

VEL6-04

Shadowdancing

A One-Round D&D® LIVING GREYHAWK™

Veluna Regional Adventure

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When a man falls dead at your feet, you know the day isn't going to be dull. When it turns out he's a member of a powerful organization, and that he's not the only one that's turned up dead, it gets your attention. When investigations lead into a whole other world... it must be an adventure! A Veluna regional adventure for mid- to high- level characters level 4 to 14. (APLs 6-12).

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2006.

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PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in Appendix 1.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Table Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum of step one. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round up to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier

adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience and gold a PC can gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character receives only one-half of the experience points and gold for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Furthermore, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the adventure.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them.

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in Veluna. PCs native to Veluna pay one Time Units per round, all others pay two Time Units.

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit. PCs that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this adventure.

A PC who does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the PC possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a Survival check (DC 20), the PC will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the PC has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The PC is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the "Lifestyle and Upkeep" section of Chapter 3 of the *Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook*.

Adventure Background

Herion's forces have been routed from the Vale, yet even now, some of the subterfuges he set in motion live on. The shadar-kai, a race of fey tied to the Plane of Shadow, had been approached during Herion's search for the remnants of his original holy symbol. Promised power and knowledge that would allow them to break the curse which binds them to the Plane of Shadow, a group of the shadow fey joined in an alliance with the lich.

After months of searching, a pair of druids turned up evidence that a group of adventurers had found the remaining piece of Herion's holy symbol in the fey realms. While the druids were tasked with waylaying the party whenever they might return, Herion also quickly set to task a small group of the shadow fey to infiltrate the fey realm via the Unseelie Court.

The adventurers, however, recovered the piece much more quickly than could have been expected, and in his haste to prevent them from returning to Veluna City, Herion left his own contingent on the Plane of Faerie with no support. With the defeat of Herion, the infiltrators themselves were left to find their own way back home.

In the process of their sojourn, this small group discovered that, just as Herion had alluded to, they no longer felt the pull to the Plane of Shadow that is their race's curse; they seemed more alive than they had ever felt before, the numb existence that they formerly knew dispelled by the fey realm's lack of any connection to the Plane of Shadow. They ascertained that by remaining on the Plane of Faerie, they might prevent themselves from being drawn back into the Shadow. Hints that Herion had given them suggested that there was a place in Veluna, a nexus of sorts, which by some strange twist had connections to both Faerie and Shadow, and that by exploiting this gateway they might break their bonds forever. That nexus is the Circle of Hands...

Adventure Summary

It is approaching evening, and the PCs are traveling along the Great Western Road from Mitrik towards Veluna City with supplies for the Midsummer celebrations during Richfest.

With sundown at their backs, and Veluna City on the eastern horizon, they hear the baying of hounds, and a haggard man stumbles out of the shadows of the trees off

the side of the road, only to be struck dead from behind. As he falls, the party sees large shadowy shapes break from the treeline, and they are then set upon by the hounds; the hounds' masters escape, disappearing into the shadows, and leaving little trace behind of their passing.

Various items identify the man as a druid, or possibly a cleric of a wilderness deity. Following the path the dead man apparently took through the woods, the party finds a small clearing with a standing stone at its center. All tracks obviously lead from here, but there is no sign of how the individuals got there in the first place.

The party proceeds on to Veluna City. Bringing the murder to the attention of the authorities, they discover that there have been similar incidents over the past few months, always with bodies being found in relative proximity to sites sacred (or at least significant) to the older faiths in the Vale, and all the victims showing signs of being "people of nature" (generally druids, rangers, etc.).

There is a pattern to the location of the murders – they all surround the Circle of Hands in a vast circle – and the PCs may discover it on their own. If they ask additional questions, or explicitly seek out a member, they come in contact with a higher ranking member of the Circle of Life, who explains that those murdered have all in fact been members of the Circle of Life, and each person killed went missing after (separate) gatherings at the Circle of Hands. They are especially concerned because the approaching Midsummer celebration is sacred, and they are concerned against attempting any more gatherings if death of this kind is the result.

By now it should be clear to the party that their path likely leads to the Circle of Hands in the Grayington Diocese and. Upon reaching the site, they find signs of recent visitors, as well as blood stains (although they do not appear to be as a result of ritual blood-letting of any kind). They also eventually notice that while in the circle, those outside appear slightly less distinct, and the sky overhead is not as bright as it was.

They discover that the Circle itself is, in fact, a portal of some kind, and they eventually pass into another realm of some kind – heavily forested and it appears to be dusk, the sun no longer in the sky. The PCs have entered the Plane of Faerie, but if they have been here before, it is a much darker and foreboding place than they remember.

The party doesn't have much time to ponder this fact, though, as they are attacked by plant creatures corrupted by the essence of Shadow; no sooner are plants defeated, when the party is waylaid by the forces of Duke

Xhosasilliname, the Seelie duke in charge of this region of Faerie.

The Duke is extremely wary of any visitors to his realm at this point, as several of his patrols have recently gone missing, after which, the area that the party was discovered in began to darken.

The feys' extreme caution is tempered by the fact that shortly before the party arrived, one of the Duke's patrols encountered a group of shadar-kai; one was captured; although executed, the fey did question him, and give some of his responses to the PCs.

It becomes clear to the party that the upcoming Midsummer's Night on Oerth with its two full moons is intended to be the impetus to make a link between Faerie and Shadow permanent, allowing many more shadar-kai to cross over into Faerie. Once sufficient numbers are present in Faerie, they intend to sever the link, thereby preventing them from ever being drawn back into the Plane of Shadow and their numbing existence.

It is therefore up to the party to return to the Circle of Hands and try to prevent the link from causing any more damage, as well as stopping whatever ritual the shadar-kai may attempt to establish the permanent link.

The party is hastily led back to the Circle's location where they first entered Faerie, and are given instructions to get back through. With the twisting nature of time in the fey realms, however, the party reappears on Oerth in the Circle of Hands just as the ritual commences, and does battle with the shadar-kai present.

It is suggested that DMs have PCs make a few of the Spot and Listen checks for this adventure ahead of time, so as to maintain story flow and not tip off surprises. (See pages 14, 15, 18)

Introduction / Encounter 1: The Dogs of War

It is early in the month of Wealsun, and it has been a quiet few months in the Vale...

No hordes of undead or devils have reappeared in the time since Herion's defeat; and criminal activity seems to be at an all time low thanks to the increase vigilance of the Church and the Mitrik Temple Guard.

You have been asked by the College of the Divine to escort a small wagon-load of supplies from Mitrik to

Veluna City for the upcoming Midsummer celebrations in the capitol city. Father Fergus, the nominal head of the “expedition” (as he likes to call it), has spent most of the trip either asleep in the wagon, or philosophizing at great length about the virtues of Rao to any who would listen.

All APLs

☛ **Fergus Maxen:** Human (Bakluni) Clr1; hp 9.

Father Fergus is a recent convert to Rao. He is at the ripe old age of 82 (and none too frail), but despite his tendency to nod off, takes his assignment for this duty very seriously. This doesn't alter the fact that he has, in fact, never seen a minute of combat in his life, and is very timid – he will not take part in any combat that follows (he has no spells that can contribute in any way regardless), and when combat breaks out, he will hide in or under the wagon until he can be assured it is safe).

If the players ask why their PC would do such a thing (i.e., escort the wagon), inform them that anyone with any church affiliations (Churches of Rao, Heironeous, or St. Cuthbert, the College of Divine, or especially either of the Knightly factions, or Mitrik Temple Guard members) will have received orders to that effect. Other PCs could have simply signed up for the escort duty – after all, it's easy money for four days of travel along a well-maintained road! Regardless of the circumstances for each PC's presence, the encounter should take place right around sunset. As written, the tree-line is about 75 feet off of each side of the road.

With about a half hour's ride remaining, the sun at your backs on the western horizon, and Veluna City on the eastern, the Great Western Road dips down into a low, wooded valley. Off to your right, you suddenly hear the baying of hounds, and the crashing of someone, or something, moving towards you through the undergrowth.

A haggard man, dressed in torn and tattered robes, breaks from the treeline, motioning back into the forest with something in his hand; he starts to head in the general direction of Veluna City, but then spots you, and frantically rushes forward, a wild and haunted look in his eyes.

All APLs

☛ **Gadarn Vosper:** Human (Oeridian) Drd5; hp 38 (currently at 2).

☛ **Dark Hunters (2):** Shadar-Kai Rgr8; hp 70 each; See Appendix 1.

The man's name is Gadarn. He bears a wooden holy symbol around his neck (Spot check DC 10, +1 per 10

feet off distance); a Knowledge (Religion) check (DC 15) identifies it as a symbol of Obad-Hai. The “motioning” was his activating a *wand of entangle* in his possession. At this point, give the PCs the option to take an action based on what they have seen so far, and then continue:

“By the gods, please! I mean no harm, but I must ...!”

With the twang of a bow, and a sickening gurgle, the man blunders forward a few more steps, before collapsing face first a few yards before you, a black arrow lodged deep in his back.

With a low growl, dark shapes appear at the edge of the woods, then begin advancing, moving on all fours...

APL 6 (EL 7)

☛ **Shadow Mastiffs (2):** hp 33; see *Monster Manual* p. 222.

APL 8 (EL 9)

☛ **Shadow Mastiffs (3):** hp 50 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 11)

☛ **Advanced Shadow Mastiffs (2):** hp 100 each; see Appendix I.

APL 12 (EL 12)

☛ **Advanced Shadow Mastiffs (3):** hp 100 each; see Appendix I.

The two humanoids are shadar-kai hunters, affiliated with the group trying to make permanent the connection between Shadow and Faerie; they were hunting Gadarn for sport, to prevent him from escaping after he stumbled upon part of their plan. The arrow that felled him was a *slaying arrow* keyed to humans, and Gadarn, unfortunately, failed his save. (Note that this is a death effect, so spells like *delay death* or *close wounds*, which prevent death from hit point damage, will not work, nor will *death ward*, which requires the caster to touch the warded creature before it is slain.) Gadarn is (was) also a member of the Circle of Life; and is only the latest in a series of murders of people of that organization by the shadar-kai.

Tactics

The hunters will not, under any circumstances, be drawn into direct melee combat at this time. Although the pair has special training to fight humans (favored enemy: human), they are cocky and arrogant, and believe they were able to silence Gadarn quickly enough to disregard any threat the PCs may pose. Their first (and only) action is to command the mastiffs to attack (as a free action); both will then withdraw to the shelter and shadow of the trees, and activate the *blackstone runes* they keep for

quick escapes (see Appendix 2). If the players ask to make Spot checks towards the woods (perhaps because of the arrow in Gadarn's back), have both hunters make Hide checks – the first hunter has a +28 to his check (his “normal” bonus for shadowy conditions), while the second is only at +8 (for sniping; see page 76 of the *Player's Handbook*).

The mastiffs will lead off by using their Bay (Su) special ability to try and break up the party. If any party members do not flee, the mastiffs will consider them the greater threat, and will use pack tactics (i.e., flanking) in an attempt to bring those individuals down.

As the encounter occurs in a small valley around sunset, the mastiffs should have sufficient shadow to use their Shadow Blend (Su) ability as well. However, they are also smart enough to retreat into the area affected by the *night extract* to gain its full benefit (and will especially target PCs that choose to remain in those areas).

The mastiffs fight to the death.

Treasure:

APL 6: L: (ogp); C: (o gp); M: 2 x *Collar of Obedience* (each 125 gp per character), *wand of entangle* (4 charges) (10 gp per character).

APL 8: L: (ogp); C: (o gp); M: 3 x *Collar of Obedience* (each 125 gp per character), *wand of entangle* (4 charges) (10 gp per character).

APL 10: L: (ogp); C: (o gp); M: 2 x *Collar of Obedience* (each 125 gp per character), *wand of entangle* (4 charges) (10 gp per character).

APL 12: L: (ogp); C: (o gp); M: 3 x *Collar of Obedience* (each 125 gp per character), *wand of entangle* (4 charges) (10 gp per character).

Development

If the PCs try to track the fleeing Shadar-Kai, they will likely be unsuccessful (they have used their *runes* to flee back to the Plane of Shadow). However, PCs with the Track feat may make a Survival check (DC 12), to locate the path the hunters and mastiffs took through the woods in the pursuit of Gadarn (as a druid, Gadarn himself left no trail).

The trail will lead approximately 50 yards through the woods to a small clearing, in the midst of which stands a small stone circle. Another Survival check (DC 15) will determine that the tracks quite clearly lead *out* from the circle, but none lead in (the hunters were pursuing Gadarn from the Circle of Hands in Grayington diocese, and both hunter and prey re-entered the Material Plane here).

The *collars of obedience* the mastiffs wear are of an unusually cruel design (small spikes on the inside as well). PCs can make a Spot check (DC 5) to notice each has many inlaid runes and arcane symbols; closer inspection reveals one rune in particular as larger and of slightly different design than all the others. A Knowledge (Religion) (DC 15) or Knowledge (Local-VTF) (DC 15; DC 10 for Veluna natives) identifies it as a manufacturers mark by the Iron Rings Consortium (it is also a representation of Herion's phylactery, the Rings of Auster) (PCs who have played **VEL5-08/09** *The Reaping* will automatically recognize the symbol). They were given to the shadar-kai as an act of “good faith” when the alliance with Herion was proposed. They are, however, normal *collars*; i.e. they do not radiate evil in any way.

If the PCs have some method of questioning Gadarn, his answers will be somewhat crazed (his last few hours were spent running for his life). Of the details of this adventure, Gadarn can answer the following:

- He was a Seeker of the Circle of Life.
- He knows that there have been other murders. (He was returning from a meeting where other Circle members were present and received warnings of the same.)
- He does not know of the plot to connect the Plane of Shadow with Faerie.
- If asked about his pursuers, he can only identify them as “shadows and darkness”.
- If specifically asked what he would like done with his body, Gadarn will ask that it be turned over to the Circle of Life. (Unless one of the party members is a higher-ranking member of the Circle of Life, Gadarn's spirit will otherwise refuse any attempts by the PCs to cast *raise dead*, *resurrect*, *reincarnate*, or similar spells – he only trusts the Circle to perform such deeds.)
- For the purposes of spells such as *speak with dead*, Gadarn stats were: Wis 16, Will +7, AL N. (This may trigger an alignment conflict for the typical Velunan party.)

Spellcraft DCs and *detect magic* results:

- *Collar of obedience*: Faint enchantment (DC 16)
- *Slaying arrow* in Gadarn's back: Dim necromancy (DC 22) (would normally be strong but the magic is expended)
- Gadarn's wand: Faint transmutation (DC 16)
- Stone circle: Dim Conjuraction (DC 20)

Encounter 2: What Shall We Do Now?

Security at the gates of all the major cities in Veluna has been increased of late in an effort to help identify any possible criminal elements. Everyone is stopped and asked a few basic questions as to their purpose in coming to the city, etc. During this questioning, there is also a guard who appears to be comparing each person passing through the gates to a small collection of wanted posters. The guards are looking for known and suspected Pack members, as well as two individuals suspected of high crimes against the state (most notably, assaulting a Church Inquisitor!).

If the PCs bring the body of Gadarn back to Veluna City with them, they will definitely be stopped and questioned thoroughly (unless they are hiding the body in some way). If the PCs mention the attack in any way, the guards will ask to escort them to the main office of the Mitrik Temple Guard, where they will be asked to give full statements as to what happened (“Who attacked you?” “Where did the attack occur?” “Can you describe the individuals who shot this man?”). If the party gives full details, the young guard taking their statements will ask them to wait again, and will disappear into a backroom office. Around 10 minutes later, he will return with an older gentleman of higher rank, who introduces himself as Captain Bras (pronounced ‘Brace’). He asks the PCs to follow him to his office, where they are invited to sit and refresh themselves.

“My good folk, I understand that you have a had a trying day, and I do not wish to keep you from your rest, but based on the story that you have related to our man out front, I thought it best to speak with you while the events are still fresh in your minds. Let me be fair and tell you right off that this is not the first such event to occur in the Vale...”

If the PCs do not have any questions after that revelation, feel free to have the Captain disclose some of the basic facts of the case:

“We have, in fact, 8 bodies that were found scattered throughout the Vale, yet all were similarly savaged ... Since you are apparently the first to survive such an attack, and since you seem quite capable, we thought you might be well-suited to investigate further...”

Otherwise, paraphrase his answers from the following:

- *Not the first? How many other attacks like this have there been?* “Eight that we know of. Eight bodies, that is. If there are others, no one has yet brought them to our attention.”
- *Where else has it happened?* “Scattered throughout the Vale... Northeast of the town of Klaemoore; north of Kempton along the road to Veluna City; northeast of the town of Shandalanar, where the Asnath Copse butts up against the foothills of the Lortmils; on the road from Grayington to Whitehale, just south of the village of Valondy. Three in various parts of the Dapplewood – one on those about halfway along the road between Valkurl and Devarnish, the second just east of Devarnish, and the third along the banks of the Volverdyva, just north of Jarl. And of course, your incident earlier this evening.” (If the players want to see specifically where, show them **Players’ Aid #1**.)
- *You said ‘bodies’ – were there no witnesses to any of the other attacks?* “Only one – the body that was picked up near Jarl was brought to our attention by the captain of a merchant vessel making its way down the Volverdyva. The captain said his crew had reported seeing a pack of wild dogs disappear into the woods along the banks of the river around dusk a week ago. They thought nothing of it at first – until they spotted the body lying face down in the mud on the shore. The man was already dead, however. Since they were to make port at Jarl that evening, they brought the body with them, and turned it over to the Guard there. The captain and his entire crew were questioned, of course, with appropriate personnel from the Inquisitor’s office present, and were subsequently released after they were found not complicit in any way.” (The crew is not available for further questioning by the PCs, as they were headed to Verbobonc, Dyvers, and ports beyond.)
- *Was there anything similar about the attacks?* “Each of the bodies looked like it had been mauled by a large animal, like a dog or a wolf, but none of the victims looked like they had been killed for food. Searches of the areas where each were found turned up a small stone circle or menhir of some kind nearby. This didn’t seem unusual at first; such sites are actually quite common throughout Veluna – no doubt remnants of the Vale’s previous inhabitants.”
- *Did you try to use ‘speak with dead’ (or similar spells) on the corpses?* “Not at first, but after the similarities began making themselves known, we’ve done so on all the bodies. Most speak only of ‘beings of darkness’, and running for their lives.”

- ***Did the victims have anything in common?*** “All of them were worshippers of the older faiths in the vale – a few were carrying holy symbols of Beory, Ehlonna, Obad-Hai and the like. They were druids and rangers for the most part, from what we could divine and from what little gear the victims had on them.” (All of the victims were members of the Circle of Life. The Captain suspects this, but he does not know for sure that is the case, as the corpses’ answers have always been overly cryptic in this regard.)
- ***What about these collars we took off the hounds we killed? Why would they have the symbol of Herion/Iron Rings Consortium on them?*** “A very good question indeed, and one that we have no answer for. As we’ve said, you are the first to witness an actual attack and defeat some of the creatures involved. The possibility that some of Herion’s forces may still be secreting themselves throughout the Vale is disturbing, to say the least. Nevertheless, it is a clear sign that the Church must keep upon its current path to rid the land of such evils!”
- ***Any ideas who might be behind these murders?*** “No, but given their recent tirades against the Church, I wouldn’t put it past those heathens that call themselves the Pack. They’d do anything at this point to cause more trouble for Veluna and her people.” (The Captain has no evidence that the Pack is behind the murders, but he has had enough dealings with the Church’s Inquisitors lately, that he would not have much incentive to believe otherwise.)
- ***It looks like the attacks were all in a circle around the Circle of Hands – and you’ve noted the link to the old faiths. Have you investigated the Circle of Hands?*** “Not yet,” the captain pauses, as if unsure about continuing. “There are rumors about, that the deaths have something to do with the flooding up in Whitehale. Some are saying that the Circle of Life was responsible for that, and that the murders are some form of retaliation. Of course this isn’t true, but sending a contingent of the Guard or Knights to the Circle might be seen in the wrong light, and we’ve been looking into other possibilities first.” (A Sense Motive check (DC 20) tells that he’s not entirely sure the rumors are false.)

