

DALE1-3

MASTER AND SERVANT

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING
FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

BY MATTHIAS SCHÄFER AND ARJEN LAAN

REVIEWED BY PIERRE VAN ROODEN AND PIETER SLEIJPEN

PLAYTESTED BY ALEX GANS, SASCHA GLIMMANN, STEFANIE KLÖTERS,
FLORIS KRAAK, WALTER VAN LEEUWEN, MARTIN LOW, WARD VAN
OOSTERUM, KRISHNA SIMONSE, TJALLING SPAANS, AUKE TEENINGA, ANNA
WERNER, DIRKJE WESTERBEEK, MARKUS WIEGAND

A man of importance has disappeared in hostile territory, and may have been captured. Returning him to safety might not be easy as the path leads to depraved Scardale. Sometimes things are exactly as they seem. A *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure set in the Dalelands for characters levels 7-10. This adventure is part of the Conspiracy of Ravens quest that started in DALE1-1.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Andy Collins, Rob Heinsoo, and James Wyatt.

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This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31 2012.

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PREPARING FOR PLAY

In order to play this adventure, you'll need copies of the following D&D 4th Edition rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. Any other rules referenced in this adventure will be noted in the **New Rules Items** section at the end of the adventure.

Throughout this adventure, text in bold italics provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA Session 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.

READING MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

Most of the information should be easy to understand, as it mirrors the information presented in the *Monster Manual*. Attacks have a letter next to them designating the type: M for melee, R for ranged, C for close, and A for area. A lower-case letter (used only in some melee and ranged attacks) denotes that the attack can be used as a basic attack.

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

As the DM of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You take the words on these pages and make them come alive. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- **You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure.** This is especially important and applicable outside of combat encounters, but feel free to use the "scaling the encounter" advice (usually for adjusting to different-sized groups) to adjust combat encounters for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time in an adventure.
- **Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group.** Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a "chance to shine."
- **Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately.** Watch for stalling, as play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish the adventure too early; provide them with a full play experience. *Living Forgotten Realms* adventures are designed to be

played within 3.5 - 4 hours; try to be very aware of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.

- **Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to interact with their environment.** Players should always know when enemies are affected by conditions and are bloodied. They should be given clues about how to interact with their surroundings so they can tackle skill challenges, combats, and puzzles without getting too frustrated over lack of information. This helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out a good choice from a clue.

In short, being the DM for a *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure isn't about following every word on the page; it's about creating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. A great deal of good information on being a DM for a D&D game can be found in Chapters 1-2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

APPROPRIATE CHARACTER LEVELS

This adventure is designed for player characters (PCs) levels 7 - 10. Characters that fall outside of the level range may not participate in the adventure. Make certain to check the levels of the PCs before beginning play to ensure that they are the proper level.

Each adventure has a low-level version and a high-level version. The low level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the first two levels of the adventure's level spread. The high level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the last two levels of the adventure's level spread.

A group may decide to play riskier and play the high level when their levels are more suited to the low level if everyone in the group is in agreement to do so; however, some of the rewards may not be available to them. Conversely, a group may decide to play the low level when their levels are more suited to the high level if everyone in the group is in agreement to do so; however, some of the rewards may be less than what they'd ideally want from the adventure.

Reading the Numbers: Each encounter will have a level and other values (such as XP or sometimes skill checks) listed with two numbers divided by a slash. The number before the slash is always the value for the low-level version of the adventure; the number after the slash is the value for the high-level version of the adventure.

FAILING TO DEFEAT AN ENCOUNTER

If a group fails to defeat an encounter - that is, if they have to flee from a combat because it's too tough or they reach the predetermined number of failures in a skill challenge before reaching success - they are only awarded half experience points (round down) for the encounter. If they manage to tackle the encounter later on and defeat it, award them the other half of the experience points for the encounter.

CHARACTER DEATH

If a PC dies during the course of the adventure, the player of that character and the rest of the group have two options, provided that they have access to the Raise Dead ritual (either a PC has it and can use it or the characters return back to civilization), they have access to the body, and it is possible to return the dead PC to life.

- **Pay the component cost for the ritual.** If the group chooses this option, the cost should be divided evenly amongst the group (500 gp for heroic tier, 5,000 gp for paragon tier, and 50,000 gp for epic tier). Using a source outside the group to cast the ritual costs 20% more than the component cost. Total cost when using an outside source is 600 gp for heroic tier, 6,000 gp for paragon tier, and 60,000 gp for epic tier. A PC that dies and chooses this method of return gains full (or half, if the party was defeated) experience points from the encounter in which the character died, but no experience points for any encounters that were missed while the character was dead. If there's still more of the adventure remaining, the PC continues to earn experience as normal, and receives a normal cut of the rewards at the end of the adventure.
- **Invoke the Death Charity clause.** If the group cannot afford to pay for the ritual (or doesn't desire to do so), the PC can choose to return back to life at the end of the adventure. Doing so forfeits all rewards (including treasure and story rewards) earned for the adventure except experience points gained prior to the character's death (the character receives the experience point award for the encounter in which they died). The PC cannot participate in the same adventure a second time.

MILESTONES

No matter if the characters succeed or fail in an encounter, they reach a milestone if it is the second encounter they've had since the start of the adventure or their last extended rest. Encounters that do not give out experience points do not count for purposes of reaching a milestone. Make certain to mention this information to the players when applicable, as it gives each PC another action point and affects how some magic item powers are used.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Lord Gyertan is a Sembian noble who has spent most of his life embezzling money and covering up illicit trade for the Six Coffers Market trading house. Gyertan is a man of few principles - but he isn't evil. As those in charge of the house committed increasingly vile crimes to expand their influence, he started to doubt his actions, as well as the safety of his own family.

The final straw came when he came into possession of information leading to the true power behind the house, and the vile acts this person was apparently willing to take to keep in control. Fearful for his own life and that of his family, Gyertan arranged, through his own contacts, a means to escape Sembia and flee towards Vesperin. The arrangement for his family went well, but as Gyertan made up to flee himself, betrayal from within brought him down. His manservant, Taln, had long worked for one of the house's agents, a vampire called Laundae Ethari. When Gyertan tried to reach his contact in Scardale, the vampire's agents caught him.

Now, he is kept in the Grounds, a fighting arena in the decrepit town of Chandler's Cross. Taln, his manservant, is now a vampire spawn, a 'reward' for his master's betrayal.

Only one other man knew of Gyertan's attempt to escape - the man who saved his family, Aron Selkirk.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

The PCs have been asked by a merchant from Vesperin, Aron Selkirk, to help on what is called a 'delicate' matter. He has asked to meet him in the town of New Velar.

If a PC has the story award DALE02 or DALE03 from DALE1-1 *The Prospect*, Kira or Dayan Nenthyn has recommended them. These twins own the Fall of Stars, and have an interest in Aron Selkirk. They approach the PC personally and ask them to hear the merchant out. They are interested to learn more about him, and the people who oppose him, so that they can determine if he is a man that is worthy of support.

If they do not have these story awards, but do have story award DALE01, Lin-Woh Chang instead recommends them.

Otherwise, if a PC has played CORE1-1 *Inheritance*, the merchant Deskyr Thanterim has recommended them, and bids the PCs to aid Aron as he has done so for Deskyr in the past. Also note if any PCs have story award CORE01 or CORE02 from this adventure, as these may play a role in Encounter 2.

Other PCs may have earned Aron's interest through other deeds, and they are approached in a personal letter.

If most of the PCs are a member of the Fall of Stars, the meeting takes place there, in one of the more private rooms. Otherwise, the meeting takes place in the House Around the Corner, a small hostelry open to non-members that is also run by the club.

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

Darkness is setting in as you make your way to your appointment. Aron Selkirk, you have learned, is a merchant who has been seen often these past months in New Velar. He searches for support along the local merchants for some kind of trade agreement on the Dragon Reach.

When you enter the establishment where you are to meet the man, you see more people. Many seasoned adventurers have been asked for aid.

Whatever trouble this man is in, it is not likely to be something simple.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

The PCs are sent to Scardale by Aron Selkirk to find a former Sembian noble, Lord Gyertan. Gyertan tried - but failed - to escape Sembia. Aron suspects that agents of Netheril caught the man. The PCs have to find and rescue the noble.

The PC's travel to Scardale Town in Scardale. For their first lead, they have the names of two contacts there. These two might have information about Lord Gyertan's whereabouts. In Scardale Town the PCs learn that one of the contacts has been found dead in Chandler's Cross. There are clues that his killer might have been a vampire. The PCs also learn that shady thugs have apprehended Gyertan.

The PCs investigation leads them to a fighting arena called "The Grounds" in Chandler's Cross. Finding and entering the Grounds should be done covertly - failure means the PCs are noticed, and their enemy ready.

At the Grounds the PCs are coaxed to join the arena fight as gladiators. The fight turns deadly if they have

drawn attention to themselves. Alternatively they can sneak into the building.

Eventually, they enter the dungeons, where they can search for the prisoner and attempt to free him. They meet Taln, Lord Gyertan's servant. Taln is now a vampire spawn, and he feels miserable due to his 'betrayal' of his master. He is willing to lead the PC's to Gyertan, but is forced to betray the PCs to his current real master, Laundae Ethari.

The end fight is with the club owner Ceremony, the vampire lord Laundae Ethari and a group of shadar-kai in the dark, mazelike dungeons.

After defeating their opponents, the PC's should get out of Chandler's Cross as fast as possible with their charge. Failing to escape safely causes Gyertan to get mortally wounded.

Once they have saved Gyertan, he can give them some information on Aron Selkirk's enemies.

ENCOUNTER 1: THE SILVER RAVEN

SETUP

Important NPCs:

Aron Selkirk, male human (Sembian)

Mei, female human (Shou)

Kira Nenthyn, female half-elf

Dayan Nenthyn, male half-elf

The PCs have entered either the Fall of Stars or the House Around the Corner, and are led to a room or far away corner, where a man sits on a table, waiting for them.

Aron Selkirk is a middle-aged man, though he looks fit and strong. He has a tiny blond beard and curly hair that is slowly thinning. He momentarily rises as you approach, and gives you a polite nod and smile. He points out a place at the table.

“Please sit. Would you like anything to drink or eat? Miss Chang will get you whatever you wish. I’d rather she let the servants handle it, but she insists on looking after my needs.”

He motions to a young Shou woman, who stands a few feet behind him. Her hair is braided in a long tail. She bows politely and silently.

PCs who played DALE1-1 *The Prospect* recognize Aron Selkirk as a merchant they briefly met during that adventure, and the girl as Mei, the servant girl of the Lanthan merchant Li-Woh Chang. Mei recognizes them even if she does not initially show it. Mei is exceptionally polite and servile, especially against PCs who gained story award with the Changs (DALE01). Mei’s boss, Lin-Woh, is not present, working on more pressing business.

The following information on Aron Selkirk can be gained with a History or Streetwise check:

DC 15: The Selkirk family is a small merchant house that operates out of the city of Calaunt in Vesperin.

DC 20: The family dates back hundreds of years. They were once one of the most influential families in Sembia, providing the head of the council for years.

DC 25: Most of the family had to flee towards the Vast, where they struggle to rebuild their power.

DC 30: The family was nearly eliminated when Netheril took over in Sembia. Many family members went missing during the Shadow War or perished in the Ordulin Maelstrom.

DC 35: Some rumors have hinted on the family’s involvement with a small resistance group called the Silver Ravens. The Ravens oppose Netheril’s presence in Sembia – though apparently not very successfully.

The following information can be gained regarding the Changs with a Streetwise check (PCs from the Dragon Coast get a +2 on the check):

DC 15: The Chang Emporium is a Shou merchant house from the Shou state of Nathlan on the Dragon Coast. Their main base is in the city of Nathlek.

DC 20: They trade primarily along the southern coast of the Sea of fallen Stars. Lin-Who Chang heads the branch trading with the area around the Dragon Reach.

DC 23: Almost all employees are women. The head of the emporium, the lady Ha-Teh Chang apparently has a dislike for men, which has curbed the success of the house.

DC 25: Rumors say they have traded with Thay in the past. On the other hand, the house has had violent clashes with Sembia.

Most of the information about the Selkirks can also be obtained from Aron himself if the PCs are inquisitive enough. Aron explains the situation as follows (Player’s Handout 1 contains a summary of this briefing and what Mei tells later on):

- Some time ago, a Sembian noble called Lord Gyertan contacted Aron, with request for aid.
- Gyertan worked for a Sembian trade house. He had discovered dark secrets regarding the house that should have stayed unknown. He fears for his life and seeks to escape Sembia.
- Gyertan implied that he had knowledge that would be valuable to Netheril’s enemies.
- Initially, all worked well. The man’s family made it to Vesperin safely.
- However, when Gyertan made his own escape, something went wrong. He didn’t arrive in Vesperin.
- Agents of Aron in Scardale Town said he was last seen in that town.
- Gyertan is middle aged, richly dressed, fat with graying hair and a drooping mustache.
- He travelled with his servant, an old, wiry man named Taln.
- Aron fears that Netheril agents capture Gyertan and Taln. Gyertan may still be held in Scardale.
- The mission is to go to Scardale, find out what happened to Gyertan, and if possible, free him and bring him to New Velar.

- There are two human contacts in Scardale, who are undercover in the area. They are called Bered and Feyanna, and they can provide the PCs with more information.
- They can be contacted at night at a warehouse in the docks district. Aron provides the details and makes sure that they meet the PCs there.
- A distinctive mark to recognize his agents is a flying raven, often as a silver badge.
- To avoid suspicion, Aron has ensured the PCs can travel on the Dragonfly, a ship that is owned by the Chang emporium, which sails under the flag of Nathlan.
- Mei, who works for the emporium, is the PCs escort on the ship. The Changs have offered their support to Aron, as they too, desire to prevent Sembia from controlling access to the Dragon Reach.
- Aron is willing to pay 100 / 150 gp per PC if they participate.

Aron and his contacts are members of a group that opposes the presence of Netheril in Sembia. They are called the Silver Ravens, named after an old Sembian adventure company.

The Silver Ravens are not a secret group, but as several members do stay undercover to spy on Netheril, Aron does not bring it up unless specifically asked.

