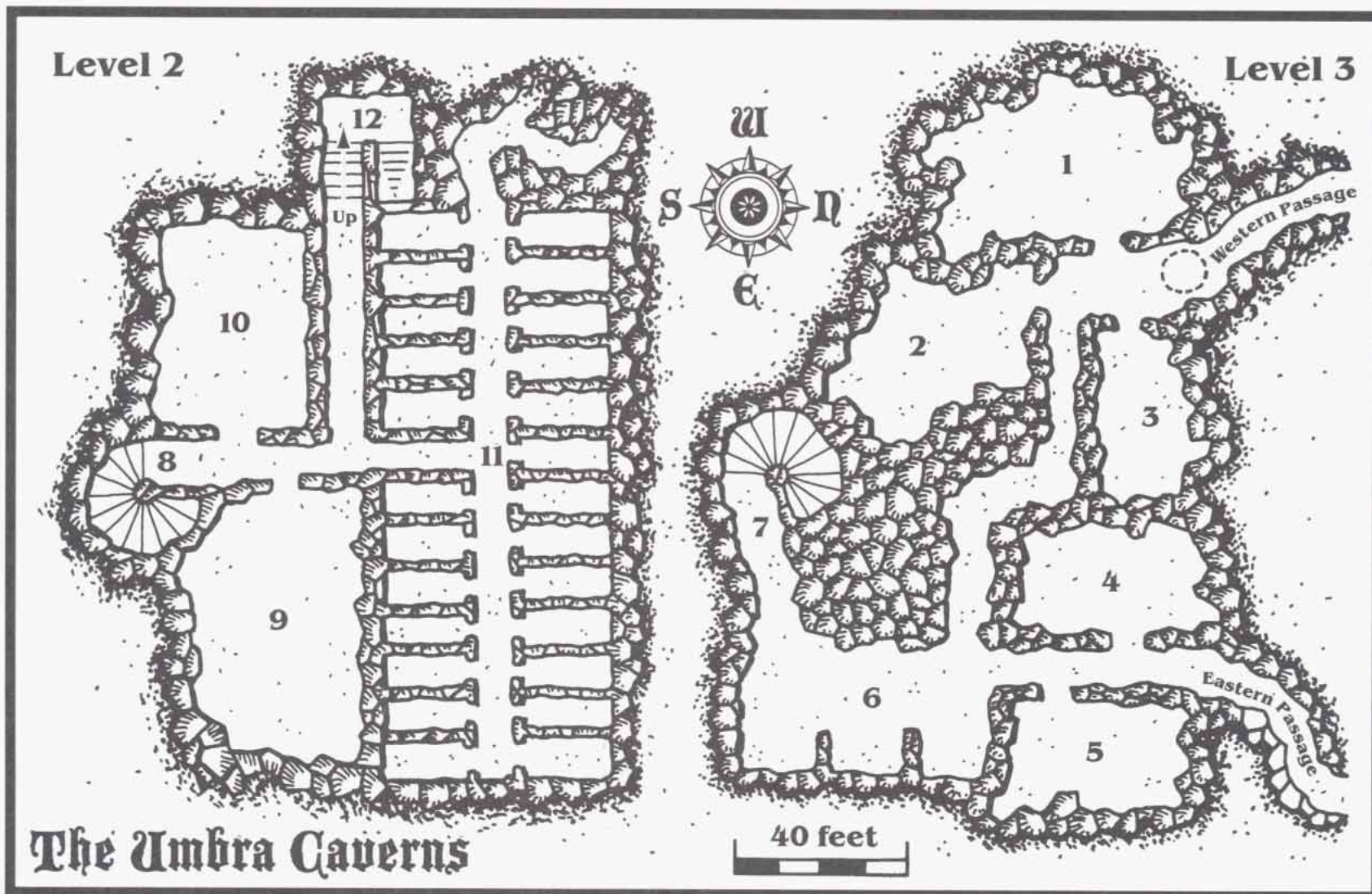
round that they remain in contact with the web.

Getting past the web proves very difficult. Like the wraith-spider itself, the web cannot be cut by any edge that is not either silver or magical. A successful bend bars/lift gates roll allows a hero to break an opening in it, although he must touch it in order to do so. As the heroes examine the web, the wraith-spider attacks from above. The wraith-spider is described in the *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM Annual Volume Two*, but its combat statistics appear below for ease of reference.

Wraith-Spider: AC 5; MV 15, Wb 18; HD 3+2; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (bite); SA poison; SD silver or +1 weapon to hit; SW turn as shadow; MR 15%; SZ M (4' diameter); ML champion (15); Int avg (10); AL LE; XP 1,400.

Notes: While normal wraith-spiders drain 1 level of experience with each bite, this one does not have that ability. *Poison*—In addition to causing damage, the wraith-spider's bite injects a dangerous toxin that remains active for 1d4+1 rounds, during which time the victim must save vs. poison each round or lose 1 Constitution point. Lost points are regained at the rate of 1 per week, although *heal* instantly restores 1d4 points.

The wraith-spider is immune to cold-based attacks as well as *sleep*, *charm*, and *hold* spells. Holy water burns the creature for 2d4 points per vial.





A Devil's Bargain



After this battle, the heroes have a chance of discovering the creature's lair. Hidden away within the rough surface of the ceiling is an uneven hole four feet in diameter. Beyond this portal lies a chamber some ten feet across in which the spider dwelt. Should the heroes search this place, they find a fair collection of coins (treated as treasure types O and P). In addition, they come upon a large emerald set upon an ornate silver wand. This is actually a *gem of sight* that, if the players are resourceful, can come in very handy at the close of the adventure.

Beyond this, the western passage enters Level Three of the umbra caverns near the armory.

Exploring the Caverns

The umbra caverns have three levels. The heroes arrive in Level Three and must make their way upward to Level One. This complex was once part of the domain of Arak. In those days, it was filled with the followers of Tristessa and the spider-goddess Lloth. In the decades since, however, it has been home only to the ranks of the undead.

The various areas on the map are described over the course of the following pages. Each description begins with a narrative that can be read aloud when the heroes first explore an area.

Level Three

When it was part of Arak, this level was used for storage and as a holding area for captives. Today, very few umbra roam this level, usually preferring their private chambers on Level Two.

Several points on the map of this level indicate the presence of "web traps." These are shimmering green webs spun by wraith-spiders. These creatures and their webs are described on page 47. In addition to these webs, a handful of wraith-spiders roam this level at all times. The heroes should encounter at least one pair of these creatures before they reach area 3.

1. Armory



A trio of collapsing racks, each holding a crumbling assortment of armor and swords, stands in one corner of this roughly square room. The bitter smell of rust mingles with dust particles to tickle your nose with each breath. A body lies on the floor, one so long dead that it is little more than a skeleton.



This body is all that remains of an explorer who came to these caverns long ago. He was quickly





slain by the umbra and left here as a warning to others who might come this way.

2. Storage Chamber

This long, cold chamber is tightly packed with stout barrels. Most have warped and split open, leaving no evidence of what they might once have held, but a few remain intact.

This room once held the water supply for the umbra. While much of it has evaporated over years, a bit remains. Of the thirty-six barrels in this room, only six remain intact. Each of these is roughly half full of stale, foul water. A *purify food and water* spell makes it perfectly safe to drink though. Imbibing the water without such cleansing requires a saving throw vs. poison. Any character who fails this roll contracts a debilitating disease (per the *cause disease* spell).

3. Lair of the Spiders

The frigid temperature in this long, slender room causes your very bones to ache when you enter. The air is painful to inhale, and every breath you let out curls away from you in a swirling cloud of glistening white. Large spider webs, all of which glow an eerie green, are draped throughout this chamber. Desiccated corpses, drained of life and scarred with frostbite, hang from several of the strands.

