

MOONLIGHT SONATA



AN ADVENTURE FOR 5 PCs
OF 8TH LEVEL BY CELESTE CONOWITCH

MOONLIGHT SONATA

This adventure is balanced for five PCs of 8th level. This adventure can easily be placed anywhere in Midgard but would work particularly well in a less urban region like the Rothenian Plains or the Margreve Forest.

Adventure Background

After failing to create a bridge to the Shadow Realm (see *Warlock Lair 43: Out of Phase*), certain new and unseen forces have become intent on freeing the Moonlit King—or rather the shard of a previous Moonlit King.

Alquam, Demon Lord of Night, in fulfillment of a bargain with the current Moonlit King in his madness—and in a circuitous attempt to diminish the machinations of Akyishigal, Demon Lord of Cockroaches—seeks to free a long-forgotten shard of a previous Moonlit King, who should prove a welcome thorn in the side of the Queen of Night and Magic. To keep his intentions hidden from the queen, for now, Alquam must infiltrate a desolate corner of the Shadow Realm by dragging the PCs into a world of dreams and his twisting melodies and trapping them there, tricked into freeing the shard of the Moonlit King

imprisoned within and redirecting any scrutiny from the queen and the Roach Lord.

The heroes must work to break free of the strange labyrinth they find themselves in, and each move they make unknowingly brings the Moonlit King closer to freedom as well.

Adventure Hooks

Here are some suggested hooks to involve your PCs in this adventure:

- If the PCs previously completed the adventure *Warlock Lair 43: Out of Phase*, they hear rumors that a lunar devil has been spotted, visiting a nearby series of Valeran ruins.
- While on the road, the PCs meet with a caravan of merchants eager to sell their wares and exchange news. The merchants just passed through a small hamlet plagued by hauntings and a series of missing persons.
- While staying in a city or town, the adventurers hear rumors of strange Valeran ruins nearby. No one knows more about them except that several people who investigated them are now missing.

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supported on patreon | www.dysonlogos.com

Publisher: Wolfgang Baur

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Open Game Content: The Open Content in this adventure includes the mirror image and owl harpy monsters and the *sleeping sand* magic item.

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PART 1: MISSING MAIDEN

This adventure begins as the PCs arrive in the hamlet of Elmshire, a small community with big problems. Their arrival interrupts a gathering outside the local trading post.

Get a Clue

As the PCs enter Elmshire, read or paraphrase the following:

Your travels have led you to an isolated hamlet. While this settlement is too small to appear on any map, the clustered wooden buildings seem friendly enough. As you pass a painted sign, "Welcome to Elmshire," you notice that a small crowd has gathered in the central square. The group is exchanging heated words, and a few are wielding unlit torches.

As the PCs arrive in town, they interrupt a gathering of the citizens of Elmshire. The group of locals is hotly debating whether or not to organize a search party to investigate the nearby ruins.

If the PCs get closer to the group, a woman from the crowd spots them and waves them over. She is an elfmarked (half-elf) gem merchant who introduces herself as Silvana Redleaf. She tells the PCs that she and her daughter Sophia Redleaf are traveling merchants who arrived in town a few days ago. They were planning on staying in Elmshire a few days before moving along, but then Sophia went missing along with some other villagers. Silvana proclaims to be frustrated with the slow action of the others and wants to hire the PCs to find her daughter:

"Well, it's a good thing you got here! You all look capable. At least more so than the rest of these backwater fools. All the trouble started with that strange music a few nights ago, and no one is doing a damn thing to get to the bottom of it. My daughter is missing, and I will pay you good money to find her."

If the PCs ask more questions of Silvana or the rest of the villagers, here is what they can learn:

- Two nights ago, villagers heard strange music coming from the nearby Valeran ruins. The music has continued to play each night since and always starts around midnight. Nothing like this has ever happened in Elmshire before.
- Several people have gone to investigate the source of the music, and none of them have returned. The missing

people are an elderly halfling trapper named Wilhelm, a human teenage boy named Reed, an elfmarked (half-elf) farmer named Marjorie, and Marjorie's prized truffle pig, Snuffles.

- The villagers have investigated the ruins during the day, but they found no trace of the missing villagers. There were no clues to the music's source either, just the empty ruins that have always been there.

Silvana claims her daughter is among the missing people who investigated the ruins, though this is not true. Silvana is a servant to the demon lord Alquam and planted to lure the adventurers to the ruins. The other villagers aren't familiar with Silvana, but since she seems so distraught, they are not suspicious of her.

Silvana offers to pay the PCs in precious stones and jewelry if they can find and return her daughter to her. She can reward gemstones equal to 1,000 gp and promises to also gift the PCs a magic ring from her collection if her daughter is brought back alive. Silvana has no intention of paying this reward, so she offers more if the PCs insist on haggling.

ELMSHIRE

Elmshire is a tiny community too small to appear on any map. The citizens of Elmshire have bonded together to carve out a patch of safety from the surrounding wilderness.

Population. Around 40.

Government. None. Elmshire has escaped the notice of any local lords interested in collecting taxes.

Defenses. Most citizens of Elmshire possess basic fighting skills and are capable of driving off and hunting beasts. In the event of greater danger, the hamlet would most likely be abandoned.

Notable Locations. The only public building in town is a trading post called Gil's Goods. The trading post doubles as a meeting place for the people of Elmshire and has basic adventuring gear for sale.

PART 2: MUSIC OF THE NIGHT

In this portion of the adventure, the PCs head to the ruins and discover a strange trapdoor. Descending through the door leads them into a series of bizarre rooms conjured by Alquam, Demon Lord of Night.