SCENE: THE NENTHYN TWINS

Kira and Dayan Nenthyn approach PCs who have the DALE02 or DALE03 story award. The two half-elf twins are the owners of the Fall of Stars. They look remarkably alike. Kira is a young tomboy with a slim figure. Her dark red hair is braided in many small strands. Dayan is a slim and boyish looking half-elf, with long dark red hair that flows free, down over his shoulders. Both have bright green eyes.

The twins like to learn more about Aron Selkirk. They wish to know if his intentions to help trade in the Dragon Reach are true, and what forces oppose him. They ask the PC to inform them of anything they learn.

An actual member of the Fall of Stars (have the DALE02 story award) earns some support of the club. The twins can lend the PC *one* of the following items for the duration of the adventure:

- One scroll of Linked Portal, which links to a portal in the Fall of stars, or
- One scroll of Knock, or
- One scroll of Speak With Dead, or
- Four *potions of healing*

Items not expended need to be returned afterwards.

The twins do not offer any extra coin for the information, as roughly half the money Aron offers the PCs is already paid by them.

SCENE: THE DRAGONFLY (OPTIONAL)

Unless they make their own travel arrangements, the PCs travel to Scardale on the Dragonfly, a ship from the Chang emporium. The ship trades occasionally in Scardale Town and is thus - for now - an inconspicuous way to enter town.

All employees (including captain Tay-Nang) are Shou women. While they tolerate the PCs onboard, they show disdain for male members of the party. Female members are considered the spokesperson. The sailors do not associate much with the PCs.

Only Mei is willing to talk to the PCs at length. She looks after them, though her submissive nature may work on their nerves. PCs who pay attention notice that Mei does not get much respect. PCs who speak Shou realize that 'Mei' is a Shou word that means 'niece'. If they inquire about this, Mei reluctantly explains that her born name is Yuki (which means 'snow'), but that nobody uses it. She does not offer an explanation, and gets a bit distressed if PCs start using her real name.

Mei can give the PCs some basic information on Scardale and Scar Town. The information may also be available with a DC 19 History check.

- Scardale used to be part of the Dales Compact, much like Harrowdale.
- It has quite a checkered history, with warlords bent for conquest, a plague, Zhent occupation, and various other forces taking turns in occupying or controlling it.
- It is now in hands of Sembia, and thus under rule by Netheril.
- It is a shady town and the Shadovar have little interest in controlling it.
- Many factions trade here - even those not welcome in other towns.
- Scardale Town -also called Scar Town- is the main settlement. A smaller one, Chandler's Cross, is further up river but it is mostly a ruin, filled with thieves and cutthroats.
- Trust no one. Everyone can be a spy.

Mei also knows the location of the warehouse where the PCs plan to meet their contacts, and offers to lead them there. She also knows some people in town, but only offers this aid if a PC has the DALE01 story award.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs have accepted the assignment and are on their way to Scardale, hand them Player Handout 1, which summarizes the information from Aron Selkirk and Mei, and move to Encounter 2.

ENCOUNTER 2: SCARDALE

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 7 / 9, COMPLEXITY 3 (900 / 1,200 XP)

SETUP

Number of Successes: 8 (see below)

Number of Failures: 3

Primary Skills: Bluff, Intimidate, Perception, Stealth, Streetwise

Once the PCs ship approaches Scardale, read the following:

Scardale town - or Scar Town for short - is a bustling place, a port more busy than Harrowdale. It is tucked away in a great fissure, along a river that emerges out of the Dales from between towering cliffs.

Scar Town itself is set into the shadow of one of these cliffs. It is quickly clear that not all that goes on here - if most, even - is business to be done in open daylight.

This skill challenge measures how covert the PCs are in their efforts to find out what happened to Lord Gyertan.

The investigation is a bit linear, but the challenge here is about not getting noticed rather than finding out who is behind the abduction.

The PCs contacts have drawn attention to themselves. One was killed, and the other left town. Neither shows up at the intended meeting place (see the warehouse scene), though Feyanna has left a message.

The PCs, too, risk drawing attention as they investigate: the more skill checks they fail, the quicker word spreads about their investigation.

PCs need be aware of this from the start. Mei warns them that everyone in Scardale can be a Netheril spy.

Pay attention to how covert the PCs are, and at appropriate moments (at least once per scene) ask for skill checks for those PCs that investigate to see whether they manage to subvert attention.

Some example skills are:

Bluff (DC 14 / 15): Fabricate a ruse to cover the investigation.

Intimidate (DC 14 / 15): Bully witnesses into staying out of the PCs' business.

Perception (DC 14 / 15): Perceive the proper moment to act, when nobody is paying attention.

Stealth (DC 14 / 15): Stay low key, minimizing the chance to draw attention.

Streetwise (DC 14 / 15): Use local knowledge to blend in with the crowd (this check is separate from the one used to gather information).

Shade Coin: In addition to skill checks, PCs may use the story award CORE02 from CORE1-1 to silence those they question. This may only be used once (even if more PCs have the coin) and either removes 1 failure or grants an automatic success.

Not all skills likely work at all scenes, and PCs may find out use of other skills (Diplomacy, Thievery, etc) to cover their tracks - use your own judgment. Try to have at least 8 skill checks throughout the challenge.

In addition to these occasional checks, investigation itself may cost time or draw attention if done poorly. These are noted per scene, below.

SCENE: THE WAREHOUSE

Recommended Skills: Stealth, Perception

Run this scene when the PCs visit the warehouse where they are to meet with their contacts.

Mei leads you to the warehouse, an old wooden structure at the far end of the docks. Nobody else seems to come here, and all is deadly quiet when you arrive.

As time passes by, the PCs likely realize that something has gone wrong.

Investigate: If they investigate, a DC 14 Perception makes them notice a strange scratch in the wood of the wall: a rough sketch of a flying bird. With a DC 15 Nature check this can be recognized as a raven. The check can be tried again, but the extra time needed means the PCs need to also make additional skill checks to cover their investigation (optionally, to speed up play, you can assign them a failure and let them find the symbol anyway).

Below the scratch, a thin piece of paper has been pushed into the splices. It looks hastily written. Give the players Player Handout 2.

A DC 8 Streetwise check reveals the 'Lap of Luck' to be a temple in Scardale Town devoted to Tymora (female Good deity of Luck).

SCENE: SCAR TOWN (OPTIONAL)

Recommended Skills: Bluff, Intimidate, Streetwise

If the PCs decide to go about town and ask questions, they may learn more - though at the risk of exposing themselves.

If a PC has the DALE01 story award, Mei offers her aid. If PCs accept the offer, they gain a +2 to Streetwise checks in Scardale Town for gathering information. Mei then leads them to the Four Dolphin Fountain, a place in Scardale town where most shady deals are being made, as a magical effect around the fountain prevents scrying.

The PCs can try to gather information as long as they wish, but each time they role a Streetwise check, they also need to make a skill check to cover their tracks.

Whether successful in covering up or not, depending on the Streetwise check they learn the following:

DC 4: The Dragon Reach is getting unsafe with pirates. The Sembians are talking about setting up a blockade to regulate trade in the Reach.

DC 5: If the PC have found Feyanna's note, they learn that the 'Lap of Luck' is Scardale's temple of Tymora.

DC 9: Shadar-kai are stalking the streets lately. They normally don't show themselves much in town.

DC 14: Some men were seen dragging a richly dressed, fat guy who claimed to be a 'Sembian noble' on a boat. The boat was set to Chandler's Cross.

DC 19: One of the men is Rystar, a former arena fighter at the Grounds, a club in Chandler's Cross.

DC 24: The rich man was not alone, but the old thin man with him didn't put up much of a fight.

DC 28: Abeid Medahn of the Lap of Luck risks having the temple closed when he barred the guards to investigate a body that was recently brought in.

SCENE: THE LAP OF LUCK

Recommended Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate

Important NPCs: Luckbringer Abeid Medahn, cleric of Tymora.

The body of Bered was brought to the Lap of Luck, the temple of Tymora in Scardale. Bered was found near the river, several miles upstream, near Chandler's Cross. The body is to be buried in the morning.

Luckbringer Abeid Medahn, the leader of Lap of Luck, has come into conflict with the Scardale Town guard when he disagreed with their claim on the body.

To be able to examine the body, the PCs need his permission. If they fail, they only briefly gain access, and Abeid Medahn's protests cause commotion that draws attention.

Tymora's Token: If a PC has the CORE01 story award, and shows the token to Abeid Medahn, he instantly

turns helpful. This counts as if the PCs succeed on a DC Diplomacy check (see below).

Diplomacy (DC 14 / 15): The PC convinces Abeid Medahn that they are on Bered's side and need the time to investigate his death. They can spend their time, and can also use rituals (see below). If they succeed at a DC 20 check, they can have them cast by Medahn as long as they supply the components.

Bluff/Intimidate (DC 19 / 20): The PC threaten Abeid Medahn or use a ruse to trick him to allow access.

Though Medhan lets the PCs look at the body, he insists on staying present. Examining the body can be done using various skills, but unless convinced of the necessity, the cleric does not allow any casting to take place.

Bered's body hasn't been touched - only a Gentle Repose ritual was cast to prevent further rot.

Examining the body: Bered has various wounds. A DC 18 Heal check reveals that claws caused them. His body is also bloodless, and his neck shows two small pinpricks, as if from a bite. A DC 16 Religion check identifies the bite as being from a vampire.

Searching the body: In one pocket is a small wooden coin. It bears the image of a sword and hammer crossed. The pocket also contains a small note with the words 'Rystar, Hog's Pen - Chandler's Cross' scribbled on it.

Information can also be obtained from Bered himself with a Speak with Dead ritual (or even a Raise Dead, if the PCs desire to spend that much money). Only if the PCs made a DC 20 Diplomacy check does Medahn allow the use of rituals. Note that performing a Raise Dead ritual takes 4 to 8 hours.

Bered can tell the PCs the following:

- He cobbles together descriptions of some men that were seen transporting an older man matching lord Gyertan's description to a boat.
- One of these was recognized as Rystar, a former arena fighter now down on his luck.
- Rystar spends much of his time drinking in the Hog's Pen in Chandler's Cross, a town upriver from Scar town.
- Bered talked to Rystar. After feeding him enough liquor to fell an ox, Rystar talked about how he brought some old geezer to the Grounds in exchange for cash.
- The Grounds is a fight club in Chandler's Cross.

- It is not easy to get in, but Rystar likely knows how. Unfortunately he passed out before Bered could ask him.
- Bered investigated further, but he must have drawn attention. He was attacked on the docks of Chandler's Cross.
- Bered does not know who killed him, as it happened in the dark, but he knows it was an undead creature as it sapped the life out of him.

If Bered is raised, he does not accompany the PCs to Chandler's Cross. Instead, he decides to go into hiding.

SCENE: CHANDLER'S CROSS

Recommended Skills: Streetwise, Stealth

Travel to Chandler's Cross is easiest by boat. The dragonfly cannot sail up the Ashaba, but Mei can arrange a smaller boat to get there. She stays on board to keep the boat ready for a hasty departure.

It is a lot harder to get info in Chandler's Cross without getting noticed. All skill checks are at -2 penalty here.

Regardless of success in covering their tracks, a Streetwise check reveals the following:

DC 4: Strange stories about the woods: shadowy creatures and vicious fey attack travelers on the road.

DC 9: Ceremony, who runs the Grounds fight club, recently sent out her men to retrieve a debtor. The guy is now her 'guest' - until he turns up in the river.

DC 14: That thug Rystar earned some cash recently. He already spent most of it in the Hog's Pen.

DC 19: There is a change of management at the Grounds. A guy from the south took over and Ceremony isn't happy.

DC 24: The guy is called Ethari, and he is tied to Netheril - everybody is scared of him.

SCENE: THE HOG'S PEN

Recommended Skills: Acrobatics, Athletics, Bluff, Endurance, Intimidate

Important NPCs: Rystar, male half-orc barbarian

The Hog's Pen is a rowdy tavern, ran by a hugely obese guy named Spykor. He serves cheap beer and equally cheap, but much fouler, stronger drinks, including the local specialty, a very strong and lightly sour drink called Bellwater. Its crowd is the dregs of society.

Rystar frequents here, drinking away his squandered fame as an arena fighter. He was once a popular sight in the Grounds fight club, but now his health is ruined, and he spends his time doing low jobs to earn enough money to spend in the bar.

One such job was escorting an old man to the Grounds on behest of Ceremony, the Grounds owner. He has already drunk away the cash for that job.

Signaling out Rystar is not hard. He is the only half-orc in the bar, and most people can point him out. Getting him to talk is a lot harder.

Acrobatics or Athletics (DC 14 / 15): A good brawl always gets the blood pumping. If the PCs start a brawl (or if Rystar does) everyone inside needs to participate. Failure means a PC loses a healing surge. If a majority of PCs fail, they draw too much attention and gain one failure.

If they win the brawl, Rystar is brow beaten enough that he can be convinced to talk.

Bluff or Endurance (DC 14 / 15): The easiest way is likely to get Rystar drunk enough that he talks about most anything with his 'drinking buddy'. The PC must either succeed in keeping up with Rystar's drinking or convincingly fool the half-orc into thinking so. Failure means Rystar, once drunk, starts a brawl (see above) before the PCs can question him.

Diplomacy or Intimidate (DC 19 / 20): Either friendly words or threats can get Rystar to talk. Failure means Rystar flies into a rage and starts a brawl (see above).

The following is what Rystar can tell if they convince him to talk:

- He is a former fighter at The Grounds, a fight club in the 'Shadows' district.
- He has been down on his luck lately, losing a few fights and working his back into a ruin.
- Ceremony, the club owner, recently offered him money for a small job: he was to bring in an old guy that owed Ceremony money.
- Ceremony is a female tiefling, hard as nails but fair - and the money was good.
- Rystar was given an address in Scar Town. He travelled there with two of Ceremony's people, Aysee and Leech - both shadar-kai.
- The old guy travelled with a servant. The servant immediately surrendered, but the old man had some spirit and tried to fight. They had to knock him out.
- Rystar brought both the servant and the guy to the Grounds. He doesn't know what happened to them afterwards.
- Access to the Grounds is restricted. There is a doorman who only lets in those who have the right passphrase, or the right story.

- The passphrase for this week is 'Pain for Your Enemies'.

Note: Even if the PCs fail this challenge, they should get information that point to the Grounds. Rystar (or someone else) makes a sneer on how 'those at the Grounds will deal with you soon enough'.