Development

If any of the PCs are members of the Church of Rao, Mitrik Temple Guard, or the Knights of Salvation, Captain Bras will task them with getting to the bottom of the situation. Members of other church-affiliated meta-

orgs will receive similar requests, “in the interest of protecting all that is good in the Vale”, although the Captain knows he cannot order them directly to participate. If the PCs are not beholden to religious interests, the Captain is authorized to pay them the standard rate (APL x 50gp) to investigate further then report back.

The PCs likely have two courses of action at this juncture. They may try to investigate further and ask questions around Veluna City, and/or try to find a member of the Circle of Life, in which case proceed to **Encounter 3: Round and Around**. If they have examined the map and concluded that their answers will be found at the Circle of Hands, proceed to **Encounter 4: Empty Spaces**.

For the DM’s edification: the Circle of Hands functions in some ways similar to the teleport hubs the Church of Rao maintains in each diocese’s capitol city, meaning that those with special knowledge (for example, the highest-ranking Stewards in the Circle of Life) can use the magic of the Circle of Hands to summon other individuals from across Veluna to a central meeting point (the magics are not completely understood by even the highest levels of the organization, but the forces involved make marginal use of the Plane of Shadow to traverse large distances in an instant). A few months ago, in the course of making one of those journeys (and quite by accident), a member of the Circle of Life was “shunted” more fully into the Plane of Shadow, and stumbled across part of the Shadar-Kai plan to use the Circle of Hands for their own purposes. It was then that the Shadar-Kai began hunting members of the Circle who used this method of transport, fearful that these “intruders” might learn of their plans to join Shadow and Faerie.

Encounter 3: Round and Around

If the PCs ask around Veluna City about the Circle of Life, the reactions received will vary on who does the asking and who is asked. As a group whose goals are preservation and freedom for all living beings, their ways are sometimes seen as antithetical to the Church’s (and therefore state’s) goals. In general, they are therefore viewed with suspicion among the more urban elements of Veluna (such as the Churches, the nobles, the typical city-dweller, and groups such as the various Colleges, VOPA, and the Pack). Of late, these suspicions have devolved into almost outright hostility among members of the Church, as word gets out of the Circle’s (possibly

tenuous) connection to the flooding in Whitehale earlier in 596 CY (events detailed in **VEL6-03 Circular Logic**).

Any PCs making Gather Information checks can discover the following:

- DC 0: “Weather’s been real good this year. I’ve heard that they’ve already started a harvest up in Whitehale ‘cause the crops have done so well. It’s a shame all those people had to die, though, from that big flood back in Readying.” (2nd month of the year)
- DC 5: “Veluna City’s always peaceful – moreso with the Guard’s increased vigilance of late – but my brother told me that the barkeep over at the Purple Paladin said one of the city guards mentioned that some adventurers brought a body in through the gates earlier this evening/last night. Say... You wouldn’t know anything about that would you?”
- DC 10: “Not a good time to be a nature person – first the floods, and now I heard that they’ve found more than a few of them killed out in the woods. Like someone’s hunting them.”
- DC 15: “The flooding up in Whitehale was intentional. Me gran’mum’s a half-Rhenee, and she said that river waters just don’t rise that fast on their own.”
- DC 20: “The Church is upset that all those people died in the flooding, and they know a bunch o’ them Circle druids was involved. I’ll bet they’re just retaliating against the nature-lovers. Serves ‘em right...”
- DC 25: “One of the higher ups in the Circle was helping with the restoration of Whitehale when the floods came. When the Church got wind that the Circle was connected to the flooding, he was run out of Whitehale and hasn’t been seen since...”

If there are Pack members present in the party, and they think to investigate or ask questions of their superiors about the situation, they get back vehement denials. Most of their members suspect that the Church is, in fact, ordering the killings in retaliation, or else that they are being caused by an unknown third party (true) with the intent to place the blame on the Pack, and so turn up the proverbial heat on that group (false).

If the PCs specifically seek out a member of the Circle of Life, it may be difficult. Veluna City has no groves or gardens within the city walls, and no representative makes their home here. A full day of asking around and a Gather Information check (DC 20; current Circle of Life Members get a +4 circumstance bonus to the check)

turns up the name of one Danu Dearth (DA noo dahr Rig) who is rumored to belong to the Circle of Life.

If the PCs go to seek out Danu, they find her easily enough (they were given directions, and she isn’t exactly hiding).

The directions you were given head southeast along the Great Western Road about two miles past the city gates. Just past a small stone marker carved with a face of Rao, you find a narrow footpath leading off the road to a small house and well-tended garden. The house rests at the edge of a small copse of mostly oak trees, one of the few remaining stands in the vicinity of Veluna City that has not been cleared for farming. Smoke drifts lazily from the chimney, and neither fence nor gate blocks the way.

Regarding the stone marker, a DC 15 Craft (sculpting) or Craft (stonemasonry) check reveals that it was carved recently. It reads (in Common): “HERE LIES C. K. / A MAN OF SMALL STATURE / BUT LARGE VALUE TO PEACE, REASON AND SERENITY / LET THOSE OF VIRTUE TAKE LESSON / FROM HIS FIVE LIVES SPENT IN RAO’S SERVICE / 595 CY”, as well as a face of Rao at the top (DC 10 Knowledge (Religion) check to recognize).

(The marker is a total red herring. An old priest of Rao has been traveling throughout the Vale, placing the stones to honor a fallen comrade, and to mark each of the spots where his comrade died.)

Assuming the PCs approach and knock:

After a few short raps on the door, an old woman appears at the door and regards you with curiosity, as well as a bit of suspicion. Her face seems weathered and crease, but despite her obvious age, she appears to be in excellent physical health. She stands about five and a half tall, around 145 pounds, light brown hair shot through with gray, and the slightest bit of a point to her ears. She is dressed in dirty breeches and a simple blouse, also covered in dirt.

“What do you want?”

☞ **Danu Dearth:** Female Human (Flan) Drd8; hp 59.

Danu is in her late 70s, although she appears not much older than 50, and despite her Flan features, has just a touch of elf in her blood (hence the ears). The PCs have interrupted her in the midst of her brunch/lunch/afternoon tea/dinner.

She is not as gruff as her initial demeanor suggests (she always greets new people roughly, until she can get a sense of their intentions), and allows the PCs to state their business with her. She will be suspicious of the

motives of anyone showing obvious association with the Church of Rao, although she will not be outright nasty in any way. (Danu had visitors several weeks ago from the Mitrik Temple Guard, and was questioned regarding anything she might know about the incidents at Lake Krag and the flooding in Whitehale. Although she believes that the greater good of the Vale was served by the incident, she took affront that she was essentially being accused of association with outright murder.)

Danu follows the Old Faith, a collection of the various Flan deities (including Rao), though she does venerate Beory more than the other beings in the pantheon. She sees the Church as somewhat corrupting the worship of Rao (in the sense of altering the original form of worship), but she recognizes that devotion can be expressed in many ways.

If the PCs manage to convince Danu that they mean her no harm, and/or are up front and honest (letting her know they are investigating the death of Gadarn and the others), she will continue:

Danu nods grimly, and motions you inside. As you enter, you notice that the furnishings are quite spare. A staff leans against the door frame, while a sickle hangs from a peg next to the door. You see two small rooms off the main one; a bed and chest are visible through one of the doorways, while the other seems to serve the purpose of pantry and storage of other basic necessities. There is little else in the way of decoration or embellishment, other than a half-finished wooden carving of a plump female figure in resting on the table. (Danu is trying her hand at carving a figurine representing Beory.)

Rather hard to miss, however, is the oversized black, white, and gray creature lying curled up on the hearth. It lifts its head and starts to rise with a growl as you come into the room, until Danu motions to it. It opens its mouth in a wide, toothy yawn, then lowers itself back down, drops its head, and quickly resumes its snoring.

“Aye, I’ve heard the rumors – which we both know are not really rumors after all. So how can I help you?”

Danu has the rank of Walker in the Circle of Life. Despite not being heavily involved in the day-to-day concerns of the group, she will answer the PCs’ questions as best she can without giving away too much of a direct answer (she likes being vague with non-Circle types).

After the first one or two questions, or if the PCs ask about him first, Choc will get up and amble toward the closest PC, then sniff around each one in turn – he’s

mainly looking for treats of any kind (especially natural ones such as berries, etc.)

- ***Are you a member of the Circle of Life?*** “We are all part of the Circle of Life; some simply recognize the shape better than others.”
- ***Can you be more specific?*** (She sighs, knowing that such transient titles are important to some) “You can address me as Walker if you choose... It matters not.”
- ***What is that beast by the fire?*** “That is Choc, my companion. Don’t worry, he’s mostly harmless.” (Danu smiles with a twinkle in her eye when she says that last bit, and Choc’s ears perk up at the mention of his name. Choc is a dire badger that has been Danu’s animal companion for a number of years, and is quite old for such a companion. He will not harm the PCs as long as Danu is present and unharmed.)
- ***Do you know who any of these victims are?*** (Based on the descriptions the PCs can give, Danu identifies about half the bodies.)
- ***How could you know who these people were, when all the resources of the Church have yet to identify them?*** “Perhaps because the Church chooses not to, or does not care to? One or two deaths are easy enough for them to dismiss as mere coincidence. But I would suspect that when the Church itself is implicated as being involved in some way – whether by causing the deaths directly, or through inaction, preventing more from occurring – then its impeccable reputation is at risk of being sullied – and that cannot stand!” (The previous is said with no small hint of sarcasm.) “In any event, I know of several people that have not been heard from in some time, and those you describe would match the descriptions of those we have not seen. I’ll wager that the remaining bodies were also members of the Circle of Life; if not, then they were at least involved in their business.”
- ***Why would the bodies all turn up in a circle around the Circle of Hands?*** “The circle of life takes many forms. Perhaps this was simply their way of guiding others to find the answers to their deaths.”
- ***If death is simply part of the Circle of Life, then why be concerned at all about these deaths? Aren’t they just part of the cycle?*** “It is true that death is part of the cycle... We live and we must all therefore die only to be born again and continue along the path. But whether we know it or not, we

all choose our own time to die; and it seems clear to me that there was no choice in these deaths.”

- ***Any ideas, then, on who killed them?*** “Not yet, but do not suppose for a moment that just because Herion and his hordes are no longer present that all perils to the Vale are gone. The times are such that for every foe defeated, two more are waiting in the shadows to take the place of the vanquished. The more timid members of the Circle blame the Church, the Church blames elements of the Pack, and vice versa, but none are willing to look beyond the end of their noses for the answer.” (Short answer – No, but it’s probably not simple retaliation, nor politically motivated.)
- ***How about why?*** “The Church is not the only force for weal at work in the Vale. Though many in the Church do not believe it, we in the Circle are as much defenders of Veluna as the Guard or the Knights; only the faces of our enemies are different. And so we are sought out, and killed by virtue of the paths we travel, and because we defend the Vale itself.”
- ***Could this be the start of some sort of faction war within the Circle of Life?*** “It is true that there are many different paths that may be walked if one wants to restore balance to the Vale. Yet I know of none that seek to sow discord in such a base manner.”
- ***Is the Circle of Life responsible for all those deaths in the flooding of Whitehale?*** “We all choose our own paths along the Circle. Some times our paths coincide, while at other times, we spiral away from our brethren, never to meet again. While some may have known where the path of the Cleansing lay, not all followed that path.” (Danu does not know whether or not the leadership of the Circle was actually involved in carrying out the Cleansing, i.e. the events leading up to the flooding, and the floods themselves. But she does suspect that her superiors may have at least *known* about it.)
- ***Any suggestions on where to go next?*** “Listen to what the victims and the land itself have told you. Seek the Circle of Hands and let it guide you to the next phase of your journey.”
- ***It looks like those responsible for the murders are using the Circle of Hands as a hub to get from one location to location within Veluna – can you tell us how to use it the same way?*** “You presume that we control the Circle, like some bauble that can be turned on and off by some simple command,

when in fact it is the Circle that guides us to where we need be.”

- ***Can we contact the Circle of Life to warn them about being hunted?*** “I’m sure they are already aware of that aspect of the situation, but you may nevertheless consider them warned.”
- ***Can we take you back to Veluna City with us? You’ll be much safer there...*** “No, I am quite happy where I am. And I think based on what we have learned and what you have told me, that right here with Choc is the safest place I can be.”
- ***We have this body with us/back in Veluna City – can you take care of it?*** “Yes, I will make sure he is properly cared for.”
- ***Do we have a deadline?*** “Time has no meaning. To a true seeker of the Circle, a year is as a day. But a time approaches that can hold great power for those that know how to harness it. Midsummer’s Day is but a few weeks away and there are many things that could be accomplished under the twin full moons of the Midsummer’s Night that would go a long way toward continuing the healing begun in Whitehale.” (A DC 15 Knowledge (Nature) or Survival check confirms what Danu says is true, regarding the full moon cycle of Luna and Celene. Also, the Circle of Life does not have any specific plans to celebrate the Midsummer’s Night at the Circle of Hands.)
- ***What’s with that stone marker down by the road?*** “That? Some old doddering priest of Rao passed through a few months ago, and said a friend of his had died in Veluna City, and he wanted to commemorate his sacrifice in some way, but the Church wouldn’t let him place the memorial inside the city. I asked him why he thought the memorial should go here, and he said he thought the view was nice! I had to laugh at that, so I invited him in for some lunch, and then we set the stone together. The strange thing was, a few weeks later, the Guard came by asking ‘what I knew about Whitehale’, and then asked why I would permit a priest of Rao to set up a memorial to a known member of the Pack. I truthfully told them I didn’t know anything about that. After they left, they seemed to hang around making notes by the marker for some time, and I thought they were going to uproot the thing, but when I checked on it later, it was untouched.”

As the PCs are leaving, Danu will comment:

In one respect, the Church is correct, we must remain vigilant. But highwaymen and burglars are not the only threat to the Vale’s security. True, people like

the Guards man the streets of her cities, patrol her roads, and defend the lines on a map that some call her borders; but some foes are not content – or so stupid – as to simply march into town through the front gates. You would be wise to remember that not all of the Vale’s protectors need wear the face of Rao...

By now, the PCs should have a pretty good idea that they should head to the Grayington Diocese and/or the Circle of Hands. Proceed to **Encounter 4: Empty Spaces**.

NOTE: If a PC dies during the course of the adventure, and the body is brought back to Danu, she is of sufficient level that she may cast *reincarnate* on the PC’s remains. This will only be available if the PCs visited Danu and they treated her with respect. If they angered her in any way (for example, a paladin of Rao arguing with her over her outlook on the Whitehale floods), then she will refuse such a service. In any case, normal costs for the spell otherwise apply.

Encounter 4: Empty Spaces

If the PCs decide to journey to the Circle of Hands on road, they will likely travel via Grayington. The journey to Grayington from Veluna City is 68 miles. It will take anywhere from 2 days (fast unencumbered horse) to 6 days (armored walking dwarf/halfling/gnome). See pages 162-164 of the *Player’s Handbook* for distances covered per day based on the slowest mode of transportation available to the party.

If the party proceeds straight overland to the Circle, it is approximately 60 miles through farmers’ fields and along poorly maintained back roads and trails. Consider the terrain to be “Trackless Plains” (speeds are reduced to $\frac{3}{4}$ normal), and adjust the descriptive text as necessary.

Your journey to Grayington passes uneventfully. The guards that had been manning the borders of the diocese while Redin Sarneth was still in power were still there, but they were not nearly as zealous in their duties as before. Perhaps the Grayington situation is settling itself down.

Although it is not even Midsummer, the farmers appear to be preparing for an early harvest, as the fields you pass seem unusually abundant for this time of year.

If the PCs stop to talk with any of the farmers, they will be happy to chat about how well the crops are doing this year, the cattle seem to be giving more milk than is usual,

etc. If pressed and asked about any unusual happenings recently, most will wave off the PCs, muttering something to the effect of “Meh! You adventurers cause nothing but trouble...”

If any of the PCs are members of a Church meta-org (the Church of Rao, Knight of Salvation, or Mitrik Temple Guard), and the PCs do not insult or condescend to the farmers, one of them will speak out as the PCs are leaving, that a few weeks ago, around dusk, he did hear something unusual –

“... Like a pack of dogs crossing over muh fields – big ones too from the sound of ‘em. But we ain’t got no wild dogs in these parts, and when I went outside to see what the ruckus was, they was gone, or else twern’t there in the first place.”

The farmer had, in fact, heard one of the shadar-kai hunting parties, but there is no evidence of their passing...

Despite the lawlessness that had gripped the town several months back after the kidnapping of Redin, Grayington itself seems to have slipped back towards its normal bucolic existence with the reinstallation of Bishop Harkin to his former post, and the increased presence of the Guard.

Although the party will likely need to stop for the night to rest in Grayington, there is nothing else to learn there regarding the shadar-kai raiding parties; they have intentionally avoided getting close to any large population centers.

Grayington itself is a Large Town (pop. 2,500, 3,000gp limit), so the party could re-equip standard supplies while they are here, and before heading south to the Circle of Hands. Some PCs may want to make Gather Information checks here as well, but much of what can be found out is the same as rumors picked up in Veluna City.

Among other items of interest:

- People are glad to see Bishop Harkin back. He’s even a bit of a hero, depending on the version of the story the person heard.
- The stories of cults, doppelgangers and fiendish plots are all over the place.
- Redin Sarneth has either been imprisoned by the Church, exiled, in training to be a real priest or dead. The most prevalent rumor on this topic is that he has gone to live at the monastery of the Brotherhood of the Vale. Apparently Redin needs some peace and quiet for reflection and contemplation.

- There is also a great deal of speculation on who will rule Grayington next – some say Redin, others say his father, Eldried Sarneth, will reclaim his former title of Plar, while still others think that Canon Truft will make Bishop Harkin not only the religious head of the diocese, but the secular as well.

The journey to the Circle of Hands is similarly rustic. The road follows a low rise south paralleling the western bank of the Volverdyva. The occasional barge drifts lazily downriver with the current, perhaps to Jarl or Verbobonc, and you see just as many setting oars or sails against the current back to Grayington and points beyond. The fields of the Vale rise up from the river plain and fade to the western horizon.

From Grayington south to the Circle of Hands is another 28 miles (1 to 3 days, depending on PC speed). Adjust the following text accordingly.

Near the end of the day's journey, the road bends ever so slightly to avoid a low hill set apart from all the rest you have seen. Near its base, you find a small, seemingly little-used path that meanders up the side of the hill.

The path is not at all difficult to find (no Search check required), and is visible from the road, especially if the party is looking for it. The hike to the top takes about 5 minutes, and is not a difficult climb.

Upon surmounting the hill, you are greeted with a rather impressive sight, and not just because of the commanding view of the Volverdyva stretching away both north and south. A flat, grassy lawn tops the crest of the hill, and spaced around the crest, like the protruding tips of a giant stone crown, rest six monoliths. The origin of their common name is clear, as all six resemble giant humanoid hands in various positions, vaguely grouped into three pairs.

A Search check (DC 20) reveals several spots of dried blood on one of the “hands”. A Heal check (DC 15) shows that they are not at all fresh (age varies, but the most recent is still two weeks old; if the check result is greater than 25, the PC(s) also determine that it appears to have been spilled in a fight, and not ritualistically).

Take note of where the PCs are when they are searching. If some are outside the confines of the Circle and some are inside, give those inside a Spot check (DC 20; the DM might wish to make these in secret, or use checks that the PCs rolled ahead of time) to eventually notice that, while in the Circle, those outside appear slightly less distinct – almost as if a very light fog has moved in – and the sky overhead is a bit hazy, and not as bright.

The longer a PC stands in the middle of the Circle, the more indistinct those outside become, as if the fog is thickening. Meanwhile, those outside looking in see that the PCs inside the Circle see to be fading from view, and becoming slightly incorporeal, although they never fade completely from view. The amount of time it takes to “fade” is not consistent, although elves seem to fade quicker than half-elves, followed by gnomes, then halflings, humans, dwarves, and finally half-orcs. The stones of the Circle are always visible while in this faded state, and if a faded PC steps outside their confines, he will fully rematerialize.