Riddle of the Ruins

If the PCs approach the ruins during the day, they find nothing of interest. As the villagers reported, the stone ruins are an empty collection of partially caved-in stone

CONSIDERING THE COURTS

For GMs who have run *Courts of the Shadow Fey* or who are thinking about running it you might review the events of this adventure and think, “But how does this fit with the Moonlit King as he’s presented there?” or “But I thought he was waiting in the...”—right, no spoilers. However, these are reasonable questions, so let’s address them.

“What if we’ve already encountered the Moonlit King?”

Then you know that he is unhinged and a shade of his former self. The character in this adventure is but a portion of the Moonlit King’s being—a memory of a past Moonlit King. Would releasing it strengthen His Grace back at the courts? Is his imprisonment here part of what allows him to manifest again and again or be replaced when killed by subsuming any who attempt to take his place? The king’s situation here is intentionally ambiguous, and unless you’re purposefully looking to continue the story told in *Courts of the Shadow Fey*, the king should not recognize or remember the PCs, and truly, this aspect of the Moonlit King likely never met the PCs. The GM should tailor this shard’s role to that which best compliments the conclusions of the past adventure. Here, the Moonlit King is a fragment of the whole, and his defeat might destroy him forever or keep him fragmented and deluded.

“What if we haven’t played Courts of the Shadow Fey yet?” In this case, if you haven’t run *Courts of the Shadow Fey* but are considering doing so, then you might use this encounter to foreshadow the later stages to the PCs or to provide them some key information that has no value until

they’re deep within the intrigues of the Shadow Court. This encounter might serve to reinforce the king’s splintered state and offer them leverage in their activities while reminding them that defeating the Moonlit King, rather than bargaining with him, is not possible, since a portion of his essential being survives here. This option is complicated as well by the chance the group kills the king here. In this case, the GM needs to decide, “Does this shard of the previous Moonlit King’s death add to or subtract from the king’s overall madness, and how will it impact the situation in the Shadow Realm?” The easiest course of action is that the death of the shard here weakens the current king’s form in the Tower of the Moon but also gives him memories of the encounter, which makes engaging him in *Courts of the Shadow Fey* a more nuanced encounter when the PCs discover the current King there.

“Wait, we killed him before, and now he’s gone, or one of our old friends, or a demon lord of filth!” And in this situation, the spirit of the Moonlit King can be released. Doing so probably makes whomever is currently the Moonlit King a bit offput as they experience memories from the old king. The current king remembers the outcome of this encounter and might send agents to waylay the PCs, whether out of spite, appreciation, or curiosity, depending on the outcome. He would now also remember his previous death, should the PCs kill this aspect, and any encounter where he engages with the PCs should be spent taunting those who previously injured him and mocking them for their efforts with descriptions of their failings during the last battle.

rooms, overgrown with brush. The place was likely a small stone castle or manor house. There are no tracks or clues to indicate what has happened.

If the PCs approach the ruins at night, read or paraphrase the following:

.....
As you draw nearer to the elven ruins, you begin to hear ghostly whispers of music. The lilting tune is melancholic, discordant, and altogether otherworldly. The structure itself is just as described, a broken collection of stone walls and foundations whose purpose has long since become unidentifiable.
.....

Searching the ruins at night is an entirely different experience than searching them by day. Examining the ruins does not reveal any tracks or clues as to what happened to the missing villagers. Any character who declares they search inside the crumbling ruins however finds an old trapdoor. The haunting music comes from somewhere below this door.

Finding the Musician

Once your PCs open the trapdoor, read or paraphrase the following:

.....
The creaking trapdoor opens to reveal an earthen cellar. Moldering remains of smashed barrels and crates are the only objects left in the space. A bloated wooden door is set in the northern wall. The whining melody is louder with the trapdoor open, but the source is clearly beyond the next door.
.....

This cellar is the beginning point of the ruins and the anchor point for Alquam’s nightmarish construction. The ruins don’t have a stable shape. They are a series of rooms designed to keep the adventurers inside long enough to hear the entire piece of night music, currently being played by Alquam. Once the whole of the sonata has been played, a portal opens to the Shadow Realm.

Ruin Rooms

Each time the PCs open a door, they conjure one of the following rooms. If the PCs return to investigate the trapdoor that led them into the ruins, they discover that the trapdoor opens onto one of the following rooms. Once a room has been selected, opening and closing the door again does not again change the previously determined room.

It is recommended that your players encounter three rooms before the final confrontation, but you can adjust this number as you see fit. Roll or choose on the random table below to generate the rooms the PCs find once they move beyond the first cellar door.

RUIN ROOMS

| d6 | The Room |
|----|-----------------|
| 1 | Graveyard |
| 2 | Greenhouse |
| 3 | Hall of Mirrors |
| 4 | Laboratory |
| 5 | Portrait Hall |
| 6 | Toy Workshop |

GRAVEYARD

The door opens to a square courtyard, surrounded by stone walls on all sides. Far above, you can see the swirling stars of the night sky. There are several mossy gravestones and a closed sarcophagus scattered around the overgrown grounds.

As the PCs enter the room, **skeletons** begin to dig their way out from the gravesites. It takes the skeletons 3 rounds to dig themselves out of their graves, so this is not meant to be a serious combat challenge, just terrifying to behold. If a skeleton is destroyed, another skeleton starts to dig its way out of the vacant grave.

The PCs must find the trapdoor inside the only sarcophagus in the graveyard to exit this room. The

ATMOSPHERIC SUGGESTION

If possible, it is recommended that you play a piece of actual music for your players during this section. Finding creepy orchestral music to play in the background while your PCs explore this ghostly construction of Alquam will ramp up the tension. Searching online for "atmospheric gothic music" yields plenty of results.

