



THE

PRINCESS

PROJECT

Sonya Hana

FOREWORD



ASHTON DUNCAN

When I began playing DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, I was attracted to the high fantasy. As a little girl, I was always roleplaying, constructing elaborate plots and worlds on the playground, discovering imaginary magic heirlooms in attics, and saving the day with the unexpected and overlooked. I was inspired by the princesses in fiction: Nasuada, who saved her people by selling lace, and Sailor Moon, whose innocent heart and friendships protected her from evil. Because of those women and their creators, I wanted to fight dragons and write stories.

I've learned that what I really love about tabletop roleplaying games is the community. Creatorship, collaboration, and cooperation are core pillars of tabletop roleplaying, and that creative drive inspires me every day.

I love that through stories we can fight tyranny with the swords and fireballs of our imaginations, raise thousands of dollars for charity, and, hopefully, foster an ever better community.

It has been an absolute pleasure making this project a reality. Thank you for reading, playing, and supporting our adventures. Please feel free to tag us on Twitter with #PrincessProjectAnthology. We'd love to see the stories we've helped you create! You can find each of our wonderful, talented creators in the credits below, as well as our inspirations.

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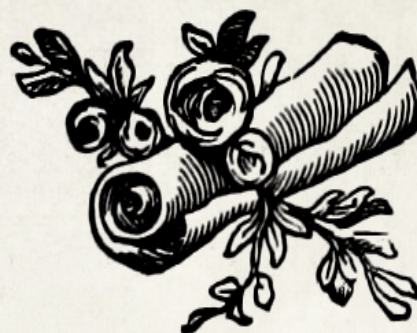
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INSPIRATION

Like the creators of the *Player's Handbook*, we, too, are inspired by the words and worlds around us. The following lists include media that inspired this project from beginning to end.

ART & FASHION

The works of Gustav Klimt

Zendaya's 2018 Met Gala dress by Versace

GAMES

Destiny (Bungie, 2014)

Dragon Age series (BioWare, 2009-)

For the Queen (Evil Hat Productions, 2019)

Legend of Zelda series (Nintendo, 1986-)

Long Live the Queen (Hanako Games, 2012)

Untitled Goose Game (House House, 2019)

The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt (CD Projekt Red, 2015)

MOVIES

Beauty and the Beast (1991)

Brave (2012)

Ever After (1998)

Frozen (2013)

Howl's Moving Castle (2005)

Kiki's Delivery Service (1989)

Moana (2016)

Mulan (1998)

The Princess Bride (1987)

The Princess Diaries (2001)

Shrek (2001)

The Swan Princess (1994)

Tangled (2010)

PERFORMANCE

Critical Role

Matthew Bourne's *Swan Lake*

Medea by Euripides

Rivals of Waterdeep

PRINT

Adeyemi, Tomi. *Children of Blood and Bone*.

Alexander, Lloyd. *The Black Cauldron*.

Atwood, Margaret. "The Penelopiad."

Basile, Giambattista. "Sun, Moon, and Talia."

Be-Papas. *Revolutionary Girl Utena*.

Cabot, Meg. The Princess Diaries series.

Christie, Agatha. The Miss Marple series.

Evans, Catherine and Alicia Furness, et al. *Eat the Rich* anthology.

Grimm, the Brothers. "Little Briar Rose."

Hale, Shannon. The Princess Academy series and Books of Bayern series.

Homer. *The Odyssey*.

Lackey, Mercedes. The Arrows trilogy.

Levine, Gail Carson. *Ella Enchanted*, *The Two Princesses of Bamarre*, and The Princess Tales series.

Maas, Sarah J. A Court of Thorns and Roses series.

Munsch, Robert. *The Paper Bag Princess*.

O'Neill, Katie. *Princess Princess Ever After*.

Paolini, Christopher. The Inheritance Cycle.

Pierce, Tamora. The Song of the Lioness, Protector of the Small, Circle of Magic, The Circle Opens, and Daughter of the Lioness series.

Porath, Jason, et al. *Rejected Princesses*.

Pratchett, Terry. *Lords and Ladies*.

Sanderson, Brandon. The Stormlight Archive series.

Warren, Ashley, et al. Uncaged series.

Willingham, Bill. *Fables*.

Wizards RPG Team. *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*.

Wrede, Patricia C. *Dealing with Dragons*.

TELEVISION

Castlevania (2018)

The Dragon Prince (2018)

Sailor Moon (1992)

Sailor Moon Crystal (2014)

Terriers (2010)

The Witcher (2019)

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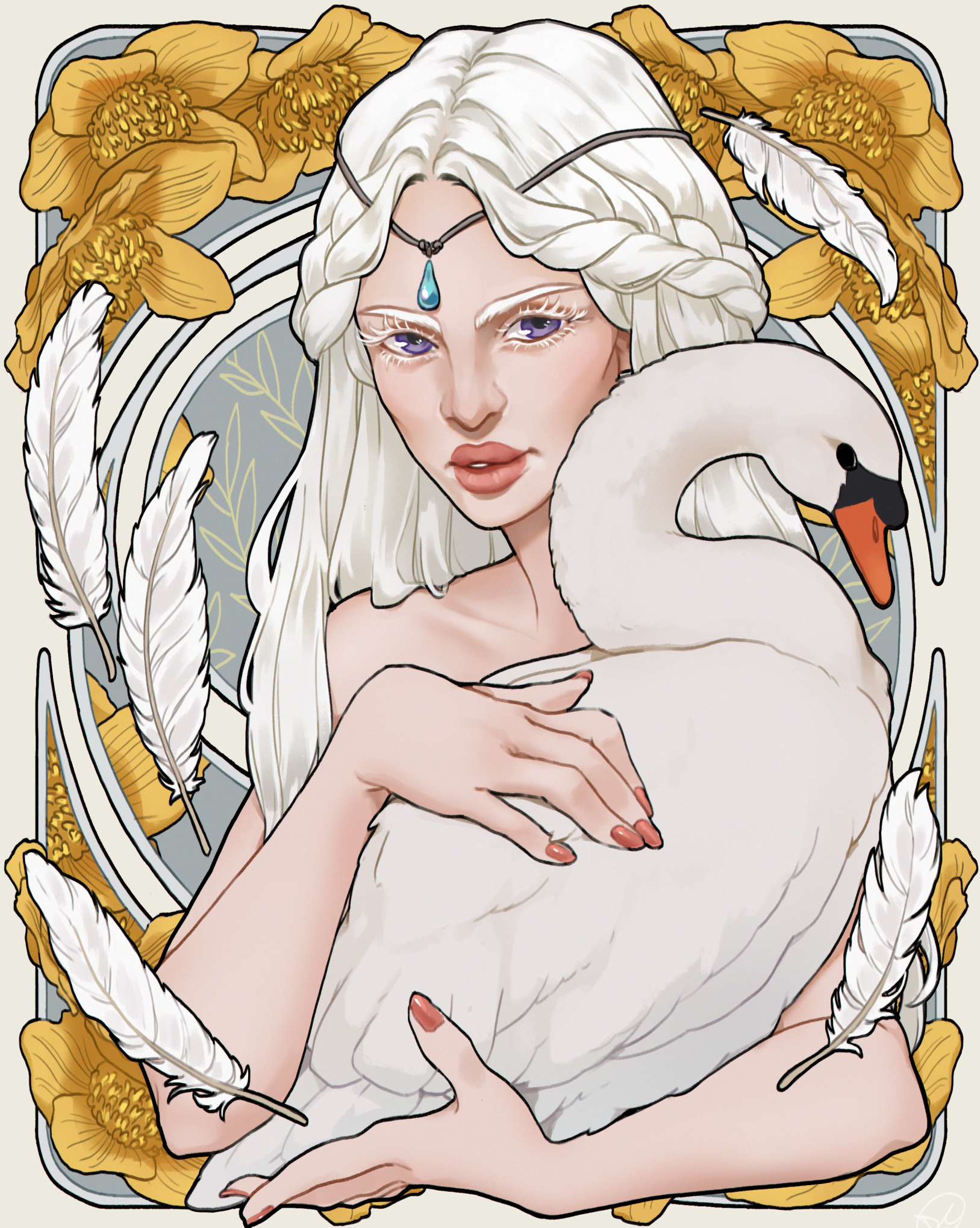
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FOWL SUITORS



HARRY WHITELAW

FOWL SUITORS



his adventure is inspired by the classic ballet Swan Lake, designed for players who prefer investigation and lateral thinking.

A six-hour adventure for 1st through 5th level characters.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The adventure starts with "A Horrible Swan" which should lead organically through "What's the Deal with Cloudette?" followed by "The Swan Song."

1. A Horrible Swan
2. What's the Deal with Cloudette?
3. The Swan Song

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Penelope's always been clever and good with people. The Duke of Vacchio is overwhelmed. His retirement is coming fast; his daughter Cloudette, whom he raised to be his successor and is usually diligent and deeply interested in politics, has been shirking her responsibilities; his court mage has left without notice; new courtiers have been arriving to gain favor and power; there's a feast to prepare; and, to put the cherry on the cake, a swan has been terrorising the mansion.

What the Duke doesn't know is that this is all the fault of a visiting mage, Rothburt, who has cursed Cloudette to take the form of a swan, and replaced her with his assistant Odelle, so that the two of them can claim a life of luxury.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is not designed to be a challenging combat encounter; Rothburt (the villain) is the only character who attempts to kill characters, all others aim only to subdue. If the players are not level 4 by the time they progress to Swan Song, you can scale down the combat by making there be 2 guards instead of 4 or by having Yvonne trust the party enough to fight alongside them immediately.

It is important that Cloudette does not die at the hands of the party, both for the sake of making sure they are heroic and to ensure there is an opportunity for there to be a happy ending.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

OVERQUALIFIED AND OVERPAID

Duke Vacchio is busy planning his retirement feast and spending hours talking to nobles and potential suitors visiting for his daughter's coronation, so when the groundskeeper comes to him about the swan that's been stealing from the mansion, it's the straw that breaks the camel's back. The Duke has called for an established group of adventurers to come and hunt the swan. The reward is a hefty sum of gold as well as any of the stolen effects from the mansion the characters may find.

THE ROTHBURT ROMANCE

Cloudette Vacchio, the Earl of Vacchio and daughter of the Duke, has had a fairly dramatic change in character, noticed by a number of members of the court. One of the ladies of the court, Yvonne Sigfried, has been a close friend to Cloudette for years and has been very confused about Cloudette's reaction to the arrival of a mage named Rothburt. Yvonne is worried since Cloudette has not been

attending her classes or duties, and has been hanging on every word that Rothburt says and gushing about him whenever she has the excuse. No one has seen Cloudette take an interest in suitors like this before.

Yvonne has made a discreet inquiry via messenger pigeon to investigate the issue. Her offer comes with an invitation to court, where the characters are introduced as her friends.

MONSTER IN THE GARDEN

Rumours have spread among the commoners of Vacchio that a monster has taken up residence in the Duke's garden and is discussed openly in the taverns. A shriek is heard coming from the garden every night and small amounts of food have gone missing from pantries nearby. With the encouragement of some of the locals and an open invitation to the mansion on the days leading up to Earl Cloudette Vacchio's coronation, the party may use this opportunity to dispel the rumors or make some coin.