Three wraith-spiders lurk in this room. As soon as the heroes have had a few seconds to look around, they move in to attack (see page 47 for their statistics). At the same time, another 1d4 spiders gather in the hallway outside to cut off the party's escape.

4. Outsiders' Cell

The walls of this stone chamber are adorned with a dozen pairs of shackles, four of which are still locked around the wrists and ankles of skeletal captives. The floor is covered with a jumble of bones, as if many people had been sealed in here and then left to die of starvation.

People captured by the umbra are questioned, examined, and then secured in this room. A few days later, they stop screaming and are usually forgotten by their captors.

5. Torture Chamber

The purpose of this room cannot be mistaken. At one end sits a large iron brazier filled with long-exhausted coals. Flanking this dark object are two racks of pokers, branding irons, thumbscrews, and other implements of torture. A rack and iron maiden, both rusted into uselessness, stand opposite each other along the walls.

This chamber was once used as a guard post for prisoners in the adjacent room. It contains a rotting table and five chairs, along with various implements of torture.

6. Umbra Guards

This length of hallway is rough and broken, as if shattered by an earthquake. The floor is dusted with splinters of stone, and the ceiling is so laced with fissures that it seems ready to collapse any second.

Each of the three alcoves here contains one umbra guard, stationed as they were in life, warding the entrance to Level Two. If the heroes do nothing to mask their approach in this direction, the umbra detect their presence and become invisible. As the heroes near the entrance to area 7, the guards move in and attack. The statistics for the umbra guards match those given on page 45.

7. Passage Up

A broad passage of rough-hewn stairs rises into the stone ceiling of this chamber. A steady current of cool air drifts down from this tunnel, carrying with it a faint hint of decay.

This stairway leads up to area 8 on the map of Level Two.





A Devil's Bargain

Level Two

This second level of the umbra complex served as living quarters for the shadow elves. The two tunnels to the north once linked this complex to the rest of Arak's warrens. When Keening became its own land, these corridors collapsed.

All of the walls on this level are decorated with glyphs and runes designed to please Lloth. These are not supernatural or dangerous, but DMs should play them as weird and alien-looking. Anyone who spends too much time staring at or studying them develops a painful headache.

Taken as a whole, these hieroglyphs tell the tale of Tristessa. Whenever a portion of these runes is deciphered, the Dungeon Master should reveal a bit of information about Keening and its darklord.

8. Passage Down

A dark tunnel of rugged and uneven steps twists down into the floor of this chamber. The walls of this area are covered with strange paintings and murals. These look rather like hieroglyphs, but are thick with depictions of spiders, webs, and dark skinned, feral-looking elves. Something about these illustrations is unsettling, making the hair rise on the back of your neck.

This set of stairs is the passage up from area 7 on Level Three. No encounters occur here.

9. Meeting Room

A long stone table dominates the center of this rectangular room. Two dozen wooden chairs are tucked neatly around its edges, and an assortment of scrolls, charts, and maps are spread across its surface. The air in here is thick and stale.

Before the formation of Keening, the umbra used this chamber for discussing matters important to their people. Since that time, the chairs have decayed to the point where they collapse if sat upon. The various documents on the table crumble into dust if touched.

Most of the papers are maps of the surface of Arak (which no longer exists), indicating areas where the umbra captured surface dwellers to question them on information regarding the drow.

10. Dining Room

This long, rectangular room has an arched ceiling, and its walls, floors, and ceiling are polished as smooth as glass. An irregular spider-web pattern has been cut into the stone on all sides. In addition, crimson tiles set into the floor form an hourglass shape.

This chamber was used by the umbra for communal dining. It has seen no activity in many years, for the umbra shun this reminder of their lives left behind.

11. Living Quarters

This room contains bunk beds, dressers, wardrobes, and other such furnishings. Judging from the beds, it once housed four inhabitants. Various household items, like washbasins and chamber pots, are scattered about. A sense of despair and tragedy lingers in the air here, but it is nothing you can put your finger on.

The larger chambers formerly contained families, while the smaller ones housed male shadow elves who had not yet taken a mate. Now, each room contains 1d3 umbra.

There is a 25% chance that an umbra is lying down when the party enters. These creatures never sleep, but they mimic activities of the living.

Each time the heroes engage in battle with an umbra, there is a cumulative 5% chance per round that undead from adjacent chambers enter the fray.

12. Passage Up

A smooth staircase rises evenly, folding back upon itself just before it vanishes in the looming darkness. Surprisingly, you see faint traces of light visible above.

This leads to Tristessa's temple of Lloth. When the characters ascend, they reach Level One, overtake Loht, and encounter Tristessa.

Moving On

At this point, the story can continue with "Scene Thirteen: The Banshee's Temple."





Scene Thirteen: The Banshee's Temple

I like not fair terms in a villain's mind.
—William Shakespeare
The Merchant of Venice

This scene details the events that transpire when the heroes reach the final level of the umbra caverns. This level is a vast temple dedicated to the evil drow goddess Lloth.

The Eye of Vhaeraun

Before the adventure can continue, the Dungeon Master should decide what each hero sees when exposed to the *Eye of Vhaeraun*. The magic of the *Eye* is such that every person sees the one item that he most wishes to possess. However, the *Eye* never appears as something far greater than could be deemed “realistic.” For example, no one will see it as a castle, no matter how much he might long to possess one.

The Temple of Lloth

When the heroes enter this temple, the Dungeon Master should read the following text aloud:



A vast chamber lies before you, stretching nearly one-hundred fifty feet across and rising to a similar height at its center. A series of stone pillars rise from floor to ceiling.

Clearly, this realm is given over to the care of spiders. Every crevice of every surface has been used to anchor the web of some hungry arachnid. Most webs are small, designed for catching flies and other insects, but a few are much larger, hinting at the presence of giant spiders who might find you a satisfying meal.

At the far end of the room is a massive golden altar shaped like an overturned black widow. A black-bladed long sword is half sunk into the body of this gleaming monstrosity, as if it had been used to slay the gigantic spider.

Gathered around the altar are three people. One is a tall, thin elf dressed in the black finery of a gentleman and a black riding cape. At his side, trembling and unsteady, is Lorelei. Her hair is in disarray, and her once-pretty clothes are badly torn.

Floating in the air above the golden spider is a spectral creature of mist and vapor. Her skin is coal black and glitters like the midnight sky. Long white hair floats freely in the air around her head, forming an almost angelic nimbus. Her delicate features are twisted in torment and agony, and black tears trickle down her slender cheeks. Her hands clutch a tattered shroud, wringing and folding it constantly.



At this point, the trio at the other end of the room has probably not noticed them. Thus, each hero should have time to take one action before the *Eye of Vhaeraun* is revealed.

If the heroes entered amid a great deal of commotion, of course, they are noticed. As soon as the heroes make their presence known to Tristessa, spiders begin to emerge from every corner of the room. The first of these creatures to appear are normal spiders. Over the course of the next several rounds, however, larger and more dangerous spiders appear.

The table below indicates the types of spiders that appear during the encounter. At the start of each round, the Dungeon Master should roll 1d6 and add to it the round number. Thus, the first die roll is 1d6+1, the second is 1d6+2, and so on.

Die Roll	Spiders Appearing
1–7	4d6 Hairy Spiders
8–10	3d6 Large Spiders
11–12	2d6 Huge Spiders
13+	1d6 Giant Spiders

These creatures do not attack unless the heroes threaten them or Tristessa. If the adventurers ignore the spiders, the spiders ignore them.