A Knowledge (Nature) or Knowledge (Arcana) check (DC 20) lets a PC recall that circles such as these are commonly associated with portals to other planes and/or dimensions. A Knowledge (Local-VTF) check (DC 10) reveals that the Circle of Life is rumored to occasionally conduct mystical rituals at the Circle of Hands, but nothing that could be called “proof” has ever been brought forward.

PCs who played **Vel5-05 The Lost** may recall that they had to sleep to cross over to Faerie in that adventure. Such is not the case here (although sleeping in the Circle will achieve the same result). Once a PC has begun to fade, merely thinking about moving to another location gives the PC the sensation of movement – like a slight tugging or loss of balance. Thinking specifically about the plane of Faerie will instantly cause the PC to begin the actual journey to the other side, and they will have only a moment to shout out to those PCs remaining outside the circle. To PCs outside the Circle, the individual inside appears in that instant to wink out of existence completely. If the PCs are touching in some way (holding hands, lashed together, etc. only one need think about Faerie to bring all along.

Once all PCs begin the transition, proceed to **Encounter 5**.

If the PCs don't come to such an insight (either to think of the Circle as a portal of some kind, or to sleep while in the Circle), describe that those within the Circle also occasionally see through the fog, towering trees where there were none before, or even larger stone hands beyond those close by. If the PCs move to investigate such phenomena while those things are visible, that too will begin their journey.

Development

If the PCs still don't cross over at this point, then the adventure is effectively over. They can report what they have learned so far to Captain Bras or their Circle contact.

If for some reason the PCs decide to wait for someone or something to show up, then they would need to wait for, or return in, approximately 3 weeks (depending on how much time they took to get to the Circle), until Midsummer's Night and its twin full moons. If this is the case, proceed to **Encounter 8: The Show Must Go On**.

Encounter 5: Goodbye Blue Sky

If the PCs slept in the Circle, read the following:

Your dreams are not pleasant. For what seems like days or weeks – or was it only a few seconds? – you drift through a dark fog. You occasionally catch a glimpse of dark figures at the corners of your vision, only to turn and see nothing more than rolling mists. Finally the mists part and you find yourself waking up back in the middle of the Circle of Hands.

If the PCs instead made the journey while awake, read the following

For what seems like minutes – or was it only a few seconds? – you drift through a dark fog. You occasionally catch a glimpse of dark figures at the corners of your vision, only to turn and see nothing more than rolling mists. Finally the mists part and you find yourself standing back in the middle of the Circle of Hands.

In either case, continue with the following:

Or so you thought... The Circle you left stood on a low grassy hill overlooking the lazy flow of the Velderdyva. But the stones surrounding you now stand at the edges of a large clearing of withering grass, with primeval forest beyond. Either you have shrunk, or the stones themselves are larger and farther apart, and appear less worn with the passing of ages than those you left.

(Adjust the following text – “clear blue sky” – based on the time of day it was when the PCs left the Circle of Hands).

The sky itself has changed as well. What was once clear blue sky is now a mass of roiling black clouds, dark and heavy like an approaching storm; there is a distinct chill and dampness in the air, but no rain falls.

A slightly worn path appears to lead from the center of the circle towards its far side, and then wanders off through the trees.

The PCs have entered the Plane of Faerie, “north” of the lands of Duke Xhosasilliname (a fey noble first met in **Vel5-05, The Lost**), but if they have been in the realm before and somehow recognize or deduce their location, it is a much darker environment than they remember.

There are many special rules that can govern play in the fey lands, but most will not come into play in this adventure. Some that will are:

Flowing Time: Time in the fey lands flows at a slower place than that in the “normal” realm. For every night spent in the fey lands, about a week passes on Oerth. (A Knowledge (The Planes) check (DC 25) will reveal this information.)

Planar Access: Because of the fey land's unique cosmological position and relationship with other planes, certain spells will not function here. Any spell requiring contact with the ethereal or astral planes does not function, and with the exception of the immediate vicinity (within 100 feet of the stone circle), nor will spells that require contact with the plane of Shadow. See **Appendix 3: DM's Aid #1** for a list of arcane spells affected.

For the DM's edification: Due to the planar confluence, some of the essence of the Plane of Shadow has been seeping through to Faerie for several weeks now, and has been corrupting the flora and fauna of the immediate vicinity. Although a connection between Faerie and Shadow is not normally possible, Herion's use of strong magics, and his repeated summoning/gating in of outsiders for use in his war with Veluna has somewhat weakened and wreaked havoc with the “normal” state of the planar boundaries. The phenomena will, in fact, die down “naturally” after the twin full moons on Midsummer's Night, regardless of any actions taken by the PCs or the shadar-kai.

The Duke's patrols have also encountered several incursions by the shadar-kai (as well as nastier things from the Plane of Shadow), and have setup an “early warning system” of sorts around the glade, in the form of several strategically placed Shriekers.

All APLs

🔊 **Shriekers:** hp 11; see *Monster Manual* p. 112.

The shriekers predominantly line the main path once it exits from the clearing, but there are enough that anyone leaving the circle on foot will trigger one or more (assume they are spaced approximately every 15 feet

around the outside of the stones, and PCs leaving by the path will trigger the shriekers after moving 10 feet beyond the stones). A successful Spot check (DC 20) sees the fungi hidden amongst the underbrush (although PCs may still not recognize them for what they are). Although the shriekers themselves pose no threat to the party, their screams will attract some of the darker creatures that have taken up residence in the area...

APL 6 (EL 8 – includes +1 for terrain advantage)

☛ **Shadow Shambling Mound:** hp 66; see Appendix I.

APL 8 (EL 10 – includes +1 for terrain advantage)

☛ **Shadow Treant:** hp 70; see Appendix I.

APL 10 (EL 12 – includes +1 for terrain advantage)

☛ **Shadow Treant (2):** hp 70 each; see Appendix I.

APL 12 (EL 14 – includes +1 for terrain advantage)

☛ **Advanced Shadow Treant (3):** hp 120 each; see Appendix I.

Tactics

Map note: For positioning of the stones, use **DM Map #3** in **Appendix 3**, but increase the scale to 1 square = 10 feet.

The party may retreat to the clearing to facilitate combat. The terrain inside the circle is unobstructed in any way (nothing but grass), as is the dirt path, while the outside is considered medium forest with scattered light undergrowth. A space covered with light undergrowth costs 2 squares of movement to move into, and increases the DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks by 2. Listen checks, however, are not increased, as most of the native fauna has been driven off or is avoiding the area. However, anyone making a Listen check within 30 feet of the screaming shriekers should receive a -10 penalty to their roll due to the distraction of the noise.

The single shambling mound (APL 6) or treant (APL 8) will be “sleeping” near where the path exits from the circle, but far enough away to not trigger the shriekers with its routine activity (2d4x10 feet from the path, and no closer than 20 feet to any shrieker). As it is considered to be hiding in forested area, remember to include the creature’s racial Hide modifier.

At APL 10, the second treant will be 2d4x10 feet away from the first and on the opposite side of the path (but about the same distance from the stone circle as the first), and at APL 12, the third treant will be another 2d4x10 feet beyond the second.

The shadow plants are not allied with the Duke nor the shadar-kai in any way. The shambling mound has learned that the shriekers signal the approach of possible food, and despite the shadows increasing its aggressive behavior, food is still its primary motivator; if reduced to less than 10 hit points, it will attempt to flee into the forest.

The treants however, are thoroughly evil from the corrupting influence of the Plane of Shadow. Once their “slumber” is disturbed, they have no qualms about crushing anything that moves, especially non-plants; they will, however, move on to the next foe if one is dropped, confident in their size and power to be able to come back later and finish off downed foes.

Any foes using fire-based attacks against the treants will earn their immediate attention. If the attack injures a treant badly enough (e.g., the treant is reduced to 10 hit points at APLs 8 and 10, or 15 hit points at APL 12), it will attempt to flee into the forest, and hide long enough for its fast healing to regenerate sufficient hit points to renew its attack (depending on how badly the treants have injured the party, this could be between 25% and 50% of its normal hit points – DM’s discretion).

Development

The shriekers (and the battle) have also alerted one of the Duke’s patrols.

All APLs (EL 9)

☛ **Duke’s patrol (5):** Thorn; hp 33 each; see Appendix I.

Upon approaching, the patrol will be content to observe the action and determine the general disposition of all sides. If the party defeats the plants, the patrol will immediately step forward and announce themselves:

Five small humanoid-shaped and green-skinned creatures garbed in leafy armor step out of the undergrowth. Their bows are not pointed directly at you, but they appear ready to bring them to bear with a moment’s notice. One of them steps forward and speaks:

(The following is first spoken in Sylvan. If no one in the party appears to understand, they will repeat the demand in Common. If a PC in the party played in **VEL5-05, The Lost**, but does not speak Sylvan, they may still recognize the Duke’s name, however, so the DM may wish to point that fact out to those particular PCs.)

“By the order of Duke Xhosasilliname [Zo-sa-silli-nah-muh], life spring of his people, a rose among thorns, muse of the ages, you are hereby commanded to lay down your weapons and state your intentions!”

The patrol's orders are to bring anyone or anything of a suspicious nature (the party qualifies as such) to the Duke's court for further questioning.

Barring any other circumstances, the patrol initially begins the encounter as "unfriendly" (refer to page 72 of the *Player's Handbook* for more information), as they are extremely wary right now of any creatures in this area not native to the realm. If any of the PCs have played **Vel5-05, The Lost**, they may have one (or more) favors which can significantly alter how the patrol reacts:

- *Lived with the Fey*: A PC with this favor spent a significant amount of time tending the Duke's gardens, and all fey of the Duke's court will recognize the PC on sight. Patrol's initial attitude changes to "friendly".
- *Friend of the Fey*: The PC acted in a generally civil manner the last time he was in Faerie. If he can make the patrol aware of this fact (for example, by relating some of the details of the events of *The Lost*), the patrol's attitude will quickly improve to "indifferent".
- *Captured by Fey* or *Imprisoned by Fey*: A PC with this favor spent a significant amount of time in the Duke's jail, and all fey of the Duke's court will recognize the PC on sight. Patrol's initial attitude changes to "hostile" (but see below).

Unless the party has a PC who is himself fey, use of the Diplomacy skill cannot adjust the patrol's attitude to higher than "friendly" – the fey mindset is simply too different from the way "mere mortals" think. Parties that start off as "hostile" (because of the *Captured by/Imprisoned by Fey* favors) can be adjusted as far as "indifferent" – the fey will not strongly trust any group that would associate with such criminals. Even if the party remains "hostile", the patrol will not attack unless attacked first (although the PCs should not know this); they will, however, insist that all PCs with such negative favors be disarmed for the journey to the Duke's encampment (other PCs will be permitted to "peace-bond" their weapons; "drawing" a peace-bonded weapon is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity).

The party may have some questions for the patrol, but they will insist that all such questions should be asked only to "Duke Xhosasilliname, life spring of his people, a rose among thorns, muse of the ages". A few that they will answer (paraphrase based on the actual questions asked):

- ***Where are we?*** "Is it not obvious? You walk in the realm of Duke Xhosasilliname, life spring of his people, a rose among thorns, muse of the ages."
- ***Yes, but where is that?*** (The patrol really doesn't know how to answer the question other than by the previous answer – to them, it is the only answer that makes any sense.)
- ***What were those creatures that attacked us?*** "Abominations! Things that should not even exist! We put them down, yet two more spring up in their place, and it is all we can do to keep them contained!" (They are being overly melodramatic, but only because the shadow "incursion" is such an unnatural occurrence in their experience.)

If the PCs ask any others questions, the patrol will insist that only the Duke is qualified to answer, and they can speak no more on the subject. Proceed to **Encounter 6A: Signs of Life**.

If the party attacks the patrol:

If the party – for whatever reason – decides to attack the patrol, then the adventure is over (the party is not meant to fight them). If the DM wishes to go through the motions, describe that the patrol flees into the cover of the forest, and begins using guerilla tactics to bring the party down one-by-one. Their goal is to capture, not kill, so they will make prodigious use of their sleep arrows, targeting those PCs who appearance suggests they might succumb easily (mages and sorcerers, then roguish types, then clerics and finally fighters). If the patrol is defeated, others follow until the party is eventually overwhelmed and captured by superior fey forces; they are subsequently imprisoned for 52 TU (and the adventure is over).

If the party is defeated by the shadow plants:

Although the patrol will not help the party in fighting the shadow plants, if the party is defeated, all is not lost. Assume that the patrol has sufficient strength and resources to drive off the plants before the party itself is completely destroyed (they saw that the party was trying to fight the shadow plants and was not allied with them in any way). In this case, the party wakes up in a dormitory-style tent in the Duke's encampment. (Proceed to **Encounter 6B**, and award XPs only for those creatures actually defeated by the party.)

Encounter 6A: Signs of Life

If the party accompanies the patrol of their own volition, then read the following:

The patrol has guided you through the forest for a few hours. When you first left the stone circle, the forest was extremely dark and silent; even the snaps of twigs beneath your feet seemed dead in the air. But the farther you march, though the trees never seem any less dense, the dismal gloom seems to lift from their boughs, and the clouds overhead are replaced by mere wisps of red and gold.

Finally, the trees part to reveal several large pavilions and many smaller ones. There is quite a bit of activity, and humanoids of all shapes, sizes, and colors seem to be going about their business. You also notice a number of guard posts visible at regular intervals all around the “camp”, each one clearly visible to the two on either side.

PCs who have been to the Duke's camp before soon realize that the number of guards is much higher than they remember.

As you leave the confines of the forest, another patrol comes out and greets yours. Two of the new individuals are of the same race as your escorts, while the other two appear to be similar to elves, yet not so – their silver eyes sparkle brightly, and their tan skin glows bronze. Your escorts and the camp patrol exchange words, and then the taller of the “elves” speaks:

“We bid you greetings in the name of Duke Xhosasilliname, life spring of his people, a rose among thorns, muse of the ages.” You almost think you hear flutes or small chimes accompanying his voice as he speaks. “We have been informed of your actions at the circle, but that still does not answer who you are or why you are here.”

All APLs

☛Seelie (Half-celestial elf) fighters (2): Rgr2/Ftr4; hp 57 each; see Appendix 1.

☛Thorn guards (2): hp 33 each; see Appendix 1.

The patrols speak in Sylvan to each other; if a party member can understand Sylvan, they will hear exchange of pleasantries, an explanation of how the thorn patrol came to be in possession of the party, as well as a bawdy joke that makes no sense even though the PC

understands Sylvan (although the joke itself seems to involve two of the PCs).

It is assumed the party will try to give a brief explanation of what has led to this point. If the PCs mention the deaths of the circle members, the fey may show some interest but not overly much. The DM may adjust the feys' tone with the party based on the reactions of the patrol described in **Encounter 5**, and whether any of the party is recognized.

After the party replies, the guard continues:

“On behalf of Duke Xhosasilliname, life spring of his people, a rose among thorns, muse of the ages, we offer you the hospitality of his camp. Enter freely and in peace. Do no violence in his sight and you are welcome.”

He will also specifically address PCs that have any of the favors from **Vel5-05 The Lost**, looking at those PCs as he speaks:

For those PCs with *Captured by Fey* or *Imprisoned by Fey*:

“The Duke is a benevolent man, and knows of the capriciousness with which those of the mortal realms may act, but understand this – if you would bring the shadows that infect our realm with you in your hearts, his retribution will be swift and just!”

For those PCs with the *Friend of the Fey*:

“Welcome [PCs' name]; we are pleased that you again grace us with your presence. We hope that the Duke's grace and benevolence to your cause was well-received upon your return home.”

And finally for those PCs with the *Lived with the Fey*:

“And hail and well-met, [PCs' name]; we had hoped to see you again – the Duke's roses need pruning, and the gardens are so overgrown with weeds now, that he may never let you go again!” (All the fey in the vicinity have a good laugh at that, but it should be clear that they are only joking with the PC.)

In any case, continue as follows:

You are shown to a large, colorful tent on the edge of the camp. Inside you can see comfortable looking chairs, couches and beds; lutes and other small instruments; and many potted plants. “You may use this pavilion to rest and recover from your journey. Water and bread can be brought to you if you wish, but you must remain here – you are not permitted to aimlessly wander the camp. We leave you now to inform the Duke that you petition an audience.”

With that, they depart, leaving the party to their own devices, and report to their master and ask about an audience. Under no circumstances will the party be allowed to meet with the fey duke immediately. He is simply not available.

The tent is large (30 ft. x 50 ft.) and comfortably furnished, but is plainly set off from the rest of the camp, and the party should feel isolated and potentially watched. In fact, the party IS now being constantly watched – by pixies. Remember that pixies are constantly under the effect of a *greater invisibility*. There will be one pixie assigned to the party at the beginning, but if the party is obviously going to split up and/or be troublesome, more will be assigned as needed. The pixie(s) will watch the party and keep tabs on the PCs' activities, but will not reveal themselves or interact.

It is possible that with very high Spot or Listen checks, the party could notice the pixie in their tent. You should ask the players to roll several Spot and Listen checks at the start of the adventure so as not to tip them off at this time to the pixies' presence. If the pixies are discovered, it will continue to monitor the PCs, though it might even engage in conversation once it knows it has been found. You may ad lib the pixie's remarks; it will not leave unless threatened with violence – which will be duly noted to the Duke. Even if a pixie is scared off, others will be assigned to the PCs.

All APLs

✦ **Seelie (Half-celestial) pixie:** hp 5 each; see Appendix 1

Despite the comfort within the tent, the PCs may want to explore a bit. In general, as stated by the guards, the party may not leave the vicinity of the pavilion – guards will escort them back if they try – but they may stand outside the tent, or even walk in the immediate area.

PCs with the *Friend of the Fey* or *Lived with the Fey* favors will be permitted to wander a bit farther, although there will always be at least 2 guards following them (but no more than 4), the PCs may even speak with the fey in the camp, although the fey cannot answer any questions about the shadows, the circle, or the party's situation.

On the other hand, PCs with the *Imprisoned by Fey* or *Captured by Fey* favors will be met with menacing stares and scowls if they even poke their heads out of the tent, and they will be discouraged from even speaking to any fey walking past.

In any case, if the PCs are proving troublesome or 'impolite', seelie wizards will also keep an eye on them using any means necessary.

The PCs will have essentially an entire day to rest, relax, and recuperate. If they request it, they may also be brought basic healing supplies (essentially equivalent to a healer's kit from the *Player's Handbook*).

Proceed to **Encounter 6C: Keep Talking**.

Encounter 6B: Coming Back To Life

If the party was brought to the Duke's camp after being defeated by the shadow plants, read the following:

You awaken inside a large, colorful tent. You're lying on what feels like one of the more sumptuous beds you've ever slept in. Around you, you can see all the comforts a home might afford, as well as several other beds with your companions in them.

As you begin stirring, an elf enters the tent through the main flap. At least, the being looks somewhat like an elf – but his silver eyes and his tan skin glowing almost to a bronze color makes you think otherwise.

"Ah! Our guests awake! No doubt you have many questions for the Duke. They may all be answered in due time, but for now you should continue to rest and recuperate. Water and bread can be brought to you if you wish, but you must remain here – you are not permitted to aimlessly wander the camp."

The tent, furnishings, and reactions of their fey "hosts", etc. are otherwise the same as described in **Encounter 6A**, down to the pixie observer, the guards outside, and the restrictions on the PCs movement. The PCs wounds have been treated to prevent further injury (treat this as having had a full night's rest), but no further healing has been performed, and any PCs who were killed in the encounter with the shadow plants are still dead.

The PCs may of course have questions for the attendant:

- **The Duke? Duke who?** "Is it not obvious? You are in the realm of Duke Xhosasilliname, life spring of his people, a rose among thorns, muse of the ages."
- **How did we get here?** "One of our patrols found you fighting some abominations at one of the stone circles near here. The creatures were driven off by the patrol, who then brought you back to the camp." (If the PCs have any of the fey favors from **Vel5-05 The Lost**, he will also comment: "Your countenance was also known to us, and the patrol wisely realized

that the Duke would likely wish to speak with you before you were rendered unrecognizable.”)