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

DUKE VACCHIO

*He/him, human **noble**, lawful neutral*

Personality Trait: Despite my noble birth, I do not place myself above other folk. We all have the same blood.

Ideal: It is my duty to protect and care for the people beneath me.

Bond: I would forsake my gods and sell my soul to Asmodeus for my daughter.

Flaw: I am surrounded by snakes in court. I am suspicious of everyone outside of my family.



ODELLE (FAKE CLOUDETTE)

*She/her, human **noble**, neutral evil*

Personality Trait: I don't like to get my hands dirty, and I won't be caught dead in unsuitable accommodations.

Ideal: If I can attain more power, no one will tell me what to do.

Bond: I am bound to Rothburt for now. Once I have ascended, I will be held to no one.

Flaw: I believe everyone but me is a pawn, small and unintelligent.

CLOUDETTE VACCHIO

*She/her, human **noble**, lawful good*

Personality Trait: If you do me an injury, I will crush you, ruin your name, and salt your fields.

Ideal: Respect is due to me because of my position, but all people, regardless of station, deserve to be treated with dignity.

Bond: I am bound to the people of Vacchio, their safety is my prime concern.

Flaw: I too often hear veiled insults and threats in every word addressed to me, and I'm quick to anger.

Cloudette uses the **vulture** stat block during the day with the addition of being proficient with daggers. At night Cloudette's humanoid form has been cursed to be merged with a swan which affects how she can speak—she speaks in short sentences and one-word answers when possible.

YVONNE SIGFRIED

*She/her, half-elf **noble**, lawful good*

Personality Trait: My eloquent flattery makes everyone I talk to feel like the most wonderful and important person in the world.

Ideal: Blood runs thicker than water.

Bond: My loyalty to my Cloudette is unwavering.

Flaw: In fact, the world does revolve around me.

ROTHBURT FEATHEREND

*He/him, human **mage**, chaotic evil*

Personality Trait: I've read every book in the world's greatest libraries—or I like to boast that I have.

Ideal: The goal of a life of study is the betterment of oneself.

Bond: Odelle is my most loyal assistant. Without her, I am nothing.

Flaw: I am easily distracted by the promise of information.

A HORRIBLE SWAN

The party is invited to the Vacchio Mansion. Upon arrival, the characters enter a very busy great hall. Minor nobility primp and preen as they flitter around the room, showing off their latest fashions and gossiping about each other. Any party members who are not dressed in high-end clothing receive critical looks from the haughty guests and any wearing armour are looked at with mild intrigue. In the hall there are four characters of note: Yvonne Sigried, Rothburt Featherend, Cloudette Vacchio (who is actually Odelle), and Duke Vacchio.

Duke Vacchio is sat at the large chair at the far end of the hall, an older gentleman who is losing much of his hair and attentively listens to a discussion with some younger members of the court, his face a mask as to whether he approves of what they say. He treats all who approach him with respect and grumbles a warning to be on the lookout for swans.

Cloudette has a very animated discussion with some of the ladies of the court, beaming at everyone involved and toying with the end of her braid. She is 20 years old, shorter than the women she's speaking to by at least a head. Cloudette has white hair and wears a beaded dress which must have taken months to create.

When speaking to the party Cloudette should act accordingly:

- She is dismissive to people she perceives as low class.
- She diverts conversation away from politics.
- She attempts to breeze past any concerns about her dismissively.

Yvonne is a tall young woman with short red hair styled into a quiff. She wears a subdued black doublet. She greets each member of the party separately, already familiar with their names whether or not you've used "The Rothburt Romance" story hook, as she is trusted by the Duke Vacchio who would have consulted her before hiring adventurers, and keeps up with the local gossip (although she dismisses the rumor of there being a monster since she hasn't seen one).

She apologizes for the stuffy atmosphere and assures that the coronation feast is going to be much more welcoming. She expects the tenants of the estate and the characters may have much more interesting discussion than the nobles' gossip.

Yvonne points to Cloudette and says:

That's Cloudette, the duke's daughter. Cloudette takes her position very seriously. She has been acting strange lately, though.

Yvonne relays the following information to the characters:

- About two weeks ago, a man named Rothburt showed up and began courting Cloudette.
- Yvonne believes that Rothburt is distracting Cloudette.
- Yvonne does not think very highly of Rothburt and is suspicious of him.
- Unrelated to her feelings about Rothburt and Cloudette, she will bring up that a swan has been stealing from the mansion (including a set of keys).

It should also be made evident that Yvonne has a crush on Cloudette.

When noticed by Rothburt, Yvonne escapes into the crowd.

Rothburt is a young human man of average height. He has dirty blonde hair and is accompanied by a barn owl familiar. Rothburt wears a suit made from a variety of different colored fabrics, vaguely reminiscent of a peacock. On his shoulder a barn owl is perched.

Rothburt approaches the adventurers with open arms and introduces himself:

Well hello, strangers! I don't believe we have had the pleasure, I am Rothburt Featherend, scholar, sorcerer and slayer of giants. Who may you be?

Rothburt is confident in his plan but also succumbs to his pride and so acts accordingly:

- Rothburt wants to know if the party is investigating him.
- He tries to match any acclaim the party has with lies of his achievements.
- Rothburt affirms how in love he is with Cloudette and how she loves him back.
- Rothburt claims that Yvonne's distrust in him is baseless and just jealousy.
- After speaking to them, Rothburt instructs his familiar (the **owl**) to keep an eye on the party. The owl can report where the party has been and who they've spoken to but not what they say. It can be spotted with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check or by a character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 15 or more.

When the party has learnt the relevant information or if conversation stagnates, Cloudette lets out a shocked yell as the swan has made an appearance.

The swan (**vulture**) has stolen an ornate dagger from Cloudette and is rushing away with it through the crowd of nobles.

Duke Vacchio loudly declares a reward for anyone who catches the swan alive.

FACILITATING THE CHASE

The encounter with the swan has two potential outcomes: the swan escapes to the garden or she is captured.

If the characters chase the swan, have each character roll initiative and roll initiative for the swan.

The swan starts 25 feet away from the party and makes a beeline for a servant's exit 10 feet away from her.

The crowded hall is difficult terrain.

The swan ducks and weaves through people's legs and has three-quarters cover against attacks while in the crowds.

If a character attempts to grapple the swan, she attacks with the ceremonial dagger.

On her turn the swan may also use the dagger to intimidate a guest, causing the guest to panic and fall in the way of one pursuer. Characters can make a successful DC 12 Strength or Dexterity saving throw to avoid the panicked noble or push past them. Failing the save knocks the guest prone.

If the swan makes it through the service door, there is another 10 feet until the swan can reach a window. Once out the window, the swan can be seen gliding wobbly down to a thicket in the garden.

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH CLOUDETTE?

If the swan made it outside, she retreats to her hideout in the hedge maze. If she is brought to 0 hit points after having made it outside, rather than killing her, simply have her be unconscious when the party finds her.

If captured, Duke Vacchio is overjoyed to have the pest dealt with and asks the party to bring her down to the kitchen where the cook will deal with her before they claim their reward. He does not want the swan killed in the hall because he doesn't want to have to interrupt the gathering further by having to clean up all the blood and feathers.

These two options are outlined below.

IN THE GARDEN

Having seen the commotion, Duke Vacchio approaches the party and encourages them to go search the gardens for where the swan has managed to hide away. Characters who make a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check find the hideout before dusk. With this check, the characters follow meandering birdlike footprints leading through a tall but simple hedge maze. At the end of the maze there is a small tunnel made of white and red rose bushes. The tunnel leads to a small den furnished with child-sized stools and stolen artifacts from the mansion. If the swan was handed over to the cook, the den is empty. Otherwise, the swan occupies the den.

If the swan was reduced to 0 hit points, she is unconscious on the stool.

If the hideaway was found after dusk, the swan is in the form of a monstrous woman, covered head to toe in white feathers whether unconscious or not.

She looks over at the adventurers as they come in and silently looks down at the trinkets she's stolen, including candlesticks, fabrics, cutlery, the dagger she just stole, and two items from the trinkets table in the appendices. The stolen goods have been arranged to spell the words:

"I AM CLOUDETTE."

IN THE KITCHEN

If the swan has been captured before escaping to the garden, the party is instructed by Duke Vacchio to take the swan downstairs to the kitchen. If they decide to free the swan rather than having her butchered, she tries to guide them to her hideaway in the garden by honking and gesturing with her wings. Failing this, she attempts to steal something from them to follow her.

If the characters take the swan down to the kitchen, they meet a lovely old man named Chef Leone (**Commoner**). Chef Leone is preparing for the night's feast. He welcomes the party and insists on giving them bottles of his homemade kombucha before getting to work. It is delicious.

The swan honks loudly as the party is given their bottles and Chef Leone pours her a bowl of kombucha too, reasoning that he may as well treat the swan well if it's going to be eaten soon.

Chef Leone insists that the party help him prepare for the meal with simple tasks around the kitchen before they get started on the swan — offering them a handful of coppers, a copy of his cookbook, or even more bottles of his homemade drinks, including beers, ciders, kombucha, and rootbeer.

While distracted by Leone's plea for help, or while chopping vegetables, making stock, and creating a roux, the swan punctures a bag of rice and begins to write using the grains.

As the swan writes, Leone will note how he's never seen an animal behaving like this.

She spells "Cloulette" with the grains she stole. She stands by her message and gestures clumsily with her wings at rice and then at herself.

ROLEPLAYING AS CLOUDETTE

When Cloudette is a swan she can only communicate in limited ways, such as honking yes/no, writing simple phrases on the ground with knick-knacks or with the speak with animals spell.

At dusk, Cloudette's curse results in her form changing dramatically. As the monster, Cloudette's mouth and neck have changed their shape and structure, her lips are now hard and beak-like, and her neck has elongated, resulting in her speaking in short high-pitched honk-like sounds.

She knows or believes the following things:

- Rothburt is to blame.
- Duke Vacchio is not going to believe a monster over his "daughter" without substantial proof.
- Fake Cloudette is in cahoots with Rothburt.
- Rothburt has spent the night with Fake Cloudette a couple times and may have some clues in her room.

If the party investigates Cloudette's room, they can use the ring of keys that Cloudette stole (which she may fetch from her trove in the maze) to enter her room through the door. A **guard** stands watch outside the room, and they also have a set of keys to the bedroom.

The guard does not have back-up to call for, as most of the guards are at the hall, but if combat ensues the guards

will not trust the party and will attempt to apprehend them in **The Swan Song**.

Cloudette's bedroom is very breezy and fashionable. It contains a four-poster bed with silk drapes, an ornate white vanity with a selection of perfumes and makeup, a sturdy dark writing desk which doesn't match the aesthetic of the room, and a large white armoire with thistles carved along the sides.

Under the bed a diary written by Odelle can be found. It details how Odelle was the youngest daughter of a minor noble who was deposed just a few years ago and only managed to escape alive thanks to Rothburt who disguised her. She has been his assistant ever since.