SCENE: ENTERING THE GROUNDS

Primary Skills: Bluff, Intimidate, Stealth, Perception + Thievery

The shadows in this area of town seem to deepen almost unnaturally. The ground here rises steeply, climbing almost to the top of the cliffside at the edge of town. From here, the river Ashaba flows almost seventy feet below.

"The Grounds" is a square, flat structure build on top of the cliff walls. One wrought iron door gives access. A minotaur stands guard by the door.

The minotaur is the Grounds' simple witted doorman - a good deterrent to anyone with 'funny' ideas.

Minotaur Warrior	Level 10 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 500
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +14
HP 106; Bloodied 53; see also <i>ferocity</i>	
AC 26; Fortitude 27, Reflex 21, Will 23	
Speed 5	
m Battleaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+16 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the minotaur warrior's next turn	
M Goring Charge (standard; at-will)	
The minotaur makes a charge attack; +17 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
Ferocity (when reduced to 0 hit points)	
The minotaur warrior makes a melee basic attack.	
Alignment Any	Languages Common
Skills Dungeoneering +12, Intimidate +11, Nature +9	
Str 23 (+11)	Dex 10 (+5) Wis 14 (+7)
Con 18 (+9)	Int 9 (+4) Cha 13 (+6)
Equipment scale armor, heavy shield, battleaxe	

There are various ways to enter the Grounds without drawing attention. In the end, each approach eventually grants the PCs access to the grounds, though they again risk drawing attention.

Attacking the minotaur is definitely a bad idea, as the PCs instantly are noted by everyone inside. In that case, the only way to get inside is fighting one's way in (facing all creatures of Encounter 4B and 5).

The passphrase: If the PCs received the secret phrase from Rystar, the Minotaur assumes that the PCs are

arena fighters and let's them pass without further skill check.

Bluff (DC 14 / 15): Claiming to be arena fighters, gamblers who want to bet on the fights or simply to be the audience is another way to get in.

Intimidate (DC 14 / 15): Threatening the bumper with violence is a sure way to be let in as the Minotaur assumes that the PCs must be arena fighters. He is used to such rude behavior of the scum fighting here and laughs the threats off.

Stealth (DC 19 / 20): Sneaking in past the guard is hard, but not impossible. It requires a distraction to draw the guard away from the door for a few moments. Failure means some of the PCs are spotted as they enter. They need to either bluff their way out of it or flee (either away or inside, where they are quickly lost in the Grounds' crowd). People who flee get reported to Ceremony.

Perception (DC 19 / 20): This spots a carefully hidden side entrance to the Grounds, which is used to depose of waste. Once spotted, the PCs can use Thievery to try to get inside.

Thievery (DC 19 / 20): This opens the back door. It is fairly easy to sneak inside once open. A failure means opening took too much time and/or noise, and the PCs are noticed as they get inside.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The skill challenge ends when the PCs reach the Grounds, or when they accumulate 3 failures.

The PCs do not need to accumulate 8 successes to succeed on this challenge. For example, clever investigation can allow them to reach the Grounds sooner, in which case they succeed as well.

Success: Ceremony and Ethari are unaware of the PC's intentions. The PCs enter the Grounds without raising suspicion.

Failure: The PCs have been noticed snooping around, and both Ceremony and Ethari are ready for them. This affects how the arena fight turns out (see Encounter 4B for more details). The PCs are still able to find and enter the Grounds.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 180 / 240 xp if they succeed in the skill challenge, or half if they fail.

ENCOUNTER 3: THE GROUNDS

SETUP

Important NPCs:

Ceremony, female tiefling darkblade

Aysee Wyldtouch, female shadar-kai witch

Leech, male shadar-kai warrior

No matter how the PCs entered the building the PCs can now walk freely in the upper parts of the Grounds.

See Appendix 1 for a cross section map of the area.

The Grounds is a busy and smelly place. The building looks like an old barracks. The rooms and hallways are filthy and littered with rubbish. Wannabe fighters gather here drinking and waiting for their turn. The widest hallway is lit with torches and ends in a winding staircase leading downstairs.

At the far end of what looks like the common room the floor drops a few feet down to a balcony. Its outlook is blocked with iron bars. It looks out over some kind of arena, though the view is not very good. At the other side, a different area seems to give a much better view.

Fighters mingle in the common room before the fight (drinking overpriced booze and placing bets). No spectators are around here though. It allows for some social gathering if PCs wish to. Every fighter points out that if the PCs want to sign up as arena fighters that Ceremony, the tiefling organizer of all tournaments, eagerly waits for a group of experienced gladiators downstairs.

The PCs are currently in the area intended for Chandlers Cross' lowlife, most of which are people looking to fight in the arena themselves. A separate area in the grounds is intended for spectators with more money - and thus more privilege. Access to that area is through the auditorium, and only under Ceremony's supervision. From the spectator's area a secret tunnel leads to an adjacent building. The tunnel ends in a one-way door and is only used as a means of escape.

To enter the deeper levels of the building where the prisoners are held one has to cross the arena behind the auditorium. The most obvious possibility is to enter the arena as fighters, but it is also possible to enter it covertly, especially at the end of the night, when the fights are over, most visitors are at the bars, and Ceremony is entertaining her guests. If the PCs stay in the bar for some time they notice that few patrons pay attention to the arena when there is no fight going on.

If the PCs do not go down to the auditorium they can run into Tahn here, who then tries to convince them to join up for the fight.

SIGNING UP FOR THE ARENA

If the PCs proceed downstairs they come to a lit auditorium where Ceremony waits for new arrivals. If the PCs have failed the skill challenge in Encounter 2 Ceremony is expecting them. Under no circumstance does she show this.

You enter a well-lit hall that has been redecorated to serve as an auditorium.

Behind a crude desk sits a tiefling woman dressed in black glossy leather flanked by two shadar-kai, a man and a woman.

"Welcome, arena fighters! My name is Ceremony." The attractive tiefling woman greets you.

"I assume you came here to sign up to fight and get rich quickly?"

Ceremony is the owner of the Grounds. She is not in a good mood, as she has recently been forced to relinquish some control to Laundae Ethari, an agent for which she spies. Ceremony believes Ethari works for Netheril. The two Shadar-kai are Aysee Wyldtouch and Leech, her trusty aides. They match the descriptions of the two people that aided Rystar when he abducted lord Gyertan. Ceremony is unaware that Aysee Wyldtouch is a Netheril agent, who has been briefing her superiors on recent events. Aysee has become suspicious of Ethari, but has not told Ceremony, as she mistakenly believes her boss is in league with the vampire, and thus a traitor to Netheril.

Ceremony doesn't trust the nosy adventurers, but she has well paying clients who want to see a good fight today. She tries to convince the PCs to join the arena fight:

- The next fight is up right now. Some rich merchants are eagerly waiting for a show in the arena. They were expecting gladiators from House Tharan'Zhul, but they didn't show up yet.
- Ceremony wants to see how the PCs are doing and sets up a fight against a fey origin group calling themselves the "Firynt'h'ael" - or the "Pain Bringers" in Common. She won't reveal more facts about the PCs' opponents.
- She suggests the PCs to give themselves a group name as well so she can announce them properly.
- If the PCs failed the skill challenge, Ceremony may try to put some pressure on them to join

the fight, noting she can have the PCs thrown out again for trespassing.

Ceremony outlines the rules for the PCs for fighting in her arena:

1. Ceremony runs this show here. Her orders are to be followed.
2. At the start of the fight each combatant has to line up at his side of the wall. The fight begins when Ceremony signals the fighters to do so.
3. All members of the PCs have to fight. There are no bystanders.
4. A match is till first blood only. An opponent who becomes bloodied is eliminated and should step back from the fight. The match continues until all opponents on one side are eliminated.
5. There's no limit on powers or weapons the PCs can use as long as the audience does not get harmed. The PCs can use all gadgets provided in the arena.
6. You can't give up. You either leave the arena bloodied or as victors.
7. You can't bet on your own fights.

Of course there are rewards:

1. Arena fighters succeeding in at least one fight have the privilege to use the better accommodations on the lower levels. This includes a grand feast after the match. Further rewards are being handed over there.
2. Winning a fight yields 50 gold pieces per participant.
3. Additionally Ceremony chips in a magic item for the winning crew (see Treasure in Encounter 5).

The PCs might want to persuade Ceremony to watch a fight from the spectator's area, which succeeds with a DC 20 Diplomacy check and a non-negotiable fee of 50 / 100 gp for each spectator. Usually she only allows access to that spectator's area to clients who have been recommended to her (which generally means they are amoral and rich). Taln can occasionally be found here. If questioned about Taln Ceremony states that he now works for her and takes care of the gladiator champions.

The PCs should become aware in this scene that the only way to reach the lower levels where more rooms can be explored leads through the gate only winners of the match are allowed to use.

If the PCs refuse to fight in the arena Ceremony's expression becomes concerned and suspicious. She rightly assumes now the PCs must be here to free the

prisoners. She orders them to leave the building. The PCs can come back later to sign up for the fight if they change their mind. In that case she orders her gladiators to kill the PCs in the arena.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs sign up for the fight continue with Encounter 4B.

If the PCs decide to fight Ceremony and her followers run Encounter 5 Below Grounds first. The way to the deeper levels is free for the PCs after the fight. They may meet the fighters of Encounter 4B here.

Alternatively the PCs might decide to use a stealthy approach to avoid the arena fight. In that case, run Encounter 4A.

TREASURE

If the PCs attack Ceremony and her cronies they can loot their belongings (see Encounter 5B).

ENCOUNTER 4A: THROUGH THE SHADOWS

**SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 8 / 10,
COMPLEXITY 5 (1,700 / 2,400 XP)**

SETUP

Number of Successes: 12

Number of Failures: 3

Primary Skills: Bluff, Dungeoneering, Perception, Thievery, Stealth

Run this encounter if the PCs decide to sneak into the dungeons. Use Appendix 1 for a guideline on how the PCs move through the area.

The difficult part is getting into the Halls of the Champions. The PCs need to sneak through the meeting chambers, past several locked doors, the audition halls, and finally the arena. All areas have guards or servants, so this is a difficult and lengthy challenge.

Regardless of how the PCs move, the last part is to move through the arena. This should obviously happen at a moment when no fight takes place, which is also when it is less likely to be watched. The last checks should be for the door from the arena into the Halls of the Champions.

The following are a sample of skills that can be used:

Bluff (DC 15 / 16): Give a plausible excuse for your presence when spotted.

Dungeoneering (DC 15 / 16): Use your knowledge of dungeon layouts to move through the right corridors and spot useful short cuts.

Perception (DC 15 / 16): Spot a guard before it sees you.

Stealth (DC 15 / 16 or 20 / 21): Sneak through a corridor or room without notice. Use the hard DC in larger rooms, such as when the PCs sneak through the arena to the dungeon entrance.

Thievery (DC 20 / 21): Open a locked door. It is fairly easy to sneak inside once open. Using a Knock ritual also counts as a success, but may prompt a need for an additional Stealth check.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The skill challenge ends when the PCs accumulate 12 successes or 3 failures.

Success: The PCs manages to enter the dungeons unseen. Move to encounter 5, where they meet Taln. They also earn the story award **DALE09 Like a Shadow in the Night**.

Failure: The PCs have been noticed. If the PCs are not yet as far, Ceremony lets them continue until they are in the arena.

Before they can enter the dungeons, they are confronted by the Firynth'tael, Ceremony's most popular gladiators. Run Encounter 4B, but the drow and the bears are absent. This fight is always to the death.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 340 / 480 xp is they succeed in the skill challenge. If they fail, they receive half for the challenge, and half yet again if they succeed in fighting the Firynth'tael.

ENCOUNTER 4B: ARENA FIGHT

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 8 / 10 (1,700 / 2,400 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures and traps:

2 Veteran Gladiators (K)

1 Eladrin Twilight Incanter (I)

1 Drow Warrior (D)

1 Bear Trap (B)

The veteran gladiators (source: *Dragon* 368) in this encounter are Eladrin. Modify the base creatures as follows:

Eladrin modifications
Medium fey humanoid
Senses low-light vision
Saving Throws +5 against charm effects
Fey Step (move; encounter)
The eladrin can teleport 5 squares.
Languages Common, Elven

Assuming the PCs agree to fight in the arena they are allowed to enter the arena. Ceremony asks the PCs to wait in a hallway until she calls for them. If the PCs are ready to proceed, read:

Ceremony yells your names behind the iron door: your signal to enter. The gate opens and reveals the arena. The smell of wild animals and blood fill your nostrils.

The hall is a big cave which completely opens up to the south, high above the cliffs along the river Ashaba.

The walls on all other sides are high and smooth. They are flecked with blood and crowned with sharpened wooden pegs pointing into the arena to discourage gladiators from climbing out of the arena.

High up you spot Ceremony overlooking the arena. A small crowd of richly dressed men and women are gathered all around the seats above the wall. They look down at you and cheer.

One of the rich people is Laundae Ethari, a vampire lord. He announces to the combatants that a special magical trophy (see below) will be thrown into the arena to the first person who causes an enemy to become bloodied.

Laundae Ethari looks like a tall pale human, with amber eyes and long dark hair. He wears polished

leather so dark it seems black, and a dark purple cloak fashioned with a silver pin in the shape of a disk. As he moves, the shadows seem to follow him about.

Every combatant has to line up at the wall of his side of the arena. Each combatant can then shift two squares (following initiative) before Ceremony gives the signal to start the combat.

The PCs' opponents are three eladrin - referred to as the Firynt'h'ael by Ceremony - and a drow warrior, Del'dueeth Jaelre.

The Firynt'h'ael are contacts of Ethari. They are vicious and mean, seeing humans - specifically - as vermin to be destroyed (they are barely constraining themselves in the arena). The drow warrior is a last minute addition to the arena fight, and the eladrin and drow do not go well together. However, business being as it is, they set aside their differences to fight the PCs - they can always kill each other later.

If Ceremony is aware of the PCs true intentions (failed skill challenge in Encounter 2) she secretly gave the PCs' opponents the orders to show no mercy and kill the PCs, and to continue fighting even when they or their opponents are bloodied.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Cliff-edge: The hall has no balustrade to the east. Right beyond the cave the cliff goes down as deep as 50 feet (dealing 5d10 falling damage). There is no path leading from the river's shores up the cliff. Swimming is extremely dangerous, as the shore here is very rocky and the water flows quite fast. Climbing back up requires a DC 15 Athletics check.