The Eye Revealed

When the *Eye of Vhaeraun* is revealed, the Dungeon Master should read the following text, inserting the proper term for each character:



With a flourish, the well-dressed man sweeps something out from under his cape. For a brief second, you are unable to see it clearly. Then, with a jolt of realization, you recognize it. Before you is nothing other than (description here).





A Devil's Bargain



The spectral woman lets out an eardrum-piercing wail at the sight of this treasure. Throughout the whole of the temple ring the words "Loht, you brought my child!"

"You see," says the dark-clad gentleman, "I always keep my word. Now, if you will please be so kind as to deliver the sword to me, I shall trouble you no more."



The magic of the *Eye* is insidious, even to those who know what it is they are actually seeing. Because of this, each of the characters must make a saving throw vs. spell (with a +4 bonus because they have been forewarned about the *Eye*). Any bonus that the character might receive for a high Wisdom score also applies.

Any character who fails this check believes, at least on a subconscious level, that the *Eye* is actually what it appears to be. Though free to continue with the adventure normally, that hero must attempt to seize this treasure if the opportunity presents itself.

The Transaction

From this point on, the scene is likely to be a bit chaotic. The heroes will certainly try to intervene, attempting to reveal the *Eye* to Tristessa, trying to grab the item, or even attacking Loht.

Revealing the Eye

To retrieve the *Eye of Vhaeraun*, the heroes almost certainly attempt to show Tristessa that the object Loht has brought her is not what it appears to be. There are many ways in which this might be done, including a *dispel magic* spell or the *gem of sight* from the umbra caverns.

As soon as Tristessa sees what has been done, she is driven into a frenzy and immediately attacks Loht. During this skirmish, she uses her deadly *keening*. The fact that this may be deadly to the player characters as well as her enemy means nothing to her.

Lorelei

If things begin to go poorly for the heroes, Lorelei can save the day. This event should leave the heroes with the impression that she is not yet lost to evil. With their help, she can still be returned to the good, if somewhat shallow, person that she was before encountering the boowray.



A Devil's Bargain



Taking the Sword

The *Sword of Arak* can be pulled from the altar only with the consent of Tristessa. As soon as Loht makes his request, she waves her hand, allowing him to claim the blade. Anyone else who tries to pull the sword free discovers that it is frozen in place. It is important that this scene ends with Loht in possession of the sword.

Fighting Loht

The heroes are almost certainly unaware of how dangerous a foe Loht is. His unique abilities and defenses make him truly deadly. During any battle, Loht attempts to get clear of his enemies and claim the black sword. He has no interest at all in the actual combat. All that matters is the recovery of the *Sword of Arak*.

Once Loht has the sword, he forgets about everything else and attempts to escape. He accomplishes this simply by turning into a shadow on the floor and quietly slipping away. Because of the poor lighting in the temple and the confusing conditions of battle, the heroes should simply believe that Loht has vanished into thin air. No doubt they will credit his escape to some manner of teleportation or an *invisibility* spell.

Fighting Tristessa

The heroes have no reason to attack Tristessa in this adventure. After all, she is not their enemy. Still, if matters come to this, she can easily defend herself.

If the heroes attack the banshee, all of the spiders in the room (and those that appear later) turn on them. This may range from nothing more than a nuisance to a deadly threat, depending on which spiders have arrived.

If the heroes attack Tristessa, she assumes that they are allies of Loht. Because of this, she ignores all future claims to the contrary.

Ending This Scene

When all is said and done, the following events should come to pass.

Retrieving the Eye

At the conclusion of this scene, the heroes should be in possession of the *Eye of Vhaeraun*. If any of the heroes failed the saving throw upon initially viewing this item, this could lead to quite a bit of strife within the party.

Rescuing Lorelei

Lorelei's experience with the boowray and her subsequent travels with Loht have left her little more than a weeping rag doll. If the heroes have any means at all of soothing her nerves, they can emerge from this encounter with her in tow.

Loht's Triumph

At the end of this scene, the Prince of Shadows should escape with the *Sword of Arak*. This is especially true if the Dungeon Master is planning to run *The Shadow Rift* adventure in the future. If Loht does not acquire the *Sword of Arak*, the Dungeon Master should arrange another encounter in which the Prince of Shadows accomplishes this goal.

The Lord of Keening

Depending on the interaction between the heroes and Tristessa in this scene, one of three things should happen:

If the party attacked Tristessa or otherwise managed to convince her that they are her enemies, she does all that she can to kill them. This includes closing the borders of Keening and unleashing numerous patrols of umbra to hunt the heroes down and destroy them. After a week, however, Tristessa abandons her wrath, returning her attention to the search for her child.

If the heroes go through the whole encounter without getting on the banshee's bad side, she ignores them. When the skirmish with Loht ends, she flies out of the temple and heads out to search for him. When she does not find him, she returns to her normal routine.

If the heroes are able to show the banshee that they actually acted on her behalf in confronting Loht, her reaction is slightly better, granting them safe passage out of her domain. If the heroes are ever forced to pass through Keening in the future, however, Tristessa will have forgotten any service that they performed for her.

Moving On

At this point, the adventure continues with "Scene Fourteen: Denouement."





A Devil's Bargain

Scene Fourteen: Denouement

There is something in corruption which, like a jaundiced eye, transfers the color of itself to the object it looks upon, and sees everything stained and impure.

—Thomas Paine
The American Crisis



When the heroes return to Tepest, both the Vistana and the priest await them. Rima has further information about the Eye to give to them, and Wyan wants to thank them for returning his daughter.

Destroying the Eye

Rima can give the heroes the following information about the terrible item they hold:



"To destroy the Eye of Vhaeraun, you must take it to a place of eternal and absolute darkness. Its magic depends on visual deception. As such, it cannot exist in a place where it could never be seen."



Though the heroes do not know it yet, Rima is referring to the Demiplane of Shadow. The heroes will have a chance to destroy the item when they encounter a gate to this dark place in the next adventure, found in the upcoming accessory: *The Shadow Rift*. When the time comes, Rima points the heroes in the direction of Briggdarrow, where the adventure *Prince of Shadows* begins.

Lorelei's Fate

When the heroes return to Viktal, they are given a warm welcome by the villagers. Exactly what happens to Wyan's daughter at this point depends on the actions of the player characters.

Lorelei Redeemed

If the heroes put in a good word for Wyan's daughter, they may well be able to convince the people of Viktal that she was not to blame for her earlier deeds. Still, this is not a sure thing. It requires a good deal of persuasion on the part of the heroes. This is best done by a bard or other highly charismatic character.

In order to clear Lorelei's name, the party must appoint one (and only one) of its members as her advocate. The Dungeon Master should then make a check on the **Encounter Reactions** table in the *DUNGEON MASTER Guide*. Unless something unusual happens, this check will be made using the "friendly" column on that table. The character's reaction adjustment (as determined by his Charisma score) is applied to this roll. Dungeon Masters should note that a positive Charisma adjustment reduces the die roll when checking this table.

If the result of this roll indicates a "friendly" reaction, then Lorelei is cleared of all responsibility for her past actions. She is accepted by the community again, and life mostly returns to normal for her. Wyan finds his depression lifted and even returns to his work with increased vigor.

If the result is "indifferent," Lorelei is cleared of the charges against her. In this case, however, the people of Viktal no longer accept her as one of their own, and she is exiled from Viktal.

A "cautious" or "threatening" result indicates that the charges against Wyan's daughter are upheld. If this is the case, the events detailed under "Lorelei Condemned" transpire.

Should the result of the roll be "hostile," things go very badly for the heroes. Not only does the Inquisition decide that Lorelei is guilty, they convict the heroes as well. With a death sentence on their heads, the adventurers will almost certainly want to put as many miles between them and Viktal as they can.