Classical music also works well. In particular, check out Edvard Grieg's Piano Concerto in A Minor as well as the first movement of Ludwig van Beethoven's *Moonlight* Sonata.

sarcophagus is a large object with AC 18, 75 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check pushes open the sarcophagus's marble lid. Opening the lid or destroying the sarcophagus reveals the trapdoor leading to the next room.

GREENHOUSE

The door opens to a large domed chamber. Black mist sluggishly curls outside, pressing against the glass that forms the ceiling. Lush plants and thick vines cover the floor and walls.

This room is a neglected greenhouse. The vines have grown thick over the walls to conceal the exit door. Chopping through the plants or otherwise removing the vines reveals the door.

If the glass ceiling or walls are damaged in any way, the black mist begins to pour into the room. The mist smells like rot but is harmless. Allowing the mist to fill the confines of the chamber slowly is meant to scare the PCs, not harm them.

HALL OF MIRRORS

Hundreds of eyes stare at you as you open the door. Reflections of yourself bounce back at you from the walls, floor, and ceiling of this disorienting space.

The room is made of mirrors. Characters who smash the mirrors or search the walls by touch discover a loose panel. Removing the panel reveals a door hidden behind it.

LABORATORY

The door opens to a chamber crammed with worktables and shelving. Every surface is cluttered with brightly colored bottles, papers, and other items common to a wizard's study. Hanging from one corner of the ceiling is a large golden cage with a cramped humanoid figure stuffed inside.

The figure inside the cage is a realistic human dummy. If the cage is opened and the dummy removed, the cage lifts upward, and a portion of the stone wall drops to reveal a door. If weight is placed back in the cage, it sinks once again, and the portion of the wall slides back to cover the door.

The bottles in this room are all empty, and every piece of paper in the room is blank.

PORTRAIT HALL

The door opens to a long hallway with another door at the very end. The walls are crammed full of dusty portraits depicting people.

Characters who examine the portraits or have a passive perception of at least 18 notice the portraits depict familiar people. The faces portray many of the villagers the PCs encountered in Elmshire and aged versions of themselves.

The portraits can be removed from the wall, but they are dusty and worthless.

TOY WORKSHOP

The door opens to a workshop crammed with toys. Shelves stuffed full of stuffed animals, puppets, and carved dolls line the walls. At the center of the room is a worktable with a hyper-realistic dollhouse, complete with a lawn and painted front door.

The workshop has a pristine collection of toys. The dollhouse in the center of the room is the key to exiting. By opening the doll house's front door, a character causes a door to appear in the room suddenly. Closing the dollhouse door causes the exit to disappear.

The Final Room

Once the adventurers reach the final room, read or paraphrase the following:

The door opens to a dark chapel with soaring vaulted ceilings. Black tapestries adorn the walls, and dripping red candles cast eerie shadows on pillars carved like screaming skulls. You finally see the source of the crawling tune that has plagued you this entire time.

A figure draped in a cloak of blackest night furiously taps its talons against a massive pipe organ. Three wriggling humanoid figures with sacks over their heads are bound to the tall silver pipes. The music pauses for just long enough to allow you to hear a chorus of shrieks from above.

This dark chapel is the final stop for Alquam's trap. The bird-like humanoid playing the organ is an illusory avatar of Alquam, Demon Lord of Night. The pipe organ, the figures, and Alquam are all the product of a *major image* spell. Interacting with these elements reveals the illusion but cannot stop the music.

While Alquam himself is not real, the three **owl harpies** (see Appendix or *Tome of Beasts*) he has commanded to guard the chapel certainly are. The harpies are seated on top of three of the 60-foot-tall pillars carved to look like columns of skulls. The owl harpies immediately attack the PCs but will

largely fight defensively, doing everything they can to keep the PCs in the chapel for 3 rounds.

At the beginning of the third round, Alquam's magic takes effect, and a portal opens in the middle of the room. The harpies' goal is to get the PCs into the portal—at least one of them, trusting that the rest will follow. Once the portal opens, the owl harpies will use their *Hovering Darkness* (dragging any unconscious PC into the portal) and *Luring Song* (luring any charmed PC into the portal) abilities to achieve this.

Should one or more PCs enter the portal, read the following and proceed to the next section of the adventure:

The ghostly music swells to a mighty crescendo that forces the world to spin. Shadows cast by the red candles and dark figures swirl into a blanket of utter black.

As you get your bearings, you realize you are no longer in the chapel. Wherever you are, at least the music has finally stopped.

Alquam's magic continues for 10 minutes after the portal opens, after which the portal closes and any remaining PCs find themselves in the original cellar with no trace of the illusory rooms.

PART 3: VAULT OF DREAMS

The portal has transported the characters to a remote corner of the Shadow Realm known as the Vault of Dreams. To escape the vault, the PCs must collect the items required to conduct the *ritual of awakening*. Once the ritual is complete, the adventurers have their window to escape—and so does the shard of the previous Moonlit King.

Vault Features

This tomb-like vault is carved from stark geometric patterns of black and white stone. There are no windows, and the whole place is filled with stale air.

Ceilings. Unless specified otherwise, the ceilings of the vault are 15 feet tall and covered with black and white mosaics of twisting abstract patterns.

Doors. Unless specified otherwise, the doors in the vault are made of black and white stone with no locks.

Light. Unless specified otherwise, there are no light sources in any area of the vault.

Restless Whispers. The Vault of Dreams is a small piece of the Shadow Realm and haunted by dreamers. Anyone

who listens can hear a soft chorus of worried whispers while inside the vault.

Stasis. The vault is trapped in a stasis that keeps both the shard of the previous Moonlit King trapped and prevents the vault from being damaged. Anything that is destroyed or displaced in the vault resets to its original state after 10 minutes have passed. The vault areas where this effect is most likely to influence the adventure are noted in each section.