Walls: The slightly tilted walls are very smooth and 30 feet high (6 squares) and require a DC 25 Athletics check to climb. Sharp wooden pegs on the top of the walls discourage combatants to climb the walls. These attack with +7 vs. Reflex dealing 1d8 + 5 damage for every attempt to climb the wall.

Bladewheels: All around the arena floor are wheels mounted horizontally on poles with sharp blades attached to them. If a creature enters an adjacent field of these wheels with a forced movement, a charge, or when running, he risks being pierced by the blades. The wheel attacks with +7 vs. Reflex dealing 2d8+5 damage.

Alternatively a creature adjacent to a wheel can turn the wheel as a standard action attacking all other creatures adjacent to the wheel with a Dexterity or Strength ability check vs. AC dealing 2d8+5 damage.

Fire braziers: The braziers are filled with oil. With a DC 8 Strength check a creature can topple over a brazier. The burning oil attacks in a close blast 3 with +7 vs. Reflex igniting everything in its path dealing 4d8 + 5

fire damage and 5 ongoing fire. This can only be done once per brazier.

Gates: All gates are locked with a mechanism controlled by Ceremony (DC 19 Thievery check to open). Once the fight is over Ceremony unlocks the gates again.

Bears: If the PCs failed the skill challenge in Encounter 2 the Grounds' beast masters drag them along the wall using chains, moving 2 squares per round and only east and west (left and right). The beast masters themselves stand on top of the walls. Otherwise the bears are chained at the spots designated on the map.

The bears act like a trap as described in the statistics. They won't move from their positions other than directed by the beast masters, and only affect the squares adjacent to them.

Blood trinket: Laundae Ethari throws a magical trinket (see Treasure) into the arena to the first person who causes an enemy to become bloodied. Laundae prefers to throw it on a square between the person and one of his enemies hoping that the two fight over it.

THE CROWD

An angry crowd can affect a match. Dragon 368's 'Fight!' article has rules for playing the crowd, and its effects on a gladiatorial fight. These rules are reproduced in the New Rules section. When using these rules, take into account that the crowd in this arena is high up and behind bars, so some effects are not appropriate for this match. The crowd in this adventure starts out indifferent or (if Ceremony was forewarned) unfriendly towards the PCs.

Note that playing the crowd makes the fight a bit more complex. For a quicker game, you can use the following two crowd effects instead:

Raging audience: The combatants are expected to fight, not to stand back. Every creature starting its turn next to a stone wall is the target of trash thrown down from the audience ranks. The audience attacks with +7 vs. AC; on hit: target is dazed until the end of its next turn. This does not happen in the first combat round.

Encouraging audience: Every time a creature drops an enemy to 0 hit points (or bloodied if that is the goal of the fight) the crowd start cheering. The crowd starts yelling "Tell us who is next! Tell us who is next!" As a free action, the creature can point out an enemy. The creature gains a +2 to attacks against that enemy until the end of his next turn.

TACTICS

The gladiators use their abilities to the best of their advantage. The drow uses his darkfire ability on a leader

type focusing his attacks on him. The eladrin incanter tries to keep a distance and use her ranged attacks on the PCs, focusing on bloodied PCs. She tries to teleport PCs to a space adjacent to the bears, hoping they will attack them. The veteran gladiators try to keep the PCs' defender busy.

Once Laundae Ethari throws the trophy one of the eladrin or the drow rush to it to pick it up and don it. This grants that NPC a +1/+2 on its Fortitude, Reflex, and Will defenses.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove a veteran gladiator

Six PCs: Add a veteran gladiator

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs are victorious Ceremony congratulates them. They have some opportunity to talk to her and toast on their victory.

The gates leading deeper into the building open up. Ceremony declares that a heroes' feast is waiting for them so they can celebrate their victory in private. Her servant Taln delivers the rewards.

The PCs may want to attack Ceremony instead of proceeding to the lower levels. In this case she quickly retreats with Laundae Ethari into the dungeons. The audience rushes out of the tunnel leading underground to the adjacent building. Laundae Ethari and Ceremony gather forces with their servants and hunt down the PCs as described in Encounter 5.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs gain 340 / 480 xp if they win the arena fight. They also earn the story award **DALE08 Gladiator of Scardale**.

TREASURE

Laundae Ethari at one point throws an *amulet of false life* +2 / *amulet of protection* +3 into the arena as a special reward to the fighter who first bloodies an opponent.

ENCOUNTER 4B: ARENA FIGHT STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Veteran Gladiator (level 7)	Level 7 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 300
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +9	
HP 78; Bloodied 39	
AC 23; Fortitude 21, Reflex 19, Will 18	
Speed 5	
m Trident (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage and the target is marked until the end of the veteran gladiator's next turn.	
M Entangling Net (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +12 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 2 damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape).	
M Pinning Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage, and the target is marked, immobilized, and takes ongoing 5 damage (save ends all). The gladiator cannot make trident attacks while the target remains immobilized.	
Alignment Any Languages Common	
Skills Bluff +8, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +8	
Str 19 (+7) Dex 15 (+5) Wis 12 (+4)	
Con 14 (+5) Int 11 (+3) Cha 10 (+3)	
Equipment scale armor, trident, net	

Eladrin Twilight Incanter (level 9)	Level 9 Controller
Medium fey humanoid	XP 400
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +5; low-light vision	
HP 90; Bloodied 45	
AC 23; Fortitude 20, Reflex 22, Will 22	
Saving Throws +5 against charm effects	
Speed 6; see also <i>fey step</i>	
m Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+11 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the eladrin twilight incanter's next turn.	
R Binding Bolt (standard; at-will)	
Ranged 10; +13 vs. reflex; 1d8 + 3 damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the eladrin twilight incanter's next turn.	
R Teleporting Bolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Teleportation	
Ranged 10; +13 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 2 damage, and the target is teleported up to 3 squares. The target cannot be teleported into an unsafe space.	
C Dazzling Blast (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Radiant	
Close blast 3; +10 vs. Will; 2d6 + 3 radiant damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the eladrin twilight incanter's next turn.	
Fey Step (move; encounter)	
The eladrin twilight incanter can teleport 5 squares.	
Alignment Any Languages Common, Elven	
Skills Arcana +16, History +16, Nature +10	
Str 12 (+5) Dex 16 (+7) Wis 12 (+5)	
Con 10 (+4) Int 20 (+9) Cha 16 (+7)	
Equipment robes, spear	

Drow Warrior (level 9)	Level 9 Lurker
Medium fey humanoid	XP 400
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +10; darkvision	
HP 71; Bloodied 35	
AC 22; Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 17	
Speed 6	
m Rapier (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon	
+12 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage, and the drow warrior makes a	

secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack*: +11 vs. Fortitude; see *drow poison* for effect.

r Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon

Ranged 10/20; +12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage, and the drow warrior makes a secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack*: +11 vs. Fortitude; see *drow poison* for effect.

R Darkfire (minor, encounter)

Ranged 10; +10 vs. Reflex; until the end of the drow warrior's next turn, the target grants combat advantage to all attackers, and the target cannot benefit from invisibility or concealment.

Combat Advantage

The drow warrior deals an extra 2d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.

Drow Poison ♦ Poison

A creature hit by a weapon coated in *drow poison* takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends). *First Failed Save*: The target is also weakened (save ends). *Second Failed Save*: The target falls unconscious until the end of the encounter.

Alignment Evil Languages Common, Elven

Skills Dungeoneering +10, Intimidate +7, Stealth +14

Str 14 (+6) **Dex** 19 (+8) **Wis** 13 (+5)

Con 11 (+4) **Int** 13 (+5) **Cha** 12 (+5)

Equipment chainmail, rapier*, hand crossbow, 20 bolts*

*These weapons are coated in *drow poison*

Chained Bears Level 7 Obstacle

Hazard XP 300
Hazard: Two dire bears, each of which attacks any creature entering or starting in a 3x3 square area.

Perception

No check is needed to notice the dire bears.

Additional skill: Nature

♦DC 15: The character identifies the bears as dire bears.

Trigger

A bear attacks when a creature enters or begins its turn in one of the marked squares

Attack

Opportunity Action **Melee**

Target: One creature in the area.

Attack: +12 vs. AC

Hit: 2d10 + 5 damage and immobilized until escape. A bear can only immobilize one person at a time.

Countermeasures

♦Immobilized characters can use Acrobatics or Athletics (DC 20) to escape.

♦A character in the area can attack the bear (AC 24, other defenses 21, hp 256). Once killed or knocked unconscious, the entire area is safe.

♦A character adjacent to the area can calm the bear with a DC 19 Nature or DC 24 Diplomacy check. A calmed bear does not attack until the end of the character's next turn (after which it gets agitated again). A bear that has been calmed three consecutive times stops attacking for the remainder of the encounter.

ENCOUNTER 4B: ARENA FIGHT STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Veteran Gladiator (level 9)		Level 9 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid		XP 400
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +10		
HP 94; Bloodied 47		
AC 25; Fortitude 23, Reflex 21, Will 20		
Speed 5		
m Trident (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+16 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage and the target is marked until the end of the eladrin veteran gladiator's next turn.		
M Entangling Net (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon		
Reach 2; +14 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 3 damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape).		
M Pinning Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon		
+16 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is marked, immobilized, and takes ongoing 5 damage (save ends all). The gladiator cannot make trident attacks while the target remains immobilized.		
Alignment Any		Languages Common
Skills Bluff +9, Diplomacy +9, Intimidate +9		
Str 19 (+8)	Dex 15 (+6)	Wis 12 (+5)
Con 14 (+6)	Int 11 (+4)	Cha 10 (+4)
Equipment scale armor, trident, net		

Eladrin Twilight Incanter (level 11)		Level 11 Controller
Medium fey humanoid		XP 600
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +6; low-light vision		
HP 106; Bloodied 53		
AC 25; Fortitude 22, Reflex 24, Will 24		
Saving Throws +5 against charm effects		
Speed 6; see also <i>fey step</i>		
m Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the eladrin twilight incanter's next turn.		
R Binding Bolt (standard; at-will)		
Ranged 10; +15 vs. reflex; 1d8+4 damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the eladrin twilight incanter's next turn.		
R Teleporting Bolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Teleportation		
Ranged 10; +15 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 3 damage, and the target is teleported up to 3 squares. The target cannot be teleported into an unsafe space.		
C Dazzling Blast (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Radiant		
Close blast 3; +12 vs. Will; 2d6 + 4 radiant damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the eladrin twilight incanter's next turn.		
Fey Step (move; encounter)		
The eladrin fey twilight incanter can teleport 5 squares.		
Alignment Any		Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +17, History +17, Nature +11		
Str 12 (+6)	Dex 16 (+8)	Wis 12 (+6)
Con 10 (+5)	Int 20 (+10)	Cha 16 (+8)
Equipment robes, spear		

Drow Warrior		Level 11 Lurker
Medium fey humanoid		XP 600
Initiative +13	Senses Perception +11; darkvision	
HP 83; Bloodied 41		
AC 24; Fortitude 20, Reflex 22, Will 19		
Speed 6		
m Rapier (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon		

+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage, and the drow warrior makes a secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack*: +13 vs. Fortitude; see *drow poison* for effect.

r Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon

Ranged 10/20; +14 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage, and the drow warrior makes a secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack*: +13 vs. Fortitude; see *drow poison* for effect.

R Darkfire (minor, encounter)

Ranged 10; +12 vs. Reflex; until the end of the drow warrior's next turn, the target grants combat advantage to all attackers, and the target cannot benefit from invisibility or concealment.

Combat Advantage

The drow warrior deals an extra 2d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.

Drow Poison ♦ Poison

A creature hit by a weapon coated in *drow poison* takes a –2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends). *First Failed Save*: The target is also weakened (save ends). *Second Failed Save*: The target falls unconscious until the end of the encounter.

Alignment Evil Languages Common, Elven

Skills Dungeoneering +11, Intimidate +8, Stealth +15

Str 14 (+7) Dex 19 (+9) Wis 13 (+6)

Con 11 (+5) Int 13 (+6) Cha 12 (+6)

Equipment chainmail, rapier*, hand crossbow, 20 bolts*

* These weapons are coated in *drow poison*

Chained Bears		Level 9 Obstacle
Hazard		XP 400
Hazard: Two dire bears, each of which attacks any creature entering or starting in a 3x3 square area.		
Perception		
No check is needed to notice the dire bears.		
Additional skill: Nature		
♦DC 15: The character identifies the bears as dire bears.		
Trigger		
A bear attacks when a creature enters or begins its turn in one of the marked squares. A bear does not attack if it is currently restraining someone.		
Attack		
Opportunity Action		Melee
Target: One creature in the area.		
Attack: +14 vs. AC		
Hit: 2d10 + 6 damage and immobilized until escape. A bear can only immobilize one person at a time.		
Countermeasures		
♦Immobilized characters can use Acrobatics or Athletics (DC 21) to escape.		
♦A character in the area can attack the bear (AC 26, other defenses 23, hp 296). Once killed or knocked unconscious, the entire area is safe.		
♦A character adjacent to the area can calm the bear with a DC 20 Nature or DC 25 Diplomacy check. A calmed bear does not attack until the end of the character's next turn (after which it gets agitated again). A bear that has been calmed three consecutive times stops attacking for the remainder of the encounter.		