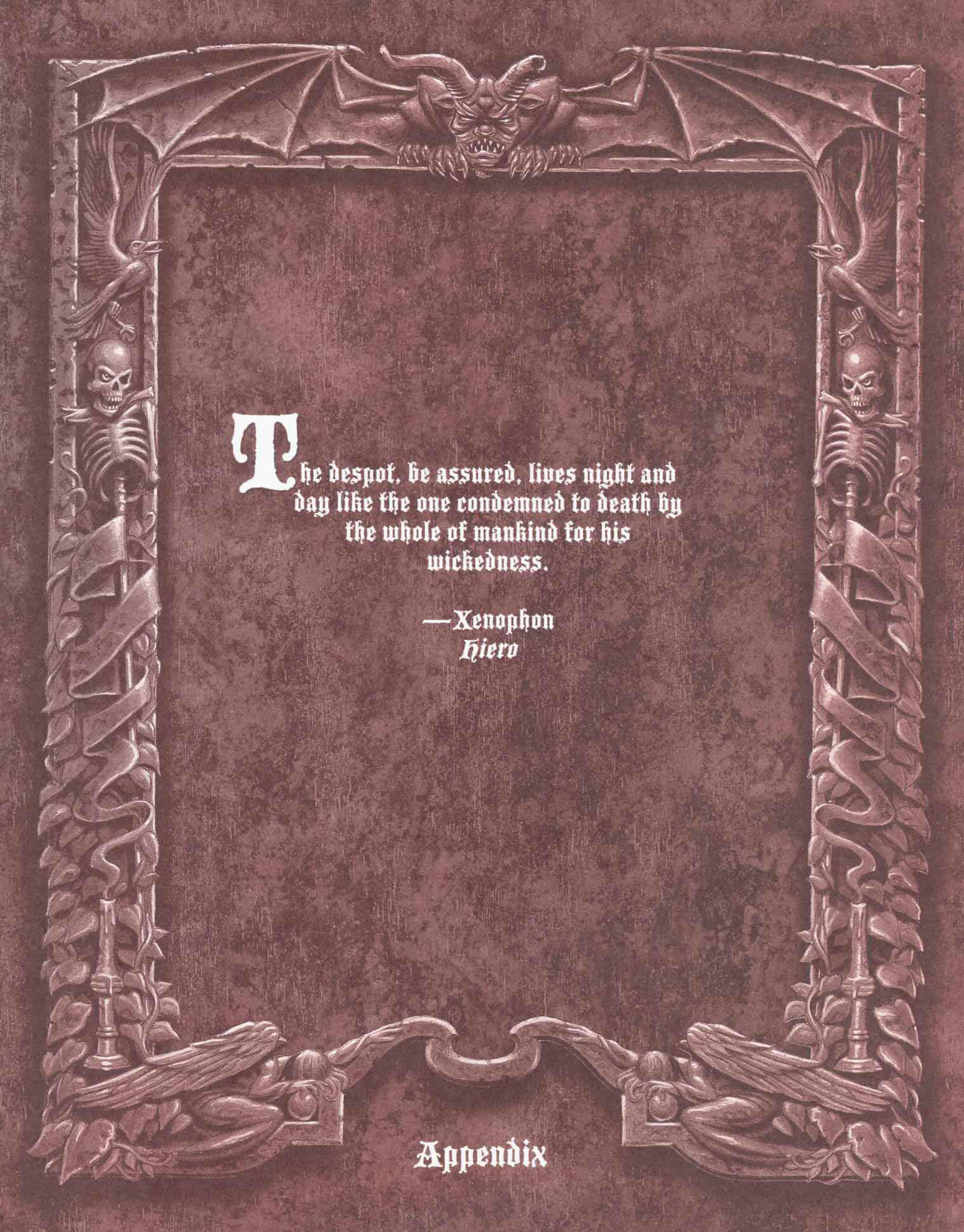
Lorelei Condemned

If the heroes do not opt to speak on Lorelei's behalf, or if they get a negative reaction from the Inquisition, her death sentence is carried out. Within a week, she is lashed to a stake in the center of the town and immolated.

This is not, however, the end of the matter. One month to the day after her execution, Lorelei returns as a rushlight. Over the course of the next three days, she haunts the people of Viktal. Primarily, this means Bryonna and Ivan. If the heroes happen to be in town, however, she haunts them as well. The only person in Viktal safe from her attentions is Wyan.

After three days have passed, Lorelei's spirit seems to vanish. One month later, however, she returns again. This pattern will repeat every month until her spirit is laid to rest. Obviously, this is prime material for a follow-up adventure.





The despot, be assured, lives night and day like the one condemned to death by the whole of mankind for his wickedness.

—Xenophon
Hiero

Appendix



Darklord of Keening

Tristessa

Banshee, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	0	Str	—
Movement	15	Dex	13
Level/Hit Dice	8	Con	—
Hit Points	64	Int	15
THACO	13	Wis	13
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	9
Damage/Attack	2d10+8 (touch)		
Special Attacks	Death wail 3× per day (paralyzing during daylight), crippling touch, spell-like powers		
Special Defenses	+1 or better magical weapon to hit, detect living creatures		
Magic Resistance	50%		

Keening's lord is a floating, luminous creature. Her skin is coal black, and she glitters like the midnight sky when she moves. Tristessa's long white hair wafts freely in the air about her,

looking like a nimbus of snowy vapor. Her features are delicate and beautiful, though always twisted in torment and agony, and black tears trickle constantly down her slender cheeks. Tristessa wears a tattered gown of violet gauze that ripples in the air, and her hands always clutch a small, ragged shroud.

Background: Tristessa was a powerful shadow elf priestess of Lloth in the now-lost domain of Arak. She was staked out above the surface with her newborn baby by Prince Loht for leading this outlawed religion. Exposure to the sun killed both mother and child, but Tristessa's spirit was absorbed into the Mists, and the dark powers granted her the small domain of Keening.

Current Sketch: Tristessa constantly searches for her lost child. She has gone mad with grief over the loss of her baby, often destroying those she encounters with her pitiful wail.

Closing the Borders: To close the borders of Keening, Tristessa creates a wall of wind. No creature can fly or walk through this barrier or diminish it in any way. Those who attempt to battle the winds are forced back into Keening.

Combat: The banshee can sense the presence of any living creature in her domain, and seeks out visitors to beseech their aid in locating her lost baby. She usually attacks only those foolish enough to begin an ascent of her mountain.

Any person who sees the banshee must make a successful saving throw vs. paralysis with a -2 penalty or flee in terror. Anyone who hears Tristessa's wail must make a successful saving throw vs. death magic or die instantly.

At will, Tristessa also can cripple with her touch. Any body part she lays her hands upon warps and twists, causing 1d8 points of damage. This deformity fades away over the course of one week per point of damage inflicted.

Three times per day, Tristessa can use the following drowlike abilities: *dancing lights*, *faerie fire* (area of effect increased by seventy square feet), and *darkness*. The banshee can move these effects around at will, and their ranges are one hundred eleven feet beyond the norm. Similarly, she can use the following priestess abilities three times per day: *clairvoyance*, *detect lie*, *suggestion*, and *dispel magic*. She can also use the *levitate*, *know alignment*, and *detect magic* spells at will.

Holy water inflicts 2d4 points of damage to Tristessa, but a *dispel evil* merely forces her to return to her lair for 1d4 hours. She can be turned as a special undead, though priests and paladins suffer -4 penalties on such attempts.