He will answer no further questions on the happenings at the circle, or attempt explanations of the events.

The PCs will have essentially an entire day to rest, relax, and recuperate. If they request it, they may also be brought basic healing supplies (essentially equivalent to a healer's kit from the *Player's Handbook*).

Proceed to **Encounter 6C: Keep Talking**.

Encounter 6C: Keep Talking

Come morning – which you only know as such because one of the Duke's attendants brought you a simple meal of teas and biscuits, and greeted you with “Good Morning!” – you are given a brief amount of time to eat and freshen up before being summoned to the Duke's chambers.

The PCs will be escorted through the camp by several guards, both of the elven and thorn varieties. Even if the PCs have been here before, they are watched at every turn and step by the various fey they pass in the camp, some with a hint of distrust, yet some with child-like wonder.

Note that much of what follows will feel very familiar to those PCs who have played **Vel5-05 The Lost**. The Duke and his court invest themselves with a great deal of pomp and circumstance, all the more so when outsiders are present. However, unlike the events of *The Lost*, the PCs are not actively seeking a diplomatic solution to a problem, only answers to their questions, so much of the previous ritual they experienced will not be present at this time. They will also not be expected to present the Duke with gifts (although such actions will not be rejected, either!)

You eventually stop outside what has to be the largest pavilion in the encampment. The leader of your escort halts and then announces: “Enter and be recognized.”

A broad hallway of sorts greets you as you enter the tent. Two well-armed guards in elegant filigreed armor block the way past curtains that must lead deeper into the tent with crossed halberds. Along the left-hand wall, a long table covered in blue silks runs the entire length of the passage, and standing on the end closest to you, a small figure – half-humanoid and

half-cricket – wearing finely-tailored jacket, addresses you in a chirpy voice, asking for your name and titles.

After the each PC answers:

With a quill pen that is almost as big as him, the attendant notes your answers on a small tablet, then escorts you across the entryway towards the tent flap. He pauses midway and asks, “Are you ready to enter the presence of Duke Xhosasilliname, life spring of his people, a rose among thorns, muse of the ages?”

He has paused next to the table, which is of an appropriate height for medium humanoids. When the PCs first enter, there is nothing on the table except a fine blue felt cloth. The PCs are expected to remove any weapons that they are carrying and place them on the table, and the grig is giving them the chance to do so. Any small or particularly elegant weapon may be kept.

If the PC is unsure of what to do and asks the grig, he will not tell the PC what is expected. However, if the PC succeeds in a Sense Motive check (DC 12), he will recognize that the grig's body language seems to be indicating something about the table.

After a reasonable pause, whether the PCs remove their weapons or not, the grig will continue his walk to other end of the entry way:

The grig continues his stately hops across the little chamber, and nods to the two honor guards. They uncross their halberds, and after thanking you for your patience, the attendant pulls aside the shiny curtains, and bows while gesturing you inside.

Entering the chamber, you are struck by its opulence. The floor is covered by overlapping carpets, and the air is rich with the scent of incense. All along the edges of the pavilion, guards stand to attention, ever watchful for any sign of treachery.

Directly ahead, seated upon a mound of pillows, sits a figure that can only be the duke. Tall and beautiful, he is dressed in the finest fabrics and jewels imaginable. He is flanked by a number of courtiers, themselves dressed in exotic silks and linens, many holding small wands or staves as badges of office.

If the PCs have been in the Duke's presence before, comment that some of the courtiers look familiar, some of them point and giggle or wink at this or that PC... The Duke however, makes no indication that he might recognize the PCs.

A red-robed seelie elf steps forward, golden hair glistening in a light that emanates from all around you. He raises a hand and the discussions fade away – all eyes focus their attention upon you and your

friends. The seneschal addresses his liege and the court....

If any of the PCs have the Captured by Fey or Imprisoned by Fey favors, the seneschal interjects “mostly” before he says “honorable heroes”, looking at those PCs as he does so.

“My Lord Duke, gentlemen and ladies of the court, I give you ...” (he lists your names and titles, if given)
“These great and honorable heroes seek the wisdom and counsel of Lord Duke Xhosasilliname, life spring of his people, a rose among thorns, muse of the ages. Turning to you, he exclaims, “Speak, so that our Duke may swiftly guide you on your journey!” The crowd chuckles at his last proclamation and you think you see a hint of a smile flash across the Duke’s face.

The PCs may take this opportunity to present the Duke with any gifts they have for him (although it is not required). For those PCs who played in *The Lost*, if the PCs relate the details of what has transpired in Veluna since their last visit, the Duke and his court will listen with some interest. If they also thank the Duke for his previous hospitality and/or generosity in granting them the piece of Herion’s holy symbol that was worn by Tallin Creen, the court will loudly applaud the Duke’s “efforts” in single-handedly ending the war in Veluna.

Unless the PCs move straight into a question-and-answer mode this exchange can be quite free-form. The Duke himself will never speak. Although etiquette demands that the party address their questions to the Duke, the seneschal will answer any and all questions the party poses (though depending on the complexity of the question, he may turn to the Duke for guidance, who will generally nod approval or disapproval of an answer as the seneschal speaks it).

Use the following to paraphrase any questions and answers the PCs may have for the Duke:

- ***How/why has the Plane of Shadow been seeping into Faerie?*** “We reluctantly admit that we do not know. It has long been believed that, among all the mysteries of the multiverse to which the Duke is privy, that our boundaries against other realms were inviolate. But the events at the circle speak otherwise. The storm brewing there is unlike any that this realm has ever seen or known.”
- ***When did the Shadow seepage begin?*** “About two weeks ago; three or four months as you reckon such things.”
- ***Do you know how to stop Shadow from encroaching?*** “No, but the Duke has assured that

your appearance here at this time and in that place is a clear sign that you will be instrumental in preventing further corruption of our fair lands.”

- ***What are the shriekers there for?*** “When the shadows first appeared, several creatures from that realm crossed paths with some of our folk, and we handily dispatched them. But since then the creatures have grown stronger and more vicious. The shriekers were placed to give us some advance warning that additional incursions were being made.”
- ***What other kind of creatures have come through?*** “Most of the creatures were simply shades of their true selves. Others were creatures from this realm that lingered too long and were corrupted by the shadows – we believe this is what you encountered when you first arrived. But more recently, darker beings from the depths of Shadow have appeared, as well as several patrols of the dark fey.” (By ‘true selves’, the fey means creatures in the natural or normal state, i.e. animals or creatures that have not been altered by the influence of Shadow.)
- ***The dark fey?*** “Yes; they are also known as the shadar-kai.” (The Duke’s brow furrows, and a low murmur runs through the room when the seneschal speaks the name – not one of surprise, but more of disgust at the mention of their name.)
- ***Did you capture any of them?*** “Yes, one of their warriors, but as they are an affront to the existence of all fey everywhere – and the Duke makes no exceptions in that regard – the traitor was summarily executed, and all trace of him was removed from the Duke’s domains.” (He and all his belongings were *disintegrated* by one of the Duke’s mages.)
- ***Did you question him before executing him?*** “Of course, but there was nothing useful to be learned. He rambled on and on, something about ‘when the moons are as one’ that he and his brethren would finally freed from their curse... Oh, and something about destroying the despoilers and vengeance upon the brethren that abandoned them. The usual mad rhetoric that their kind always espouses...” (The despoilers would be humanoids in general on the Material Plane and the ‘brethren that abandoned them’ refers to most fey that are not shadar-kai.)
- ***You said something about ‘Moons’?*** “Yes, what about them? There is no moon in Faerie; everyone knows that! The traitor seemed to think that there was some ritual that could be performed under a full moon that would allow his kind to cross over into

the Duke's realm and remain here indefinitely." (If the PCs did not already realize that the Midsummer's Night had twin full moons – perhaps as a result of visiting Danu earlier – they can make a DC 15 Knowledge (Nature) or Survival check to know that that event was approaching when they left the Material plane.)

- **What's so special about the Circle of Hands?** "The what? You mean the Af-Athaspar? It is a portal, as well as an anchor of sorts; perhaps more so than other places in your Vale, but nothing more..." (He will not elaborate if pressed on this issue)

Once the PCs seem to be finished with their questions:

As your last question is answered, you notice that one of the small green figures who accompanied you earlier has entered the tent. There seems to be a great deal of commotion caused by his entrance, and much whispering. You hear the flutter of invisible wings speed past you, then the seneschal cocks his head as if listening closely to someone whispering in his ear. He then speaks, addressing the Duke, but making sure you hear as well.

"My Lord Duke, it seems that something is happening at the Af-Athaspar – thunder and lightning!" The crowd gasps at the seneschal's statement, and all look to the Duke. He appears to be thinking for but a moment then nods at the seneschal, who turns to you, and continues: "My Lord Duke believes that this may in fact be a more serious matter than any could have previously considered. Were you to return and perhaps put a stop to whatever is causing this maelstrom, the Duke would happily extend his gratitude to each of you..."

It is presumed that the PCs will accept the seneschal's offer. The DM may ad-lib additional conversation, although the seneschal will not agree to outright extortion, only that he can promise the Duke's favor. Once the matter is settled, proceed on to **Encounter 7: Eclipse**.

Encounter 7: Eclipse

Even before you leave the camp, you can see storm clouds brewing over the forest where the circle from which you made your entrance to Faerie must be. As the Duke's patrols begin to lead you back through the forest, the dusky sun is quickly covered by clouds. You can tell that you must be getting closer, as the

shadows in the trees around you begin to deepen once more, and the clouds overhead thicken like a brewing thunderstorm; an occasional all-around flash and rumble signals the lightning the seneschal spoke of.

Another patrol has gone ahead of the party to temporarily move the shriekers away from the path.

When you get to the circle, you see another patrol of the small green fey has arrived ahead of you, and they give you instructions for activating the stones to return you home. As you are preparing to leave, you notice that the wind has picked up, the storm clouds directly over have begun to swirl in a huge spiral, and a definite chill has entered the air.

Based on the change of environment, some PCs may anticipate trouble upon returning to the Material Plane, and will likely wish to buff – now would be a good time to do so, but there is certainly no need for the DM to prompt them! For the transit to work correctly, all the PCs will need to be gathered around and touching the same stone.

Activating the stone, the deep, dark fog once again surrounds you, and the drifting sensation returns.

With a sudden JOLT, you feel solid earth beneath your feet. It takes but a moment for the fog to part, and then scene before you is nothing like when you left.

You're almost sure that you are back at the Circle of Hands, but it is difficult to tell. It is night, and between the twin full moons overhead and the flickering of a low fire at the center of the Circle, the shadows dance wildly. Dark purple and green flames leap off of the stone at your backs, and the ones on either side of you burn with a similar light, though no heat radiates from them.

At APL 6:

Across the circle from you, a slight, grey-skinned man with exaggerated elven features and clothed in robes is standing next to another of the hands. He takes notice of you, and as he reaches out toward the stone in front of him, you hear him mutter "Kill them..." to no one in particular...

At APLs 8 & 10:

Across the circle from you, a slight, grey-skinned man with exaggerated elven features and clothed in robes is standing next to another of the hands; a taller woman of equally dismal pallor appears to be observing him but turns at your appearance. The robed man takes notice of you, and as he reaches out

toward the stone in front of him, you hear him mutter "Kill them..." to no one in particular...

At APL 12:

Across the circle from you, a slight, grey-skinned man with exaggerated elven features and clothed in robes is standing next to another of the hands; a taller woman of equally dismal pallor appears to be observing him but turns at your appearance. Two short, tough-looking old men wearing bright red hats stand next to the fire, and another just like them leans against another of the far stones; all three wield scythes that look too large for them. The robed man takes notice of you, and as he reaches out toward the stone in front of him, you hear him mutter "Kill them..." to no one in particular...

APL 6 (EL 9)

✦ **Xeutschos**: Shadar-Kai Wiz7; hp 70; see Appendix 1.

✦ **Shadar-Kai Sentries (3)**: hp 26 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 11)

✦ **Xeutschos**: Shadar-Kai Wiz9; hp 80; see Appendix 1.

✦ **Kanat**: Shadar-Kai Ftr6; hp 72; see Appendix 1.

✦ **Shadar-Kai Sentries (3)**: hp 26 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 13)

✦ **Xeutschos**: Shadar-Kai Wiz11; hp 90; see Appendix 1.

✦ **Kanat**: Shadar-Kai Ftr8; hp 90; see Appendix 1.

✦ **Shadar-Kai Sentries (3)**: hp 26 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 15)

✦ **Xeutschos**: Shadar-Kai Wiz13; hp 100; see Appendix 1.

✦ **Kanat**: Shadar-Kai Ftr8; hp 90; see Appendix 1.

✦ **Advanced Redcaps (3)**: hp 90 each; see Appendix 1.

✦ **Shadar-Kai Sentries (3)**: hp 26 each; see Appendix 1.

Due to the twisting nature of time in the fey realms, the party has managed to reappear on Oerth right as the final part of ritual commences. There should be no surprise round, as both parties become aware of each other at the same time.

Xeutschos (ZOO cho) had cast *greater mage armor* on the way to the Circle of Hands, and cast *false life*, *expeditious retreat*, and *shield* at the start of the ritual. The latter two spells have 1 minute (10 rounds) remaining on their durations at the start of the combat. His hit points total includes 17 temporary hit points from the casting of *false life*. If Kanat is present, he has received a casting of *indomitability* before the start of the ritual as well (which will also still be in effect when the PCs arrive).

Tactics

Map note: For positioning of the stones and the various opponents at the beginning of this encounter, see **DM Map #3** in **Appendix 3**.

Although Xeutschos doesn't completely understand the inner workings of the ritual given to him by Herion's forces, he does know that completing the steps described will establish a connection between the two planes, and that his shadar-kai brethren waiting in the Plane of Shadow can use the opportunity to cross over to Faerie and escape their Shadow Curse (so he thinks). As such, he will do his utmost to complete the ritual.

To do so, Xeutschos must take a standard action to touch and activate each of the remaining stones (similar to activating a use-activated magic item that does not provoke an attack of opportunity). Upon activation, the stone will burst with a flash of purple and green light, and begins to burn just like the others.

His very first action will be to cast *nervekitter*, either on himself at APL 6 or on Kanat at APL 8 and above. If he beats the PCs' initiative (or if those that go ahead of him stay close to those PCs who are still flat-footed), then he will cast a spherical *wall of evil* in an attempt to contain the party. Otherwise, he will then try to activate the stone directly next to him then move on to the next, using his companions, and/or the stones themselves for cover. If any PCs get within 10 feet of him, he will try to prevent the PC from getting any closer by casting a *shadow well* on the offending PC (or *wall of evil* if still available, as a line to block further access). Xeutschos is cold and calculating as befits the life of a shadar-kai, but that means he still has a fair amount of paranoia about him, so the bulk of the spells he prepared today are intended to keep people away from him in case someone tries to interrupt the ritual.

At all APLs, the sentries will start out hidden in the shadows of the stones marked 2, 4 and 6. If the sentries win initiative at APLs 6-10, the sentry at #2 will lob his vial of *night extract* at the party to give his allies the additional advantage of concealment, and the sentries at #4 and #6 will move up, trying to remain hidden to gain their sneak attack. At APL 12, if the sentries win

initiative, the sentry at #2 will not use the *night extract* directly on the party; he has been bullied and intimidated by the 3 redcaps, and knows that they do not have the same ability to see in the area of the *night extract* as the shadar-kai. He will, however, throw a vial to try and provide concealment for Xeutschos as he moves to the remaining stones.

At APLs 8-12, Kanat's job is to protect Xeutschos, and she will always try to keep herself between the party and the mage. Until the three remaining stones have been activated, she will generally avoid being drawn directly into melee, and will use tripping and as many attacks of opportunity as possible to keep the PCs from approaching Xeutschos.

At APL 12, the redcaps will dive right into combat, attacking whoever is closest. They were hired with the promise of bloodshed, and they leave the task of protecting Xeutschos to his shadar-kai brethren. They will fight to the death.

Development

If Xeutschos is able to activate the three remaining stones, read or paraphrase the following:

With a maniacal grin and a final touch from the robed man, all six stones flare briefly with a sickly purple flame that just as quickly dies down to almost nothing. Even the fire in the middle of the Circle appears subdued, almost as if it was about to burn out. In the pale moonlight, you become aware of figures – MANY figures – moving past you from out of the darkness. And not just past you, but through you as well. Some of the figures resolve themselves into humanoid shapes similar to the beings before you, but all remain incorporeal and faded as they pass by.

At the same time, an odd sound drifts in from the edge of your hearing, like the winds of an approaching storm, and quickly becomes almost deafening in its intensity.

Then, just as suddenly, like a castle door slamming shut against the wind, the sound stops. Some of the racing figures react like they have been knocked back, some fall prone to the ground, and some seem to almost fade into existence, before all wink out completely. With a scream of "NOOOOOOO!" the pale man turns to you glaring, his grin twisting to hatred and anger.

While some shadar-kai are able to pass over from Shadow to Faerie (these are the incorporeal beings the PCs see running past), the ritual has in fact failed (Herion's promises to the shadar-kai were completely empty). The figures being knocked back are those stragglers who tried

to cross over just as the planar boundaries "slammed shut".

At this point, Xeutschos throws most caution to the wind – he recognizes that something has gone wrong, and in his mind, the PCs are responsible. He will use whatever damaging spells he can, although if he sees an opportunity to disable a number of PCs at once, he will take it (for example, if the party is grouped close enough that they might all be affected by *slow*) to give his companions the ability to more easily render the party helpless. Remember that the shadar-kai are an extremely vicious race, and will go to the effort to come back and kill those that they have only previously disabled; Xeutschos is no exception, and will even pick up the spiked chain of a fallen comrade if he thinks he may contribute to the PCs' pain and suffering (he is proficient in its use)...

If the battle has gone completely against him (if all his support is killed or disabled, for example), then he will try to escape by activating the remaining charge on his *blackstone rune*.

If the party succeeds in driving off or killing the shadar-kai, in addition to the equipment remaining on the fallen, they will find the remains of scrolls at the base of each of the stone hands (Search DC 20 at night, or DC 10 during the day, or in the effects of a *daylight* spell). What writing remains on them is in an older dialect of Oeridian - most of the language and phrasing is actually nonsense, but a DC 20 Spellcraft check reveals that where magical concepts are described, they generally deal with magic of the Illusion school (and specifically the (Figment) subschool). The remains of a seal is on each scroll as well, and examining all of the scrolls together will reveal that the seal likely consisted of three inter-locking rings.

Treasure:

APL 6: L: Masterwork dagger (25 gp per character), 3 x masterwork spiked chain (each 27 gp per character; C: (70 gp); M: 3 x *+1 studded leather* (each 97 gp per character), 4 x *+1 gal-ralan* (each 52 gp per character), 4 x *potion of cure moderate wounds* (each 25 gp per character), 3 x vial of *night extract* (each 4 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor +1* (166 gp per character), *headband of intellect +2* (333 gp per character), *blackstone rune* (1 charge) (91 gp per character).

APL 8: L: Masterwork dagger (25 gp per character), 3 x masterwork spiked chain (each 27 gp per character; C: (78 gp); M: *+1 spiked chain* (193 gp per character), *+1 mithral shirt* (175 gp per character), 3 x *+1 studded leather* (each 97 gp per character), 3 x *+1 gal-ralan* (each 52 gp per character), 2 x *+2 gal-ralan* (each 208 gp per character), 2 x *potion of cure light wounds* (each 4 gp per character), 4 x

potion of cure moderate wounds (each 25 gp per character), 5 x vial of *night extract* (each 4 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor +1* (166 gp per character), *headband of intellect +2* (333 gp per character), *blackstone rune* (1 charge) (91 gp per character), *tunic of steady spellcasting* (208 gp per character).