ENCOUNTER 4B: ARENA FIGHT MAP

DUNGEON TILES

Shop / Floor	8x10	x2
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ARCANE CORRIDOS

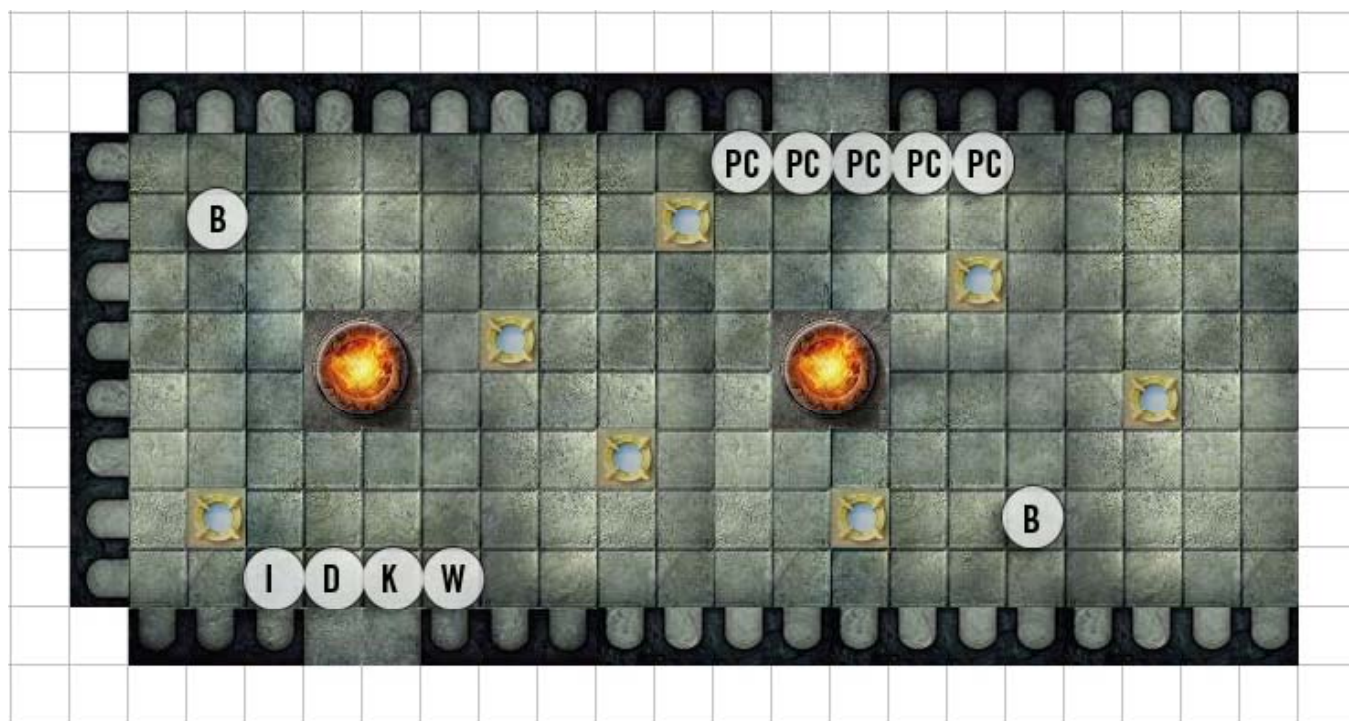
Fire Bowl/ Floor	2x2	x2
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HIDDEN CRYPTS

Alcoves / Floor	8x2	x2
Alcoves - Wall / Floor	2x4	x8

FANE OF THE FORGOTTEN GODS

Blue Cistern / Statue	1x1	x7
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ENCOUNTER 5A: THE SERVANT

SETUP

Important NPCs:

Taln, male vampire spawn

Lord Gyertan male human

If the adventurers enter the lower levels after winning the arena match, a pale old servant (Taln) approaches them and asks them to follow him.

If the PCs entered here by stealth, they may also encounter Taln (unless they sneak past him), though he is then not really sure what they are there for - in that case adjust the scene as needed.

The servant opens a double door leading the way to a brightly lit room. A grand banquet has been set up on a long table. Heaps of meat, vegetables, fruit, desserts and several barrels of wine and beer are offered to you, the winners of the match.

On a smaller table nearby are the rewards of your match: small bags of gold for each of you, two polished armors and a high quality weapon.

“Dinner has been served and accommodations have been prepared for you. If you need anything else...” says the old servant with a bow “...just call me. I’m new here as well, but I am quite acquainted with the surroundings. My name is Taln.”

Taln’s task is to keep an eye on the new arrivals.

Vampire Spawn Fleshripper		Level 5 Minion
Medium natural humanoid (undead)		XP 50
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +3; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		
AC 20; Fortitude 17, Reflex 18, Will 17		
Immune disease, poison; Resist 5 Necrotic		
Speed 7, climb 4 (spider climb)		
m Claws (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic		
+11 vs. AC; 5 necrotic damage (7 necrotic damage against a bloodied target).		
Destroyed by Sunlight		
A vampire spawn that begins its turn in direct sunlight can take only a single move action on its turn. If it ends the turn in direct sunlight, it burns to ash and is destroyed.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common
Str 14 (+4)	Dex 16 (+5)	Wis 12 (+3)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 10 (+2)	Cha 14 (+4)

The PCs may recognize the name as that of Lord Gyertan servant. If they confront him with this, Taln breaks out in tears. He admits that he has betrayed his master. He is repentant about his actions and promises the PCs to help them. At this moment he really believes

his own words so Insight checks show him to be trustworthy

Taln tries to hide his nature, by staying in the shadows to prevent the PCs noticing he does not cast one himself. A DC 20 Perception check reveals that he has similar bite marks like the victim the PCs might have examined earlier, and a DC 25 check reveals he casts no shadow. A DC 16 Religion check reveals these to be vampire bites. A DC 20 religion check reveals that Taln is a vampire spawn himself. If confronted with this Taln starts to whimper and tells the PCs that Laundae Ethari indeed has bitten him. If the PCs have not caught on that Taln is a vampire, fear causes him to not reveal that he has been transformed into a spawn. Instead he claims that Ethari has kept him alive so far. A DC 15 Insight check reveals this as a lie.

He is honest with all other topics:

- Lord Gyertan is alive and imprisoned a level deeper. Taln can show the PCs the way. There are no guards as Lord Gyertan can hardly move by himself and is in chains.
- He does not know why Lord Gyertan has been abducted, but Gyertan may know something about Ethari.
- Ethari works for someone else. Ceremony thinks he works for Netheril, but Taln believes there is another party involved. He doesn’t know who.
- He knows Ethari from when he worked for the Six Coffers Market trading house in Sembia. The house used to be respectable but has gone downhill recently.
- He is too afraid of his new masters to help the PCs other than showing them where Lord Gyertan is hidden.

RESCUING LORD GYERTAN

Taln leads the PCs downstairs through a mazelike labyrinth of animal cages, jails and fighter training rooms to the deepest level of the Grounds.

The doors on this level are all unlocked when the PCs arrive. If the PCs examine the doors with a DC 20 Thievery check they realize that the locks on the doors can be controlled by a mechanism elsewhere in this building. If the PCs want to block the doors from closing roll a 20 Thievery check for them secretly so the PCs won’t know if their blocking attempt was successful.

Taln and the PCs pass a few guards on the upper levels but as Taln is with them they wave the group through. Taln leads them directly to Lord Gyertan in the most southeastern part of the jail level (see map).

Lord Gyertan is in an extremely bad shape. He can hardly talk or perceive his surroundings. He has no

healing surges left to heal today. His torturers have broken one of his legs making it impossible for him to walk alone. Healing powers (such as a paladin's *lay on hands* ability) do not heal the leg - it needs extensive rest to mend.

Gyertan does not readily trust the PCs. At this point the only thing he is able to answer is that he indeed is Lord Gyertan. Only once he has been freed is he able - and willing - to explain further.

TALN BETRAYS THE PCs

Right at the moment when the PCs want to free Lord Gyertan from his iron shackles Laundae Ethari and Ceremony enter the dungeons.

Taln, if present, betrays them. He feels the presence of his true master and has to follow his orders. His eyes start to glow red; he runs out of the prison cell and yells "Master! They are here. They want to free the prisoner!".

If the PCs make precautions to avoid things like this happening change the events accordingly.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once Laundae Ethari and Ceremony enter, move to encounter 5B.

TREASURE

Taln shows the PCs their rewards for the won match: 50 gold pieces for each PC, a *battle harness armor* +2, a *champion's armor* +2, and a *victory flash weapon* +2 / *bloodclaw weapon* +3.

Even if the PCs snuck in, Taln doesn't stop them from taking it as loot.

ENCOUNTER 5B: BELOW GROUNDS

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 9 / 11 (2,050 / 3,100
XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures.

1 Ceremony, female tiefling darkblade (TD)

1 Shadar-kai Warrior (SW)

8 Human Bowman Lackeys (HL)

1 Laundae Ethari, male vampire lord (VL)

Taln, male vampire spawn (VS)

Lord Gyertan, male human (LG)

This encounter starts once Ceremony and Laundae Ethari enter this level with their lackeys. Combat starts the moment the NPCs enter. If the PCs snuck in and avoided meeting Taln, they may still have the element of surprise.

Aysee Wyldtouch, Ceremony's right hand, is strangely absent from this fight - as Ceremony engages the PCs, she flees to warn her superiors (leading to Encounter 6).

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Lattice doors: The main feature of this encounter is the doors.

The doors all consist of grates and lattices giving line of sight and line of effect through all rooms. Creatures behind a door are considered to have cover. Creatures behind two doors or more are considered to have superior cover. Breaking down a door is a DC 25 Strength ability check. Destroying a door: 50 hp each, Resist 2 all; AC 15, Fort 14, Ref 14, immune to attacks targeting Will defense.

Once the combat starts a human lackey takes control of the door mechanism (see below). Loud metallic knocks and clicks can be heard from all doors as if someone hammers against them. The level wide mechanism locks and unlocks all doors at random intervals. Every creature using a minor action to open a door has to check if the door is locked or unlocked. Roll 1d20. On a roll of 10 or higher the door is unlocked and can be opened easily. Otherwise it's locked until the end of the creature's turn. The door might unlock already on the turn of the next creature passing through.

A door automatically slams shut once a creature passes through. At this point the locking mechanism

resets and another creature wanting to pass through has to check again if the door is unlocked or not.

It's possible to open a door with a DC 20 Thievery check as a standard action.

Creatures can also hold an opened door open with a minor action, preventing it from closing. They can sustain holding the door open with a minor action but must stay adjacent to the door. Otherwise the door falls shut again at the end of the creature's turn.

Lattice doors mechanism: The control panel to operate the doors on this level is in the northwestern corner of this level in an alcove.

A DC 8 Thievery check and a standard action is required to hold a door open until the end of the operator's next turn.

A DC 20 Thievery check and a standard action each is required to lock all doors, unlock all doors or set it to random intervals as described above.

The enemies in this encounter automatically succeed on these checks.

Smashing the control panel automatically succeeds but leaves all doors in the current state.

Blood rock: The center chamber is filled with the blood of a bear laid on a stone bench in the center of the room. This chamber is considered blood rock which means all powers deal critical damage on a roll of 19 or 20. Additionally powers with the rage keyword receive a +2 on attack.

Climbing the slippery table requires a DC 8 Athletics check.

The shackles of Lord Gyertan: If the PCs want to free Lord Gyertan in the middle of the fight they have to succeed in a Thievery skill challenge against DC 15 requiring 6 successes before 3 failures. Every roll 5 points above the designated DC yields an extra success. If they fail Lord Gyertan gets badly hurt while being freed. This counts as 1 failure in Encounter 6 as this hurts Lord Gyertan.

The PCs can also smash the shackles open with a weapon, which automatically succeeds but also counts as 1 failure in Encounter 6 as this hurts Lord Gyertan.

The magic circle: Magic runes can be found on the floor of the western room. This used to be a room for beast trainers. Creatures standing inside gain a +2 bonus on Nature checks to handle animals. It additionally grants +2 defense bonus against melee attacks. This feature can be determined with a DC 14 / 15 Arcana check.

Bone pile: A heap of animal bones is piled here. Most of these are the remains of animals which died in the arena or which served as food for other critters. Standing behind the bone pile provides cover. Treat the pile as difficult terrain. It costs 2 squares of movement to

enter each bone square. On entering the creature must make a DC 14 / 15 Acrobatics checks as a free action or fall prone.

The water basin, chairs, rubbish, fire brazier: Difficult terrain. Cost 2 squares of movement to enter.

TACTICS

The creatures use their abilities to the best of their advantage to kill the PCs. As most enemies have teleporting abilities they use these to teleport safely through the lattice doors.

The first thing Laundae Ethari, the vampire lord does is call upon all his servants in Scardale to come to aid him. There are not as many as he would wish, but it is a free action for him and he does this telepathically. This feature is not listed in his stat block. As he enjoys seeing the terror in the eyes of his victims he speaks this out loudly. This should bring PCs on the edge as they are now warned that more enemies will arrive soon (though the enemies that arrive may differ from what they expect).

The human lackey arriving with Ceremony rushes to the control panel in the northwest alcove to manipulate the doors so his masters can move through unhindered if they want to. He keeps readying his action to handle the panel until one of his masters wants to pass through a door.

If PCs have uncovered that Ethari is working for a different agent than Netheril, they may attempt to coax Ceremony to their side. If confronted with these accusations, and as long as a PC doesn't attack her, a DC 15 Diplomacy check causes her to delay. On a failed check, she disbelieves the PCs' words and attacks for that round. If three successful checks are made, her resolve wavers, and she withdraws. She does not aid the PCs, but instead moves back up the stairs to the arena to safety. All other opponents continue to fight.

Ethari flees once he is the only one left to fight the PCs.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove four human bowman lackeys.

Six PCs: Add a shadar-kai warrior (or at high tier the minotaur guard from Encounter 2).

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

After the PCs have defeated the bad guys they need to escape. Run Encounter 6 next.