At the writing desk there are expensive inks, suitable for transcribing spells into a spellbook. The two drawers in the desk are locked. Opening the desk drawers requires a successful DC 15 Strength check to break the lock or a DC 12 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) to use a lockpick. The top drawer includes well-thumbed books on the heraldry and history of the noble families of Vacchio, a set of flashcards with the descriptions of guests who were at the mansion today, and Cloudette's journal which seems to be mostly used as a planner as opposed to a diary, giving times for meetings and initials instead of names for who will be attending. Inside some of the pages are scraps of paper where someone has tried to imitate the handwriting used.

- In the second drawer there are a couple of books with a thin layer of dust over them. The books include:
- A handwritten note book detailing the duties of an Earl and what is expected of a Duke.



- An accountant's checkbook with the dues of the tenants of Vacchio.
- A sketchbook with drawings of Yvonne, Chef Leone and some of the local farmers.

Characters who make a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check can see that a lot more time was spent on the sketches of Yvonne, especially one of her dozing beneath a tree and another of Yvonne carving a whistle with a steely focus in her eyes. The sketches are drawn with loving detail, including specks of freckles and other minute features.

There is a hidden compartment under the desk found with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The compartment has no lock and contains a scroll. The scroll details the instructions for a curse which seals a person in the body of a beast in the day and a hybrid monstrosity at night. It requires that both the caster and victim drink a mixture of rare items, and then after the sun goes down, the caster performs a ritual.

The vanity has a number standard makeup options and a rack of perfume bottles. The perfume bottles have lightly scented drinks inside them instead of perfume. Characters who succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check identify the drinks as four bottles of alter self and one bottle made of rare materials used in curses like mandrake heart. Alternatively, the potions can be consumed. The alter self potion smells and tastes vaguely of rosewater. The materials for curses taste of watered-down wine and have no effect unless used properly. With this evidence, the party may choose either take the case to Duke Vacchio or confront Odelle and Rothburt. Cloudette insists on accompanying them.

THE SWAN SONG

If the sun has not already set, it should at this point, triggering Cloudette's transformation into a swan/human hybrid. Back in the Great Hall, tables have been set. Nobility and commoners are dining together as Chef Leone's starters have been served. Duke Vacchio, Yvonne, Odelle (still disguised as Cloudette), and Rothburt are sat together, discussing whether it is the duty of a land owner to freely make available valuable information to improve the businesses of tenants or to only provide the information to those who are proven to be loyal to prevent these practices from being shared with competitors.

Yvonne disagrees with Rothburt's cut-throat attitude but is visibly upset that "Cloudette" is simply deferring to Rothburt instead of engaging in the discussion herself.

Thanks to his familiar, Rothburt is aware that the characters have found the real Cloudette and investigated her room. He responds to seeing the party by calling the four guards standing around the hall.

The guests hurriedly leave the room as combat starts. Yvonne is unsure of who to trust as she doesn't trust Rothburt but he claims the characters have done Cloudette wrong and does not engage unless she can be convinced that Odelle is not Cloudette. Odelle is not trained in combat

and attempts to run to Duke Vacchio for protection.

Duke Vacchio is confused by the chaos and takes a defensive stance, calling out to his guards that they are to subdue, not kill, and that he wants an explanation from Rothburt once this is sorted.

TACTICS

The encounter is as follows:

- Rothburt (**mage**)
- Rothburt's familiar (**owl**)
- Four **guards**

The party are aided by Cloudette (**noble**) who will focus on attacking Rothburt over defending herself or her allies from the guards.

Rothburt fights alongside the guards to subdue the party, but while the guards are simply fighting to surrender, Rothburt fights to the death to protect his and Odelle's secret.

To scale down the encounter, use two guards instead of four, or have Yvonne's distrust of Rothburt result in her instantly joining the party's side in the fight.

If the party wins the fight or if the above conditions are not met, the party can address Duke Vacchio. Otherwise, they are put in the Vacchio guard house under lock and key until after the coronation.

Fighting the guards makes Duke Vacchio demand that someone speak up for the party to vouch for their intent, otherwise the party is dismissed from his court. If the characters are under the employ of Yvonne she vouches for them. If the characters worked with Chef Leone, he vouches for them no matter how good their cooking skills were.

Characters are prompted to present any evidence that helps their cause. Rothburt and Odelle claim the evidence has been planted by the party because they are in league with Yvonne who doesn't trust Rothburt and disapproves of their love.

If the party found the scroll and ingredients of the curse, then Odelle loses her nerve and turns against Rothburt, claiming that he seduced and manipulated her when she was vulnerable and she had no choice but to go along with his plans. Characters who succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check can tell that she is lying about her involvement in the plan but Rothburt is not turning against her despite the betrayal.

If Odelle does not admit to her disguise, Duke Vacchio requires immediate proof that Cloudette is who the characters claim she is and that Odelle is not. This can be done in a number of ways, but if the party is struggling have an NPC like Cloudette or Yvonne offer help:

- The party can request that both Cloudette and Odelle sketch something. Cloudette is more technically proficient than Odelle.
- Cloudette knows the names of all the tenants and servants but Odelle has only studied the nobles names. Quizzing them both may reveal the true Cloudette.

- Cloudette can be tested using some detail about her past that only she and her father would know, or some other test that you find appropriate. For example, why doesn't her writing desk match the decor of her room? Because it belonged to the last Duke Vacchio, and using it was supposed to honor their legacy.

This trial is based on how the party discovered and presents evidence rather than skill checks, but some groups may not like this style of play. It can be replaced with contested Charisma checks between the party and either Rothburt or Odelle, with whichever group succeeds three times winning the trial.

AFTERMATH

If Duke Vacchio decides to believe the party, Odelle begs for leniency by offering a cure to the curse. If she is promised leniency she reveals that true love's kiss breaks the curse.

This can be a romantic kiss from Yvonne, or a familial kiss from her father or one of her subjects whom she loves as if they were her family.

If Odelle and Rothburt are found guilty by Duke Vacchio and Cloudette returns to normal, they are removed from the premises and the feast continues, ending with Cloudette ascending and taking on her role as the new

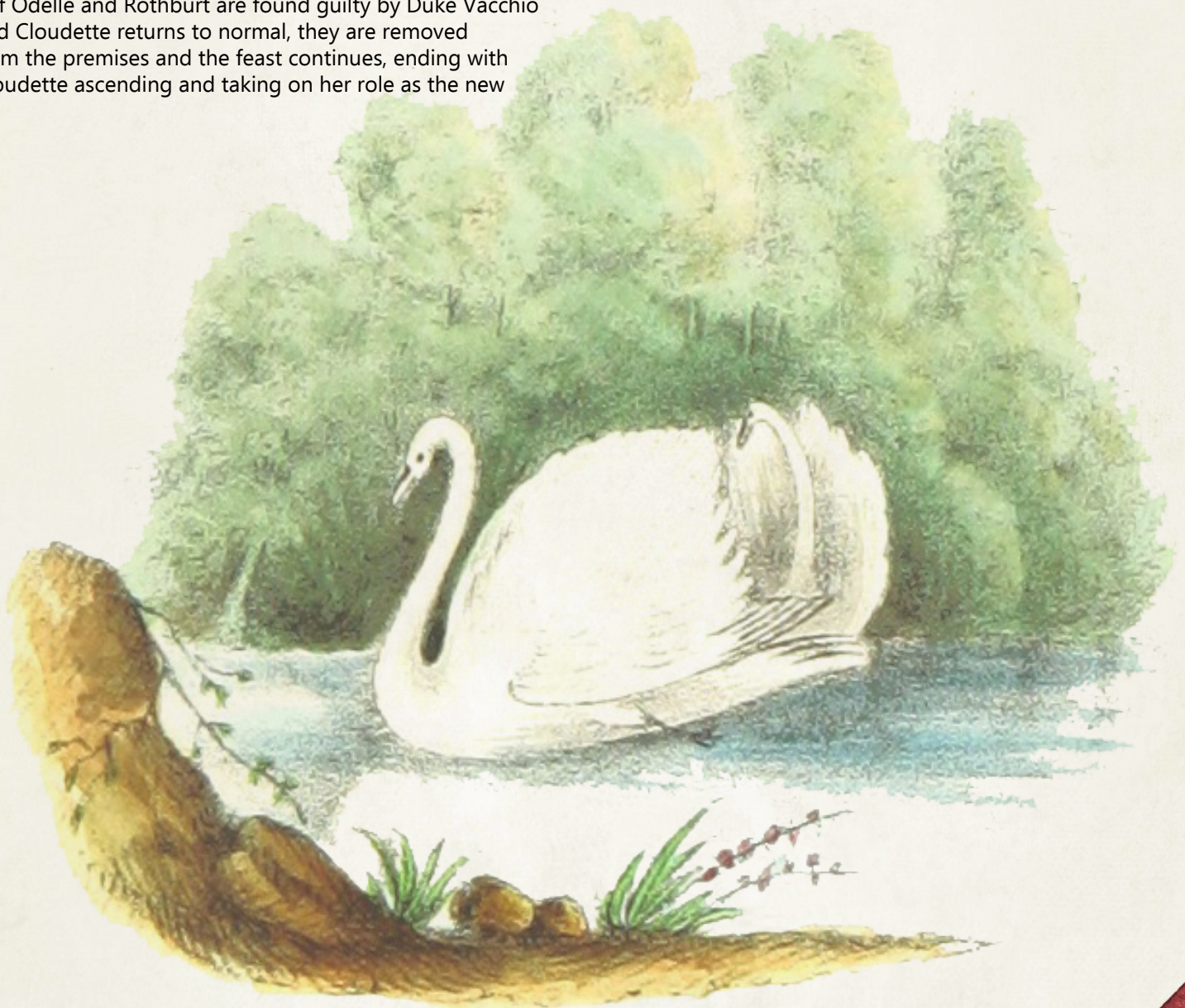
Duke Vacchio. She gives the party the reward promised to the party in the "Overqualified and Overpaid" story hook, including the 2 trinkets from the trinkets table in the appendices.