Vault of Dreams

The following locations are keyed to the map Vault of Dreams.

AREA 1: POOL ROOM

You find yourself in complete darkness. As your eyes adjust, you see a pool set into the floor of this hexagonal room. The pool glows with a faint lavender light, illuminating the base of a marble statue at its edge.

The portal has transported the PCs to the Shadow Realm. In particular, a hidden shrine called the Vault of Dreams. This chamber is the center of the vault and holds the key to the PCs' escape.

Characters who look around the room find several things of note.

Braziers. Two large stone braziers rest on the balcony. Each brazier has a neat pile of dried twigs and aromatic leaves ready to light. When lit, these braziers illuminate the entire room.

Pool. The faintly glowing substance in the pool is not water. It is a viscous opalescent liquid. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana or Nature) check confirms this is no natural substance, and it appears to be raw magical energy in a semi-solid state. If any liquid is removed from the pool, it ceases to be magical. If the pool is drained, any fluid lost replenishes after 10 minutes.

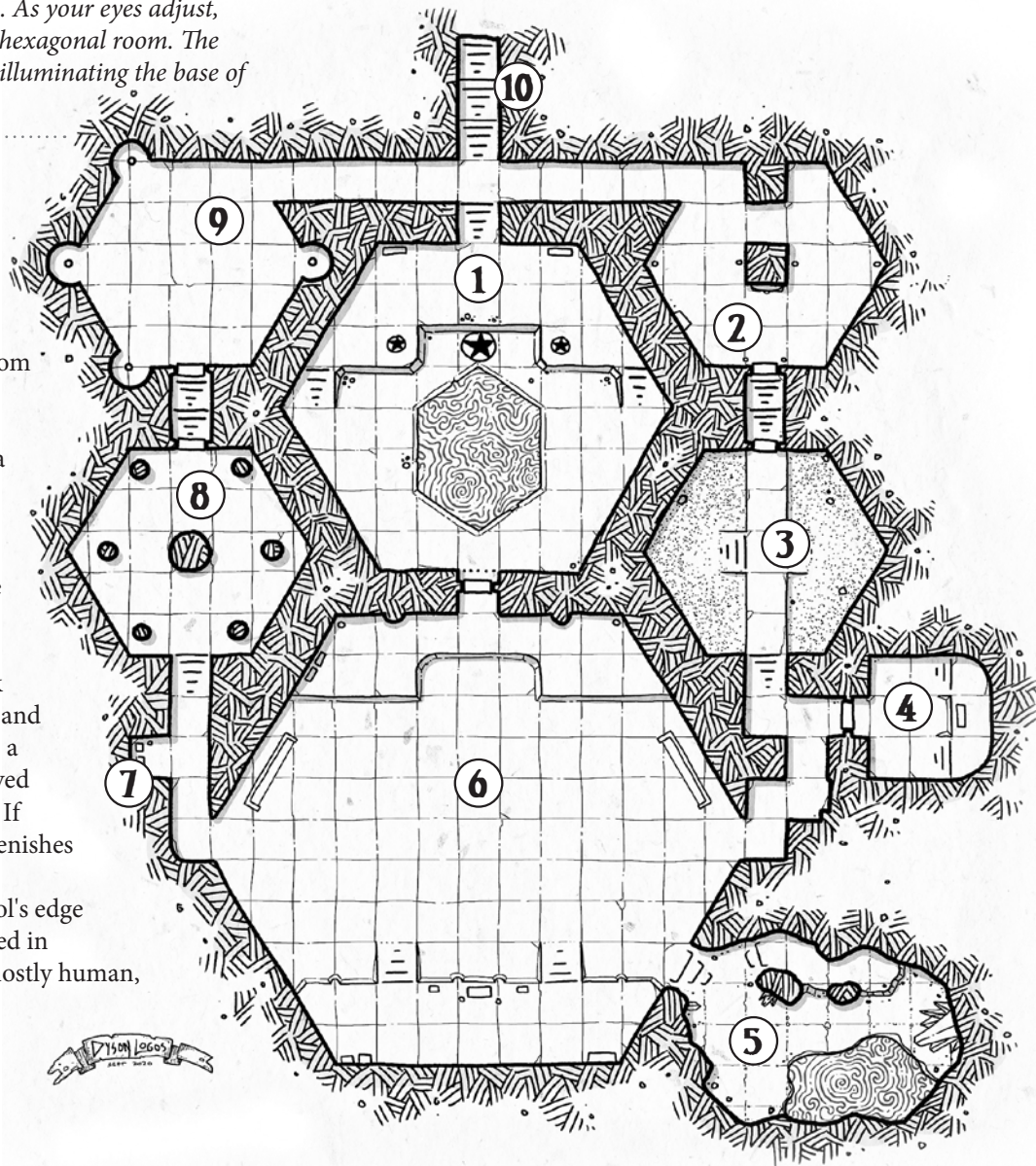
Statue. The marble statue at the pool's edge depicts a male humanoid figure dressed in otherworldly finery. The man looks mostly human,

except for one monstrous clawed hand. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (History) check identifies this statue as a depiction of the fey lord known as the Moonlit King (see *Tome of Beasts*).

The statue is a large object with AC 18, 75 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check topples the statue. If the statue is damaged, moved, pushed into the pool, or destroyed, it reverts to its original state and place after 10 minutes.

ESCAPING THE VAULT

Several things have to happen in this room to escape the Vault of Dreams. In the other regions of the vault, the PCs can find a knife, a wand, and a chalice. When these three items are dropped into the pool, the ritual of awakening begins, and the characters will have an opportunity to escape



MAP: [CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THIS MAP FOR YOUR VIRTUAL TABLE TOP.](#)

the vault. When the three items are tossed into the pool, jump to the Return of the King section below.