It might be possible that the PCs come up with a plan to smuggle the lord out of this place without Taln being able to alarm his superiors. Improvise the encounters accordingly then. Reward clever ideas.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs gain 410 / 620 XP if they defeat the enemies in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 5: BELOW GROUNDS STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Tiefling Darkblade		Level 7 Lurker
medium natural humanoid		XP 300
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +5; low-light vision		
HP 64; Bloodied 32		
AC 20; Fortitude 17, Reflex 19, Will 17		
Resist 12 fire		
Speed 6; see also <i>cloak of lurking</i>		
m Poisoned Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon		
+12 vs. AC (+13 against a bloodied target); 1d6 + 5 damage, and the tiefling darkblade makes a secondary attack against the same target. <i>Secondary Attack</i> : +10 vs. Fortitude; ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).		
Cloak of Lurking (move; recharge 6) ♦ Teleportation		
The tiefling darkblade teleports 5 squares and becomes invisible until the end of its next turn.		
Infernal Wrath (minor; encounter)		
The tiefling warblade gains a +1 power bonus to its next attack roll against an enemy that hit it since the tiefling's last turn. If the attack hits and deals damage, the darkblade deals an extra 3 damage.		
Alignment Any		Languages Common
Skills Bluff +13, Stealth +15		
Str 13 (+4)	Dex 20 (+8)	Wis 14 (+5)
Con 16 (+6)	Int 13 (+4)	Cha 16 (+6)
Equipment leather armor, poisoned short sword		

Shadar-kai Warrior		Level 8 Soldier
Medium shadow humanoid		XP 350
Initiative +11 Senses Perception +6; low-light vision		
HP 86; Bloodied 43		
AC 24; Fortitude 19, Reflex 20, Will 17		
Speed 5; see also shadow jaunt		
m Katar (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+13 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage (crit 1d6 + 9).		
M Double Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
The shadar-kai warrior makes two katar attacks		
M Cage of Gloom (standard; recharge 5-6)		
The shadar-kai warrior makes a katar attack. If the attack hits, the shadar kai warrior makes a secondary attack as strands of shadow coil around the target. <i>Secondary attack</i> : + 11 vs. Reflex; the target is restrained (save ends).		
Shadow Jaunt (move; encounter) ♦ Teleportation		
The shadar-kai warrior teleports 3 squares and becomes insubstantial until the start of her next turn.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common
Skills Acrobatics +15, Stealth +15		
Str 17 (+7)	Dex 20 (+9)	Wis 14 (+6)
Con 14 (+6)	Int 12 (+5)	Cha 11 (+4)
Equipment chainmail, 2 katars		

Human Bowman Lackey		Level 7 Minion
Medium natural humanoid		XP 75
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +4	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		
AC 19; Fortitude 17, Reflex 17, Will 15; see also <i>mob rule</i>		
Speed 6		
m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+9 vs. AC; 4 damage.		
R Bow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+12 vs. AC; 6 damage.		
Mob Rule		

The human lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human lackeys are within 5 squares of it.		
Alignment Any		Languages Common
Str 11 (+3)	Dex 16 (+6)	Wis 12 (+4)
Con 14 (+5)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 13 (+4)
Equipment leather armor, club		

Laundae Ethari		Level 9 Elite Controller
Medium shadow humanoid (undead)		XP 800
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +5; darkvision		
HP 178; Bloodied 89		
Regeneration 5 (regeneration does not function while Laundae Ethari is exposed to direct sunlight)		
AC 25; Fortitude 22, Reflex 23, Will 23		
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 Necrotic; Vulnerable radiant 10		
Saving Throws +2		
Action Point 1		
Speed 6; see also <i>shadow jaunt</i>		
m Blackfire Touch (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Necrotic		
+13 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 fire and necrotic damage.		
M Blood Drain (standard; recharges when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied) ♦ Healing		
Requires combat advantage; +11 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 7 damage, the target is weakened (save ends), and Laundae Ethari regains 44 hit points		
R Beshadowed Mind (standard; recharge 4-6) ♦ Necrotic		
Ranged 10; +13 vs. Will; 2d6 + 5 necrotic damage, and the target has no line of sight to anything more than 2 squares from it (save ends).		
C Deep Shadow (standard; sustain minor; encounter) ♦ Necrotic		
Aura 2; thick, writhing shadows surround Laundae Ethari. Laundae Ethari and any other shadow creatures in the aura gain concealment. In addition, enemies that enter or start their turns in the aura gain 5 necrotic damage, and enemies (including flying ones) also treat the area within the aura as difficult terrain. Laundae Ethari can sustain the aura as a minor action. However, the effect ends if he uses <i>shadow jaunt</i> or moves more than half his speed on his turn.		
C Dominating Gaze (minor recharge 6) ♦ Charm		
Ranged 5; +11 vs. Will; the target is dominated (save ends, with a -2 penalty on the saving throw). <i>Aftereffect</i> : The target is dazed (save ends). Laundae Ethari can dominate only one creature at a time.		
Mist Form (standard; encounter) ♦ Polymorph		
Laundae Ethari becomes insubstantial and gains a fly speed of 12, but cannot make attacks. Laundae Ethari can remain in mist form for up to 1 hour or end the effect as a minor action.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common
Skills Acrobatics +9, Arcana +13, religion +13, Stealth +14		
Str 13 (+5)	Dex 16 (+7)	Wis 12 (+5)
Con 13 (+5)	Int 19 (+8)	Cha 17 (+7)

ENCOUNTER 5: BELOW GROUNDS STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Tiefling Darkblade (Level 9)		Level 9 Lurker
medium natural humanoid		XP 400
Initiative +13 Senses Perception +6; low-light vision		
HP 76; Bloodied 38		
AC 22; Fortitude 19, Reflex 21, Will 19		
Resist 14 fire		
Speed 6; see also <i>cloak of lurking</i>		
m Poisoned Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon		
+14 vs. AC (+15 against a bloodied target); 1d6 + 6 damage, and the tiefling darkblade makes a secondary attack against the same target. <i>Secondary Attack</i> : +12 vs. Fortitude; ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).		
Cloak of Lurking (move; recharge 6) ♦ Teleportation		
The tiefling darkblade teleports 5 squares and becomes invisible until the end of its next turn.		
Infernal Wrath (minor; encounter)		
The tiefling darkblade gains a +1 power bonus to its next attack roll against an enemy that hit it since the tiefling's last turn. If the attack hits and deals damage, the darkblade deals an extra 3 damage.		
Alignment Any		Languages Common
Skills Bluff +14, Stealth +16		
Str 13 (+5)	Dex 20 (+9)	Wis 14 (+6)
Con 16 (+7)	Int 13 (+5)	Cha 16 (+7)
Equipment leather armor, poisoned short sword		

Shadar-kai Warrior (Level 10)		Level 10 Soldier
Medium shadow humanoid		XP 500
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +7; low-light vision		
HP 102; Bloodied 51		
AC 26; Fortitude 21, Reflex 22, Will 19		
Speed 5; see also <i>shadow jaunt</i>		
m Katar (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+15 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage (crit 1d6 + 10).		
M Double Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
The shadar-kai warrior makes two katar attacks		
M Cage of Gloom (standard; recharge 5-6)		
The shadar-kai warrior makes a katar attack. If the attack hits, the shadar-kai warrior makes a secondary attack as strands of shadow coil around the target. <i>Secondary attack</i> : +13 vs. Reflex; the target is restrained (save ends).		
Shadow Jaunt (move; encounter) ♦ Teleportation		
The shadar-kai warrior teleports 3 squares and becomes insubstantial until the start of her next turn.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common
Skills Acrobatics +16, Stealth +16		
Str 17 (+8)	Dex 20 (+10)	Wis 14 (+7)
Con 14 (+7)	Int 12 (+6)	Cha 11 (+5)
Equipment chainmail, 2 katars		

Human Bowman Lackey (Level 10)		Level 10 Minion
Medium natural humanoid		XP 125
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +6		
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		
AC 22; Fortitude 19, Reflex 20, Will 18; see also <i>mob rule</i>		
Speed 6		
m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+12 vs. AC; 5 damage.		
R Bow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+15 vs. AC; 7 damage.		

Mob Rule		
The human lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human lackeys are within 5 squares of it.		
Alignment Any		Languages Common
Str 11 (+5)	Dex 16 (+8)	Wis 12 (+6)
Con 14 (+7)	Int 10 (+5)	Cha 13 (+6)
Equipment leather armor, club		

Laundae Ethari		Level 11 Elite Controller
Medium shadow humanoid (undead)		XP 1,200
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +6; darkvision		
HP 210; Bloodied 105		
Regeneration 10 (regeneration does not function while Laundae Ethari is exposed to direct sunlight)		
AC 27; Fortitude 24, Reflex 25, Will 25		
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 Necrotic; Vulnerable radiant 10		
Saving Throws +2		
Action Point 1		
Speed 6; see also <i>shadow jaunt</i>		
m Blackfire Touch (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Necrotic		
+15 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 6 fire and necrotic damage.		
M Blood Drain (standard; recharges when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied) ♦ Healing		
Requires combat advantage; +13 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 8 damage, the target is weakened (save ends), and Laundae Ethari regains 52 hit points.		
R Beshadowed Mind (standard; recharge 4-6) ♦ Necrotic		
Ranged 10; +15 vs. Will; 2d6 + 6 necrotic damage, and the target has no line of sight to anything more than 2 squares from it (save ends).		
C Deep Shadow (standard; sustain minor; encounter) ♦ Necrotic		
Aura 2; thick, writhing shadows surround Laundae Ethari. Laundae Ethari and any other shadow creatures in the aura gain concealment. In addition, enemies that enter or start their turns in the aura gain 5 necrotic damage, and enemies (including flying ones) also treat the area within the aura as difficult terrain. Laundae Ethari can sustain the aura as a minor action. However, the effect ends if he uses <i>shadow jaunt</i> or moves more than half his speed on his turn.		
C Dominating Gaze (minor recharge 6) ♦ Charm		
Ranged 5; +13 vs. Will; the target is dominated (save ends, with a -2 penalty on the saving throw). <i>Aftereffect</i> : The target is dazed (save ends). Laundae Ethari can dominate only one creature at a time.		
Mist Form (standard; encounter) ♦ Polymorph		
Laundae Ethari becomes insubstantial and gains a fly speed of 12, but cannot make attacks. Laundae Ethari can remain in mist form for up to 1 hour or end the effect as a minor action.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common
Skills Acrobatics +10, Arcana +14, religion +14, Stealth +15		
Str 13 (+6)	Dex 16 (+8)	Wis 12 (+6)
Con 13 (+6)	Int 19 (+9)	Cha 17 (+8)

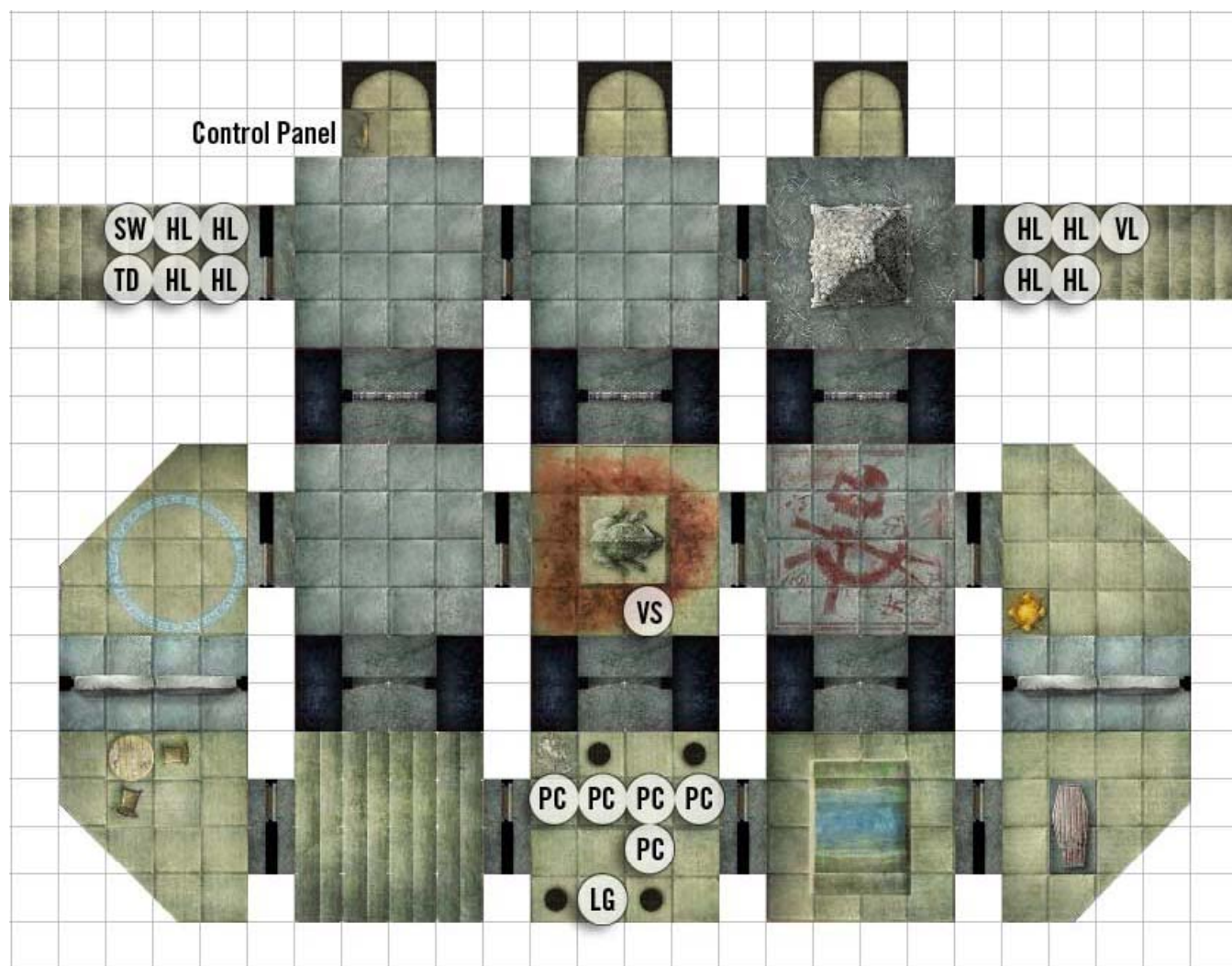
ENCOUNTER 5: BELOW GROUNDS MAP

HIDDEN CRYPTS

Crypt / Floor	4x4	X3
Double Doors - Hall / Floor	4x2	X3
Hall Arch / Floor	4x2	X3
Large Double Doors / Floor	4x2	X3
Skull Pile / Blood Symbol	4x4	X2
Wooden Door / Coffin	1x2	X6
Wooden Door / Floor	2x1	X7

FANE OF THE FORGOTTEN GODS

Table & Chairs / Alcove	2x2	X2
Darkness / Alcove	2x2	X1
Broken Altar / Alcove	2x2	X1
Frog Altar / Stairs	4x4	X2
Floor w/Columns / Stairs	2x4	X2
Floor / Spiral Staircase	4x4d	X1
Floor w/Runes / Spiral Staircase	4x4d	X1
Gong / Closed Wood Trapdoor	1x1	X1
Floor / Statue Alcoves	4x4d	X1
Floor / Hidden Shrine	4x4d	X1
Depressed Pool / Whirlpool	4x4	X1
Flaming Basin / Broken Statue	1x1	X2
Stairs w/Landing / Floor	8x2	X2



ENCOUNTER 6: ESCAPE

**SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 7 / 9,
COMPLEXITY 2 (600 / 800 XP)**

SETUP

Number of Successes: 6

Number of Failures: 3

Important NPCs: Lord Gyertan (unable to walk)

Primary Skills: Acrobatics, Athletics, Bluff, Dungeoneering, Endurance, Heal, Insight, Intimidate, Perception, Stealth, Thievery

Lord Gyertan is heavily wounded. He has no healing surges left to regain lost hit points. He can barely walk so one or two PCs must carry him out of the building.