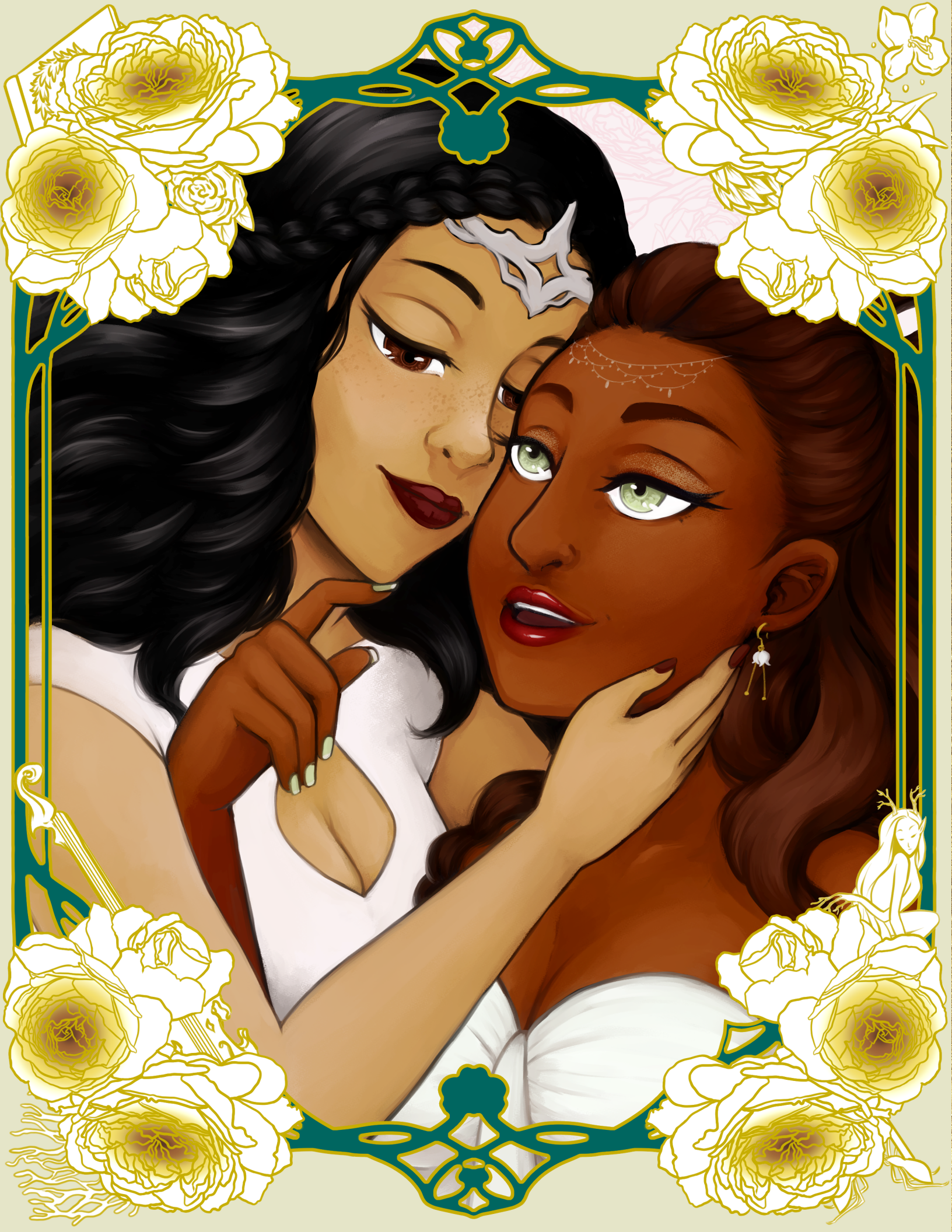
Odelle leaves Vacchio that night while Rothburt remains in jail. A month later she is spotted in town again and Rothburt escapes from his cell.

If the party cannot prove that Odelle is false then Odelle ascends to become Duke Vacchio. She dismisses Rothburt and puts a bounty on him for if he ever returns. She continues to use the alter self potions to hide her identity and starts solidifying her alliances and putting together a military force to take back her family's land.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

- Adventurers can track down the escaped Rothburt.
- Adventurers can investigate what has been deposing noble houses like Odelle's.





TYING THE KNOT



SHARENE GILCHRIST

TYING THE KNOT



Thanks to what some call fate and others chance, two princesses named Neeja Calix and Betony Heliconia, both claimants to the throne of Campion, met and fell in love. The people of Campion hope the princesses' wedding will unite the kingdom once again and end almost a century of civil war. Campion is a verdant valley kingdom known best for its abundance of

flowers and agriculture, and for being a peaceful place for travelers to rest.

The people of Campion seek a group of adventurers to hunt down items needed to honor a sacred wedding tradition of Princess Neeja's people. With the history of war between the two cultures, a neutral third party is sought to retrieve the items without prejudice. The eight unique items have been scattered around the kingdom—stolen, misplaced, repurposed, or simply lost. Can adventurers find them all before the ceremony begins?

A two to four-hour adventure for 1st- through 3rd-level characters.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

In the farming valley of Campion almost 100 years ago, a bloody civil war raged between the ruling Calix family and the usurping Heliconia family. Each family and their people represented a long history of culture and religious beliefs—the Calix are Spiritualists who worship ancestral spirits, and the Heliconia, Devotees of the nature god. The Devotees won the war to rule the kingdom, but the Spiritualists prosper outside the main cities in small settlements. Now that the two princesses are to be married, there is hope among the people the wedding will end the social tensions between the two religions and bring peace.

The princesses devoted themselves to creating a ceremony involving important elements of both cultures.

When researching, they discovered the tradition of the Eight Gifts and decided to incorporate it into their wedding, but they learned that all the items were lost. Speaking with the priests and researchers, they began the difficult work of finding these items again. Many arguments arose between the religious leaders over the potential for sabotage or bribery should a radical get wind of the ceremony. Deciding a neutral third party should collect the items, a call for adventurers was put out to assist and two holy leaders are chosen to assist.

The adventurers hear the history of Campion from the holy leaders and are given places to begin looking for the items. They meet many members of the main city and use what they learn to help them collect the items and return them to the temple before the wedding begins. After they deliver the items and are rewarded, they are welcome to attend the wedding and enjoy some local hospitality.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is perfect for characters who enjoy lore and exploration. While each NPC has motivations and suggestions for solving the problem, there is plenty of room for variation and adaptation. If your players come up with a better idea, run with it!

The adventurers are introduced to the kingdom and its history, as well as the items they need to retrieve. They are given maps, information, and free range in the kingdom.

Using the information provided and what they learn on the way, the adventurers must use various methods to acquire the items for the ceremony. This portion comprises the majority of the adventure. The adventurers can visit the people and places of the town to acquire the items in any order they wish.

All of the objects must be returned to the temple priests before the wedding begins. The adventurers then attend the wedding and enjoy their success and rewards.

- Option 1: Introduce a time limit on the adventure and provide tiered rewards based on how many of the items they can return inside that timeline.
- Option 2: Increase the difficulty or game length by having the priests have only vague ideas of where the objects are, (such as they suspect the coral is owned by a merchant but not exactly who). The adventurers then must spend more time in the town speaking with locals and working out where the objects are before acquiring them.
- Option 3: Use both of the above.
- Option 4: This adventure is easily adapted to higher levels by increasing the DC of the challenges, adding more monsters in the combat portion, and adapting the rewards via the tables in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Campion is a beautiful valley filled with flowers, forests, and fauna. The people here value tradition and a quiet life. It has nice weather and few hazards, making it a valuable agricultural kingdom. The prior civil war devastated the farmlands, which have since recovered, but left many farmers wary of the possibility of war and possible destruction. Most people of Campion do not want more war. They want to be left to worship and live in peace.

- Two holy leaders (Priest Padauk and Priestess Laelia) wait at a busy crossroads tavern to recruit adventurers. They offer a reward and accompany the adventurers back to Campion.
- A poster explaining the need for adventurers and offering a reward is posted at a common area with a contact in Campion. Arriving at the temple, the two holy leaders explain the quest.
- The adventurers arrive in the valley and overhear the locals discussing the situation. When they ask about it, they are directed to the temple where the holy leaders explain the quest.

BACKGROUND

In the small and verdant valley kingdom of Campion, the Spiritualists uphold an ancient wedding tradition: gathering a number of rare items for each royal wedding. Ninety three years ago, a civil war shook up both the royal line and the tradition, and in the time since, these royal trinkets were scattered and lost. The Spiritualists, ruled by the Calix family, were overthrown by the Devotees, ruled by the Heliconia family, changing the kingdom's religion. The Spiritualists took to the forests while the Devotees settled in the cities. Now the bloody wars of succession are over, but there is still social tension between the two cultures—living apart from one another, rare intermarriages and friendships, and little respect shown for the traditions of the other. Over time, the people came to learn despite their differences they wanted the same quiet agricultural life, and peace slowly settled over the land.

BLESSINGS OF FATE

The princess Neeja Calix is an experienced hunter, but she could not have foreseen the accident that found her trapped in a sinkhole with a poisonous snake. Princess Betony Heliconia was rumored to never leave the castle, but she often did in disguise to explore the kingdom. She so happened to be on such an adventure when she came across the stricken Neeja. Betony rescued the princess and nursed her back to health, during which time the two fell in love.

RED TAPE

After many months of diplomatic meetings, discussions, deals, and politics, the wedding was officially announced. With much diligent work by the princesses, the families agreed to the wedding in the name of peace. Clergy from both religions have been meeting and planning the combined faith ceremony, and many other disparate groups are coming together to prepare for the happy occasion. Most Campioners are happy to find the families uniting, hoping it will end any future civil war. They agree it might not be a perfect solution, but it's a functional one.

For the wedding to proceed, the Eight Gifts must be collected. The Eight Gifts were a tradition of the Spiritualists, one Betony found particularly beautiful and insisted be included, but no one could agree who should collect the items. Eventually, they decided to seek third-party help so the items would be collected without upsetting either faction.

The following are characteristics and traditions of the Campion Spiritualists, the faith of the Calix family:

- Have many rituals to perform through the day and for every occasion.
- Build small altars in their homes.
- Often live with extended family and know their family tree well.
- Live by many strict rules and traditions.
- Pray to specific ancestors for aid (e.g. asking a carpenter grandfather to help with woodwork).
- Hunt, fish, and forage more than create agriculture or husbandry.
- The following are characteristics and traditions of the Campion Devotees, the faith of the Heliconia family:
- Worship by working and appreciating the earth and its gifts.
- Perform rituals on natural event occasions (solstice, full moon, eclipse, etc.).
- Work with domestic animals in their daily lives (carriages, ox plows, etc.).
- Self-reliant—everyone is taught to garden and grow at least a little of their own food.
- Pray to the god(s) of nature, (whichever is appropriate to your campaign).
- Have a large temple for community events and worship.

THE EIGHT GIFTS

These eight items must be collected for the wedding ceremony. Each item represents a different aspect of love and marriage and has a story connected to it, which is told as part of the ceremony. The princesses wish to keep the stories a surprise for the wedding, so the adventurers are only told what the items are and given a description.

- Dryad of the Spring—wooden statue of a dryad surrounded by flowers
- The Rose's Eye—a large pink gem carved like a rose
- Master's Fiddle—fiddle with a glittering bow string made of unicorn hair
- Book of Remarkable Flora—an ancient book about rare plants
- Acacia Island Coral—a beautiful piece of ocean coral
- Cloak of Leaves—a cloak that looks like it's made of leaves
- Cave Violet—a violet flower that has a faint blue glow
- Spider Silk Needles—a pair of fine silver knitting needles with spiders on them

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

PRINCESS NEEJA CALIX

She/her, daughter of Laylani and Kadupul Calix. Heir to the Calix throne, Spiritualist. Noble.

Personality Trait: I'm not afraid to express the things I'm passionate about. I enjoy the gifts life gives me to the fullest.

Ideal: Traditions are important, and they must be maintained.

Bond: When I make a commitment, I stick it through to the end.

Flaw: Sometimes I commit to things before thinking them through.

PRINCESS BETONY HELICONICA

She/her, the Forestkeeper, heir to the throne of Campion, daughter of Queen Dillenia and King Asarum, Devotee. Noble.

Personality Trait: I prefer being with plants than people. I can only tolerate being the center of attention for a little while.

Ideal: I've found inner peace and I want everyone else to feel it too.

Bond: I think a lot about the greater good.

Flaw: I have difficulty expressing intense or negative emotions.

PRIEST PADAUK

He/him, Keeper of the Knowledge of the Ancestors, Spiritualist. Priest.