AREA 2: RELIQUARY OF RITUAL

This hexagonal room is empty except for an ornate silver chest atop an altar at the room's very center.

As you take in your surroundings, a booming voice issues from the chest, "You are in the presence of the Reliquary of Ritual! Step forward pilgrims if ye seek knowledge."

If any characters approach the chest, the reliquary poses them a series of questions. The reliquary asks a question, waits for every character to answer, then delivers its response.

The first question the reliquary asks:

"Who comes before the Reliquary of Ritual?"

If the player answers anything other than their real name, the reliquary says: "Ye are unworthy. Step away, pilgrim." The reliquary then refuses to interact with that character any further.

The second question the reliquary asks:

"Would you name yourself as strong or wise?"

If a character answers "strong," the reliquary will say, "That is too bad. You are unworthy of my knowledge. Run along."

The reliquary opens its lid and spits out a child's toy sword as a consolation prize. The reliquary then refuses to interact with that character any further.

The third exchange is not a question but instead a demand:

"Demonstrate your power if ye be worthy."

The reliquary wants to see something impressive to demonstrate a character's worth. Casting a spell is one way to impress the reliquary, but a creative demonstration using a skill is also acceptable. The reliquary will judge who gave the most impressive display (preferring anyone who cast a spell). It then says to that character, "Only ye are worthy, step forward and receive the gifts of the reliquary."

Treasure. The reliquary opens to the person it deems "worthy." Inside the chest is a *scroll of telepathic bond* and a *scroll of phantom steed*. In addition to these, there is a piece of rolled parchment that details the *ritual of awakening* (see Appendix).

AREA 3: SANDS OF SLEEP

A thin walkway stretches between the two doors of this room. Just underneath the walkway is a lake of white sand that continuously churns like ocean waves. Every so often, you glimpse objects in the sand, whispers of golden treasures that bubble to the surface and then sink back into the depths.

This pit is filled with *sleeping sand*. Any character who touches it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or fall unconscious. An unconscious PC is rapidly pulled underneath the sand and begins to suffocate. An unconscious character can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of their turns to see if they wake up. Pulling a character out of the sand or swimming out of the sand requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

Buried Treasures. There are various golden objects buried in the sand, everything from ornate clocks to crowns to weapons. A character who reaches into the sand or dives in must succeed a DC 15 Constitution saving throw each round they are in contact with it (as per the rules above). Characters who use magic or other creative means for fishing objects out of the sand do so easily. All objects pulled from the sand disappear from the inventory of characters who teleport out of the vault.

Golden Hilt. Characters who have investigated the Dream Anvil in Area 6 can easily spot a golden hilt among the sand's treasures.

AREA 4: DREAM ANVIL

A faintly glowing anvil sits at the far side of this small room. Set into its surface is a depression shaped like a knife with a unique hilt.

The anvil is the only object in this room. The PCs can use it to craft the knife needed for the ritual of awakening. When sleeping sand and a hilt from Area 3 are inserted, the anvil flashes and magically assembles a glass dagger.

Clue. If the PCs are struggling to figure out how to use the anvil, randomly determine a character who notices an empty packet of *sleeping sand* at the base of the anvil.

AREA 5: REFUSE PIT

The roughhewn walls of this cavern reveal it was a later addition to the vault. A rocky crater on the south side of the room is filled with a bubbling black liquid. A sudden presence enters your mind as you hear a voice crawl into your thoughts.

This stone cavern serves as a refuse pit for the vault. Trash is dumped into the bubbling black liquid, which breaks down all materials.

The telepathic voice belongs to an unfortunate servant named Elwood. Elwood served as the vault's caretaker until he defied instructions and removed the coverings of the mirrors in Area 6. He was promptly slain by the mirror images who dropped his body into the black pit. While his body is gone, Elwood's consciousness remains trapped in the pit. Elwood cannot be saved, but he wants revenge on the creatures who trapped him in this eternal nightmare. Elwood asks the PCs to smash the mirrors in Area 6 and dump every single shattered piece into the black bubbling pit. This process is the only way to ensure the mirror images cannot respawn.

If the characters do as Elwood asks, he spits out the chalice required to conduct the *ritual of awakening*.

AREA 6: MIRROR CHAMBER

This room is large with soaring ceilings and a wide expanse of a tiled floor. On the southern side of the room rests a stage scattered with objects. Two ornately carved mirrors, at least 15 feet in height, rest in opposite corners. On the northern side sprawls a balcony, 15 feet up.

Two **mirror images** lurk inside this room, one inside each mirror. The mirrors are angled so that the mirror images do not perceive anyone on the northern balcony. However, if a creature enters the room from the west or east or climbs down from the balcony, they immediately step from their mirrors to attack.

Destroying the Mirrors. The gigantic mirrors and the mirror images that inhabit them are one creature. The standing mirrors share the mirror images' AC, saving throws, and hit points. The mirrors shatter when the mirror images are destroyed, scattering the shards on the floor. Like everything else in the vault, the mirrors will repair themselves 10 minutes after being destroyed.

The Stage. The stage at the southern end of the room has a variety of equipment stacked on it. These items include moldy rations, candles, kindling, cleaning materials, and

ROLEPLAYING ELWOOD

Elwood was once an elf commanded to clean and look after the Vault of Dreams. He has been trapped in his current incorporeal state for so long, however, that he can only vaguely recall details about his former life.

The realization that he will be trapped here for centuries until his consciousness finally fades away has shredded his sanity. Elwood is desperate for the characters to help him enact his revenge and will try every emotional tactic to get them to help.