Darklords of Tepest

Laveeda

Annis, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	0	Str	19
Movement	18	Dex	16
Level/Hit Dice	7+7	Con	17
Hit Points	78	Int	14
THACO	13	Wis	15
No. of Attacks	3	Cha	3
Damage/Attack	1d8+8/1d8+8/2d4+1		
Special Attacks	See below		
Special Defenses	See below		
Magic Resistance	20%		

Leticia

Sea Hag, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	2	Str	19
Movement	18, Sw 15	Dex	16
Level/Hit Dice	5	Con	17
Hit Points	39	Int	12
THACO	15	Wis	13
No. of Attacks	2	Cha	3
Damage/Attack	1d4+6/2d4+2		
Special Attacks	See below		
Special Defenses	See below		
Magic Resistance	50%		

Lorinda

Greenhag, Neutral Evil

Armor Class	-2	Str	18/51
Movement	18, Sw 12	Dex	16
Level/Hit Dice	9	Con	16
Hit Points	81	Int	14
THACO	11	Wis	18
No. of Attacks	2	Cha	3
Damage/Attack	1d2+6/1d2+6		
Special Attacks	See below		
Special Defenses	See below		
Magic Resistance	35%		

Like all hags, the three sisters can change shape at will, assuming any appearance they like. However, no shape really pleases them, for they always see themselves and each other as they truly are: hideous, wretched creatures, with wrinkles, baggy skin, pointed noses, sharp black teeth, and warts.

Background: As babies, the three hags were left upon the porch of Rudella Mindefisk by fairies in response to her ardent wish for daughters. Although her husband Holger, a farmer, had no use for "weakling daughters," she insisted on rearing them. The girls were weak and sickly at first (as their reluctant

adoptive father feared) but strengthened as time went on. Meanwhile, Rudella sickened and eventually died, somehow drained of her vitality.

After his wife's death, Holger demanded that the sisters keep his house tidy and cook for him and his sons while they worked the fields. Often left to themselves, the girls spent much time plotting how they would leave the farm behind. They needed gold to make it on their own, but did not know where to get it. When a wealthy man sought shelter at the farm one stormy night, they murdered him for his money. Rather than bury the body, they cooked it into stew and served it to their unsuspecting father and brothers. That plan worked so well that they continued the practice for several years.

Eventually they realized that they could not make enough money this way, so they decided to entice some traveler to take them away. Before long, a roguish dandy came along, but he had no intention of taking any of them away with him. Instead, he masterfully played them against each other until their jealousy for one another peaked. Ultimately, they murdered him so that none would lose him. As they did so, the Mists claimed them, creating for them the domain of Tepest.

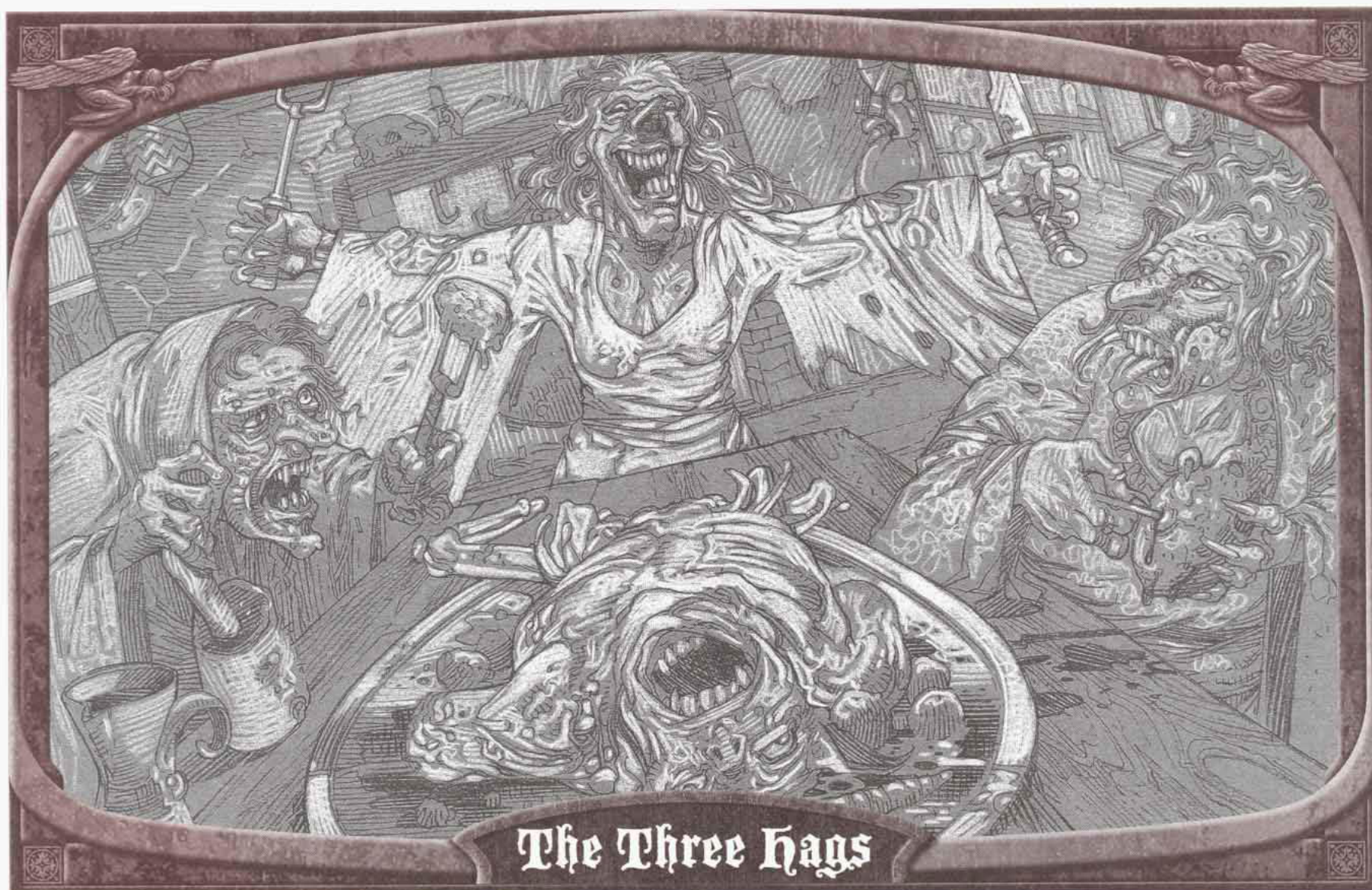
Current Sketch: The hags have recently become aware that a new and powerful evil has settled in their domain. This is Loht, Prince of Shadows, from the former domain of Arak. While they have not acted directly against him, the sisters have studied his movements and methods. As long as he takes no action against them or their interests, the hags are content to let Loht do as he will. They have even allowed some of the evil creatures in the land to become his agents. Of course, all such fey serve two masters, for they keep the hags informed of everything they do on Loht's behalf.

Closing the Borders: When the hags seal their borders, a violent storm encircles Tepest. Stinging rain, snow, and bolts of lightning drive travelers inland, toward the lake. Magic neither affects the bizarre storm nor offers any protection from it.

Combat: The sisters have ravenous appetites, but they feed for pleasure more than for survival. Each hag can devour an entire man-sized creature in ten minutes. Their steely claws and incredible strength help them finish the job quickly.

Each hag can mimic the voice of any creature, though after two rounds, there is a 35% chance that she cackles strangely. Each sister also has the natural ability to shape





The Three Hags

change at will. If and when one of them reveals her true appearance to an unsuspecting victim, he may be called upon to make both a fear check and a horror check.

Each sister can cast the following spells at will, once per round: *audible glamor*, *fog cloud*, *invisibility*, *pass without trace*, *speak with monsters*, and *weakness*.