Personality Trait: I love talking about all the things I know, which are a lot. I think I'm smarter than most.

Ideal: Knowledge is power.

Bond: I want to ensure everything I know is passed on and shared.

Flaw: I have no sense of humor. I take everything very seriously.

PRIESTESS LAELIA

She/her, Beloved of Bees. Devotee. Priest.

Personality Trait: I'm inspired by the natural beauty around me. I believe nature is the way to peace.

Ideal: I want to help everyone feel the same connection to the earth I do.

Bond: I like to help improve every place I visit with a little greenery.

Flaw: I prefer animals and plants to people and sometimes it shows.

JACINTA MIDDLEMIST

She/her, master alchemist, owner of Middlemist Alchemical Works, Devotee. Commoner.

Personality Trait: I like to play pranks and tease people. Making other people laugh makes me happy.

Ideal: I want to use my skills to create things that help people, or at least make them smile.

Bond: I'm more devoted to my work than it appears.

Flaw: Sometimes I take my jokes and pranks a little too far.

ARBOR MIDDLEMIST

He/him, master glassmaker, owner of Starlight Glass. Devotee. Commoner.

Personality Trait: I love to decorate myself and my space with beautiful things. Beauty makes me happy.

Ideal: Sharing beauty is a way to connect with other people.

Bond: I want to make the world a beautiful place.

Flaw: Being pretty can be a little too important to me.

MAESTRO ZINGIBER

They/them, busking fiddler, moves around town to perform. Spiritualist. Commoner.

Personality Trait: I am utterly enchanted by music. It brings me joy I can't explain in words.

Ideal: I want to share the joy I feel when performing with everyone.

Bond: There is always more to learn and more practice to be had.

Flaw: I sometimes forget that I'm not on stage right now.

MIRABILIS REBE

She/her, librarian, agnostic. Acolyte.

Personality Trait: It is difficult to always stay organized, but as long as I schedule my worries for the end of the day, I don't seem to notice much.

Ideal: There's no need to raise your voice or your blood pressure.

Bond: The library needs to be preserved no matter what it takes!

Flaw: I've spent so long alone with my books, I don't think I remember what manners are.

CAMUS NINEBARK

He/him, Ninebark Farms and Cornelius the Scarecrow (Spiritualist). Commoner.

Camus himself is quiet and reserved and does not interact much, preferring to hang back and play his banjo. He directs all conversation to Cornelius.

Personality Trait: I'm so happy to be alive! I always stop and enjoy things.

Ideal: Peaceful farm life is all I need.

Bond: I'm forever indebted to Mr. Ninebark for giving me life.

Flaw: I'm very gullible and naive.

LOCATIONS

Campion City is a large, bright, and cheery city along the widest part of the river filled with flowers and outdoor cafes. Filled with all kinds of people, Campion City appears bustling and contemporary, but has the relaxed mood of a small town.

SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS IN TOWN

TEMPLE OF THE TREES

Description: A large building adjoining town square across from the castle, it is unmistakable as a temple, thanks to the huge pillars holding up the glass cupola carved as massive trees. The main hall is always open to worshippers and is usually busy. Several rows of pews allow for private contemplation or group seating for discussion. Incense and candles are always burning.

One section of the temple is slowly being converted for use by the Spiritualist sect and is a collection of small paintings and trinkets honoring late family and friends on handmade altars.

Important members: Devotee Priestess Laelia, Spiritualist Priest Padauk

Purchasable items: Incense (1 sp), prayer beads and wheels (1 sp), holy water (1 gp), robes (5 sp)

Priestess Laelia: *"Thanks for helping us out with this. We've tracked down the items around town, but we haven't shared these locations or details with anyone else. Please keep it that way. We've discovered the Rose's Eye is the central piece of the Middlemist Alchemical Works stained glass window. Next, the Dryad of the Spring statue is the prow of a ship called the 'Oxeye.' It should be at the docks. The Book of Remarkable Flora is in the Saint Azami Library somewhere, and we've tracked my personal favorite, the Cave Violet, to a small cave just past Ninebark Farms. I'm really looking forward to this ceremony. It's so interesting! Anyway, I have to go check on my bees now, so good luck!"*

Priest Padauk: *"Er, yes, thank you, Priestess Laelia. And you, adventurers, we are most grateful for your assistance. Now then, note this down carefully. The Acacia Island Coral is in the aquarium of the merchant Rheine Silene, the Master's Fiddle has somehow found its way to a young performer Maestro Zingiber, the Spider Silk Needles are in the possession of the very talented knitter Mrs Aigrette, and the final item—the Cloak of Leaves—appears to be at the farm of Mr. Ninebark. I've marked out the locations on this basic map for you. Please do gather these items with discretion. We should not like our enemies to take advantage. Deliver the items to us at the west door of the castle before the wedding. We appreciate your hard work. And please, dress for the wedding, for you will join the ceremony!"*

MIDDLEMIST ALCHEMICAL WORKS

Description: Visible from town square, it is a stone building with a large, round stained-glass window and a carved wooden door, covered in flowering vines. The window is striking with its sunburst design radiating from the center, and it fills the interior with



rainbow light. Inside, the shop is warm and humid, with plants everywhere and wooden shelves stocked with potions, salves, and tinctures. Distillers and other chemical supplies bubble away in a workshop room behind the shop. Upstairs is the owner's apartment. It is overwhelming, cluttered with sights and smells—mostly pleasant, but there is an occasional whiff of something acidic.

Owned by: Jacinta Middlemist

Purchasable items: simple perfume (1 sp), hair dye (1 sp), temporary and permanent tattoo ink (3 sp/8 gp), cosmetics and toiletries (2 cp-9 cp), basic healing potions (30 gp), antitoxin (30 gp).

Acquire: Rose's Eye

"Turns out The Rose's Eye is the central piece of my stained glass window? Wow! Well, I'm sure my brother Arbor can fix it, but he's angry with me about a prank gone too far. If you can convince him to give me a chance, I'm happy to give up the gem. Still, without Arbor removing it correctly, the window will break. He made the window for me and I won't let that happen. My prank involved throwing an ink balloon at him. I made the ink. It was supposed to disappear... but turns out it was permanent. I'd been bugging him a lot lately, and that was the last straw. I've developed a salve which will remove the dye, but he won't listen to me long enough for me to explain. Give him the salve and explain the situation about the window, and hopefully, he will help."

STARLIGHT GLASS

Description: On the main road to the docks is a large warehouse with the business name painted along the side. The entrance is through a well-made solarium filled with greenery and sun catchers, showing off the artist's work. There is a small shop in the front, and the open warehouse allows interested parties to watch the artisans melt and work the glass. It smells of woodburning, acrid dyes, and cleaning supplies. The glass work is beautiful and filled with color and light, clearly the work of a talented artist. Arbor bears a clear resemblance to his sister, but for one thing: he has an odd black splatter all over his left side, like ink sprayed on his skin. He appears to be trying to hide it, but the stains are difficult to miss against his light skin.

Owned by: Arbor Middlemist

Purchasable items: Jars (2 cp), bottles (2 cp), suncatchers (5 cp-5 sp from small to large), vases (5 sp), statues (5 sp), beads (1 cp/each), reading glasses (3 sp), sunglasses (3 sp), custom orders (depends on size and complexity).

"I'm angry at my sister for splattering me with permanent ink with one of her silly pranks. I've since figured out she was bugging me because I was working too hard and ignoring her, but she still went too far. I want to speak with her again, but every time I look at myself, I see my skin splattered with ink and get angry all over. Still, I should do this for Campion. Okay, if you want me to help, tell me this:

what happened in our fair kingdom? I want to know you are doing this for the right reasons."

A successful DC 10 Intelligence (History) check allows the adventurers to relay what they learned about the kingdom. (This can also be roleplayed if the players are willing.) Satisfied the adventurers care about his homeland, Arbor agrees to help. He goes to his sister's shop and removes the gem from the window, but this process takes some time. The adventurers can wait, or go and come back later. Once the gem is removed, Arbor asks one of the adventurers to help him apply the salve. Jacinta apologizes to Arbor, and they begin speaking again.

BOTAN DOCKS

Description: Strong wooden platforms stretch out into the river to provide mooring for both large cargo ships and small rowing vessels. Always filled with people hard at work any time of the day or night, travel up and down the river is strictly controlled and monitored.

Ship owned by: Captain Kokia Cookei (**bandit captain**).

To do: Solve the puzzle of the statue.

Acquire: Dryad of the Spring statue

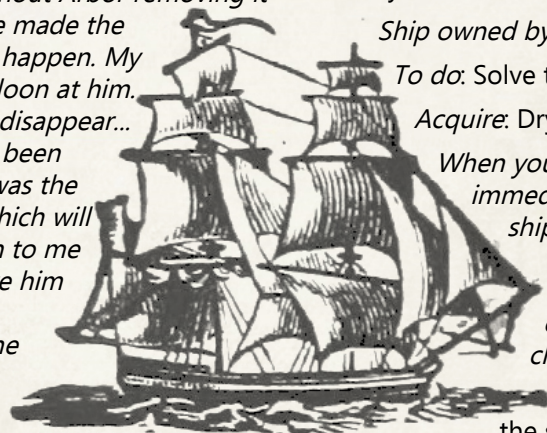
When you arrive at the Oxeye, you note immediately what a bright, clean, and well-kept ship it is in comparison to the others next to it. On the deck, a cheerful tabaxi climbs about the rigging, maintaining and cleaning it. She hops down and cheerfully introduces herself.

When asked, she will explain she found the statue in a shipwreck. It magically attached itself to the prow of the ship while they were trying to hang it.

Investigating the statue, characters discover it is a well carved likeness of a woman surrounded by vines and flowers. She has one arm reaching forward and seems to be wearing a gown made of leaves. Behind her, a small metal box with gears and runes attaches the statue to the prow of the ship. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals the source of the magic, a sonic lock. As a group, the adventurers must perform a sea shanty, sung by the captain, with a successful DC 12 Charisma (Performance) check, directed at the statue, to unlock the magical box. Here is what the captain sings:

*My warm clothes are all in pawn,
And it's mighty draughty 'round Cape Hawn.
Go down you red roses, go down.
It's round Cape Hawn we've got to go,
Chasing whales through ice and snow.
Go down you red roses, go down.
Oh, my old mother, she wrote to me,
My darling child come home from sea.
Go down you red roses, go down.
Oh, it's one more pull, and that will do,
For we're the sailors to bring it through.
Go down you red roses, go down.*

When the song is finished, the mechanism whirrs and



clicks, unlocking itself.

"That's incredible! I'm going back out to sea first thing in the morning to go look for some more neat stuff!" Captain Cookei is extremely amused by the adventurers working out this particular puzzle.

SAINT AZAMI LIBRARY

Description: A tall narrow building that appears to be crammed between two larger buildings, almost uncomfortably. A small sign in the window, faded by the sun, reads "St. Azami Library" in neat cursive, with the opening hours below. Opening the door, the smell of old paper, rot, and damp assault your senses. What was once a tidy and well organized library is in disarray, thanks to a large hole in the roof in the back. Daylight can be seen shining through from outside. The librarian, small even for a gnome, is puttering about, moving books and scrolls away from the damaged area and clearly struggling under some of the weight.