APL 10: L: Masterwork dagger (25 gp per character), 3 x masterwork spiked chain (each 27 gp per character; C: (78 gp); M: *+1 spiked chain* (193 gp per character), *+1 light fortification mithral shirt* (425 gp per character), 3 x *+1 studded leather* (each 97 gp per character), 3 x *+1 gal-ralan* (each 52 gp per character), 2 x *+2 gal-ralan* (each 208 gp per character), 5 x *potion of cure moderate wounds* (each 25 gp per character), *potion of enlarge person* (20 gp per character), 5 x vial of *night extract* (each 4 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor +1* (166 gp per character), *headband of intellect +4* (1333 gp per character), *blackstone rune* (1 charge) (91 gp per character), *tunic of steady spellcasting* (208 gp per character), *brooch of shielding* (125 gp per character).

APL 12: L: 3 x masterwork spiked chain (each 27 gp per character), 3 x scythe (each 1 gp per character; C: (133 gp); M: *+1 dagger* (191 gp per character), *+1 spiked chain* (193 gp per character), *+1 light fortification mithral shirt* (425 gp per character), 3 x *+1 studded leather* (each 97 gp per character), 3 x *+1 gal-ralan* (each 52 gp per character), *+2 gal-ralan* (208 gp per character), *+3 gal-ralan* (466 gp per character), 5 x *potion of cure moderate wounds* (each 25 gp per character), *potion of enlarge person* (20 gp per character), 5 x vial of *night extract* (each 4 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor +1* (166 gp per character), *headband of intellect +4* (1333 gp per character), *blackstone rune* (1 charge) (91 gp per character), *tunic of steady spellcasting* (208 gp per character), *brooch of shielding* (125 gp per character), *shadow veil* (833 gp per character), 3 x *redcap's tooth* (each 83 gp per character).

Encounter 8: The Show Must Go On

Only if the PCs did not discover the Circle of Hands' connection to Faerie, and/or they waited for someone or something to show up, will this encounter occur...

Use the statistics for Xeutschos and his minions as detailed in **Encounter 7: Eclipse**, but disregard any boxed text or descriptions of tactics there; at this point,

the Shadar-Kai are motivated to slaughter the PCs for simply daring to interfere with their plans (even if the party was unaware they were doing so!) and will show no mercy.

The sentries (and Kanat at APL 8+) will attempt to stealthily approach the PCs (using their Hide in Plain Sight ability). If they can get within striking distance and remain hidden, Xeutschos will try to disable PCs with his spells from a safe distance – his “opening salvo” (something that can affect multiple PCs at once, if possible) will be the signal for the sentries (and Kanat) to attack. If, on the other hand, they are spotted before closing to melee distance, Xeutschos will still try to attack from a distance, but the other NPCs will move as quickly as possible to close the distance.

If the PCs wait, it will cost them an additional 2 TUs beyond their normal cost for a Veluna mod; this cannot be offset by favors in any way.

Conclusion

After the mage fled/was killed, the flames on the stones eventually died down. With the coming of dawn, it seemed clear you were back in Veluna where you ought to be. No storm swirled overhead, and no other of the dark fey made themselves known the rest of the night. Curiously, the “fading” effect you experienced earlier while standing within the Circle of Hands was no longer manifest.

A – If the PCs defeat Xeutschos and prevent the ritual from completing:

Presuming the PCs inform the Captain Bras and the guard of what happened:

After a few days journey back to Veluna City, you are able to make arrangements for a meeting with Captain Bras, who eagerly listens while a scribe records the details of your tale.

“I’m glad you were able to put a stop to whatever this foul ritual may have been intended to accomplish.” He motions to the remains of the scrolls you brought back as he continues, “To see yet more evidence that this was in some way linked to Herion is truly disheartening. Some days it seems as if his foul taint may never be cleansed from our lands!”

“I’ve only heard bogey-stories of these ‘dark fey’ you describe. ‘Course their behavior doesn’t sound any less predictable than what I’ve heard about regular fey

– like I told you, you just can't trust those uncivilized types!"

"Even though it's clear you stopped the proceedings before their plans could be completed, that is no guarantee that they and their ilk won't try again. The canon will be informed, of course, and I reckon he will want to start sending patrols past the Circle of Hands on a more regular basis."

"Regardless, you have our thanks for your efforts. It's good to know the rumors of the Church's involvement in this mess can be put to rest."

For those PCs not performing the investigation as a Church obligation, the Captain pays the following:

Treasure:

APL 6: L: (ogp); C: (300 gp); M: (ogp).

APL 8: L: (ogp); C: (400 gp); M: (ogp).

APL 10: L: (ogp); C: (500 gp); M: (ogp).

APL 12: L: (ogp); C: (600 gp); M: (ogp).

PCs who accepted the mission "for the good of the Church" will receive half of the above amount as a reward.

If the PCs return to Danu Dearg's house to inform her of events, read or paraphrase the following (in this version of the ending, Danu is obviously saddened by the loss of Choc, but try to play her with a sense of understanding, of knowing that such things are the way of the circle of life, and gaining comfort from that knowledge):

You see a familiar wisp of smoke drifting from the chimney as you approach Danu's hut, but there is no response to your knocks on the door. After a moment, though, you hear the sounds of shovel striking dirt coming from the back side of the house.

Presuming the PCs investigate:

As you round the side of the house, you see Danu at the edge of the oak copse. She appears to throw one more shovel of dirt on a small mound, then kneels and plants a small sprig while uttering words that drift away from you on the wind. As she stands up with her back still towards you, she speaks obviously to you: "You're welcome to join me; Choc wouldn't mind, and I promise I won't tell the Church if you want to say a word or two also."

She turns and smiles – her face is smudged with dirt but the clear streaks on her cheeks betray the fact that she has been crying. "Ahlith, stop!" She speaks in a scolding voice to a small black and white (and dirty) creature you now see digging away at the fresh

mound of dirt with its claws. "We shall see him again some day, but that is not the way to hasten the meeting!" The little badger at her feet looks up, then with what must pass for resignation, starts covering back up the hole it had already made. Danu lightly chuckles, then turns back to you. "The circle turns, my friends; what can I do for you?"

Presuming the PCs inform Danu of the events:

"The shadar-kai, you say? That is ... unsettling, but not unexpected when the shadows are long. Looking back, it could certainly explain many things. Although my elders will be cautious, I have a feeling that we need not fear such trouble for quite a while now. I was even paid a visit this morning from an old friend who's been working the fields up in Whitehale; said he didn't have a single problem on the journey here, either."

"I'm not sure how the old canon figures into things – perhaps it was just his last grasp at terror from beyond the grave!" (She chuckles at her own joke).

Danu will invite the PCs to stay for dinner, and will not be offended if they do not accept her offer. As the party is leaving, read the following:

As Danu walks with you back to the Great Western Road, she looks to the northwest, where gray clouds are gathering on the horizon. "Looks like a storm coming in," she muses, as the wind picks up from that direction. "Best be getting back to the city; you don't want to be caught out after dark!" She winks, then turns and heads back into her house.

B – If Xeutscho was able to complete the ritual:

Presuming the PCs inform the Captain Bras and the guard of what happened:

After a few days journey back to Veluna City, you are able to make arrangements for a meeting with Captain Bras, who eagerly listens while a scribe records the details of your tale.

"It is unfortunate that you seemed unable to put a stop to whatever this foul ritual may have accomplished." He motions to the remains of the scrolls you brought back as he continues, "To see yet more evidence that this was in some way linked to Herion is truly disheartening. Some days it seems as if his foul taint may never be cleansed from our lands!"

"I've only heard bogey-stories of these 'dark fey' you describe. 'Course their behavior doesn't sound any less predictable than what I've heard about regular fey

– like I told you, you just can't trust those uncivilized types!"

"It's seems clear, though, that something went wrong if the fellow in charge of things seemed so upset when the apparitions you saw stopped running through ... wherever. A guarantee if I ever heard one that they and their ilk will eventually try again. The canon will be informed, of course, and I reckon he will want to start sending patrols past the Circle of Hands on a more regular basis."

"Regardless, you have our thanks for your efforts. It's good to know the rumors of the Church's involvement in this mess can be put to rest."

For those PCs not performing the investigation as a Church obligation, the Captain pays the following:

Treasure:

APL 6: L: (ogp); C: (300 gp); M: (ogp).

APL 8: L: (ogp); C: (400 gp); M: (ogp).

APL 10: L: (ogp); C: (500 gp); M: (ogp).

APL 12: L: (ogp); C: (600 gp); M: (ogp).

PCs who accepted the mission "for the good of the Church" will receive half of the above amount as a reward.

If the PCs return to Danu Dearg's house to inform her of events, read or paraphrase the following (in this version of the ending, Danu should be played as much more saddened by the loss of her companion; while knowing that such things are part of the natural cycle, she still regrets his absence; her light-heartedness from the previous encounter with her is now gone):

You see a familiar wisp of smoke drifting from the chimney as you approach Danu's hut, but there is no response to your knocks on the door. After a moment, though, you hear the sounds of shovel striking dirt coming from the back side of the house.

Presuming the PCs investigate:

As you round the side of the house, you see Danu at the edge of the oak copse. You see her throw one more shovel of dirt on a small mound; you think you hear a sob, as she kneels and plants a small sprig, then utters words that drift away from you on the wind. As she stands up with her back still towards you, she speaks obviously to you: "You're welcome to join me; Choc wouldn't mind, and I promise I won't tell the Church if you want to say a word or two also."

She turns and weakly smiles – her face is smudged with dirt but the clear streaks on her cheeks betray

the fact that she has been crying. "Ahlith, stop!" She speaks in a scolding voice to a small black and white (and dirty) creature you now see digging away at the fresh mound of dirt with its claws. "Now is not the time and that is not the place to go digging for your dinner!" The little badger at her feet looks up, then with what must pass for resignation, starts covering back up the hole it had already made. Danu tries to chuckle at his antics, but it is clear that it is forced. She turns back to you, and with a heavy sigh, says, "The circle turns, my friends; what can I do for you?"

Presuming the PCs inform Danu of the events:

"The shadar-kai, you say? That is ... unsettling, but not unexpected when the shadows are long. Looking back, it could certainly explain many things. I received a message earlier today from one of my elders; it did not come in the manner I would normally expect, which leads me to believe that our problems have only just begun."

"Some of the more stubborn ones will place the blame for their troubles on your shoulders, even though from what you have told me, you made the best effort to prevent the ritual from its completion. I wish I had more say in such matters, but I no longer as persuasive as I once was."

"I'm also not sure how the old canon figures into things – perhaps it was just his last grasp at trying to reclaim the mantle of power in the Vale."

Danu will invite the PCs to stay for dinner, and will not be offended if they do not accept her offer. As the party is leaving, read the following:

As Danu walks with you back to the Great Western Road, she looks to the northwest, where gray clouds are gathering on the horizon. "Looks like a storm coming in," she muses, as the wind picks up from that direction. "Best be getting back to the city; you don't want to be caught out after dark..." She sighs, then turns and heads back into her house.

If Xeutscho was able to complete the ritual (i.e., the all the stones are activated), *even though* the ritual was, for the most part, a sham, there is one significant side effect – it appears that the Circle of Life's connection to the Circle of Hands has been "broken", meaning they seem no longer able to use the power of the Circle of Hands to call seekers and walkers together. It appears to be nothing more than a simple stone circle at this point, with no special connections to any place else. (The PCs should not know this fact however; the following should only give the impression that something is now "wrong" with the Circle):

A few weeks later, while resting in Tannenbaum's Chalice, you overhear a traveler talking to some of the local fixturs. "Yeah, I'm not sure what the big deal is. My caravans' have gone past there who knows how many times when running the Volverdyva Road route, and I never thought twice about it. I heard the rumors about what happened a few weeks ago, so this time I decided to hike up to the top with some of my guards."

"And like I said, I don't see what the big deal was... For being so sacred to some o'them nature types, it seemed awfully unkempt – nothing but brown grass and weeds over the whole top of the thing..."

The End

Official critical events results: Any player interested in downloading an official summary of events of this mod that reflects the critical events of the first run of this event should be given the following password. The DM should give this password to the players at the conclusion of play. They can then download the critical summary and use the password to open the file:

Password: leftovers

The End

Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus story awards) to each character.

Encounter One: The Dogs of War

Defeat the shadow mastiffs.

APL 6	210 xp
APL 8	270 xp
APL 10	330 xp
APL 12	390 xp

Encounter Five: Goodbye Blue Sky

Defeat the shadow plants.

APL 6	240 xp
APL 8	300 xp

APL 10	360 xp
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APL 12	420 xp
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Encounter Seven: Eclipse

Defeat the shadar-kai cultists and stop the ritual.

APL 6	270 xp
APL 8	330 xp
APL 10	390 xp
APL 12	450 xp

Story Award

Figure out how to use the Circle of Hands to journey to the Plane of Faerie.

APL 6	60 xp
APL 8	75 xp
APL 10	90 xp
APL 12	105 xp

Show restraint by not attacking the fey thorn patrol.

APL 6	60 xp
APL 8	75 xp
APL 10	90 xp
APL 12	105 xp

Warn the Circle of Life about the killings and/or turn Gadarn Vosper's body over to the Circle (Danu Dearg or another NPC).

APL 6	60 xp
APL 8	75 xp
APL 10	90 xp
APL 12	105 xp

Total possible experience:

APL 6	900 xp
APL 8	1,125 xp
APL 10	1,350 xp
APL 12	1,575 xp

Treasure Summary

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a "treasure" section

within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

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

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

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

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

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

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Encounter One: The Dogs of War

APL 6: L: (ogp); C: (0 gp); M: 2 x *Collar of Obedience* (each 125 gp per character), *wand of entangle* (4 charges) (10 gp per character).

APL 8: L: (ogp); C: (0 gp); M: 3 x *Collar of Obedience* (each 125 gp per character), *wand of entangle* (4 charges) (10 gp per character).

APL 10: L: (ogp); C: (0 gp); M: 2 x *Collar of Obedience* (each 125 gp per character), *wand of entangle* (4 charges) (10 gp per character).

APL 12: L: (ogp); C: (0 gp); M: 3 x *Collar of Obedience* (each 125 gp per character), *wand of entangle* (4 charges) (10 gp per character).

Encounter Seven: Eclipse

APL 6: L: Masterwork dagger (25 gp per character), 3 x masterwork spiked chain (each 27 gp per character; C: (70 gp); M: 3 x *+1 studded leather* (each 97 gp per character), 4 x *+1 gal-ralan* (each 52 gp per character), 4 x *potion of cure moderate wounds* (each 25 gp per character), 3 x vial of *night extract* (each 4 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor +1* (166 gp per character), *headband of intellect +2* (333 gp per character), *blackstone rune* (1 charge) (91 gp per character).

APL 8: L: Masterwork dagger (25 gp per character), 3 x masterwork spiked chain (each 27 gp per character; C: (78 gp); M: *+1 spiked chain* (193 gp per character), *+1 mithral shirt* (175 gp per character), 3 x *+1 studded leather* (each 97 gp per character), 3 x *+1 gal-ralan* (each 52 gp per character), 2 x *+2 gal-ralan* (each 208 gp per character), 2 x *potion of cure light wounds* (each 4 gp per character), 4 x *potion of cure moderate wounds* (each 25 gp per character), 5 x vial of *night extract* (each 4 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor +1* (166 gp per character), *headband of intellect +2* (333 gp per character), *blackstone rune* (1 charge) (91 gp per character), *tunic of steady spellcasting* (208 gp per character).

APL 10: L: Masterwork dagger (25 gp per character), 3 x masterwork spiked chain (each 27 gp per character; C: (78 gp); M: *+1 spiked chain* (193 gp per character), *+1 light fortification mithral shirt* (425 gp per character), 3 x *+1 studded leather* (each 97 gp per character), 3 x *+1 gal-ralan* (each 52 gp per character), 2 x *+2 gal-ralan* (each 208 gp per character), 5 x *potion of cure moderate wounds* (each 25 gp per character), *potion of enlarge person* (20 gp per character), 5 x vial of *night extract* (each 4 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor +1* (166 gp per character), *headband of intellect +4* (1333 gp per character), *blackstone rune* (1 charge) (91 gp per character), *tunic of steady spellcasting* (208 gp per character), *brooch of shielding* (125 gp per character).

APL 12: L: 3 x masterwork spiked chain (each 27 gp per character), 3 x scythe (each 1 gp per character; C: (133 gp); M: *+1 dagger* (191 gp per character), *+1 spiked chain* (193

gp per character), +1 *light fortification mithral shirt* (425 gp per character), 3 x +1 *studded leather* (each 97 gp per character), 3 x +1 *gal-ralan* (each 52 gp per character), +2 *gal-ralan* (208 gp per character), +3 *gal-ralan* (466 gp per character), 5 x *potion of cure moderate wounds* (each 25 gp per character), *potion of enlarge person* (20 gp per character), 5 x vial of *night extract* (each 4 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor* +1 (166 gp per character), *headband of intellect* +4 (1333 gp per character), *blackstone rune* (1 charge) (91 gp per character), *tunic of steady spellcasting* (208 gp per character), *brooch of shielding* (125 gp per character), *shadow veil* (833 gp per character), 3 x *redcap's tooth* (each 83 gp per character).

Total Possible Treasure

APL 6	900 gp
APL 8	1,300 gp
APL 10	2,300 gp
APL 12	3,300 gp

Special

Treasure Access Notes:

- (1) "Enmity of Shadows" is awarded to all PCs if Xeutschos remains alive at the end of **Encounter 7** (either by being captured and not killed by the party, or he was able to escape).
- (2) "Lost in Shadow" is awarded to any PC that activates a *blackstone rune* (should only be possible after defeating Xeutschos in **Encounter 7**). If this occurs, the gp value of the rune (1,100gp) should be subtracted from the potential treasure awarded.
- (3) "Thanks of the Fey" is awarded to all PCs ONLY if the ritual in **Encounter 7** is not completed.
- (4) Items marked with a ** are available to all PCs ONLY if they also receive the "Thanks of the Fey" favor.
- (5) "Sylthar" is awarded to PCs ONLY if the ritual in **Encounter 7** is not completed AND the PC already possessed either the *Friend of the Fey* or *Lived with the Fey* favors from **VEL5-05 The Lost**. If the PC elects to purchase a Feycraft item, all rules for construction of that item apply (these are described in *DMG II*).
- (6) "Sylqueran" is awarded to PCs ONLY if the ritual in **Encounter 7** is not completed AND the PC already possessed either the *Captured by Fey* or *Imprisoned by Fey* favors from **VEL5-05 The Lost**.

- (7) "Thanks of the Fey", "Sylthar" and/or "Sylqueran" can only be awarded if the PCs journeyed to the Plane of Faerie.
- (8) "Murders Solved" is awarded to PCs if they inform the Circle of Life of what they learned from the Fey Duke and/or the evidence gathered after the fight with the shadar-kai (they do not need to turn evidence over to the Circle). If one of the PCs is a member of the Circle of Life meta-organization, the party is considered to have met this qualification.
- (9) "Sorrow of the Circle" is awarded to the PCs if Xeutschos and the shadar-kai were able to complete the ritual.
- (10) It is possible for a PC to receive both the "Murders Solved" *and* the "Sorrow of the Circle" favors.
- (11) "Defended the Church's Reputation" is awarded to PCs if they inform the Church and/or the Guard of what they learned from the Fey Duke, and/or if they turned over evidence gathered after the fight with the shadar-kai.

Appendix 1: NPCs

ALL APLs

ENCOUNTER 1: The Dogs of War

Dark Hunter: Male Shadar-kai* Rgr8: CR 9; Medium fey (extraplanar); HD 3d6+8d8+11; hp 70; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 21 (touch 16, flat-footed 16); Base Atk +9; Grp +11; Atk +15 melee (2d4+3, masterwork spiked chain) or +15 ranged (1d6+3, +1 composite shortbow (+2 Str)); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (2d4+3, masterwork spiked chain) or +15/+10 ranged (1d6+3, +1 composite shortbow (+2 Str)); SA favored enemy (fey +2, human +4), sneak attack +1d6, swift tracker, wild empathy, woodland stride; SQ: DR 5/cold iron, Hide in Plain Sight, Shadow Curse, Superior Low-light Vision; AL NE; SV Fort +8; Ref +14; Will +9; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +5, Handle Animal +9, Heal +5, Hide +18 (+28 in dark or shadowy conditions), Knowledge (Geography) +4, Knowledge (Nature) +9, Listen +14, Move Silently +18, Search +9, Spot +14, Survival +16; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)(B), Iron Will, Manyshot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Finesse.