You hear shouts and footsteps of a lot of people on the levels above you coming closer every second. Ceremony must have alerted all fighters in the house to come to her aid. You feel a sudden chill and it seems like the place becomes darker.

The forces coming into the Grounds are not Ethari's, or even Ceremony's men. They are Shadovar, agents from Netheril. Warned of the goings-on at the Grounds by their spy among Ceremony's servants, they now come to take control and to eliminate the threat of Lord Gyertan. When they enter, they come into conflict with the arena fighters, and chaos ensues.

The Shadovar enter the Grounds through the main entrance the PCs used and then spread out, but are hampered by the force of arena fighters.

Fighting all the Shadovar is extremely dangerous for the wounded Lord Gyertan. Even trying to get outside through the panicked crowd is dangerous. The PCs can fight off the opponents, but their attacks also target Lord Gyertan. The PCs have to make sure Lord Gyertan doesn't die. If the PCs accumulate 3 failures Lord Gyertan dies in the most logical way at the time of failure.

The PCs have three options to leave the building and reach the docks:

1. Back through the main gates where they came from or through the escape tunnel from the spectator area, leading to the adjacent house.
2. Climb out of the arena cave down the cliffs and swim to town.
3. Use a Linked Portal ritual to transport everyone to the Fall of Stars in New Velar.

In all cases, the main task is to keep ahead of the Netheril forces while avoiding harm to fall on lord Gyertan.

The following skills are useful in all encounters:

Acrobatics / Athletics / Endurance (DC 14 / 15): Dodge out of harms way, push an enemy out of the way, deflect a hit that would harm lord Gyertan, and generally keep on moving.

Bluff / Insight / Intimidate (DC 14 / 15): Lure the enemies into a false direction in the mazelike chambers of the building, or scare opponents enough to make them back off.

Dungeoneering (DC 14 / 15): Use knowledge on how the mazelike building is constructed and finds a shortcut or hideout for the group.

Heal (DC 14 / 15): A PC can remove a fresh wound from Lord Gyertan. Remove one skill failure. This only works once.

Healing powers: Healing powers that don't cost Gyertan healing surges cure some of his wounds and earn one success. This only works once.

Perception / Stealth (DC 14 / 15): Find a spot to hide or give crucial advice on how to avoid some enemies by sneaking past them.

Thievery (DC 14 / 15): A PC can block some doors or enable old mechanical traps to hold off the advancing enemy crowd.

SCENE: BRING 'EM ON!

Additional Skills Streetwise

Run this scene when the PCs escape through the main gates or through the audience tunnels. They have to fight their way through a panicked crowd of cutthroats and inexperienced arena fighters.

Streetwise (DC 19 / 20): Use rumors from cutthroats in Scardale to navigate the mazelike room layout.

SCENE: DOWN THE CLIFF!

Additional Skills: Nature

Run this scene when the PCs escape through the arena and intend to climb down the wall to reach the river. Once the PCs are dangling at ropes at the cliff side, their

opponents appear above them on the edge, and start firing down at them.

Thievery (DC 14 / 15): Knots the ropes perfectly for climbing - this also gives a +2 on all checks done while climbing down the rope.

Acrobatics / Athletics/ Endurance (DC 14 / 15): Climb down the rope while keeping lord Gyertan from coming to harm, by interposing oneself, carrying him, or shielding him while hanging on.

Nature (DC 14 / 15): Give crucial advice on climbing in outdoor areas.

Perception (DC 14 / 15): Spot some easy to reach edges to climb down the cliff safely.

ESCAPE THROUGH THE WATER

Athletics (DC 19 / 20): Swim through the water of the Asaba river to safety.

Nature (DC 14 / 15): Experience with strong water currents reveals the right moment to jump into the water to master swimming the river. This gives a success and a +2 on Athletics checks to swim the surf for the rest of the encounter.

Perception (DC 14 / 15): Find a place where swimming is easier as the current is not so strong. This does not yield a success but gives +2 on Athletics checks to swim through the surf.

SCENE: THROUGH THE PORTAL

Additional Skills: Athletics, Arcana, Thievery, Stealth

Run this scene when the PCs desire to use a Linked Portal ritual to get home. They need to find an easily defendable place and keep people from entering.

Arcana (DC 14 / 15): Perform the ritual as desired, as speedy as possible while keeping things quiet.

Athletics (DC 14 / 15): Keep a door closed as opponents try to force it open.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends when the PCs earn 6 successes or 3 failures. Regardless of success they arrive at the boat or activate the portal.

Success: The PCs escape successfully with Lord Gyertan alive along with them.

DALE1-3 Master and Servant

Failure: Lord Gyertan is mortally wounded and dies when the PCs arrive at the boat (or at the Fall of Stars). Before he dies, he grasps the PC that holds him, and whispers:

“Tell... Selkirk... Mirabeta.”

A Raise Dead ritual does not work on Lord Gyertan, who has no wish to return to life.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 120 / 160 XP if they succeed in the skill challenge, or half if they fail.

Additionally they receive 70 / 100 XP as a minor quest reward if they brought back Lord Gyertan alive.

TREASURE

The PC's receive 100 / 150 gp each provided they bring back Gyertan, even if he is dead. They are also offered a scroll of Linked Portal, offered by the Fall of Stars, as a small token of gratitude for their work.

CONCLUSION

If the PCs saved Gyertan, they have some time to talk to him on the way back as he slowly recovers (or in the Fall of Stars if they used a Linked Portal ritual).

Gyertan does not tell much, preferring to keep his secrets for Aron Selkirk. He can, however, inform inquisitive PCs of the following:

- Aron Selkirk is trustworthy. Gyertan believes he has good intentions.
- He is however too ambitious: he doesn't know what he is getting himself into. He is fighting Netheril.... and *not only* Netheril.
- If asked what that means, Gyertan comments that Ethari wasn't working for Netheril at all - though he managed to fool Ceremony.
- If asked who Ethari worked for, Gyertan is silent for a long time. Then he finally says: “Mirabeta.”

Gyertan doesn't say anything more after that.

Aron Selkirk congratulates the PCs for their efforts. In addition, Kira and Dayan Nenthyn are pleased with the information they received regarding Aron and his enemies - though the extent of the resistance worries them. The PCs earn **DALE07 An Alliance is Forged.**

If the PCs entered the arena to fight the gladiators and were victorious they receive **DALE08 Gladiator of Scardale.**

If instead they managed to sneak in without having to fight, they earn **DALE09 Like a Shadow in the Night.**

REWARDS SUMMARY

At the conclusion of the adventure, the PCs earn experience points, treasure, and possibly story awards. All totals listed here are per PC. A number before the slash is the low-level value; after the slash is the high-level value.

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

It is critical that you enter the PC rewards accurately on the tracking form, and ensure that the information is reported and entered online in a timely manner. While players will be able to track their character's information on paper, the online information serves as an important backup and verification of play. Ask the players for their RPGA numbers and character numbers (usually a single digit) when you begin to fill out the tracking form.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Give PCs a full award for each encounter they successfully completed, and a half award if they were unsuccessful. Give no award if the characters did not play the encounter at all.

Encounter 2: Scardale

180 / 240 XP

Encounter 4A: In the Shadows

340 / 480 XP

Encounter 4B: Arena Fight

340 / 480 XP

Encounter 5: Below Grounds

410 / 620 XP

Encounter 6: Escape

120 / 160 XP

Minor Quest: Rescuing Lord Gyertan

70 / 100 XP

Total Possible Experience

1,120 / 1,600 XP

TREASURE

Each PC receives treasure in the form of gold pieces as well as one share from a treasure bundle. The treasure bundle may give the PC more gold, a magic item, or some other item of value. Each player makes one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure bundle. Mark the one-letter bundle ID on the tracking form next to any character that selects a bundle; note that it is possible (and likely) that some

characters will not select a bundle for each session of play.

If characters buy or sell magic items or other gear during the adventure (or pay for services) add or subtract that amount from the total gold the PC receives at the end of the adventure. If a player selects an option that gives their character more gold, add that to the gold all characters receive, and ensure you enter the total amount of gold gained (minus any expenditures) online. You can have a negative number and enter that negative online. PCs receive 20% of a magic item's purchase price for any item they sell. If a player selects a magic weapon or suit of armor for their PC that is not specific on the type of item listed, they must select the exact item at the time they choose that bundle. For example, if a *duelist's weapon +1* is listed as a choice in a bundle, a player selects the form of the weapon amongst the choices possible for that magic item (light blades). If the player selects the item as a *+1 duelist's dagger*, the player writes that information down on the PC's adventure log and the item is forever after that specific weapon.

An asterisk next to a magic item means that it is an item that appears in the **New Rules** section.

Gold Per PC

150 / 200 gp

(Encounter 5: 50 / 50 gp, Encounter 6: 100 / 150 gp)

EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING

Bundle A: +2 *amulet of false life* (level 9) (low-level version only)

Found in Encounter 4B

Bundle B: *victory flash weapon* +2* (level 8) (low-level version only)

Found in Encounter 5A

Bundle C: *battle harness* +2* (level 9)

Found in Encounter 5A

Bundle D: *champion's armor* +2* (level 9)

Found in Encounter 5A

Bundle E: +3 *amulet of protection* (level 11) (high-level version only)

Found in Encounter 4B

Bundle F: *bloodclaw weapon* +3* (level 12) (high-level version only)

Found in Encounter 5A

Bundle G: *ritual scroll of Linked Portal* (level 8)

Found in Encounter 6

Consumable Plus Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add an *augmenting whetstone** (level 11) plus 0 / 150 gp to their total gold per PC. The player should write the consumable gained on their adventure log.

More Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add 350 / 500 gp to their total gold per PC.

STORY AWARDS

Award these if the PC completes the condition for the award in the adventure. Pass out certificates to the players for their story awards. If a PC earns three awards, they may only have 2 of them and must pick which two they want before ending the session. Make sure to mark the story award codes next to each character that earned them on the tracking form.

If the PCs have rescued Lord Gyertan they receive **DALE07 An Alliance Is Forged**.

If they entered the arena to fight the gladiators and were victorious they earn **DALE08 Gladiator of Scardale**. If they instead successfully used stealth to enter, they earn **DALE09 Like a Shadow in the Night**.

DALE07 An Alliance Is Forged

Aron Selkirk is grateful for the rescue of an important ally for his crusade against Netheril, the occupants of Sembia. You gain standing among the Silver Ravens.

In addition, your information has convinced Kira and Dayan Nenthyn to lend their support to Aron Selkirk's plans for the Dragon Reach. They may call upon your services at a date when these plans are put into motion.

This story award is part of the *Conspiracy of Ravens* quest.

DALE08 Gladiator of Scardale

You made yourself a name as a successful arena fighter in Scardale. The name of your group is remembered in Scardale's underground. Unsavory merchants and nobles might have heard of your deeds and treat you accordingly at the DM's discretion.

DALE09 Like a Shadow in the Night

You have proven to be stealthy and silent sellsword who keeps a low profile. Your name is passed secretly to influential individuals who are in need of discreet operations.

The Underground of Scardale calls your group the "shadows of Scardale" even though no one knows your true identities.

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

Mark the answers to the following adventure questions on the tracking form.

1. Did the adventurers save Lord Gyertan?

- a. They didn't rescue him.
- b. They found him and brought him out alive.
- c. They found him but he was killed while escaping.

2. What happened to the servant Taln?

- a. The adventurers killed him.
- b. The adventurers knocked him unconscious.
- c. The adventurer's struck a deal with him and let him escape.
- d. The adventurers did not deal with Taln.

3. What happened to Ceremony?

- a. The adventurers killed her.
- b. The adventurers knocked her unconscious.
- c. The adventurer's struck a deal with her and let her escape.
- d. The adventurers did not deal with Ceremony.

4. What happened to Laundae Ethari, the Vampire Lord?

- a. The adventurers killed him.
- b. The adventurers let him escape.
- c. The adventurers did not deal with him.

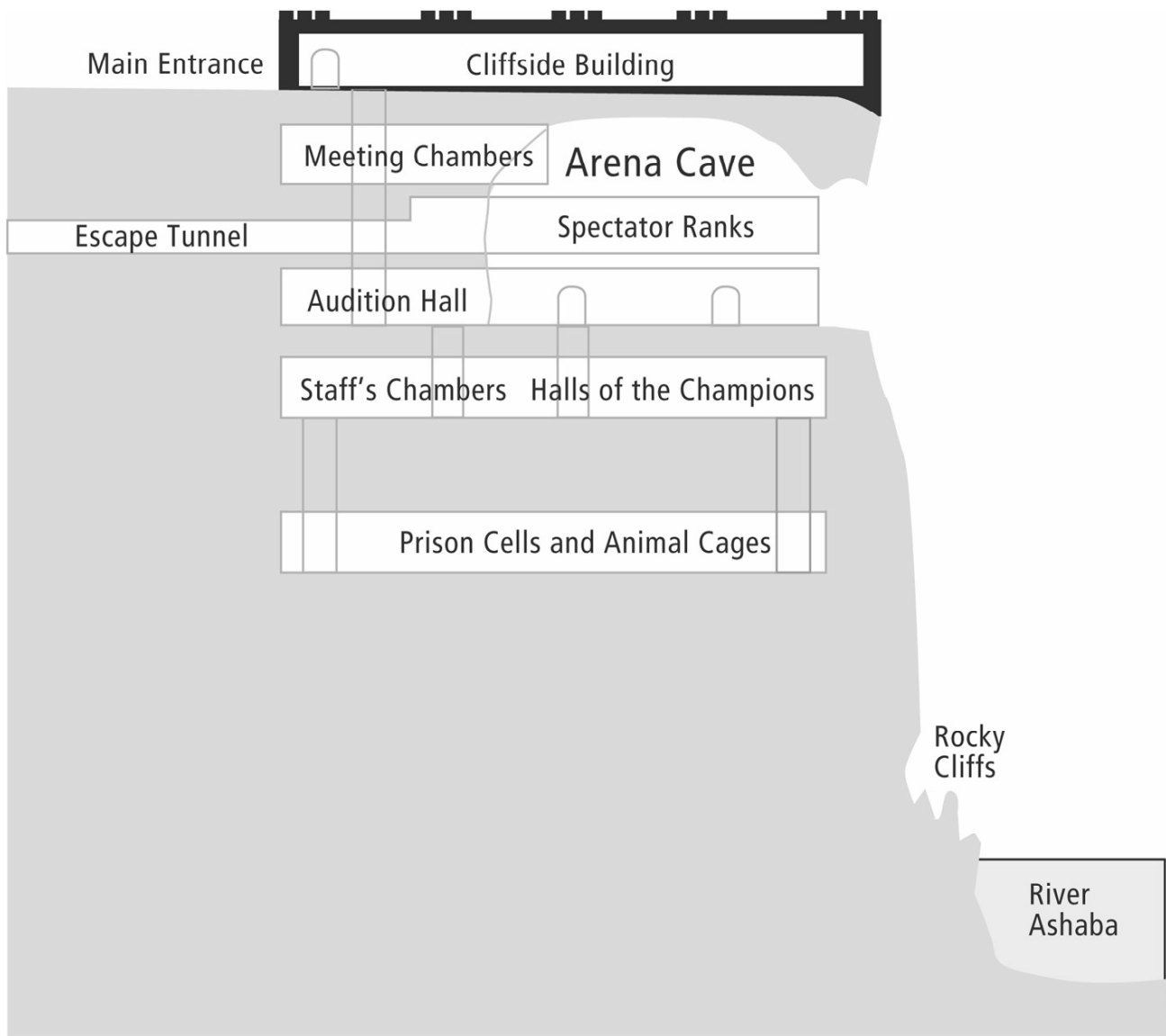
5. How do you (the DM) rate this adventure? (Please also feel free to e-mail specific feedback to the author or the campaign staff.)