Managed by: Librarian Mirabilis Rebe

Purchasable items: Blank books (9 sp), quills (5 cp), ink (9 sp), books on herbalism and gardening (5 sp each), parchment (1 sp), ink pen (2 cp),

Acquire: Book of Remarkable Flora

"That book? Oh yes, I've got it packaged up safely. Bloody hell, I didn't know it was so important! Well, as you can see, I have a lot of cleaning up to do. There was a big freakin' storm a couple days ago, and I got home this morning to find this bloody mess! If you could help me fix the roof and move these damned heavy boxes, I'll go fetch the book." She goes off to find it.

The adventurers must succeed on a DC 11 Strength (Athletics) check to move four heavy boxes out of the damaged area. An adventurer can repair the hole in the roof with a successful DC 11 Strength check with mason's or carpenter's tools. Otherwise, characters who succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check can climb on the roof and place a tarp over the hole. Casting the *prestidigitation* cantrip can also help clean up some of the mold and dirt.

"You fixed the roof? And got those monstrous boxes out of the way? Hot damn! Thank you! Now I can start cleaning up the worst of this mess before it ruins any more of my precious books. Get out of my way, mold. I'm comin' for you!" She charges off into the library armed with cleaning supplies.

SILENE'S SUNDRIES

Description: Pushing through the weathered wooden door and into the large general store, the merchant can be seen busily dusting and arranging things as they go about their business. The bell above the door jingles and they barely notice.

"Welcome to Silene's Sundries, travellers. Have a look around and I'll be with you shortly."

The driftwood shelves have a worn and aged look about them, but the contents seem to be of high quality and the shop seems especially clean. Winding through the aisles

of various general goods, the adventurers spot a huge aquarium with a small coin box on the front. The writing on the box reads, "1 try for a copper, 10 for a silver."

Owned by: Merchant Rhein Silene

Purchasable items: Adventuring gear from chapter 5 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Acquire: Acacia Island Coral

The aquarium in Silene's Sundries has many beautiful creatures in it, but at its center is a dazzling piece of coral. Hanging from the coral are many precious items that Silene has collected over the years: jewelry, vials of hard to find spell components, and more. For a fee, anyone can try to use Silene's fishing pole to hook one of the items on the coral, or succeeding on a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check instead hooks the entire coral.

When the party removes the coral covered in goods from the tank, Silene looks visibly startled. *"Now hold on just a minute! That's not exactly fair to all my other patrons! If you want to keep the coral, I suppose that will be fine, but you need to return the rest to the tank to give someone else a chance to win."*

MRS. AIGRETTE'S KNITTERY

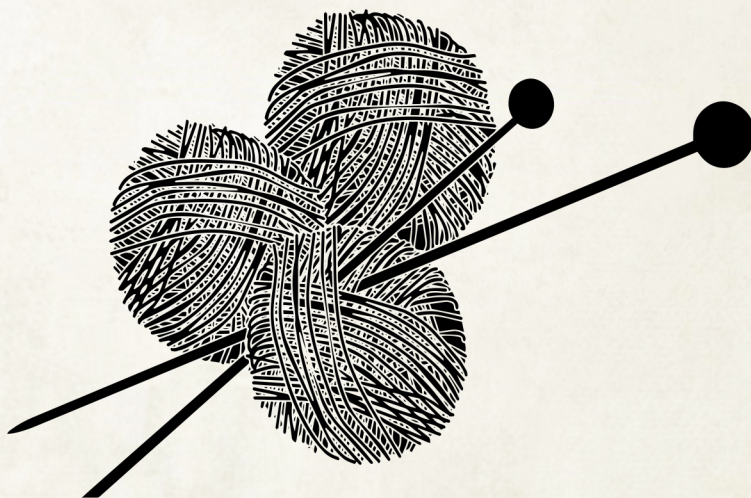
Description: A cozy shop with an apartment above, filled with knitting, plants, and cats. In the windows hang examples of her work in various sizes and shapes on wooden models. Rolls of wool are stacked in a neat rainbow along one wall, with knitting and crochet needles lined neatly along another. A large table serves as Mrs Aigrette's workstation, where she is currently knitting a long scarf.

Owned by: Mrs. Aigrette

Purchasable items: Knitted hats, scarves, mittens, gloves (all 2 cp each), and sweaters designed for various body shapes and types from Tiny to Large (range from 5 cp to 1 gp depending on size).

Acquire: Spider Silk Needles

Mrs. Aigrette is an old elf, and while she does well on her own usually, today she is finding it difficult to keep up with her new kittens. "I guess I'm not as quick on my feet as I used to be. If you can help me gather up the six kittens that are lost around my shop, I will gladly reward you!"



The party must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check to locate the six kittens that have escaped and then DC 11 Wisdom (Animal Handling) to coax the kittens back into their basket. Once they have done this and explained the need for the needles to Mrs Aigrette, she is happy to hand them over. If all the kittens cannot be found, Mrs Aigrette will need convincing, with a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to get her to give up the needles.

MAESTRO ZINGIBER'S APARTMENT

Owned by: Maestro Zingiber

Acquire: Master's Fiddle

Description: At the top of a rickety flight of stairs behind a flimsy door is a shabby apartment, only a single room, but it is absolutely stuffed with things. Outrageous clothing, glittering accessories, costume pieces, and sketches and paintings everywhere of the Maestro himself. While the items look lovely at first glance, close inspection reveals them to be inexpensive jewelry and fabrics. Clearly the Maestro has higher ambitions than this stuffy apartment.

"Good day to you, brave adventurers, you honor me with your presence. My fiddle? Oh no, I couldn't possibly part with that! Unless, of course, you could help me get the new fiddle I have been eyeing at the shop. I've been saving up for months, but the busking hasn't gone so well lately and I still don't have enough." They drape themselves dramatically on the couch. "Whatever shall I do? Oh! I know! You lot are new in town. You draw attention. Why don't you help me drum up some business and I should be able to get enough for my lovely new fiddle. What do you say?"

Take the Maestro out to the town square and help bring attention to their performance. A successful DC 12 Charisma (Performance) check by any musician adventurers who play along helps, or succeed on a DC 11 Charisma (Persuasion) to convince people around town to stop by and see the Maestro play. Getting at least five people earns them enough money to get their new fiddle.

"I will compose a tune in your honor, my new companions, and it will sing your praises!" Maestro Zingiber gestures dramatically before handing over the fiddle and skipping off to the shop.

VIOLET CAVE

The bare gray stone of the entry of this unexplored cavern does well to hide nature's bounty within. Lush walls of greenery and tropical plants hang along the tunnel and a soft carpet of moss covers the floor dulling the adventurers' footsteps to a mere whisper. It feels warm and humid and smells of wet plants and fungus.

A rushing underground river is bridged by a fallen log that seems to be perched uneasily up on either edge of a 10-foot deep chasm, slowing exploration into the deeper recesses of the subterranean lair. Characters who make a successful DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check get across the log without falling into the water.

Once on the other side, the mossy carpet below your feet

is dotted with many small flowers that seem to sway and dip as if blown by some unnatural wind. Pushing forward beyond a curtain of vines the tunnel opens up to a 50-foot circular room with a large pool of water at the center. In the middle of the pool is a stony pillar upon which grows the cave violet in all its splendor. Around the perimeter of the room are several large brightly colored fungi that seem to sway with the same motions as the flowers.

If the heroes fail to cross the log successfully, they fall into the river that then rushes them through a smaller underwater tunnel and pops them out in the pool in the center of the room.

To climb the slick mossy pillar to the violet requires a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. A failure means they fall and must try again with disadvantage.

When the cave violet is removed from its home atop the pillar, there is a loud, low rumbling sound, like the rolling of some large stone and the fungi surrounding the room stop swaying and instead begin to move to intercept the adventurers.

These fungi are in fact myconids (1 **myconid adult** and 4 **myconid sprouts**). They are aggressive and territorial and do not want the adventurers in their space.

Navigating the tunnel in reverse is simple. However, all of the small flowers on the floor try to slow the party, turning all the ground before the river into difficult terrain. The adventurers must protect the violet as they leave by ensuring it is not struck by a weapon or spell. It can only be stored in a container with hard sides to prevent it from being crushed. It can be dropped only once without harm.

Have the sprouts attack first to allow an opportunity to flee from the adult if the adventurers find it too difficult. The myconids will not leave the cave and stop attacking once the adventurers leave the cave.

NINEBARK FARMS

Description: Outside of Campion City. Not far from Violet Cavern.

If ever there was a perfect example of a peaceful, majestic farm, it is here. Rows upon rows of corn wave in the breeze, while standing tall beneath the shadow of a gnarled old tree, a brightly dressed scarecrow eyes any who step beyond the old iron gate. A large farm house stands atop a hill in the fields where a large firbolg in a straw hat plucks at a four-string banjo. A wooden sign hangs from a post beside the porch reading "FRESH PRODUCE AND SUNDRIES."

If the adventurers ask the firbolg, Mr. Ninebark, about the cloak, he directs them to the scarecrow.

Purchasable items: Fresh and preserved produce and herbs (1 cp-2 sp)

Owned by: Camus Ninebark

To do: Convince Cornelius the awakened scarecrow to give up his cloak.

Solution: Help repair the scarecrow. Replacing his cloak or clothing makes him even happier and he gives the party rations in thanks as well.

Acquire: Cloak of Leaves.

Upon approaching the field you hear the jolly voice of the scarecrow sing out to you, "Fine day isn't it!" He flaps his long colorful cloak and laughs again. "None of you are crows, are you?"

When asked about his cloak Cornelius replies, "Oh yes, it's lovely, isn't it? Mr. Ninebark found it in the field and gave it to me."

With a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check, the adventurers can see signs of wear in the happy scarecrow. With a set of weaver's tools or by casting the *mending* spell, the party can repair the scarecrow. Additionally, castings of the *druidcraft* or *prestidigitation* cantrips can help refresh his stuffing. A successful DC 13 Dexterity check can be used in place of these spells to help sew up some of the scarecrow's torn seams.

Upon being fixed, Cornelius runs his fingers over his seams and cries out in joy. "You fixed me up as good as new! For that I must repay you."

CAMPION CASTLE

Description: Made of large, dark stones, the castle would be imposing but for the more gentle curves of its design. A large gate in a vine-covered wall stands open and welcomes visitors to the courtyard, looking up the tall narrow towers at every corner. Access to the inner chambers is not permitted.

Development: Upon collecting the necessary items, the characters can attend the princesses' wedding.

THE WEDDING

The adventurers return the items to the anxious priests waiting at the castle. They inspect each item and are pleased with every one returned. The adventurers are led to a small room where the princesses are in plain gowns but with elaborate hairstyles.

Princess Neeja: "I can't thank you enough for acquiring the gifts. It means so much to both of us, not just because I get to give those really smooth wedding vows,"—(this makes Betony laugh)—"but because those stories are really important to my people. We had to do a lot of work before you got here to reconstruct all of that, but actually getting the items was so delicate. We are blessed by your help.

Princess Betony smiles shyly at the adventurers. "Thank you all so much. We would like to invite you to present some of the gifts during the wedding. It would mean a lot to both of us."