Hide in Plain Sight (Su): Shadar-kai can use the Hide skill even while being observed. As long as they are not illuminated by natural daylight, the daylight spell, or a similar magical light, shadar-kai can hide themselves from view in the open without having anything to actually hide behind.

Shadow Curse (Su): Any time a shadar-kai is stunned, dazed, staggered, or unconscious (other than from natural sleep), the shadow fey must make a Will save (DC 15) or gain one negative level that cannot be removed until he restores his soul completely. The shadar-kai must also attempt a save any time he removes a gal-ralan, if he has one (see Shadar-Kai Items, below).

Possessions: Masterwork spiked chain, +1 composite shortbow (+2 Str), +1 mithral shirt, +2 gal-ralan*, collar of obedience* (on all shadow mastiffs), ring of protection +1, vial of night extract*(x3)

Spells Prepared (2/1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 1st – *longstrider*, *magic fang*; 2nd – *cat's grace*.

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER 5, 6A, 6B, 6C:

Minions of the Fey Duke:

Thorn* patrol: CR4; Small fey; HD 6d6+12; hp 33; Init +6; Spd 20ft; AC 19 (touch 13, flat-footed 17); Base Atk +3; Grp +2; Atk +8 melee (1d6+3, Thorn longsword) or +6 ranged (1d6, longbow); Full Atk +8 melee (1d6+3, Thorn longsword) or +6 ranged (1d6, longbow); SA Sleep arrows, sneak attack +2d6; SQ DR 5/cold iron, low-light vision; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +3, Hide +17, Listen +9, Move Silently +13, Search +9, Sense Motive +9, Spot +9, Survival +0 (+2 following tracks); Improved Initiative, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Sleep Arrows (Ex): Thorns carry the sleep arrows commonly used by pixies. Any opponent struck by one of these arrows, regardless of Hit Dice, must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or be affected as though by a sleep spell. The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Sneak Attack (Ex): A thorn can sneak attack as a rogue, gaining an extra 2d6 points of damage on a successful sneak attack.

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Seelie (half-celestial) pixie: CR5; Small outsider (native); HD 1d6+2; hp 5; Init +4; Spd 20ft, fly 60ft; AC 18 (touch 16, flat-footed 13); Base Atk +2; Grp -4; Atk +6 melee (1d4, short sword) or +6 ranged (1d6, longbow); Full Atk +6 melee (1d4, short sword) or +6 ranged (1d6, longbow); SA: spell-like abilities, special arrows, *daylight* at will, *smite evil* 1/day; SQ: DR 10/cold iron, DR5/magic, darkvision 60ft, low-light vision, immunity to disease, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, greater invisibility, SR 15, +4 bonus on fortitude saves vs poison; AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 11, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 19, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +9, Concentration +6, Escape Artist +9, Hide +9, Listen +10, Move Silently +9, Ride +9, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +10; Dodge, Weapon Finesse.

Daylight (Su): can create *daylight* effect at will.

Smite Evil (Su): once per day a half-celestial can make a normal melee attack to deal extra damage equal to its HD (max +20) against an evil foe.

Spell-like abilities: 3/day—protection from evil. 1/day—lesser confusion (DC 16), dancing lights, detect chaos, detect good, detect law, detect thoughts (DC 17), dispel magic, entangle (DC 16), permanent image (DC 21; visual and auditory elements only), polymorph (self only), bless 1/day. Caster level 8th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Special Arrows (Ex): Pixies sometimes employ arrows that deal no damage but can erase memory or put a creature to sleep.

Memory Loss: An opponent struck by this arrow must succeed on a DC 17 Will save or lose all memory. The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +2 racial bonus. The subject retains skills, languages, and class abilities but forgets everything else until he or she receives a heal spell or memory restoration with limited wish, wish, or miracle.

Sleep: Any opponent struck by this arrow, regardless of Hit Dice, must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save or be affected as though by a sleep spell. The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Seelie (half-celestial elf) guards: CR 7; Medium outsider (native); HD 2d8+4d10+12; hp 41; Init +3; Spd 30ft, fly 60ft (good); AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 14); Base Atk +6; Grp +9; Atk +10 melee (1d8+5, longsword) or +10 ranged (1d8, longbow); Full Atk +6/+1 melee (1d8+5, longsword) and +1 melee (1d4+1, dagger) or +10/+5 ranged (1d8, longbow); SA daylight, smite evil, spell-like abilities; SQ DR 5/magic, darkvision 60ft, immunity to disease, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, spell resistance 16, +4 bonus on fortitude saves vs poison AL CG; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +8, Handle Animal +6, Jump +8, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +2, Knowledge (geography) +2, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +6, Ride +7, Search +5, Spot +8, Survival +6, Swim +5; Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Weapon focus (longbow), Weapon Focus

(longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword), Close-Quarters Fighting.

Daylight (Su): can create *daylight* effect at will.

Smite Evil (Su): once per day a half-celestial can make a normal melee attack to deal extra damage equal to its HD (max +20) against an evil foe.

Spell-like abilities: 3/day—protection from evil. 1/day—bless, aid, detect evil, cure serious wounds, neutralize poison. Caster level 6th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

ENCOUNTER 7: Eclipse

Sentries: Male Shadar-kai* Rog2; CR 3; Medium fey (extraplanar); HD 5d6+5; hp 26; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 19 (touch 15, flat-footed 14); Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk +8 melee (2d4+3, masterwork spiked chain); Full Atk +8 melee (2d4+3, masterwork spiked chain); SA sneak attack +2d6, evasion, trapfinding; SQ DR 5/cold iron, Hide in Plain Sight, Shadow Curse, Superior Low-light Vision; AL NE; SV Fort +3; Ref +12; Will +5; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Balance +15, Bluff +5, Escape Artist +13, Hide +13 (+23 in dark or shadowy conditions), Jump +9, Listen +11, Move Silently +13, Search +9, Sense Motive +6, Spot +11, Survival +7, Tumble +15; Alertness, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)(B), Weapon Finesse.

Hide in Plain Sight (Su): Shadar-kai can use the Hide skill even while being observed. As long as they are not illuminated by natural daylight, the daylight spell, or a similar magical light, shadar-kai can hide themselves from view in the open without having anything to actually hide behind.

Shadow Curse (Su): Any time a shadar-kai is stunned, dazed, staggered, or unconscious (other than from natural sleep), the shadow fey must make a Will save (DC 15) or gain one negative level that cannot be removed until he restores his soul completely. The shadar-kai must also attempt a save any time he removes a gal-ralan, if he has one (see Shadar-Kai Items, below).

Possessions: Masterwork spiked chain, +1 studded leather, +1 gal-ralan*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, vial of *night extract**, coin 25gp.

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

APL 6

ENCOUNTER 5: Goodbye Blue Sky

Shadow* Shambling Mound: CR 7; Large plant; HD 8d8+24; hp 66; Init +0; Spd 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 20 (touch 9, flat-footed 20); Base Atk +6; Grp +15; Atk +12 (2d6+5, slam); Full Atk +12 (2d6+5, 2 slams); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA improved grab, constrict; SQ DR 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity, low-light vision, plant traits, resistance to cold 13 and fire 10; AL NE; SV Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 21, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Hide +3 (+15 in swampy or forested area), Listen +8, Move Silently +14; Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus: Slam.

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

Constrict (Ex): A shambler deals 2d6+7 points of damage with a successful grapple check.

Electricity Immunity (Ex): Shamblers take no damage from electricity. Instead, any electricity attack (such as *shocking grasp* or *lightning bolt*) used against a shambler temporarily grants it 1d4 points of Constitution. The shambler loses these points at the rate of 1 per hour.

Plant Traits: A shadow treant is immune to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing, and mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects). It is not subject to critical hits.

Shadow Blend (Su): In any conditions other than full daylight, a shadow creature can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability, but a *daylight* spell will.

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

ENCOUNTER 7: Eclipse

Xeutschos: Male Shadar-Kai* Wiz7; CR 8; Medium fey (extraplanar); HD 3d6+7d4+20; hp 53 [70 with *false life*]; Init +7; Spd 30 ft. [60ft. with *expeditious retreat*]; AC 14 [24 with *mage armor* and *shield*]

(touch 14, flat-footed 11 [21 with *mage armor* and *shield*]); Base Atk +4, Grp +3; Atk +4 melee (1d4-1, masterwork dagger) or Atk +7 ranged (1d4-1, masterwork dagger); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ DR 5/cold iron, Hide in Plain Sight, Shadow Curse, Superior Low-light Vision; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +14, Craft (Alchemy) +7, Decipher Script +9, Hide +10 (+20 in dark or shadowy conditions), Knowledge (Arcana) +14, Knowledge (Nature) +11, Knowledge (The Planes) +14, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Search +11, Spellcraft +15, Spot +8, Survival +8; Combat Casting, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)(B), Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Sudden Maximize*, Sudden Widen*.

Hide in Plain Sight (Su): Shadar-kai can use the Hide skill even while being observed. As long as they are not illuminated by natural daylight, the daylight spell, or a similar magical light, shadar-kai can hide themselves from view in the open without having anything to actually hide behind.

Shadow Curse (Su): Any time a shadar-kai is stunned, dazed, staggered, or unconscious (other than from natural sleep), the shadow fey must make a Will save (DC 15) or gain one negative level that cannot be removed until he restores his soul completely. The shadar-kai must also attempt a save any time he removes a gal-ralan, if he has one (see Shadar-Kai Items, below).

Possessions: Masterwork dagger, spell component pouches, rat familiar, Xeutschos's spellbook Volume 1, *amulet of natural armor* +1, +1 *gal-ralan**, *headband of intellect* +2, potion of *cure moderate wounds* (x2), *blackstone rune* (1 charge), coin 35pp.

Spells Prepared (4/5/4/3/2; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0th – resistance, flare, acid splash (x2); 1st – ~~false life~~, *nerveskitter*, *ray of enfeeblement*, ~~shield~~, ~~expeditious retreat~~; 2nd – *Melf's acid arrow* (x2), *mirror image*, *shadow spray**; 3rd – ~~greater mage armor~~*; *hold person*, *slow*; 4th – *shadow well**, *wall of evil**. (Spells shown in ~~strikeout~~ are precast.)

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

APL 8

ENCOUNTER 1: The Dogs of War

Advanced Shadow Mastiff: CR 6; Medium outsider (extraplanar); HD 6d8+18; hp 50; Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; AC 14 (touch 11, flat-footed 13); Base Atk +6; Grp +9; Atk +9 (1d8+4, bite); Full Atk +9 (1d8+4, bite); SA bay, trip; SQ shadow blend, scent, darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 17, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Hide +10, Jump +11, Listen +10, Move Silently +10, Spot +10, Survival +10 (+14 when tracking by scent); Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (Bite), Track.

Bay (Su): When a shadow mastiff howls or barks, all creatures except evil outsiders within a 300-foot spread must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic, mind-affecting fear effect. Whether or not the save is successful, an affected creature is immune to the same mastiff's bay for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

ENCOUNTER 5: Goodbye Blue Sky

Shadow* Treant: CR 9; Huge plant (extraplanar); HD 7d8+35; hp 70; Init -1; Spd 45 ft.; AC 20 (touch 7, flat-footed 20); Base Atk +5; Grp +22; Atk +12 (2d6+9, slam); Full Atk +12 (2d6+9, 2 slams); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA animate trees, double damage against objects, trample 2d6+13; SQ DR 10/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 2, low-light vision, plant traits, resistance to cold 12, shadow blend, vulnerability to fire; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +1, Will +7; Str 29, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +3, Hide -9 (+7 in forested areas), Intimidate +6, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +5, Sense Motive +8, Spot +8, Survival +8 (+10 aboveground); Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack.

Fast Healing (Ex): A shadow treant regains hit points at the rate of 2 hit points per round. Fast healing does not restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation, and it does not allow the shadow treant to regrow or reattach lost body parts.

Shadow Blend (Su): In any conditions other than full daylight, a shadow creature can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment.

Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability, but a *daylight* spell will.

ENCOUNTER 7: Eclipse

Xeutsch: Male Shadar-Kai* Wiz9; CR 10; Medium fey (extraplanar); HD 3d6+9d4+24; hp 63 [80 with *false life*]; Init +7; Spd 30 ft. [60ft. with *expeditious retreat*]; AC 14 [24 with *greater mage armor* and *shield*] (touch 13, flat-footed 11 [21 with *greater mage armor* and *shield*]); Base Atk +5, Grp +4; Atk +5 melee (1d4-1, masterwork dagger) or Atk +8 ranged (1d4-1, masterwork dagger); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ DR 5/cold iron, Hide in Plain Sight, Shadow Curse, Superior Low-light Vision; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +12; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 19, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +22, Craft (Alchemy) +7, Decipher Script +9, Hide +10 (+20 in dark or shadowy conditions), Knowledge (Arcana) +16, Knowledge (Nature) +11, Knowledge (The Planes) +16, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Search +11, Spellcraft +17, Spot +8, Survival +8; Arcane Mastery*, Combat Casting, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)(B), Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Sudden Maximize*, Sudden Widen*.

Hide in Plain Sight (Su): Shadar-kai can use the Hide skill even while being observed. As long as they are not illuminated by natural daylight, the daylight spell, or a similar magical light, shadar-kai can hide themselves from view in the open without having anything to actually hide behind.

Shadow Curse (Su): Any time a shadar-kai is stunned, dazed, staggered, or unconscious (other than from natural sleep), the shadow fey must make a Will save (DC 15) or gain one negative level that cannot be removed until he restores his soul completely. The shadar-kai must also attempt a save any time he removes a gal-ralan, if he has one (see Shadar-Kai Items, below).

Possessions: Masterwork dagger, spell component pouches, rat familiar, Xeutsch's spellbook Volume I+II, *amulet of natural armor* +1, +2 *gal-ralan**, *headband of intellect* +2, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *tunic of steady spellcasting*, *blackstone rune* (1 charge), coin 35pp.

Spells Prepared (4/5/5/4/3/1; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0th – resistance, flare, acid splash (x2); 1st – ~~false life~~, *nerveskitter**, *ray of enfeeblement*, ~~shield~~, ~~expeditious retreat~~, 2nd – *Melf's acid arrow* (x2), *mirror image*, *scorching ray*, *shadow spray**; 3rd – *dispel magic*, ~~greater mage armor~~*, *hold person*, *slow*, 4th – *crushing despair*, *shadow well**, *wall of evil**; 5th – ~~indomitability~~. (Spells shown in ~~strikeout~~ are precast.)

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Kanat: Female Shadar-Kai* Ftr6; CR 7; Medium fey (extraplanar); Medium fey (extraplanar); HD 3d6+8d8+18; hp 72; Init +8; Spd 30 ft; AC 19 (touch 14, flat-footed 15); Base Atk +9; Grp +11; Atk +13 melee (2d4+6, +1 *spiked chain*); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (2d4+6, +1 *spiked chain*); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ DR 5/cold iron, Hide in Plain Sight, Shadow Curse, Superior Low-light Vision; AL NE; SV Fort +10; Ref +11; Will +8; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +10 (+20 in dark or shadowy conditions), Intimidate +4, Jump +10, Listen +9, Move Silently +10, Search +7, Spot +9, Survival +7, Tumble +12; Alertness, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)(B), Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Iron Will, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (spiked chain), Weapon Specialization (spiked chain).

Hide in Plain Sight (Su): Shadar-kai can use the Hide skill even while being observed. As long as they are not illuminated by natural daylight, the daylight spell, or a similar magical light, shadar-kai can hide themselves from view in the open without having anything to actually hide behind.

Shadow Curse (Su): Any time a shadar-kai is stunned, dazed, staggered, or unconscious (other than from natural sleep), the shadow fey must make a Will save (DC 15) or gain one negative level that cannot be removed until he restores his soul completely. The shadar-kai must also attempt a save any time he removes a gal-ralan, if he has one (see Shadar-Kai Items, below).

Possessions: +1 *spiked chain*, +1 *mithral shirt*, +2 *gal-ralan**, *potion of cure light wounds* (x2), vial of *night extract**(x2), coin 48gp.

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

APL 10

ENCOUNTER 1: The Dogs of War

Advanced Shadow Mastiff: CR 9; Large outsider (extraplanar); HD 10d8+50; hp 100; Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; AC 16 (touch 10, flat-footed 15); Base Atk +10; Grp +21; Atk +16 (2d6+10, bite); Full Atk +16 (2d6+10, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA bay, trip; SQ shadow blend, scent, darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +8; Str 25, Dex 12, Con 21, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Hide +10, Jump +15, Listen +14, Move Silently +14, Spot +14, Survival +14 (+18 when tracking by scent); Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Improved Natural Attack (Bite), Lightning Reflexes, Track.

Bay (Su): When a shadow mastiff howls or barks, all creatures except evil outsiders within a 300-foot spread must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic, mind-affecting fear effect. Whether or not the save is successful, an affected creature is immune to the same mastiff's bay for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

ENCOUNTER 5: Goodbye Blue Sky

Shadow* Treant: CR 9; Huge plant (extraplanar); HD 7d8+35; hp 70; Init -1; Spd 45 ft.; AC 20 (touch 7, flat-footed 20); Base Atk +5; Grp +22; Atk +12 (2d6+9, slam); Full Atk +12 (2d6+9, 2 slams); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA animate trees, double damage against objects, trample 2d6+13; SQ DR 10/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 2, low-light vision, plant traits, resistance to cold 12, shadow blend vulnerability to fire; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +1, Will +7; Str 29, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +3, Hide -9 (+7 in forested areas), Intimidate +6, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +5, Sense Motive +8, Spot +8, Survival +8 (+10 aboveground); Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack.

Fast Healing (Ex): A shadow treant regains hit points at the rate of 2 hit points per round. Fast healing does not restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation, and it does not allow the shadow treant to regrow or reattach lost body parts.

ENCOUNTER 7: Eclipse

Xeutsch: Male Shadar-Kai* Wizi11; CR 12; Medium fey (extraplanar); HD 3d6+11d4+24; hp 73 [90 with *false life*]; Init +7; Spd 30 ft. [60ft. with *expeditious retreat*]; AC 14 [24 with *greater mage armor* and *shield*] (touch 13, flat-footed 11 [21 with *greater mage armor* and *shield*]); Base Atk +6, Grp +5; Atk +6 melee (1d4-1, masterwork dagger) or Atk +9 ranged (1d4-1, masterwork dagger); Full Atk +6/+1 melee (1d4-1, masterwork dagger); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ DR 5/cold iron, Hide in Plain Sight, Shadow Curse, Superior Low-light Vision; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +13; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 21, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +24, Craft (Alchemy) +10, Decipher Script +10, Hide +10 (+20 in dark or shadowy conditions), Knowledge (Arcana) +19, Knowledge (Nature) +12, Knowledge (The Planes) +19, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Search +12, Spellcraft +21, Spot +8, Survival +8; Arcane Mastery*, Combat Casting, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)(B), Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Sudden Empower*, Sudden Maximize*, Sudden Widen*.

Hide in Plain Sight (Su): Shadar-kai can use the Hide skill even while being observed. As long as they are not illuminated by natural daylight, the daylight spell, or a similar magical light, shadar-kai can hide themselves from view in the open without having anything to actually hide behind.

Shadow Curse (Su): Any time a shadar-kai is stunned, dazed, staggered, or unconscious (other than from natural sleep), the shadow fey must make a Will save (DC 15) or gain one negative level that cannot be removed until he restores his soul completely. The shadar-kai must also attempt a save any time he removes a gal-ralan, if he has one (see Shadar-Kai Items, below).

Possessions: Masterwork dagger, spell component pouches, rat familiar, Xeutsch's spellbook Volume I+II+III, *amulet of natural armor* +1, +2 *gal-ralan**, *headband of intellect* +4, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *tunic of steady spellcasting**, *blackstone rune** (1 charge), coin 35pp.