If the PCs ask Elwood questions about the vault or how they arrived, he can only provide cryptic hints at information. He genuinely cannot remember the purpose of the vault, but he does suggest the characters visit the Reliquary of Ritual in Area 2 if they need help.

other standard equipment. The only notable item is a set of massive black-velvet curtains. If these curtains are draped over the mirrors in this room, the mirror images are forced to retreat into their respective mirrors and do not attack anyone who passes through the room. The curtains were originally placed here by Elwood, who met a nasty fate and now resides in Area 5.

AREA 7: LECTERN

A stone lectern rests in this unadorned alcove. A tome rests open on it. The page shows an image of a beautiful, crowned figure dressed in a cape made of flowing water.

The tome resting on the lectern is titled *Pimm's Faerie Tales*. It is a collection of stories chronicling the various fey monarchs who vie for power.

Anyone who spends time examining the book or flipping through its pages discovers a note is written inside the front cover:

Night stares across the sky upon her cast-out lord, flanked by her sister queens, ready for a fight.

Winter's monarch keeps His Rippling Majesty close by her side, whose watery throne rests to the Moonlit King's right.

This note reveals how to solve the spinning pillar puzzle in Area 8. The PCs can also use the book to identify the carved images of the fey lords and ladies.

AREA 8: SPINNING PILLARS

Six floor-to-ceiling pillars surround a central column of transparent glass. Five of the pillars are carved with five different panels. The sixth pillar on the eastern side of the room shows the same panel on every side depicting a man dressed in finery with a single clawed hand.

This room is a puzzle that can be solved using the note written in the book in Area 7. To solve the puzzle, the PCs must rotate the pillars, so the correct sides face the center's glass column.

The panels depicted on the five pillars (that can be rotated) are:

- A man dressed in animal hides with antlers growing from his head: Lord of the Hunt
- A crowned woman dressed in a gown carved with stars: Queen of Night and Magic
- A woman with wild tangled hair holding a silver ring: Queen of Witches
- A crowned man dressed in robes carved like waves: River King
- A woman draped in thick furs fringed with carved shards of ice: Snow Queen

The correct faces to show on the pillars are:

- Top left: Snow Queen
- Top Right: River King
- Far-Right: Moonlit King
- Bottom Right: Lord of the Hunt
- Bottom Left: Queen of Witches
- Far Left: Queen of Night and Magic

Once the pillars have been set correctly, the glass column cracks, and a glass wand rolls onto the floor. The wand is not magical, but it is one of the three items needed to conduct the *ritual of awakening* in Area 1.

AREA 9: CHRONICLE OF DREAMS

Wooden shelves with dozens of tiny drawers cover the walls of this room. There are several alcoves in the room that each contain a marble stand topped with a shallow bowl. The bowls are filled with viscous black liquid.

This chamber is a storage space for the Moonlit King's dreams. While the king slept, a caretaker named Elwood was supposed to collect the dreams and place them in these drawers. Since Elwood met his unfortunate end centuries ago (see Area 5), the Moonlit King's dreams have gone uncollected, and most of the drawers are empty.

Searching the Drawers. Most of the dozens of drawers are empty, but a few contain glass marbles. Each of these

marbles is of varying sizes and has a different pattern of colored glass. When a marble is dropped into the black liquid, the creature that dropped the marble experiences the king's dream.

If a character drops a marble into a bowl, you can roll or choose on the Dream Marbles Table below to determine what they experience:

DREAM MARBLES

d8 The Dream

- 1 You experience the sensation of physical touch for the first time in what feels like forever. Her beautiful face, like marble perfection, swims into view. So close, you can count the constellations that swirl in her gaze. She's going to take you back this time. This time, you're sure.
- 2 Wind whips against your face as you soar through the moonlit sky. It is the warm winds of faerie however, so not so unpleasant. Far below, you watch the forests stir as you head home to rest.
- 3 Your tongue feels the sweet burst of yet another ripe summer berry. You sigh with pleasure as gilded pixies lay dinner platters before you. Your eyes fill with the delight of soft cheeses, honeyed meats, rich wines, and fresh breads.
- 4 White-hot light blinds your vision as stone walls shatter nearby. Your vision recovers slowly, allowing you to see a hole in the wall of your prison. Fresh air, real night air, fills your nose. You are free to escape.
- 5 The caress of silk is a revelation as you slide your arm into yet another gossamer sleeve. You smile at the rows of beautiful clothing. Excessive finery made just for you.
- 6 You feel the crown's weight settle on your head and hear the cheers of your subjects. Everyone in the court has come to witness your triumph. You wave to the folk as the band begins to play.
- 7 Panic surges in your chest as you claw along the dark stone floor. There is not a single crack in your prison. You can no longer feel the moon's light, you are going to die here alone.
- 8 Wolf songs echo through the hills somewhere far away. You long to run with them once again, but no matter how fast you run, you can't seem to catch up. Surely, they must be over the next hill, you just have to push a little farther.

AREA 10: COLLAPSED PASSAGE

Large chunks of stone and rubble have fallen from above, collapsing the passage.

This passage used to lead to the rest of the Shadow Realm, but it has collapsed over the centuries.

A character can spend an hour of hard work clearing the passage, at which point viscous black liquid pours from the opening. The liquid continues to flow in a torrent, flooding

the vault for 10 minutes. At the 10-minute mark, the collapsed passage suddenly returns to its original state, and the liquid disappears. The vault's ability to reset itself makes it impossible to escape using this route.

Return of the King

Once the glass knife, the wand, and the chalice are dropped into the pool, the ritual of awakening begins.