Working together, the sisters can cast the following magic: *animate dead*, *control weather*, *curse*, *dream*, *forcecage*, *mindblank*, *polymorph other*, *veil*, and *vision*. They can use these spells twice per day, as if they were 9th-level mages. Because they are telepathically linked, they need not be near each other to cast them. The connection is natural and instantaneous, although engaging one of them in battle or any other preoccupying activity prevents the trio from casting their group spells. Each hag has her own unique abilities as well.

Laveeda, the annis, can smell human flesh a half-mile away, and up to a mile away if the wind blows the scent to her. If she has seen the person before, she can identify who it is by

smell. Also, her hearing is so acute that she cannot be surprised. In combat, if she makes three successful attacks in a single round, she has grappled her opponent; all subsequent attacks automatically hit as she heartily rakes and chews her victim alive.

Leticia, the sea hag, can cast a deadly glance, up to three times per day, at any creature within thirty feet. If the victim fails a saving throw vs. poison, there is a 25% chance that he dies of sheer horror and a 75% chance that he becomes paralyzed for three days.

Lorinda, the greenhag, can move through the forest in absolute silence. She also imposes a -5 penalty upon opponents' surprise rolls in that environment.

Mirrors and sunlight are the sisters' least favorite things. Any mirror (even a magical one) cracks if one of them looks into it, much to her embarrassment and rage. Sunlight is so painful to them that they are unable to shape change while it falls upon them. In addition, each turn of such exposure inflicts one point of damage.





The Prince of Shadows

Loht

Shadow Elf, Lawful Evil

Armor Class	6	Str	17
Movement	15	Dex	18
Level/Hit Dice	7	Con	17
Hit Points	45	Int	18
THACO	13	Wis	14
No. of Attacks	2	Cha	16
Damage/Attack	1d8+1/1d8+1 (long sword w/+1 Strength bonus)		
Special Attacks	Spells, fear aura, and fumble gaze		
Special Defenses	+1 or better magical weapon to hit, immune to steel weapons or fire- and heat-based attacks		
Magic Resistance	15%		

Loht hails from Arak, a domain of shadow elves that was lost in the Grand Conjunction. He stands fully six feet in height, although his slender build makes him weigh far less than one might expect him to. His face is gaunt and angular, a fact accented by his long tapering ears, and his long silver hair flows down to the small of his back. His eyes burn with intelligence, but that fire is malevolent and brooding rather than whimsical or curious.

Loht favors dark colors and fashionable styles. His usual garb is a slender embroidered tunic tied about the waist with a woven silver sash, and a pair of tight black leggings. A silver clasp at his throat secures the long gray cape that trails behind him. The delicate nature of these clothes, especially when worn with his favorite gray tricorne, makes him look quite the dandy.

Background: Little is known about Loht's background, save for the fact that he was once a ruler of Arak. He keeps his private life to himself, revealing nothing of his past. Even magical and psionic means prove unable to pry these secrets from him. What little is known about Loht has been pieced together by prognosticators like Rima of Tepest. Exactly how much of this speculation is truth remains to be seen.

Legend says that the Shadow Prince was somehow cast out of his domain, Arak, when that land was swept out of existence in the wake of the Grand Conjunction. Why he himself did not vanish along with

his domain is a question whose answer is forever shrouded in the Mists.

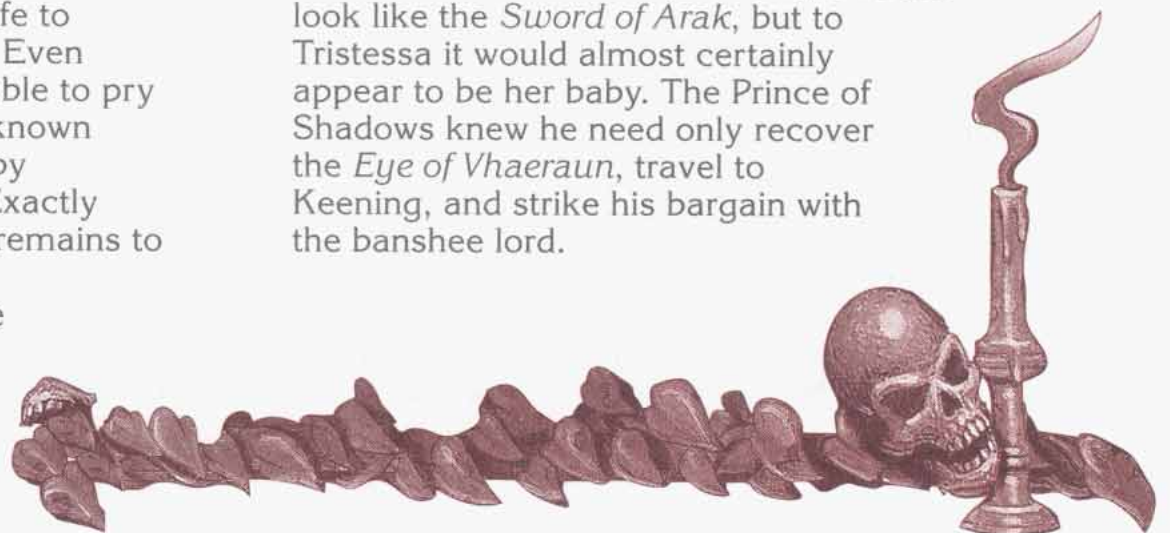
Since that dark day, he has wandered the lands of Ravenloft searching for something—the legendary *Sword of Arak*. Why he wants the sword, and what he intends to do with it, not even the Vistani can guess. Lately he has spent much time among the mysterious fey races appearing in Tepest and Nova Vaasa. The darkest of the fey folk obey him without question, suggesting some tie between the fey and the lost folk of Arak which can now only be guessed at.

In time, the Prince of the Shadows learned that the *Sword of Arak* had fallen into the hands of Tristessa, the banshee lord of Keening. Having located his prize, Loht had only to devise a plan to recover the weapon.

Loht spent several years researching Tristessa and her domain of Keening. To his surprise, he discovered that she was one of his former subjects. In the days when he had been a prince of Arak, Loht himself had ordered the self-styled priestess of Lloth and her deformed child exiled to the surface world. He had no idea that her anger and despair had enabled her to somehow survive even after the rays of the sun had burned the flesh from her bones.

The Prince of Shadows also learned of Tristessa's obsession with the baby who was executed alongside her. He discovered that the mad banshee still frantically searches for the child, though it is most certainly dead. The Prince of Shadows decided to exploit this weakness in order to regain the *Sword of Arak*.

Current Sketch: Not long ago, one of his agents reported that Wyan, the priest who led the Inquisitors of Tepest, had come into the possession of an unusual magical item. Known as the *Eye of Vhaeraun*, this macabre gem would appear as the thing the viewer desires most in the world. Thus, to Loht, it would look like the *Sword of Arak*, but to Tristessa it would almost certainly appear to be her baby. The Prince of Shadows knew he need only recover the *Eye of Vhaeraun*, travel to Keening, and strike his bargain with the banshee lord.





Loht

Matters became complicated when Loht learned that Wyan himself had resisted the evil wiles of the *Eye*. Knowing that it was an object that could bring untold suffering in a greedy world, the priest locked it away deep beneath his temple in Viktal. For some reason, Loht was reluctant to simply attack the Inquisitor and seize the gem himself, as if he feared that acting too overtly might draw attention on his movements that it was better to avoid. He therefore decided that to recover the *Eye*, he would need to have an agent inside Wyan's own home. To that end, he dispatched one of his fey allies to Viktal. Her mission was to corrupt Wyan's own daughter and use her to learn the location of Loht's treasure.

Combat: Loht is a dangerous enemy. He is loath to actually enter into combat himself, but has no qualms about commanding his followers to do so on his behalf. This reluctance to "dirty his hands" might lead the rash into believing

that the Prince of Shadows is unable to give a good account of himself in melee—a possibly fatal error. If he is pressed into battle, he wields a black-bladed long sword with deadly speed and accuracy born of centuries upon centuries of practice, parrying and thrusting with great skill.