Spells Prepared (4/6/5/5/4/3/1; base DC = 15 + spell level): 0th – resistance, flare, acid splash (x2); 1st – *false life*, *nerveskitter**, *ray of enfeeblement*

(x2), ~~shield~~, ~~expeditious retreat~~, 2nd – *Melf's acid arrow* (x2), *mirror image*, *scorching ray*, *shadow spray**; 3rd – *dispel magic*, ~~greater mage armor~~*; *hold person* (x2), *slow*, 4th – *crushing despair*, *shadow well** (x2), *wall of evil**; 5th – *dominate person*, *feeblemind*, ~~indomitability~~*; 6th – *mislead*. (Spells shown in ~~strikeout~~ are precast.)

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Kanat: Female Shadar-Kai* Ftr8; CR 9; Medium fey (extraplanar); Medium fey (extraplanar); HD 3d6+8d10+22; hp 90; Init +8; Spd 30 ft; AC 19 (touch 14, flat-footed 15); Base Atk +11; Grp +13; Atk +15 melee (2d4+6, +1 *spiked chain*); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (2d4+6, +1 *spiked chain*); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ DR 5/cold iron, Hide in Plain Sight, Shadow Curse, Superior Low-light Vision; AL NE; SV Fort +11; Ref +11; Will +8; Str 15, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +15 (+25 in dark or shadowy conditions), Intimidate +10, Jump +10, Listen +9, Move Silently +10, Search +7, Spot +9, Survival +7, Tumble +12; Alertness, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Deft Opportunist*, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)(B), Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (spiked chain), Weapon Specialization (spiked chain).

Hide in Plain Sight (Su): Shadar-kai can use the Hide skill even while being observed. As long as they are not illuminated by natural daylight, the daylight spell, or a similar magical light, shadar-kai can hide themselves from view in the open without having anything to actually hide behind.

Shadow Curse (Su): Any time a shadar-kai is stunned, dazed, staggered, or unconscious (other than from natural sleep), the shadow fey must make a Will save (DC 15) or gain one negative level that cannot be removed until he restores his soul completely. The shadar-kai must also attempt a save any time he removes a gal-ralan, if he has one (see Shadar-Kai Items, below).

Possessions: +1 *spiked chain*, +1 *light fortification mithral shirt*, +2 *gal-ralan**, *brooch of shielding*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of enlarge person*, coin 48gp.

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

APL 12

ENCOUNTER 1: The Dogs of War

Advanced Shadow Mastiff: CR 10; Large outsider (extraplanar); HD 12d8+60; hp 120; Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; AC 16 (touch 10, flat-footed 15); Base Atk +12; Grp +23; Atk +18 (2d6+10, bite); Full Atk +18 (2d6+10, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA bay, trip; SQ shadow blend, scent, darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +13, Ref +11, Will +9; Str 25, Dex 13, Con 21, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Hide +10, Jump +15, Listen +14, Move Silently +14, Spot +14, Survival +14 (+18 when tracking by scent); Dodge, Improved Natural Armor, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (Bite), Lightning Reflexes, Track.

Bay (Su): When a shadow mastiff howls or barks, all creatures except evil outsiders within a 300-foot spread must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic, mind-affecting fear effect. Whether or not the save is successful, an affected creature is immune to the same mastiff's bay for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

ENCOUNTER 5: Goodbye Blue Sky

Advanced Shadow* Treant: CR 10; Huge plant (extraplanar); HD 11d8+55; hp 110; Init -1; Spd 45 ft.; AC 20 (touch 7, flat-footed 20); Base Atk +8; Grp +26; Atk +16 (2d6+10, slam); Full Atk +16 (2d6+10, 2 slams); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA animate trees, double damage against objects, trample 2d6+15; SQ DR 10/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 2, low-light vision, plant traits, resistance to cold 15, shadow blend vulnerability to fire; AL NE; SV Fort +14, Ref +3, Will +9; Str 30, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +3, Hide -9 (+7 in forested areas), Intimidate +8, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +10, Move Silently +5, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10, Survival +10 (+12 aboveground); Ability Focus (Trample), Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack.

Fast Healing (Ex): A shadow treant regains hit points at the rate of 2 hit points per round. Fast healing does not restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation, and it does not

allow the shadow treant to regrow or reattach lost body parts.

ENCOUNTER 7: Eclipse

Xeutsch: Male Shadar-Kai* Wiz13; CR 14; Medium fey (extraplanar); HD 3d6+13d4+28; hp 83 [100 with *false life*]; Init +7; Spd 30 ft. [60ft. with *expeditious retreat*]; AC:16 [26 with *greater mage armor* and *shield*] (touch 15, flat-footed 13 [23 with *greater mage armor* and *shield*]); Base Atk +7, Grp +6; Atk +7 melee (1d4, +1 *dagger*) or Atk +10 ranged (1d4, +1 *dagger*); Full Atk +7/+2 (1d4, +1 *dagger*); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ DR 5/cold iron, Hide in Plain Sight, Shadow Curse, Superior Low-light Vision; AL NE; SV Fort +12, Ref +13, Will +15; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 22, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +26, Craft (Alchemy) +11, Decipher Script +11, Hide +10 (+20 in dark or shadowy conditions), Knowledge (Arcana) +23, Knowledge (Nature) +13, Knowledge (The Planes) +22, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Search +13, Spellcraft +27, Spot +8, Survival +8; Arcane Mastery*, Combat Casting, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)(B), Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Penetration, Sudden Empower*, Sudden Maximize*, Sudden Widen*.

Hide in Plain Sight (Su): Shadar-kai can use the Hide skill even while being observed. As long as they are not illuminated by natural daylight, the daylight spell, or a similar magical light, shadar-kai can hide themselves from view in the open without having anything to actually hide behind.

Shadow Curse (Su): Any time a shadar-kai is stunned, dazed, staggered, or unconscious (other than from natural sleep), the shadow fey must make a Will save (DC 15) or gain one negative level that cannot be removed until he restores his soul completely. The shadar-kai must also attempt a save any time he removes a gal-ralan, if he has one (see Shadar-Kai Items, below).

Possessions: +1 *dagger*, spell component pouches, rat familiar, Xeutsch's spellbook Volume I+II+III+IV, *amulet of natural armor* +1, +3 *gal-ralan**, *headband of intellect* +4, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *shadow veil**, *tunic of*

*steady spellcasting**, *blackstone rune** (1 charge), coin 35pp.

Spells Prepared (4/6/6/5/5/4/3/1; base DC = 16 + spell level): 0th – resistance, flare, acid splash (x2); 1st – ~~false life~~, *nerveskitter**, *ray of enfeeblement* (x2), ~~shield~~, ~~expeditious retreat~~; 2nd – *Melf's acid arrow* (x2), *mirror image*, *scorching ray*, *shadow spray** (x2); 3rd – *dispel magic*, ~~greater mage armor*~~, *hold person* (x2), *slow*; 4th – *crushing despair*, *shadow conjuration*, *shadow well** (x2), *wall of evil**; 5th – *dominate person*, *feeblemind*, ~~indomitability*~~, *shadow evocation*; 6th – *mislead*, *howling chain**, *mass suggestion*; 7th – *reverse gravity*. (Spells shown in ~~strikeout~~ are precast.)

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Kanat: Female Shadar-Kai* Ftr8; CR 9; Medium fey (extraplanar); Medium fey (extraplanar); HD 3d6+8d10+22; hp 90; Init +8; Spd 30 ft; AC 19 (touch 14, flat-footed 15); Base Atk +11; Grp +13; Atk +15 melee (2d4+6, *+1 spiked chain*); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (2d4+6, *+1 spiked chain*); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ DR 5/cold iron, Hide in Plain Sight, Shadow Curse, Superior Low-light Vision; AL NE; SV Fort +11; Ref +11; Will +8; Str 15, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +15 (+25 in dark or shadowy conditions), Intimidate +10, Jump +10, Listen +9, Move Silently +10, Search +7, Spot +9, Survival +7, Tumble +12; Alertness, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Deft Opportunist*, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)(B), Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (spiked chain), Weapon Specialization (spiked chain).

Hide in Plain Sight (Su): Shadar-kai can use the Hide skill even while being observed. As long as they are not illuminated by natural daylight, the daylight spell, or a similar magical light, shadar-kai can hide themselves from view in the open without having anything to actually hide behind.

Shadow Curse (Su): Any time a shadar-kai is stunned, dazed, staggered, or unconscious (other than from natural sleep), the shadow fey must make a Will save (DC 15) or gain one negative level that cannot be removed until he restores his soul completely. The shadar-kai must also attempt a save any time he removes a gal-ralan, if he has one (see Shadar-Kai Items, below).

Possessions: *+1 spiked chain*, *+1 light fortification mithral shirt*, *+2 gal-ralan**, *brooch of shielding*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of enlarge person*, coin 48gp.

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Advanced Redcaps*: CR 6; Small fey; HD 10d6+50; hp 90; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (touch 15, flat-footed 15); Base Atk +5; Grp +10; Atk +9 melee (2d4+11, Medium scythe)** or +11 ranged (1d6+6; Medium sling); SA Eldritch stone, powerful build; SQ DR 10/cold iron, low-light vision; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +8; Str 20, Dex 19, Con 20, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Hide +21, Intimidate +14, Listen +16, Move Silently +17, Spot +16, Survival +14; Alertness, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

** Includes adjustments for Power Attack feat.

Eldritch Stone (Su): Bullets fired from a redcap's sling glow with a greenish-blue magical energy, giving them a +1 enhancement bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls as well as dealing 1d6 points of damage (instead of the 1d4 points an ordinary bullet deals).

Powerful Build (Ex): The physical stature of a redcap lets it function in many ways as if he were one size category higher. Whenever a redcap is subject to a size modifier or special size modifier for an opposed check (such as during grapple checks, bull rush attempts, and trip attempts), the redcap is treated as one size larger if doing so is advantageous to it. A redcap is also considered to be one size larger when determining whether a creature's special attacks based on size (such as improved grab or swallow whole) can affect him. A redcap can use weapons designed for a creature one size larger without penalty. However, its space and reach remain those of a creature of its actual size. The benefits of this characteristic stack with the effects of powers, abilities, and spells that change the subject's size category.

Possessions: Medium scythe, medium sling, *redcap tooth*, coin 11pp.

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Shadow Creature Template

As presented in *Lords of Madness*

“Shadow” is a template that can be added to any corporeal aberration, animal, dragon, fey, giant, humanoid, magical beast, monstrous humanoid, plant, undead, or vermin (hereafter referred to as the base creature).

A shadow creature uses all the base creature's statistics and abilities except as noted here. Do not recalculate the creature's Hit Dice, base attack bonus, saves, or skill points if its type changes.

Size and Type: Animals or vermin with this template become magical beasts, but otherwise the creature type is unchanged. Shadow creatures encountered on the Material Plane have the extraplanar subtype and are native to the Plane of Shadow.

Speed: As base creature X 1-1/2.

Special Qualities: A shadow creature retains all the special qualities of the base creature, and also gains the following:

- Resistance to cold equal to 5 + 1 per Hit Die, to a maximum of 15.
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Low-light vision.
- *Shadow Blend (Su)*: In any conditions other than full daylight, a shadow creature can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability, but a *daylight* spell will.

Shadow creatures also have one additional special ability for every 4 Hit Dice they possess (minimum of one additional ability) chosen from the following list:

- +2 Luck bonus on all saving throws.
- *Cause Fear (Sp)*: 1/day. Caster level 5th. The save DC is Charisma-based.
- Damage reduction 5/magic.
- Evasion, as the rogue class feature.
- Fast healing 2.
- *Mirror Image (Sp)*: 1/day. Caster level 5th.
- *Plane Shift (Sp)*: 1/day, to or from the Plane of Shadow only. Caster level 15th.

If the base creature already has one or more of these special qualities, use the better value.

Skills: Same as base creature. Shadow creatures gain a +6 racial bonus on Move Silently checks.

Feats: Same as the base creature.

Environment: Plane of Shadow.

Organization: Same as the base creature.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1.

Treasure: Same as the base creature.

Alignment: Usually neutral evil.

Advancement: Same as the base creature.

Level Adjustment: Same as the base creature +2.

Shadar-Kai as presented in *Fiend Folio* Medium-Size Fey (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 3d6 (10 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armor Class: 16 (+3 Dex, +3 studded leather), touch 13, flat-footed 13

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/+1

Attack: Spiked chain +4 melee (2d4/x2), or shortbow +4 ranged (1d6/x3)

Full Attack: Spiked chain +4 melee (2d4/x2), or shortbow +4 ranged (1d6/x3)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft. (10 ft. with spiked chain)

Special Attacks: Sneak attack +1d6

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/cold iron, hide in plain sight, shadow curse, superior low-light vision

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +1

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 9

Skills: Hide +9, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Search +6, Spot +8, Survival +6 (+8 following tracks)

Feats: Alertness, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)(B), Weapon Finesse

Environment: Any forest and underground (Plane of Shadow)

Organization: Solitary, patrol (3–6), or raid (7–12)

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: +1 gal-ralan plus standard

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +1

The shadar-kai, or shadow fey, are a race of bitter, determined folk whose souls are poisoned by shadow. Gray-skinned and dark-eyed, the slender shadar-kai stand slightly taller than average humans, and their soft movements exude grace and uncanny stealth. Shadow follows the shadar-kai wherever they go. Shadows cast by the folds of their clothing seem deeper than those on humanoids, and a shadar-kai can seemingly fade out of sight by simply stepping into any common shadow.

The shadar-kai prefer light weapons suited for grace and agility, especially spiked chains. Many shadar-kai favor a variety of piercings and tattoos.

Long ago, the shadar-kai thought to preserve the world from the rising humanoid races. Skilled in shadow magic, the shadar-kai made a pact with a dark power of the Plane of Shadow to cast the world into an endless twilight in which the shadow fey would rule supreme. But the experiment went awry, and the shadar-kai were left bound to the Plane of Shadow, cursed to lose their souls in its dark depths. This shadow curse affects the shadar-kai to this day, and every member of the race is engaged in a lifelong struggle to stave off inevitable doom.

The continuous pull of the Plane of Shadow has left the shadar-kai grim and embattled. Few races understand the plight of the shadow fey. Even the temporary solutions the shadar-kai have found leave them struggling with constant pain, making them vicious. Their willingness to commit acts of cruelty and violence has increased with each generation.

Shadar-kai speak Common, Elven, and Sylvan.

COMBAT

Cursed and blessed with a great affinity for the Plane of Shadow, the shadar-kai are subtle and deceptive. They steal without being detected when they can, striking from ambush when necessary. Spellcasters among the shadar-kai favor shadow and illusion magic, and few groups of the shadow fey are without a powerful spellcasting leader. Skilled at stealth and gifted with visual acuity greater than that of most other creatures, the shadar-kai have little trouble making sure that combat occurs on their terms.

The shadar-kai described in the statistics block wears a +1 gal-ralan (see Shadar-Kai Items, below).

Sneak Attack (Ex): Any time a shadar-kai's target is denied a Dexterity bonus, or when a target is flanked by a shadar-kai, the shadar-kai

deals an extra 1d6 points of damage on a successful melee attack. This damage stacks with sneak attack damage from other sources, such as rogue levels.

Hide in Plain Sight (Su): Shadar-kai can use the Hide skill even while being observed. As long as they are not illuminated by natural daylight, the daylight spell, or a similar magical light, shadar-kai can hide themselves from view in the open without having anything to actually hide behind.

Shadow Curse (Su): The Plane of Shadow exerts a tremendous pull on a shadar-kai's soul, which is only tenuously connected to its mortal body. Any time a shadar-kai is stunned, dazed, staggered, or unconscious (other than from natural sleep), the shadow fey must make a Will save (DC 15) or lose a portion of her soul to the Plane of Shadow. The shadar-kai must also attempt a save any time she removes a gal-ralan, if she has one (see Shadar-Kai Items, below).

A shadar-kai with a damaged soul gains one negative level that cannot be removed until she restores her soul completely. If exposed to another event that requires a save against the shadow curse, a shadar-kai may gain additional negative levels. A shadar-kai on the Plane of Shadow can transfix her soul to her body again with a greater restoration spell. A shadar-kai on the Material Plane (or elsewhere) must use a wish or miracle spell to restore her soul.

A shadar-kai afflicted with the shadow curse cannot be raised from the dead or resurrected, and cannot gain experience. The touch of the shadow curse galls a shadar-kai, filling its heart with an icy emptiness that eventually drives all but the most determined individuals to capitulate and leave the Material Plane altogether.

A shadar-kai creature who goes to the Plane of Shadow and remains there ameliorates the effects of the shadow curse and suffers no ill effects. However, if she leaves the Plane of Shadow without restoring her soul, she suffers the effects of the shadow curse until she returns to the Plane of Shadow or restores her soul.

Superior Low-Light Vision (Ex): Shadar-kai have extraordinary vision in low-light conditions. They can see four times as far as a human in low-light conditions.

Skills: * Shadar-kai have a +10 racial bonus on Hide checks made in dark or shadowy conditions (anything other than daylight or the area of a daylight spell).

Redcap as presented in *Monster Manual* III

Small Fey

Hit Dice: 4d6+8 (22 hp)

Initiative: +5

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

AC: +13 (+1 Size, +1 Dex, +1 Natural), touch 12, flatfooted 12

Base Attack/Grapple: +2/+4

Attack: Medium scythe +3 melee (2d4+7/x4)* or Medium sling +5 ranged (1d6+3)

Full Attack: Medium scythe +3 melee (2d4+7/x4)* or Medium sling +5 ranged (1d6+3)

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: Eldritch stone, powerful build

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/cold iron, low-light vision

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +5

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 13

Skills: Hide +12, Intimidate +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Spot +8, Survival +8

Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Environment: Temperate hills

Organization: Solitary, gang (3 or 5), or band (7, 9, or 11)

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: ½ coins only (plus 1 redcap tooth)

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 5-20 HD (Small)

Level Adjustment: +4

*Includes adjustments for Power Attack feat.

You see a very short, tough-looking old man with leathery skin, iron boots, and a bright red hat. He is wielding a scythe that looks too large for him. His wicked grin is lined with large teeth.

Redcaps are the most evil fey you are ever likely to meet. They are mass-murdering psychotic killers who live on other creatures' pain. A redcap stands 3 to 4 feet tall, weighs about 50 pounds, and looks like a touch old man with protruding teeth. On their heads redcaps wear bright red hats – kept fresh and moistly colored by dipping in their victims' blood – and on their feet they wear boots of iron.

Redcaps prefer to roost in old abandoned keeps and towers, preferably ones left vacant by some horrific tragedy. These fey absorb some of the essence of every creature they kill. Thanks to this ability, a redcap that manages to live a long life can amass tremendous strength and near

invulnerability. When a redcap dies, it vanishes from the world, leaving only a single tooth behind.

Redcaps speak Common and Sylvan.

COMBAT

Redcaps prefer to attack from ambush, usually waiting until their intended victims are preparing to settle in for the evening. Brutal combatants, redcaps attack without mercy, opening up combat with their slings and magic stones but closing quickly to finish opponents with their wicked scythes.

A redcap normally attacks using its Power Attack feat, taking a -2 penalty on its attack rolls and gaining a +2 bonus on damage rolls (+4 if using a scythe).

Eldritch Stone (Su): Bullets fired from a redcap's sling glow with a greenish-blue magical energy, giving them a +1 enhancement bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls as well as dealing 1d6 points of damage (instead of the 1d4 points an ordinary bullet deals).

Powerful Build (Ex): The physical stature of a redcap lets it function in many ways as if he were one size category higher. Whenever a redcap is subject to a size modifier or special size modifier for an opposed check (such as during grapple checks, bull rush attempts, and trip attempts), the redcap is treated as one size larger if doing so is advantageous to it. A redcap is also considered to be one size larger when determining whether a creature's special attacks based on size (such as improved grab or swallow whole) can affect him. A redcap can use weapons designed for a creature one size larger without penalty. However, its space and reach remain those of a creature of its actual size. The benefits of this characteristic stack with the effects of powers, abilities, and spells that change the subject's size category.