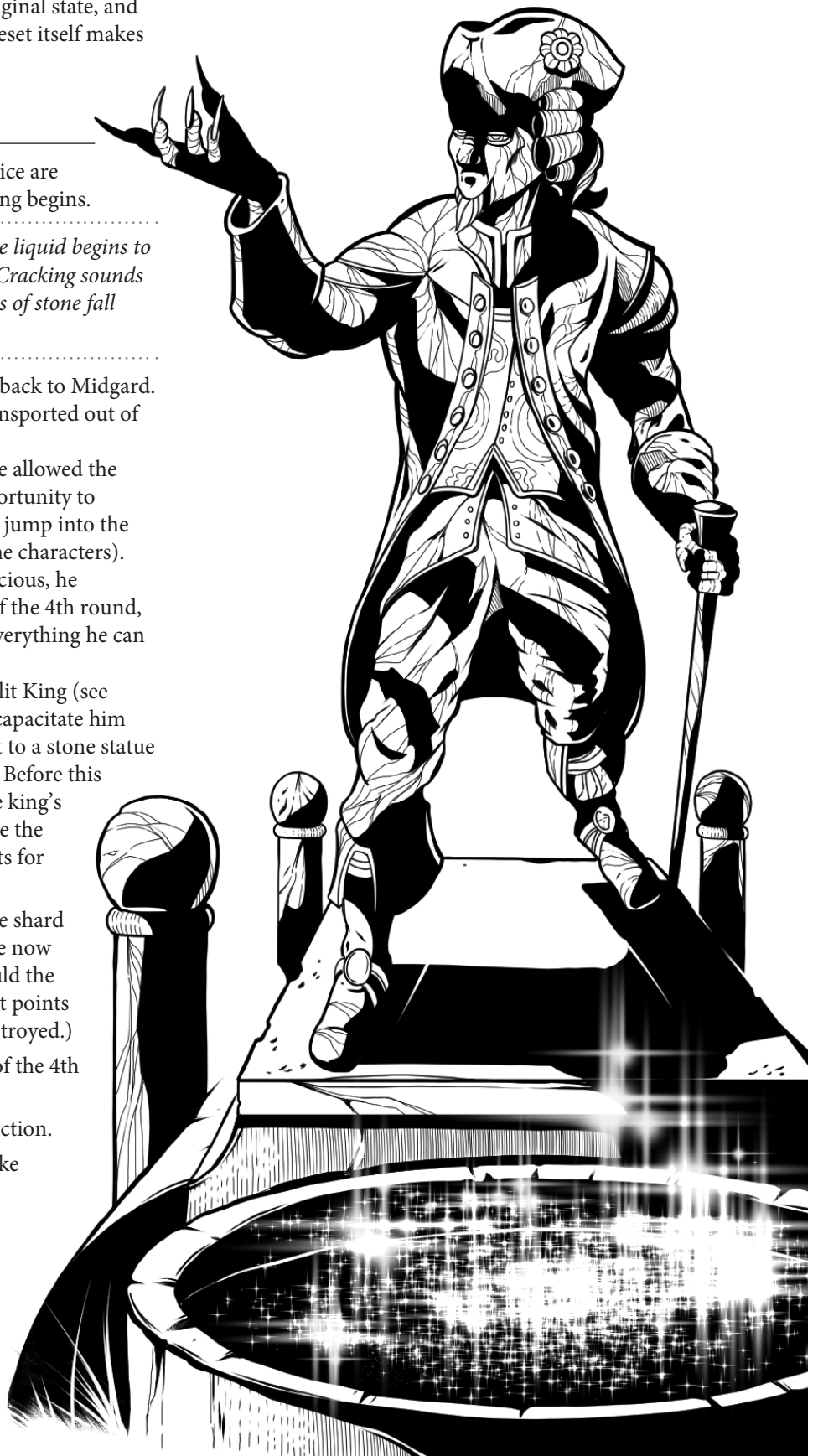
As the items sink into the opalescent pool, the liquid begins to spin, rapidly speeding to create a whirlpool. Cracking sounds come from the marble statue as you see flecks of stone fall from a now-animated face.

The swirling vortex in the pool is the portal back to Midgard. If the PCs jump into the vortex, they are transported out of the vault and return to Midgard.

By opening the vortex, the characters have allowed the shard of the previous **Moonlit King** an opportunity to escape as well. The Moonlit King's goal is to jump into the portal and escape (not necessarily to fight the characters). Each round the Moonlit King remains conscious, he becomes less statue-like. At the beginning of the 4th round, he has full control of his powers and does everything he can to leap into the vortex.

If the characters decide to fight the Moonlit King (see *Tome of Beasts*) and manage to defeat or incapacitate him before he leaps into the portal, he will revert to a stone statue in 10 minutes due to the vault's stasis effect. Before this happens, the vortex closes, which means the king's memory is forced to remain in the vault. Use the following changes to the Moonlit King's stats for this encounter:

- Has hit point maximum halved. (Once the shard steps through the portal, his memories are now shared by the current Moonlit King. Should the shard of the Moonlit King ever fall to 0 hit points while outside of the vault, the shard is destroyed.)
- Has a speed of 0 feet until the beginning of the 4th round of combat.
- Does half damage with Fearful Shadows action.
- Cannot take Summon Devil action nor take legendary actions.
- Cannot take lair actions, and the Vault of Dreams is not affected by regional effects.



CONCLUSION

This section details the events that follow the completion of the *ritual of awakening*.

Consequences

If the PCs can neutralize the Moonlit King, he reverts to a statue and is unable to escape his prison in the Vault of Dreams.

The final strike shatters the Moonlit King as if he were made of stone. The pieces lay scattered on the floor, no longer living. The whirl of the portal in the center of the room begins to grow quieter as you see the whirlpool growing smaller. If you are going to escape from the vault, you have to do it now.