The priests lead the adventurers to the great hall and on to the dais, where a large table draped in fine cloth holds the Eight Gifts. The adventurers choose which gifts they would like to present. The adventurers are positioned before the table and finally have a chance to take the room in. *The main hall of the castle is breathtaking. The huge oak doors, carved with nature spirits, are pushed open to reveal a massive hall with a domed ceiling covered in frescoes of important moments in the country's history. Columns shaped like trees support the roof and direct the eye toward the dais where two ornately carved thrones sit side by side. Rows of benches have been set up for guests with the royal families sitting on chairs up front. Tall, peaked windows let in the cheerful sunlight and make the tiled floor sparkle. The two holy leaders stand up front and, once everyone is seated, a small chorus of children begin to sing a traditional song and the brides are led out one by one in their incredible bridal gowns. They hold hands before the altar, and after a brief sermon by each of the holy leaders, they begin their vows.*

Princess Betony: "I, Princess Betony Heliconia, ask you, Neeja Calix, to be my wife, as my friend and my love. On this day, I affirm the relationship we have enjoyed, looking to the future to deepen and strengthen it.

I will be yours in plenty and in want, in sickness and in health, in failure and in triumph.

Together we will dream, will stumble but restore each other. We will share all things, serving each other and our kingdom. I will cherish and respect you, comfort and encourage you, be open with you, and stay with you as long as we shall live, freed and bound by our love." Her voice shakes with feeling, and a tear rolls down her cheek.

Princess Neeja: "I, Neeja Calix, present to you, my beloved Betony, the Eight Gifts which represent our love."

The adventurers are introduced by a page who calls out their full name and title as they come forward and present the gift to the princesses and the audience. If any of the items are fakes, murmurs of distaste can be heard through the crowd. The people do not seem happy that the true item was not found. As each item is presented, Neeja tells the romantic story of its origin. When all of the items have been presented, Neeja looks back at Betony and chokes up, standing up straight and taking a deep breath to try and contain her emotions.



The priests continue with a few more important ceremonial duties, and then a long, beautiful patchwork scarf is brought forth.

"This scarf is made of scraps from the clothing of both of your ancestors. It represents your union, and the union of these families, and the kingdom." Priest Padauk holds it up, and Priestess Laelia takes it and wraps it around the joined hands of the brides.

"With this knot, we unite you," the priests say in union. They pull the knot together and the whole room erupts in cheering and joyful exclamations as the brides kiss. They are escorted from the hall under showers of flower petals, and musicians, food, and drink are brought in. The party continues well into the night, spilling out into the courtyard. The whole city seems to be out celebrating and everyone is covered in flower petals by the end of the night.

AFTERMATH

The next day, the adventurers are summoned to the temple where Priest Padauk and Priestess Laelia give them their rewards and more thanks.

Resolving adventure hooks:

All of the above hooks end the same:

- The next day the party meets the princesses and are given their rewards
- Any townsfolk who were positively affected by the adventurers offer discounts on their wares or services.
- The temple offers free room and board to the adventurers for their help.
- Maestro Zingiber composes a song about the adventurers, which spreads among other bards and may be heard in other towns.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

With a complex history of civil war, there are many story threads to pick up on in Campion, such as assassination attempts on the princesses or holy leaders, attacks on those who helped the adventurers, or terrorists from one of the factions trying to take over the city.





THE COLOR OF BRAVERY



EMILY HARMON

THE COLOR OF BRAVERY



When an illithid incursion threatens a flumph kingdom in the Underdark, flumph Princess Floophlathrum defies their father's wishes and travels to the surface world, in search of help. Will the adventurers be able to traverse the dangers of the

Underdark, dodge mindflayer contingencies, and rescue the flumph kingdom?

A four-hour adventure for 5th through 10th level characters.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

1. **Call to Action**
2. **Part 1: Descent Into Darkness**
3. **Part 2: The King and his Council**
4. **Part 3: We Had a Good Plan...**
5. **Afterword**

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In the depths of the Underdark, the flumph kingdom of Humphoresia has come under threat of attack by the ever-expanding mind flayer colony, led by Oothilir, the indomitable elder brain. While flumph-custom dictates that flumphs should flee under direct confrontation, flumph Princess Floophlathrum (they/them) is unwilling to abandon their ancestral homeland. After confronting their father, King Phoomthalrup (he/him), and his close council, Princess Floophlathrum realizes the flumphs will flee if provoked—unless they can get a little help convincing them otherwise. Princess Floophlathrum sneaks away and travels to the

surface world, where they hope to find a helping hand. This adventure begins as Princess Floophlathrum travels through an Underdark cavern beneath The Rosy Curiosi-tea in search of a way to the surface, when they are suddenly attacked.

Unbeknownst to Princess Floophlathrum, while they have been away, a contingent of illithid mindhunters has taken the opportunity to surround Humphoresia and begin sieging their defenses. Unwilling to leave his child behind, King Phoomthalrup is delaying their planned retreat until Princess Floophlathrum can be found.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is designed for three to seven characters of level 5-10. The adventure is linear and designed to be played in sequence.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

HOOK 1

An Unfurled Rose, proprietor of The Rosy Curiosi-tea, posted a request for rare herbs and flowers a tenday ago. After dangerous questing through forests, mountains, and ravines, the characters have acquired the ingredients and travelled to The Rosy Curiosi-tea to receive payment. Go around the table and have each character describe what herb or flower they brought, and what they had to do to find and collect it; reward characters with inspiration for telling engaging stories.

HOOK 2

After returning from their latest adventure, the characters have acquired rooms at the local inn, The Amber Whale,

and are enjoying an afternoon exploring Waterdeep's boutiques. They are walking past The Rosy Curiosi-tea when the adventure begins. If characters are using Hook 2, proceed to A Cry for Help.

CALL TO ACTION

The adventure begins at The Rosy Curiosi-tea, a tea shop in the heart of Waterdeep owned by An Unfurled Rose (they/them). An Unfurled Rose warmly greets the characters and offers them a selection of their teas, which rotate weekly based on available fresh ingredients. Currently available are Neverwinter Green Tea, Chultan Black Rose, Maztican Matcha, and a Golden Sunrise Tea from Thay (2 sp per cup). If using Hook 1, An Unfurled Rose offers them 15 gp for each ingredient and covers the cost of their tea. If any character refuses payment, An Unfurled Rose offers that character a special to-go brew of tea that acts as a *greater healing potion*.

ABOUT THE ROSY CURIOSI-TEA

The Rosy Curiosi-tea is a two-story tea shop featuring winding bookshelves, chandeliers, and reading nooks that make characters feel as if they are inside a labyrinth of coziness. There is a single set of wooden stairs leading down with a rope and sign marked "Employees Only". Downstairs is a 20 by 30 foot drying room, where An Unfurled Rose prepares their fresh herbs.

A CRY FOR HELP

Once characters have spoken with An Unfurled Rose (Hook 1) or are passing by the outside of the shop (Hook 2), read the following:

The ground suddenly shifts beneath your feet as the sound of crumbling stone and splitting wood emanates from beneath the earth. In your mind, you hear a high-pitched scream and a voice that cries out: "Please! Help me! I-it's everywhere!!"

Below The Rosy Curiosi-tea, an Underdark passageway has collapsed, ripping apart the floor of the basement and destabilizing the building. An Unfurled Rose calmly evacuates any other patrons and contacts the guard for help. Princess Floophlathrum is in the tunnel below, ensnared by a **roper** that is reeling her in for a midday snack.

When the characters arrive, read the following:

This 20 by 30 foot basement is in disarray, as the far side of the room has collapsed into an expansive tunnel 20 feet below. Bioluminescent fungi cast an eerie puce light along the smooth stone walls. Below, four writhing rope-like tentacles flash through the air. Inside one of them, a medium-sized jellyfish-like creature emits sharp flashes of red and blue light, struggling to free itself as the tentacles drag it towards a gaping maw full of razor-sharp teeth.

If characters intervene, the **roper** turns its attention to the bigger threat, saving Princess Floophlathrum (**flumph** with plot armor) for dessert. On initiative count 1, three **black puddings** drop from the ceiling and engage any characters that have been reeled in.

THE QUEST

After combat concludes, Princess Floophlathrum enthusiastically thanks the characters for their help, and hurriedly explains their mission to save their kingdom, Humphoresia, which is under threat of attack by an ever-expanding mind flayer colony, led by Oothilir, the indomitable elder brain. They are seeking help from surface-dwellers to help convince their father, King Phoomtharup, and his ruling council, that the flumphs should not flee from the colony and abandon their ancestral homeland. Instead, they must fight, forge an alliance with the mind flayers, or make an alliance with other creatures who will help them defend their home. Princess Floophlathrum does not have a strong opinion on which option is chosen, but they are strongly opposed to fleeing the conflict. Princess Floophlathrum asks the characters to escort them back to Humphoresia and to help them advise the King and his council. Princess Floophlathrum tells the characters that if they are successful, they can each choose an item from the royal treasury as a reward.



ON THE NATURE OF FLUMPHS

Flumphs are wholly good-natured, with a tendency towards chaotic good. If placed in a dangerous situation, they will (almost) always choose to flee, rather than fight. The flumphs of Humphoresia realize their names may be difficult for outsiders to pronounce—as such, they will come up with temporary names, based on nearby objects, that are easy to pronounce (Princess Longsword, King Pointy Hat, Councilor Pepper Shaker).

PART 1: DESCENT INTO DARKNESS

This section consists of a number of encounters that the party may encounter while they travel to Humphoresia. Each of these encounters unlocks an option that characters may use to affect the outcome of Part 2.

MYCONID MADNESS

Characters come across a myconid-run mushroom farm that has been corrupted by faerzress.

Purple-spotted bioluminescent mushrooms are interspersed among edible green and brown fungi. Small mushroom-shaped creatures move through the cavern, which is filled with an eerily still purple mist. The creatures move aimlessly, bumping into walls and trampling mushrooms in their wake.

The faerzress in this area has corrupted the minds of the myconids, driving them mad. Even in their demented state, they are mostly harmless. A *greater restoration* spell or similar magic will remove a level of madness from one of the myconids, as will removing the myconid from the affected area for 24 hours. If cured, the myconid asks the characters for their help removing the faerzress. It takes three consecutive Perception or Investigation checks totalling 45 or higher to successfully remove the faerzress. A character proficient in Nature or the Herbalism Kit makes these checks at advantage.

If characters succeed this check, they spend 3 hours removing the faerzress from the area. Afterwards, the myconids thank them for their help, and offer them a favor. The myconids are especially skilled at agriculture and farming, and overproduce mushrooms in the area. Note this success for Part 2.

If characters fail this check, all characters who contributed to the check must make a DC 14 Charisma saving throw and on a failure gain 1 level of long-term madness (see chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for Madness rules). The characters may continue attempting this check until the cumulative Perception or Investigation check reaches 45, at which point they succeed. For each additional check they fail, have the characters roll another saving throw against madness.

MINDFLAYER TROOP

The characters encounter a scouting party of mind flayers (one **mind flayer psion**, one **mind flayer**, two **gnoll** mind-slaves each containing one **intellect devourer**) that are searching for secret passages into Humphoresia. If the characters are sighted, the mind flayers attack and fight until killed. They focus on capturing the princess, to be interrogated for valuable military information, and kill all who stand in their way.