In addition to his swordsmanship, Loht is able to cast the spells of the school of necromancy as if he were a 7th-level mage. He can choose from the following spells: 1st—*cantrip*, *chill touch*, *detect undead*; 2nd—*spectral hand*; 3rd—*feign undead*, *hold undead*, *vampiric touch*; 4th—*contagion*, *enervation*. At will, Loht can radiate a magical aura that imposes images of death and the grave on the minds of his enemies. This affects every living creature within thirty feet, causing them to make immediate fear checks. In addition, his piercing gaze can break the nerve of anyone who looks into his eyes. Such folk must make successful saving throws vs. spell or suffer the effects of a *fumble* spell.

Loht has the ability to change forms for up to three hours a day, changing back and forth at will, as long as he does not exceed the total duration in any twenty-four hour period. He can appear as any creature whose shadow he has ever touched, from a will-o'-the-wisp to a firefly, but his favorite disguise is as a shadow that mimics the outline of his own natural form.

Loht is as graceful as any dancer or acrobat. He walks with a fluid grace and has a 75% chance to move silently and unobtrusively, per the thief abilities. This same agility gives him the ability to attack twice in any round of combat.

Only silver weapons or those of +1 or greater enchantment can harm Loht. Also, he is immune to steel weapons (which includes most normal weapons), even if they are magical. Heat or fire-based attacks are likewise ineffective against him.

Due to his affinity with the very stuff of shadow, sunlight is extremely harmful to Loht. Each round that he is exposed to direct sunlight, Loht suffers three points of damage, his skin burning and crackling. If the light is filtered, as on a cloudy or overcast day, the damage slows to three points per turn. Naturally, he takes any possible steps to remove himself from such uncongenial surroundings with all deliberate speed.





Minor Characters

This section presents game statistics for the important characters that the heroes encounter in this adventure.

Ivan

Though he cannot enter either of the two towns in Tepest, Ivan could still accompany the heroes on several other encounters in this adventure.

Ivan D'Ogmai, hm, F1: AC 8 (Dexterity); MV 12; HD 1; hp 8; THAC0 20 (19 w/sabre); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4 (w/Strength and specialization); SZ M; ML elite (14); AL N; XP 75.

Notes: Specialized in sabre and has the healing nonweapon proficiency.

S 16, D 16, C 13, I 14, W 9, Ch 11.

Personality: Persistent and desperate.

Lorelei or Bryonna

Both of these young ladies have similar game statistics, although it is likely that only Lorelei's will come into play during the game.

Lorelei or Bryonna, hf: AC 10, MV 12 (unencumbered), HD 1/2; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2 (improvised weapons); SZ M; ML unsteady (6); AL LG; XP 0.

Notes: No combat experience at all. Lorelei's alignment does not reflect the influence of the boowray.

S 9, D 12, C 10, I 12, W 11, Ch 13.

Personality: Vain and proud (Lorelei), or kind and innocent (Bryonna).

Wyan

Lorelei's father is the head of the Inquisition. As such, he can call upon his followers and the Inquisitors (see page 11) to do his bidding.

Wyan, hm, C4: AC 10 (robes); MV 12; HD 4; hp 18; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (quarterstaff); SD spells; SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (14); AL CG; XP 240.

S 13, D 13, C 14, I 13, W 16, Ch 15 (18 to villagers).

Personality: Passionate and visionary.

Special Equipment: Holy symbol, holy water (3 vials), and prayer book.

Spells (5/4): 1st—*bles*, *detect magic*, *protection from evil* (x2), *purify food & drink*; 2nd—*augury*, *detect charm*, *hold person* (x2).

Leobe

It is always possible that the heroes can convince this old woodsman to join them for at least part of their adventure.

Leobe, hm, R3: AC 7 (leather, Dexterity), MV 12 (unencumbered), HD 3; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); SZ M (6' tall); ML steady (12); AL NG; XP 120.

Notes: +4 on all attack rolls vs. goblins.

S 15, D 15, C 15, I 12, W 12, Ch 9.

Personality: Reclusive and grouchy.

Special Equipment: Animal hides, assorted animal traps.

Aroun

Though Aroun is unlikely to be much help (or much opposition, for that matter) to the heroes other than revealing the presence of the boowray, his statistics could still feasibly come into play.

Aroun (geist): AC nil; MV FI 12 (A); HD nil; THAC0 nil; #AT nil; SA panic; SD invulnerable; SZ M (6' tall); ML fearless (20); Int very (12); AL NG; XP 0.

Notes: Geists are immune to all damage and cannot be harmed in any way. Those seeing a geist must make fear checks (or horror checks if the creature has a particularly revolting countenance). Geists can turn invisible at will and are able to pass through solid objects, although magical wards can keep them out. They can be destroyed with a *dismissal*, *banishment*, *wish*, *abjure*, *holy word*, or similar magical spell.

Personality: Reserved and mournful.

Eldrak

When he is encountered in this adventure, Eldrak is on the verge of death. When fully restored to health, his statistics are as follows.

Eldrak, hm, T3: AC 7 (leather, Dexterity), MV 12 (unencumbered), HD 3; hp 15; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); SA backstab; SD thief skills; SZ M (6' tall); ML avg (10); AL NG; XP 120.

Notes: Backstabbing allows a +4 bonus on attack roll and inflicts double normal damage.

S 10, D 15, C 12, I 12, W 13, Ch 14.

Personality: Friendly and outgoing.

Thief Abilities: PP 40, OL 33, F/RT 30, MS 27, HS 20, DN 15, CW 87, RL nil.





Goblin Vampire



The goblin vampire is a rare form of undead creature. The creature is twice the size of a normal goblin. Its fangs reach roughly halfway down its chest, rather like those of a smilodon. Its hands appear blackened and shriveled, with long, curved talons. The most horrifying thing about a goblin vampire is its eyes, which pulsate with a strange orange glow.

These creatures care nothing for language or talk, only for the death and destruction they can cause. It is unknown whether they even understand languages they knew in life.

Combat: Anyone who meets the vampire's burning gaze must make an immediate fear check, even if previously exposed to the creature. For each check an opponent fails, the goblin vampire gains one Hit Die (to a maximum of 10). The duration of this temporary increase in Hit Dice is equal to the Hit Dice of the victim. Thus, a 5th-level warrior failing a fear check would add one Hit Die to the goblin vampire for five turns.

If both of the goblin vampire's claws hit, the creature has grasped its victim and can automatically gore him with its curved fangs, inflicting an additional $2d6+3$ points of damage.

Goblin vampires have the equivalent of 18(50) Strength. This gives them a bonus of +1 on their attack rolls and +3 on their damage rolls.

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Ravenloft
FREQUENCY:	Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Day
DIET:	Fear, blood
INTELLIGENCE:	Low (5)
TREASURE:	N
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic Evil
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	3
MOVEMENT:	12
HIT DICE:	3 base, 10 max
THACO:	16 base, 10 max (Hit Dice + Strength bonus)
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2 (claw/claw)
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1d6+3/1d6+3
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Fear aura, gore
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Spell and poison immunities
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	25%
SIZE:	M (6' tall)
MORALE:	Fanatic (17)
XP VALUE:	3,000

The goblin vampire is immune to mind- and life-affecting spells such as *hold* and *charm* spells. Poisons, diseases, and the like also pose no threat to the creature.

Moonlight is extremely dangerous to the goblin vampire, inflicting 1d4 points of damage each round that it falls upon the creature. Holy water inflicts 1d6+1 points of damage, and an obsidian stake through the heart destroys it instantly. Goblin vampires cannot assume gaseous form or regenerate; they are turned as spectres.