ADVANCEMENT

After a redcap has slain a victim, it dips its cap into the victim's blood thereby gradually gaining strength and power. This ability is reflected in special rules for advancement that apply only to redcaps. For each additional Hit Die a redcap has, it gains +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity, and +1 Constitution as well as the normal benefits for advancing in Hit Dice. For every 2 additional Hit Dice, an advanced redcap gains +1 natural armor. The redcaps damage reduction also improves as its Hit Dice increase, as indicated on the table below.

Redcap's Total HD	Natural Armor	Damage Reduction	CR
5 – 6	+2	5/cold iron	3
7 – 8	+3	5/cold iron	4
9 – 10	+4	10/cold iron	6
11 – 12	+5	10/cold iron	7
13 – 14	+6	10/cold iron	8
15 – 16	+7	15/cold iron	10
17 – 18	+8	15/cold iron	11
19 – 20	+9	15/cold iron	12

Thorn as presented in *Monster Manual III*

Small Fey

Hit Dice: 6d6+12 (33 hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)

AC: 19 (+1 Size, +2 Dex, +3 Natural, +2 leaf leather, +1 buckler), touch 13, flatfooted 17

Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+2

Attack: Thorn longsword +8 melee (1d6+3/19-20) or longbow +6 ranged (1d6/x3)

Full Attack: Thorn longsword +8 melee (1d6+3/19-20) or longbow +6 ranged (1d6/x3)

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: Sleep arrows, sneak attack +2d6

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/cold iron, low-light vision

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +5

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 13

Skills: Diplomacy +3, Hide +17, Listen +9, Move Silently +13, Search +9, Sense Motive +9, Spot +9, Survival +0 (+2 following tracks)

Feats: Improved Initiative, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Environment: Temperate forests

Organization: Solitary, pair, or patrol (3-5)

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral good

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +2 (cohort)

A small humanoid-shaped creature thickly garbed in rubbery leaves holds a buckler and grips a thornlike longsword. Its skin is dark green, and its hair is brown.

The warriors of the fey realms, thorns are fanatical defenders. Often, a grig, nixie, or pixie will find that its whimsical or mischievous nature gets it into trouble beyond its ability to manage. Sometimes, a thorn will be around to help such a creature out. These warriors also act as guards or

guardians for prestigious fey or important fey sites. For instance, if a dryad ever undertakes a mission important enough to cause her to leave her tree for a time, she endeavors to enlist a thorn to guard it.

Thorns get their name from the unusual longswords they carry, which are made of thorns from carefully cultivated, enormous rose bushes in the faerie courts. Their armor is made from thick, rubbery leaves and gives them protection equivalent to leather.

A thorn stands about 3 feet tall and is very slender, weighing only 25 pounds. Its skin can be any shade of green. Its hair is usually bark-brown, but a few have berry-red tresses.

Thorns speak Common and Sylvan.

COMBAT

Thorns generally do not pick fights, but they will attack anyone or anything that threatens or harms other fey. Like most fey, though, they don't take a direct approach. Instead, they are sneaky creatures that launch vicious attacks from hiding.

Sleep Arrows (Ex): Thorns carry the sleep arrows commonly used by pixies. Any opponent struck by one of these arrows, regardless of Hit Dice, must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or be affected as though by a sleep spell. The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Sneak Attack (Ex): A thorn can sneak attack as a rogue, gaining an extra 2d6 points of damage on a successful sneak attack.

Collar of Obedience as presented in *Complete Adventurer*

Any animal or magical beast wearing this collar becomes easier to handle. The DC of any Handle Animal check to handle, push, teach, train, or rear the wearer is decreased by 5.

A collar occupies the same space on the body as an amulet, brooch, or other item meant to be worn around the neck.

Faint enchantment; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *charm animal*; Price 1,500 gp.

Gal-Ralan as presented in *Fiend Folio*

When this cold-forged iron armband is donned (taking up the spot where bracers would be worn), it pierces the wearer's forearm with long needles of the same metal. The device fixes its wearer's soul to her body but also causes never-ending pain. As long as a character wears a gal-ralan, she takes 1 point of Constitution damage

that cannot be healed until after the gal-ralan is removed.

A gal-ralan provides its wearer with a +1 to +5 resistance bonus on her saving throws. This bonus increases by an additional +2 against death effects, energy drains, and effects that affect the wearer's soul (such as the shadow curse). For example, a +2 *gal-ralan* provides a +4 resistance bonus against these effects, +3 *gal-ralan* provides a +5 resistance bonus against these effects, and so on.

Faint abjuration; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *resistance*, caster level must be three times that of the gal-ralan's bonus; Price: 1,000 gp (+1), 4000gp (+2), 9,000gp (+3), 18,000gp (+4), or 25,000gp (+5). Weight: —.

Blackstone Rune as presented in *Fiend Folio*

Shadar-kai overcome by the shadow curse often make use of the *blackstone rune*. The rune is a complex sigil drawn on a small, glossy stone. On command, a *blackstone rune* allows its bearer to *plane shift* between the Plane of Shadow and the Material Plane (in either direction), along with up to 50 pounds of objects. A *blackstone rune* can be used three times before its magic fades.

Moderate conjuration; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *plane shift*; Price: 3,300gp.

Night Extract as presented in *Fiend Folio*

When thrown or dropped, one vial of this magic liquid reduces the ambient light level to that of starlight in a 20 foot radius. Magical light still functions in the area (and counters the effect), but torches, lanterns, sunrods, and other mundane light sources are suppressed until removed from the area. The DC of Spot checks made against targets within the *night extract's* area increases by +10, although creatures with darkvision or superior low-light vision ignore this increase, and creatures with normal low-light vision gain a +5 bonus on Spot checks made in starlight. The *night extract* provides nine-tenths concealment (40% miss chance) against creatures without low-light vision, concealment (20% miss chance) against creatures with low-light vision, and no concealment against creatures with darkvision or superior low-light vision. The effect lasts for 10 minutes.

Faint evocation; CL 1st; Craft Wondrous Item, *light*; Price: 50 gp.

Redcap's Tooth as presented in *Monster Manual III*

When a redcap dies, it leaves behind a single tooth. Anyone wearing this tooth gains a +2 circumstance bonus when dealing with fey, and a +4 circumstance bonus when dealing with other redcaps.

Faint transmutation; CL 6th; cannot be made; Price: 1,000 gp.

Shadow Veil as presented in *Complete Arcane*

A shadow veil appears as a indistinct, enveloping covering. A shadow veil precludes wearing any other kind of armor. A shadow veil grants a +2 deflection bonus. Someone wearing a shadow veil is hard to distinguish in shadow, and is treated as if having concealment (20% miss chance) against creatures without darkvision, blindsight, or other sensory apparatus that does not rely on light.

Strong necromancy; CL 12th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Knowledge (religion) 5 ranks, *create undead*; Price 10,000 gp; Weight —.

Tunic of Steady Spellcasting as presented in *Complete Adventurer*

The wearer of this tunic gains a +5 competence bonus on Concentration checks. Despite the item's name, its bonus applies on all Concentration checks, not just those made to cast spells.

Faint transmutation; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *bear's endurance*; Price 2,500 gp.

Arcane Mastery as presented in *Complete Arcane*

You are quick and certain in your efforts to defeat the arcane defenses and spells of others.

Prerequisite: Ability to cast arcane spells or use spell-like abilities (including invocations).

Benefit: You can take 10 on caster levels checks (as if the caster level check was a skill check). You can use this feat even while under stress.

Deft Opportunist as presented in *Complete Adventurer*

You are prepared for the unexpected.

Prerequisite: Dex 15, Combat Reflexes.

Benefit: You get a +4 bonus on attack rolls when making attacks of opportunity.

Sudden Empower [Metamagic] as presented in Complete Arcane

You can cast a spell to greater effect without special preparation.

Prerequisite: Any metamagic feat.

Benefit: Once per day, you can apply the effect of the Empower Spell feat to any spell you cast without increasing the level of the spell or specially preparing it ahead of time. You can still use Empower Spell normally if you have it.

Sudden Maximize [Metamagic] as presented in Complete Arcane

You can cast a spell to maximum effect without special preparation.

Prerequisite: Any metamagic feat.

Benefit: Once per day, you can apply the effect of the Maximize Spell feat to any spell you cast without increasing the level of the spell or specially preparing it ahead of time. You can still use Maximize Spell normally if you have it.

Sudden Widen [Metamagic] as presented in Complete Arcane

You increase a spell's area without special preparation.

Benefit: Once per day, you can apply the effect of the Widen Spell feat to any spell you cast without increasing the level of the spell or specially preparing it ahead of time. You can still use Widen Spell normally if you have it.

Howling Chain as presented in Spell Compendium

Evocation [Force]

Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 6

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Effect: Once chain of force

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: See text

Spell Resistance: Yes

A blood-red chain of pure force appears, howling instead of rattling as it shakes and twines.

You create a chain of force that lashes out and attacks your enemies. The chain has a reach of 15 feet, but cannot move from the space you designate. The chain attacks by attempting to trip you foes (+12 melee touch attack, +15 on the opposed Strength check). It does not provoke

attacks of opportunity for tripping, nor can it be tripped in response on a failed attempt. If it succeeds in tripping an enemy, it immediately follows up with a melee attack on the prone defender (+12 melee attack, 2d6+10 points of damage). Any creature struck by the chain must make a Will saving throw or become shaken.

A *howling chain* can make one attack of opportunity each round for every four caster levels you have, using the same tactics as above.

A *howling chain* has as many hit points as you do when you're undamaged, and its AC is AC 20 (-1 size, +11 natural). It takes damage as a normal creature, but most magical effects that don't deal damage do not affect it. It makes saving throws as its caster. *Disintegrate* or a successful *dispel magic* destroys it.

Focus: A small length of platinum chain worth at least 500 gp.

Indomitability as presented in Spell Compendium

Abjuration

Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 5

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 1 minute/level or until discharged

Saving Throw: None (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The spell's energy makes you feel impervious to wounds, if only for a limited time.

The *indomitability* spell protects its recipient from the first incapacitating attack the creature suffers during the spell's duration. An incapacitating attack is one that would reduce the recipient to fewer than 1 hit point. The attack must be one that deals damage; the *indomitability* spell offers no protection from nondamaging effects or attacks that kill or destroy without dealing any damage, such as death effects. Regardless of how much damage the attack deals, the recipient of the *indomitability* spell takes only enough damage to be reduced to 1 hp. The remaining damage from the attack is ignored. Once the spell protects the subject in this manner, the spell is discharged.

Mage Armor, Greater as presented in Spell Compendium

Conjuration (Creation) [Force]

Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 3

Components: V, S

An invisible sheen of armor shaped force surrounds you.

This spell functions like *mage armor* (PH 249) except that it requires no material component and its tangible field of force provides a +6 armor bonus to Armor Class.

Nerveskitter as presented in *Spell*

Compendium

Transmutation

Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 immediate action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 round

Saving Throw: None (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

You suffuse your ally with a brief, blue glow. He jerks away from you, as if he can anticipate your next action.

You cast this spell when you and your party roll initiative. You enhance the subject's reactions in combat, granting it a +5 bonus on its initiative check for the current encounter. If the subject does not make an initiative check within 1 round, this spell has no effect.

Shadow Spray as presented in *Spell*

Compendium

Illusion (Shadow)

Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 2

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Target: 5-ft.-radius burst

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

As you finish casting this spell, ribbonlike shadows burst outward from the midst of your foes.

You cause a multitude of ribbonlike shadows to instantaneously explode outwards from the

point of origin. Creatures in the area take 4 points of strength damage and are dazed for 1 round.

Material Component: A handful of black ribbons.

Shadow Well as presented in *Spell*

Compendium

Illusion (Shadow)

Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will negates; see text

Spell Resistance: Yes

You spit out the words of the spell, and the shadow of your foe darkens, becoming a solid black pit. Your opponent pinwheels its arms as it topples backward into the darkness.

You cause the target's shadow to become a temporary gateway to a pocket realm within the Plane of Shadow. The target must make a Will save or be pulled into the gateway. Inside the pocket realm, the creature sees a deserted gloomy duplicate of the real world, while shadow phantasms stalk and taunt it without causing actual harm. Each round, the creature can attempt another Will save to return from the *shadow well*. Otherwise the subject returns to the real world when the spell's duration expires.

Being trapped in a *shadow well* can be terrifying; upon returning to the real world, the subject must succeed on another Will Save or be frightened for 1d4 rounds.

Upon leaving the pocket realm, the subject reappears in the spot it had been in when the *shadow well* spell was cast. If this spot is filled with a solid object, the subject appears in the nearest adjacent empty space.

Spells and abilities that move a creature within a plane, such as *teleport* and *dimension door*, do not help a creature escape a shadow well spell, although a *plane shift* spell allows it to flee to another plane as normal. The target might still become frightened upon leaving.

Wall of Evil as presented in *Spell*

Compendium (based on *Wall of Good*)

Abjuration [Evil]

Level: Cleric 4, Sorcerer/Wizard 4

Components: V, S, M / DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: A straight wall whose area is up to one 10-ft. square/level or a sphere or hemisphere with a radius of up to 5 ft./2 levels

Duration: 10 minutes/level

Saving Throw: See text

Spell Resistance: Yes

You invoke the abjuration, and a wall of red and black energy springs up, only to fade away to invisibility.

You create an immobile barrier that inhibits good creatures. A good summoned creature cannot pass through the wall in either direction, and any other good creature must succeed on a Will Save each time it attempts to move through the wall. If the saving throw is failed, the creature's movement is stopped, and it can take no other action that round.

A *wall of evil* must be continuous and unbroken when formed. If it is cast so that an object or creature breaks its surface, the spell fails.

Arcane Material Component: Powdered silver worth 25 gp.

Appendix 3: Maps and Aids

DM's Aid #1: Non-functioning Arcane Magic on the Plane of Faerie

Due to the lack of conjunction with the Astral or Ethereal Planes and the Plane of Shadow, the spells listed below do not work on the Plane of Faerie. Generally speaking, if a spell is of the Illusion (Shadow), Conjunction (Teleportation), or Transmutation (Teleportation) schools, it will not work since those spells require the caster to move through one of those three planes in some fashion, or summon the substance of those planes. There is one exception to this rule: inside the stone circle in **Encounter 5: Goodbye Blue Sky**, and for 100 feet beyond the stones in all directions, any spell of the Illusion (Shadow) school will function normally.

Astral Plane Spells

Astral hospice
Astral projection
Baleful transposition
Benign transposition
Dimension door
Dimension door, greater
Dimensional anchor
Fire stride
G'elsewhere chant
Gemjump
Interplanar message
Knight's move
Maze
Planar tolerance
Plane shift
Plane shift, greater
Refuge
Summon Monster spells (I-IX)
Swamp stride
Teleport
Teleport, greater
Teleportation circle
Translocation trick
Tree stride
Word of recall
Vanish

Ethereal Plane Spells

Blink
Blink, greater
Dimensional anchor
Ethereal jaunt
Etherealness
Invisibility purge
Leomund's secret chest
See invisibility
Teleport object
True seeing
Vanish

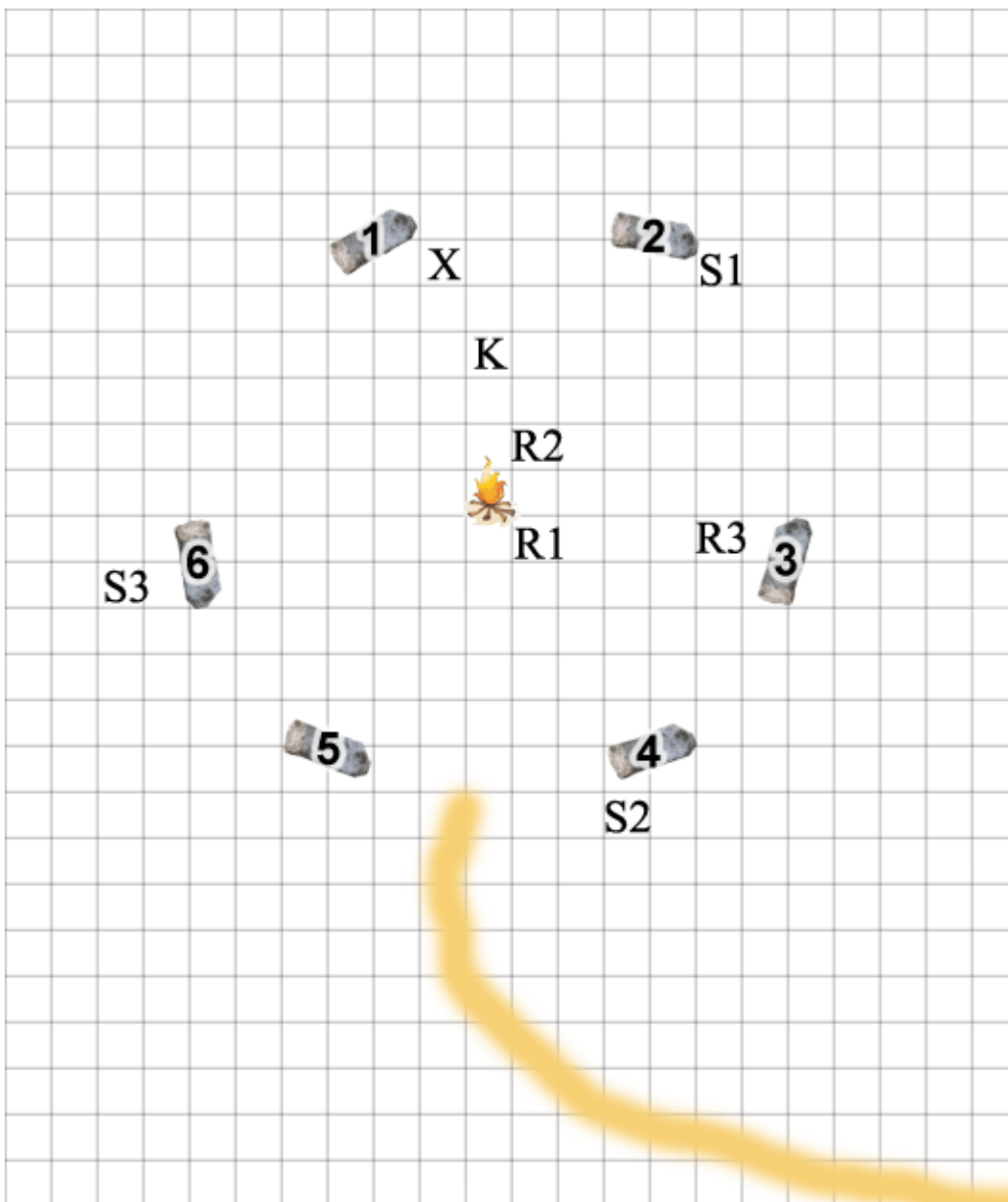
Plane of Shadow Spells

Dimensional anchor
Claws of darkness
Dark way
Dead end
Net of shadows
Project image
Shades
Shadow binding
Shadow cache
Shadow conjuration
Shadow conjuration, greater
Shadow evocation
Shadow evocation, greater
Shadow form
Shadow hand
Shadow landscape
Shadow mask
Shadow phase
Shadow radiance
Shadow spray
Shadow walk
Shadow well
Shadowfade
Shadowy grapppler
Spectral weapon
Veil of shadow
Wall of gloom
Summon Monster spells (I-IX)

DM's Aid #2: Map of Grayington Diocese



DM's Aid #3: Map of Circle of Hands (Grayington)



Scale: 1 square = 5 feet

Key:

X = Xeutscho (All APLs)

K = Kanat (APL 8-12)

S1, S2, S3 = Sentries (All APLs)

R1, R2, R3 = Redcaps (APL 12)

- Stones 4, 5, and 6 are already "burning" when the party arrives

- Party appears surrounding stone # 5

Players' Aid #1: Locations where bodies were found



Appendix 5: Critical Events Summary

What did the party do after the fight with the shadow mastiffs?

Did the PCs talk to anyone besides Captain Bras?

Was the Circle of Life and/or Danu Dearg contacted before the party investigated the Circle of Hands?

Did the PCs fight the faerie patrol?

Was the ritual stopped?

Did Xeutscho or any of the other shadar-kai escape?

Who did the PCs tell of their adventure, and what was told?

Anything else you feel the triad should know about?