- a. Five stars (best possible rating)
- b. Four stars (very good)
- c. Three stars (average)
- d. Two stars (below average)
- e. One star (really awful)

6. How do the players rate this adventure? (You can average the individual ratings or come up with whatever other method works for everyone.)

- a. Five stars (best possible rating)
- b. Four stars (very good)
- c. Three stars (average)
- d. Two stars (below average)
- e. One star (really awful)

APPENDIX 1: THE GROUNDS



NEW RULES

Augmenting Whetstone

Level 11

This rough sharpening stone temporarily grants your weapon a magical enhancement.

Lvl 11 350 gp

Whetstone

Power (Consumable): Minor Action. Touch this whetstone to a melee or ranged weapon you hold. The weapon gains a +2 enhancement bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls until the end of the encounter. This has no effect on the extra damage dice or other special effect applied when the weapon scores a critical hit.

Battle Harness

Level 9

Attack first, have your weapons ready, keep your vitals safe—this armor does it all.

Lvl 9 +2 4,200 gp

Armor: Cloth, Leather, Hide

Enhancement: AC

Property: As a free action, you can draw a sheathed weapon or retrieve a stowed item.

Power (Daily): You gain a power bonus to initiative equal to the item's enhancement bonus.

Reference: *Dragon* 368, page 71.

Bloodclaw Weapon

Level 12

The hilt of this weapon digs into its wielder's hand, drawing blood while inflicting a more grievous wound upon an enemy

Lvl 12 +3 13,000 gp

Weapon: Any melee

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

Power (At-Will): Free Action. Use this power before making a melee attack on your turn. You take damage up to a maximum of the weapon's enhancement bonus (a +3 weapon deals up to 3 damage to its wielder). This damage cannot be reduced or prevented in any way. If you hit, increase the damage your target takes by double the amount of damage you took, triple if you are wielding the weapon in two hands.

Champion's Armor

Level 9

Imbued with the spirit of a great hero of a previous age, this armor strives to ensure your own efforts are no less legendary

Lvl 9 +2 4,200 gp

Armor: Scale, Plate

Enhancement: AC

Power (Daily): Immediate Reaction. Use this power when you are hit by an attack. Gain temporary hit points equal to the damage you take until the end of your next turn.

Victory Flash Weapon

Level 8

You strike your enemy down with dazzling flare, and this weapon responds in kind.

Lvl 8 +2 3,400 gp

Weapon: Any melee

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

Power (Daily): Free Action. Use this power when you reduce an enemy to 0 hit points with this weapon. Make a secondary attack. *Secondary Attack:* close burst 1; targets enemies; Strength vs. Will; the target is blinded until the end of your next turn.

Reference: *Dragon* 368, page 72.

FIGHT!: CROWDS

Source: *Dragon* 368, page 50-51

Aside from the dangers gladiators face in the ring, there are dangers outside the ring, too. A crowd in the throes of bloodlust can be every bit as rough as a wild beast, and, if angered, they might fling rubbish onto the field, distract gladiators with insults, or pluck an unwary warrior off the field and rip him apart in the stands.

Gladiators learn that appeasing the crowd is as important as fighting well, because a crowd won over can be a useful ally if things go bad. Gladiators who make their livings fighting in the arenas need to become famous and loved by the people, because by doing so, they receive better pay, better gear, and better treatment when they're injured.

Any time a gladiatorial duel occurs in front of a crowd of just about any size (about 50 or more people), the crowd has the potential to become a factor in the match. Use the following guidelines to determine whether a crowd becomes involved and what happens when they do.

DISPOSITION

At the start of match, after you make the fame check for the character(s), determine how the crowd is disposed to the player characters. Five dispositions are discussed below. A crowd that's friendly to the PCs is considered unfriendly to their opponents and vice versa. Likewise, a crowd helpful to the PCs is hostile to the NPCs. The only time a crowd's disposition is the same for both PCs and NPCs is when it's indifferent.

Use your best judgment when setting the initial disposition, keeping in mind whether the adventurers have fought in previous matches, their achievements in the region, and any other factor that you find relevant. Avoid setting the starting disposition to helpful or hostile, unless, of course, it's integral to the adventure's plot.

Helpful: A helpful crowd wants the gladiator to win and takes an active roll in making this happen. When a crowd's disposition reaches helpful, the crowd becomes a hazard. You can't improve a crowd's disposition above helpful.

Friendly: A friendly crowd is positively disposed toward the gladiator and cheers for the character in the match. Veteran gladiators who have fought in the same arena several times find the crowds friendly. The DCs to interact with friendly crowds are easy.

Indifferent: An indifferent crowd doesn't care who wins. Most crowds begin at this disposition. The DCs to interact with an indifferent crowd are moderate.

Unfriendly: The crowd roots against the gladiator, cheering for the opponent. PC gladiators fighting against local heroes usually find the crowds unfriendly. The DCs to interact with an indifferent crowd are hard.

Hostile: The crowd despises the gladiator and actively works against the character(s). When a crowd's disposition reaches hostile, the crowd becomes a hazard. The DCs to interact with an indifferent crowd are hard.

MODIFYING THE DISPOSITION

Once the match begins, the player characters, those on the field or those in the stands, can work to modify the crowd's disposition. Remember, once the crowd's disposition reaches helpful or hostile, it becomes a hazard and can directly affect the match's outcome.

To modify a crowd's disposition, the PCs must succeed on a skill challenge. DCs depend on the crowd's disposition, described above.

WORKING THE CROWD LEVEL (PARTY'S LEVEL)

Through showmanship, manipulation, and sheer force of will, you must win over the crowds.

COMPLEXITY 1

Large crowds might have greater complexities.

Number of Successes: 4

Number of Failures: 3

Primary Skills: Acrobatics, Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight, Intimidate.

Victory: The PCs improve the crowd's disposition by one step. If doing so improves the crowd's disposition to helpful, the crowd becomes a hazard against the PCs' opponent.

Defeat: The crowd's disposition worsens by one step. If doing so reduces the crowd's disposition to hostile, the crowd becomes a hazard against the PCs.

Acrobatics: *You perform a stunt to impress the crowds, bringing gasps and cheers for a success, and laughter and derision for failure.*

DC varies (1 success, no maximum; gladiators only). A failed check, in addition to counting as a failure, closes off future Acrobatics checks during this skill challenge.

Bluff: *You or your allies mock the enemy, perhaps imitating a distinctive feature or mannerism in a way to make the crowds laugh.*

DC varies (1 success, no maximum). A failed check, in addition to counting as a failure, closes off future Bluff checks for this skill challenge.

Diplomacy: *Your allies sing the PC's praises in the stands or you address the crowd directly and asks for story awards or put on a good show for the people.*

DC varies (1 success, no maximum). A failure imposes a -2 penalty to Diplomacy checks through the next round.

Insight: *You have an instinctive sense of what the crowd wants, gauging their disposition and the general mood of the arena.*

DC varies (1 success, maximum 1 attempt). A success also grants the PC a +2 bonus to Diplomacy checks for the duration of the challenge, while a failure also imposes a -2 penalty to Bluff and Diplomacy checks for the duration of the encounter.

Intimidate: *You display ferocity with a roar, weapon maneuver, or another act to strike fear in the hearts of the crowd.*

DC varies (1 success, no maximum). A failed check closes off Intimidate until the PC hits an enemy with an attack.

Angry Crowd	Level (Party's Level)
Hazard	XP Varies
Hazard: Each square occupied by the crowd becomes difficult terrain.	
Perception	
No check is needed to see the crows.	
Initiative	
+0	
Trigger	
When the crowd's disposition becomes helpful or hostile to the player characters, the crowd rolls for initiative and attacks.	
Attack	
Standard Action	
Target: Helpful crowds target the enemy gladiator, while hostile crowds target the PC or PCs.	
Effect	
Roll 1d20 to see what the crowd does on its turn.	
1: An angry fan jumps out of the stands and joins the fight attacking the target: level vs. AC; 3 damage, plus 1 damage per tier. The fan occupies a space adjacent to the target and is slain when it takes at least 1 damage.	
2–3: The crowd grabs the target whenever it enters an adjacent space: level vs. Fortitude or Reflex; the target is immobilized (save ends).	
4–5: The crowd shoves the target back into the fight. Any time the target enters a square adjacent to the crowd, the crowd makes an attack: level vs. Fortitude; push the target 1d4 squares.	
6–7: The crowd reaches out and grabs at the target. All squares adjacent to the crowd become difficult terrain until the start of the crowd's next turn.	
8–9: Someone hurls a vicious insult at the target: level vs. Will; the target takes a -2 penalty to attacks until the end of its next turn.	
10–11: The crowd's noise imposes a -5 penalty to all Perception checks.	
12–13: The crowd closes in or descends from the stands, thus reducing the size of the battlefield by 1 square on each side.	
14–15: Someone from the crowd hurls an object at the target: level vs. Reflex; the target loses one healing surge.	
16–17: When the target enters a space adjacent to the crowd, the crowd attacks: level vs. Fortitude; slide the target 1d4 squares (enemy's choice).	
18–19: When the target enters a space adjacent to the crowd, the crowd attacks: level vs. AC; 5 damage, plus 5 damage per tier.	

20: A mob descends from the stands bent on killing the target. See below for statistics.

Countermeasures

A character can engage in a skill challenge to improve the crowd's disposition as described above. Improving the crowd's disposition above hostile ends the hazard.

Angry Mob	Level 5 Brute
medium natural humanoid (swarm)	XP 200
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +1
Swarm Attack aura 1, the angry mob makes a basic attack as a free action against each enemy that begins its turn in the aura.	
HP 74; Bloodied 37	
AC 17; Fortitude 19, Reflex 17, Will 16	
Resist half damage from melee and ranged attacks; Vulnerable 10 against close and area attacks	
Speed 5	
m Savage Mob (standard; at-will)	
+8 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
Crushing Press	
The angry mob deals an extra 2d6 damage to prone creatures.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Str 18 (+6)	Dex 15 (+3)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 8 (+1)
	Cha 12 (+3)

PLAYER HANDOUT 1: BRIEFING

The following is a summary of information provided by Aron Selkirk Regarding the mission:

- Some time ago, a Sembian noble called Lord Gyertan contacted Aron, with request for aid.
- Gyertan worked for a Sembian trade house. He had discovered dark secrets regarding the house that should have stayed unknown. He fears for his life and seeks to escape Sembia.
- Gyertan implied that he had knowledge that would be valuable to Netheril's enemies.
- Initially, all worked well. The man's family safely made it to Vesperin.
- However, when Gyertan made his own escape, something went wrong. He didn't arrive in Vesperin.
- Agents of Aron in Scardale Town said he was last seen in that town.
- Gyertan is middle aged, richly dressed, fat with graying hair and a drooping mustache.
- He travelled with his servant, an old, wiry man named Taln.
- Aron fears Netheril agents captured Gyertan and Taln. He may still be held in Scardale.
- The mission is to go to Scardale, find out what happened to Gyertan, and if possible, free him and bring him to New Velar.
- There are two human contacts in Scardale, who are undercover in the area. They are called Bered and Feyanna, and they can provide the PCs with more information.
- They can be contacted at night at a warehouse in the docks district. Aron provides the details and makes sure that they meet the PCs there.
- A distinctive mark to recognize his agents is a flying raven, often as a silver badge.
- To avoid suspicion, Aron has ensured the PCs can travel on the Dragonfly, a ship that is owned by the Chang emporium, which sails under the flag of Nathlan.
- Mei, who works for the emporium, is the PCs escort on the ship. The Changs have offered their support to Aron, as they too, desire to prevent Sembia from controlling access to the Dragon Reach.
- Aron is willing to pay 100 / 150 gp per PC if they participate.

The following is a summary of information provided by Mei about Scardale and Scar Town:

- Scardale used to be part of the Dales Compact, much like Harrowdale
- It had quite a checkered history, with warlords bent for conquest, a plague, Zhent occupation, and various other forces taking turns in occupying or controlling it.
- It is now in hands of Sembia, and thus under rule by Netheril.
- It is, however, such a shady town that even the Shadovar scantily control it.
- Many factions trade here - even those not welcome in other towns, such as the Thayans. It is shady, but trade there does make a profit.
- Scardale Town - also called Scar Town - is the main settlement. A smaller one, Chandler's Cross, is further up river but mostly a ruin, filled with thieves and cutthroats.

PLAYER HANDOUT 2: FEYANNA'S NOTE

B. died. Murdered.

Can't visit him. Being watched.

See Lap of Luck, they have B's body!

Gyertan and servant taken.

Left Town

F.