Habitat/Society: Goblin vampires are solitary creatures that stalk the land in search of fear and blood. To date, they have been encountered only in Tepest. They have a great hatred of their former race, and typically hunt down goblins during daytime when they are most vulnerable.

Ecology: Goblin vampires are created only by the unique curse placed on items stolen from the Three Sisters of Tepest. Anyone who carries the item gradually becomes a goblin vampire. The transformation takes twenty hours to complete. If the item is discarded before the change is concluded, the character stops changing. He does not, however, revert to normal.

Goblin vampires live on both the blood and fear of their opponents. The creature must feed on either of the above once per day else it temporarily loses one Hit Die, perishing upon reaching zero. In addition, it must feed on both fear *and* blood at least once every three days or it again loses one Hit Die on the fourth day and each day thereafter until it does feast on both.



CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Ravenloft/Keening
FREQUENCY:	Common (Not encountered outside Keening)
ORGANIZATION:	Clan
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Night (Any)
DIET:	Nil
INTELLIGENCE:	Low (3-5)
TREASURE:	Q
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic Evil
NO. APPEARING:	2d4
ARMOR CLASS:	5
MOVEMENT:	12
HIT DICE:	4+4
THACO:	17
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1d6/1d6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Strike shadows, hypnotic stare
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Invisibility, spell immunities
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	20%
SIZE:	M (6' tall)
MORALE:	Fearless (19-20)
XP VALUE:	975

The umbra are undead shadow elves that dwell in the domain of Keening. Their devotion to Tristessa was so great in life that they continue to serve her long after death.

Umbra are slender, with dark violet skin, silver hair, and bright indigo eyes that burn with a black flame. Their bodies are gaunt, and leathery skin stretches tightly over their clearly visible bones.

Combat: In melee, umbra strike twice with their filthy black claws for 1d6 points of damage each. In lieu of that, they may attack an opponent's shadow. This imposes a -2 penalty on the attack roll, but inflicts double damage on the victim.

All umbra can become invisible at will (per the spell). They use this ability to get close to their victims, imposing a -4 penalty to all surprise checks when they materialize. Encountering the umbra in this way for the first time requires a fear check.

Anyone looking into the eyes of an umbra must make a successful saving throw vs. paralysis or stand frozen in terror for 1d4 rounds. The umbra typically combine this power with their invisibility to appear face-to-face with opponents, then repeatedly strike their shadows with a +4 attack bonus while they are immobile.

Umbra are immune to life- or mind-affecting spells, *charm*, *hold*, death magic, and cold- or ice-based attacks. Poisons and diseases also pose no threat to them.



Umbra can see in pure darkness as well as other races see in daylight, though they prefer lit areas where their opponents will cast shadows.

Umbra cannot stand the touch of sunlight, which inflicts 4 points of damage to them for every round of exposure. The sudden appearance of bright light, even if it is not sunlight, blinds them for 1d2 rounds. While blinded, they back away from the source.

Holy water splashed upon them inflicts 2d4 points of damage.

Habitat/Society: The umbra move through the tunnels of Mount Lament with indifference, awaiting the commands of Tristessa. They patrol Keening in search of the banshee's baby.

Ecology: When Tristessa became the darklord of Keening, she had over five hundred umbra to command. Their numbers have dwindled over the years, however, so that fewer than one hundred umbra dwell in the domain currently.



The Sword of Arak

The *Sword of Arak* is a slender long sword whose origins are unknown to any save the shadow elves. The blade is forty inches long and forged of black mithral, a rare alloy found only on the Demiplane of Shadow. The hilt is cut from ivory and carved in the shape of a wailing banshee.

History

Almost nothing is known about the creation or history of this weapon. It is believed to have originated in the now-vanished domain of Arak, although some say that it predates that realm.

Powers

Only natives of Arak can safely wield this magical blade. Others can use it, but only one of Ravenloft's shadow elves can make the best use of this powerful relic.

Constant

To all outside appearances, the *Sword of Arak* is a *sword of sharpness +2*. Thus, it acts as a +4 weapon for determining who or what can be harmed by it, though its attack and damage bonuses remain only +2.

When used in combat, the *Sword of Arak* may sever an extremity as indicated below.

Opponent Type	Modified Score to Sever*
Normal/Armored	19–22
Larger Than Man-Sized	20–22
Solid Metal or Stone	21–22

*Considering only the sword's +2 bonus

Like other *swords of sharpness*, the *Sword of Arak* never sheds light. It does, however, grant its owner infravision. If the owner normally has infravision, the range of such sight doubles. If the owner is not so gifted, the weapon bestows such sight out to ninety feet.

Invoked

Those who know the proper command words can order the sword to employ many unique powers. Loht knows all these words and functions. Thus, if he takes possession of the weapon, the Dungeon Master should assume that he can use it to cast the following spells: *antiplant shell*, *domination*, *demishadow monsters*, *cure critical*

wounds, *globe of invulnerability*, *Otiluke's resilient sphere*, *animal summoning III*, *raise dead*, and *true seeing*. Each spell functions as if cast by a 10th-level mage or priest and can be used once per day.

Curse

Natives of Arak can use this weapon without fear. Others, however, risk many a curse when claiming the *Sword of Arak* as their own.

Each day that it is in the possession of anyone but a native of Arak, the sword must be used to kill a creature of small size or larger. If this is not done, all of the owner's mental ability scores fall by one point. At the same time, all of the character's physical scores increase by one point. No ability score may rise above 20 in this fashion.

As the sword's owner loses more of his mental ability scores, he becomes more bestial and violent. When one or more of his mental scores reaches 3, the transformation is complete. No further ability score changes occur. Only a *wish* spell can undo the transformation at this point.

Anyone who willingly employs the blade in battle (even a shadow elf) will never let it out of his sight thereafter. If the owner is separated from the sword, he does whatever it takes to recover the blade. During this time, he must attempt a Wisdom check for every day that passes without the weapon; failure indicates a frantic obsession for the weapon.

Means of Destruction

The black mithral from which the *Sword of Arak* was forged makes it almost invulnerable to physical harm. There are, however, two possible ways by which this powerful weapon can be destroyed:

- The *Sword of Arak* is partially composed of shadowstuff. As such, it can be destroyed by exposing it to the unfiltered light of the sun for twenty-four continuous hours.
- It is said that since the *Sword of Arak* was forged on the Demiplane of Shadow, it can be destroyed only by returning it to its plane of origin. Legend further states that the sword has a special purpose, having been created to slay the shadow elves' greatest enemy, and that the blade will crack and shatter once its purpose has been fulfilled—but the identity of that enemy, if indeed he or she still exists, the shadow elves do not tell.





SERVANTS of DARKNESS

by Kevin Melka & Steve Miller

Young Bryonna has been judged guilty of consorting with the dark forces of Tepest, and now she will burn at the stake for it. The Inquisitors, priests whose zealousness sometimes stirs whispers of doubt among the people, have condemned her with all the surety that comes with their "holy" power.

Heroes of integrity and justice are needed to ferret out the truth. To succeed, they must travel a perilous path that winds through the labyrinthine tunnels of Mount Lament and leads them to the dreaded Hags of Tepest and Tristessa the banshee. Worse still, they must ultimately face the mysterious Prince of Shadows, who manipulates the denizens of the domain for his own evil purposes. When to stand fast? When to run? Only those who survive can say.

Servants of Darkness is a stand-alone adventure that can also lead the party to investigate the misty chasm at the center of the Demiplane's Core in *The Shadow Rift*, the next release for the RAVENLOFT® campaign setting.

For four to six characters of levels 4–6

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