Characters who jump into the vortex appear back on Midgard within the cellar of the ruins just outside Elmshire. When they appear, they notice that the missing citizens have appeared with them. The citizens cannot remember anything since they last heard the music. Silvana has fled Elmshire by the time the characters return for their reward.

THE MOONLIT KING ESCAPES

If the PCs decide to jump into the vortex without confronting the Moonlit King, they return to Midgard as above. However, the Moonlit King follows them when he regains full control of his body in 4 rounds. Once he is free, the shard of the Moonlit King has better things to do than fight adventurers, but he might be inclined to give them a gift or a last-minute sucker punch.

However that interaction ends, the shard is now free to wander the world. What he does with his freedom, especially with regard to the current Moonlit King and the courts, depends on what works best for your campaign, but he has many scores to settle and isn't too concerned with whatever global fallout might ensue.

Further Adventures

If the PCs wish to continue following the threads of this story, here are several hooks to craft a follow-up adventure:

- The PCs can attempt to track down Silvana Redleaf to get their just rewards. This route leads them to interact with the demon cult of Alquam.
- If the PCs succeeded in keeping the Moonlit King trapped, this attracts the gratitude of one of the fey lords or ladies. Perhaps the fey is interested in giving them a few tasks of their own to complete.
- The PCs' presence in the vault has likely alerted the Queen of Night and Magic to their efforts—and maybe also the current Moonlit King or his allies. The PCs might subsequently get drawn into quests for any number of related parties, perhaps even being drawn into the intrigues of the *Courts of the Shadow Fey*.

APPENDIX

All of the new game elements in this adventure are presented here.

New Magic Items

These items may prove useful to resourceful adventurers.

SLEEPING SAND

Wondrous item, uncommon

Found in a small packet, this powder resembles soft white sand. There is enough of it for one use. When you use an action to throw the dust into the air, you and each creature within 30 feet of you that requires sleep must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or fall unconscious until the sleeper takes damage, someone uses an action to shake or slap the sleeper awake, or 1 minute has passed.



Monsters & NPCs

There are many foes that seek to block your progress.

MIRROR IMAGE

Medium monstrosity, lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 170 (20d8 + 80)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 13 (+1) | 20 (+5) | 19 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+2) | 16 (+3) |

Damage Immunities radiant

Condition Immunities blinded

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages understands the language of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Refract. If the mirror image is hit with radiant damage, every creature who can see it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be blinded.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mirror image makes three slash attacks. One of these attacks can be replaced with its multiplicity action.

Slash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d6 + 5)

Multiplicity (Recharge 5–6). The mirror image conjures three illusory duplicates of itself that appear in its space. The duplicates move with the mirror image and mimic its actions, shifting positions, so it's impossible to track which image is real.

Each time a creature targets the mirror image with an attack, roll a d20 to determine whether the attack targets one of the duplicates.

On a roll of 10 or higher, the attack targets a duplicate which is immediately destroyed.

A creature is unaffected by this ability if it can't see, if it relies on senses other than sight, such as blindsight, or if it can perceive illusions as false, as with truesight.

REACTIONS

Copy. When the mirror image takes damage from a creature within melee range, it can use a reaction to assume the form of its attacker for the remainder of its turn.

While a creature is copied, all damage dealt to the mirror image is also dealt to it.

OWL HARPY

Medium monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)

Speed 20 ft., fly 80 ft. (hover)

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 14 (+4) |

Skills Performance +7, Stealth +6 (+9 while flying)

Damage Vulnerabilities thunder

Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Abyssal, Giant

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Dissonance. The owl harpy can't use its blindsight while deafened.

Innate Spellcasting. The owl harpy's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. The owl harpy can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

3/day: *darkness*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The owl harpy makes two claw attacks and two talon attacks.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage.

Talons. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Hovering Darkness. An owl harpy that hovers in flight can shake a fine, magical dander from her wings over a creature within 20 feet and directly below her. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or fall unconscious and be poisoned for 10 minutes. It wakes up if it takes damage or if a creature uses an action to shake it awake, but waking up doesn't end the poisoning.

Luring Song. The owl harpy sings a magical melody. Every humanoid and giant within 300 feet of the harpy that can hear the song must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed until the song ends. The harpy must use a bonus action on its subsequent turns to continue singing. It can stop singing at any time. The song ends if the harpy becomes incapacitated.

While charmed by the harpy, a target is incapacitated and ignores the songs of other harpies. A charmed target that is more than 5 feet away from the harpy must

move at its highest rate (including dashing, if necessary) along the most direct route to get within 5 feet of the harpy. The charmed creature doesn't maneuver to avoid opportunity attacks, but it can repeat the saving throw every time it takes damage from anything other than the harpy. It also repeats the saving throw before entering damaging terrain (lava or a pit, for example) if the most direct route includes a dangerous space. A creature also repeats the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. A successful saving throw ends the effect on that creature and makes the creature immune to this harpy's song for 24 hours.

The Ritual of Awakening

Following is the text of the ritual of awakening, instructing the PCs on how to perform the ritual:

*While caught in sleep
Your soul we'll keep
Locked in the vault of dreams*

*Our mad liege
We'll keep from siege
Locked in the vault of dreams*

*One day to wake
The steps to take
To escape the vault of dreams*

*Key objects found
Then promptly drowned
To escape the vault of dreams*

*One a chalice
Stained by malice
Kept in the vault of dreams*

*Forge the knife
Of nightmares life
Kept in the vault of dreams*

*Reveal the wand
From pillars spawned
Or die in the vault of dreams*

*With all three
Our king you'll see
Or die in the vault of dreams*

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