By defeating the mind flayers, the characters prevent the illithid forces from learning about weak points in the flumphs' defenses. Note this success for Part 2.

Additionally, the characters find a **tentacle rod**, made from the tanned tendrils of two ropers. When carried, the character experiences a strong hunger for brains, and must consume at least one bite of brain per day or gain a level of madness (see chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

DROW MERCHANT

The characters encounter a drow merchant named Verdanza Blackswallow (she/her), driving a vardo which is covered in colorful, yet faded, paint. She will tell the characters that she killed a Vistani merchant a tenday ago and took the wagon for her new merchant enterprise. Two **giant spiders** draw the wooden wagon. Verdanza is a fanatical worshipper of Lolth, who can offer the characters anything in the *Player's Handbook* at three times the list price, as well as any one common magic item of your choice from *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*. If a fellow worshipper of Lolth is amongst the party, she offers the items for twice the cost listed in the *Player's Handbook*. If the characters inform Verdanza that they are purchasing items to fight the mind flayers, roll a d20. If you roll 10 or higher, Verdanza offers the characters items at their normal cost, as she holds a grudge against the mind flayers for destroying her last cart. If the roll is less than 10, Verdanza increases the cost of items to five times their list price, as she does not want to be involved in the kerfuffle.

BULLETTE BONANZA

The characters encounter a **bullette** (at half health) who is being savagely attacked by a band of ten **gnolls**. The bullette is a sentient creature named Suzy (she/her) who speaks Common, Primordial, and Dwarvish. Characters with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 12 or higher, or those who move within 10 feet of the bullette, can see that she is protecting a nest of five baby bulettes.

If the characters intervene and save Suzy, she offers them a favor. Note this success for Part 2.

PART 2: THE KING AND HIS COUNCIL

ABOUT THE LOCATION

Humphoresia is a spot of light in the endless darkness of the Underdark. This ancient dwarven fortress is built into the side of an enormous 500-foot cavern overlooking a still blue lake. The ceiling of the cavern is dotted with bioluminescent fungi, giving the appearance of distant stars.

The stronghold consists of tall 50-foot walls made of white stone, with a variety of winding city streets and buildings inside. A large evacuation tunnel stretches from the keep into the Worm Writhings.

FORMULATING THE PLAN

Once the characters have arrived in Humphoresia, they should formulate a plan with Princess Floophlathrum to determine whether they will encourage the flumphs to flee Humphoresia, fight the illithids head on, or contact allies to construct a different alternative. This decision will be shaped by the encounters they had in Part 1. Once the characters have agreed on a plan, the princess will escort them to the council chambers, where they can speak with the King and his council.

CONVINCING THE KING AND HIS COUNCIL

King Phoomthalrup's Council consists of a number of flumph councilors that believe, for various reasons, that the flumphs should flee the illithid threat. King Phoomthalrup is torn between his council's advice and the opinion of his own daughter.

To convince the councilors, characters must make compelling arguments and succeed on relevant skill checks that must be succeeded to convince each councilor. The number of councilors present is equal to the number of players at the table. Give each player the information on one of the councilors (see Councilors below). Go around the table and have each player role play their councilor in turn, and have the rest of the party try to convince the councilor to support their plan. Reward excellent roleplay with advantage on the check, or allow arguments supported by warrants and evidence to automatically convince specific councilors. Record the results of each councilor's check—the majority of the checks must succeed, or the council will not agree to the characters' plan. (In the case of an even number of characters, 50% of the checks must succeed).

Once the councilors have each been heard, Princess Floophlathrum makes a final appeal to the king and King Phoomthalrup (played by the DM) makes his final decision, which is determined by the outcome of the Councilor's vote.

Failure. If the characters did not succeed, the king agrees to the plans of the most outspoken or persuasive councilor, to be determined based on the players' roleplaying.

Success. If the characters succeed, the king agrees to their plan, tells Princess Floophlathrum that he is proud of them and that they will make a good leader for their kingdom, and then steps aside for them to formulate the flumphs' next steps. The characters will act as the princess's new council and advise them as to what should be done. Ultimately, the princess takes the characters' advice, allowing them to determine the plan for the next portion of the adventure.

COUNCILORS

The following councilors are a part of King Phoomthalrup's Council. Select a number of councilors equal to the number of players at the table, and provide each player information on the councilor they will roleplay.

Councilor Phlermaglerm (he/him) came from a different colony twenty years ago, and had a younger brother that died during an illithid incursion that destroyed their colony. He is traumatized by the loss and is afraid to risk losing anyone else that he cares about, including his daughter Gluphloglerm and wife Phoogluphlem. He claims that the only way to survive is to flee. A successful DC 13 Charisma (Intimidation) check or a DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check will convince him otherwise.

Councilor Legtharferm (she/her) is the lead coordinator for the mushroom farms at the edges of the kingdom, which have largely been burned and destroyed by illithid forces. She fears that the flumphs cannot survive if they do not move on and find other food sources. If characters befriended the myconids in Part 1, or offer another food supply, she automatically agrees to their plan. Otherwise, it takes a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check to convince her that the farms can be repaired in time to feed the kingdom. If the characters befriended the myconids in Part 1 and offer their aid in establishing the farms or supplying mushrooms in the interim, they make the check at advantage.

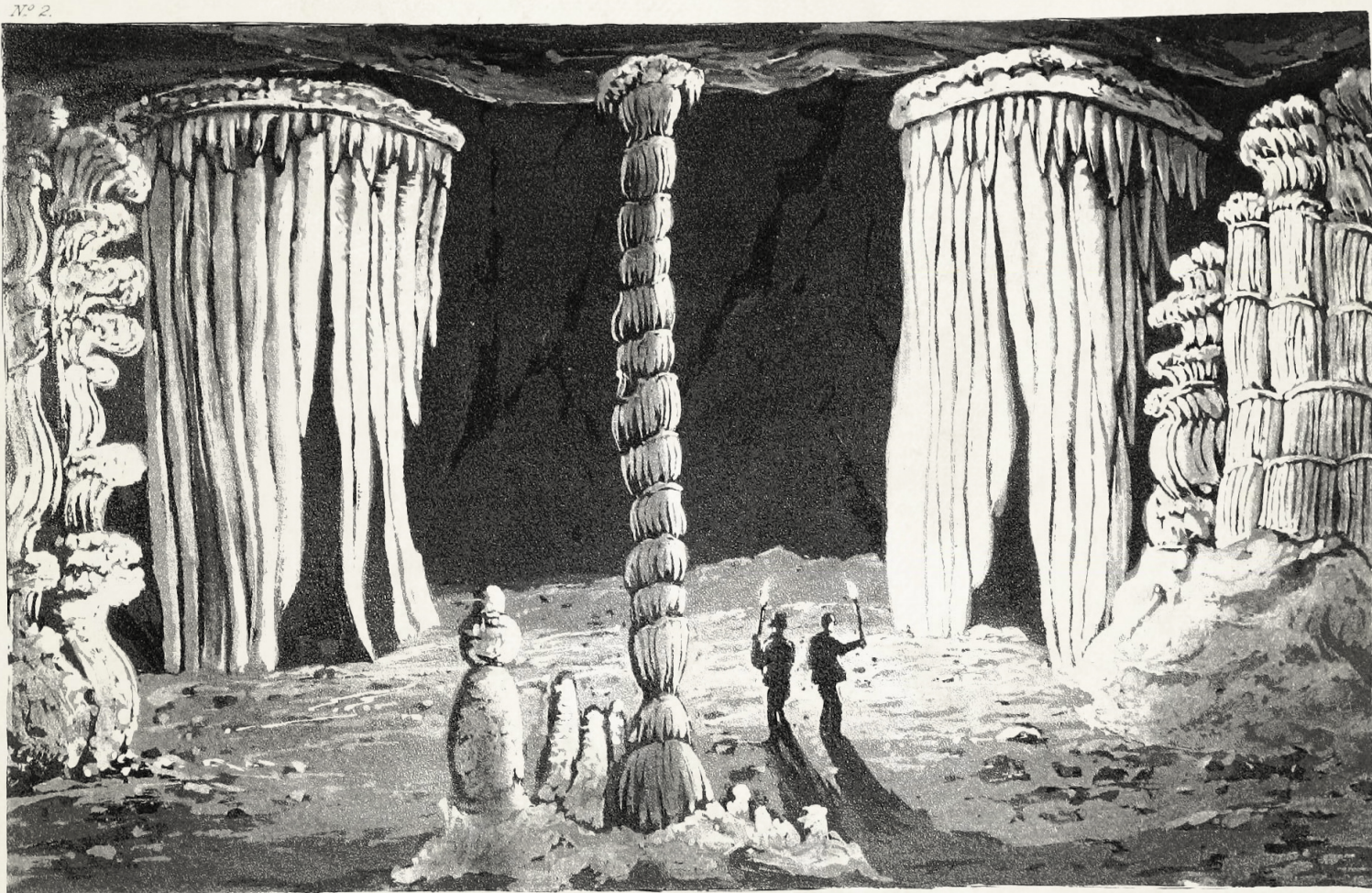
Councilor Lephlaglem (they/them) is the leader of the flumphs' minor military forces, which consist of 50 flumphs who are primarily trained in scare tactics such as using Advanced Telepathy to imitate telepathic creatures and the strategic use of Stench Spray. Councilor Lephlaglem believes that the flumph forces do not stand a chance in head-on combat with the mindflayers, and wants to flee to a more defensible position. They can be convinced to stay if they are provided with a reasonable battle plan or thoroughly assured that combat will not occur. Councilor Lephlaglem is a tactician at heart, and a successful DC 12 Intelligence (History) check or DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check will convince them. If the characters defeated the illithids in Part 1, the councilor is pleased that the illithids did not gain any intelligence and that the characters proved themselves in battle, and makes these checks at advantage.

Councilor Phumphory (he/him) is in love with Councilor Lephlaglem, and fears that, if the flumphs fight or are sieged, Councilor Lephlaglem may die. Councilor Phumphory can be convinced to side with the characters, but only if they can ensure Councilor Lephlaglem's safety. Councilor Phumphory will not admit to his love, or even suggest it, but he is terribly bad at hiding his feelings. A character who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 15 or higher notices him stealing longing glances at Lephlaglem, giggling too much when they talk, or agreeing with everything they say. A successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check will convince Councilor Phumphory. If characters can ensure Councilor Lephlaglem's safety by sending him out of the city, perhaps making use of relationships the characters created in Part 1, this check is made at advantage.

Councilor Floglampher (she/her) is the flumph ambassador to neighboring Underdark cities. Floglampher is obsessed with Humphoresia's image, and other cities' opinions of them. She is concerned that, if the flumphs suffer a terrible military defeat or fail in negotiations, it will tarnish their reputation in the Underdark. Characters must convince Floglampher that their plan will be successful in bringing the flumphs fame and glory, or otherwise elevate their status with other Underdark denizens. This can be achieved with a successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check or a successful DC 13 Charisma (Performance) check if the characters stage a pre-enactment of their plan. A character who is a bard makes both checks at advantage.

Councilor Flaflofur (he/him) is being controlled by an **intellect devourer** allied with the mindflayers. No one on the council has noticed his odd behavior, including staring hungrily at the heads of those in the council chamber. Flaflofur is the leading priest of Helm, a god that was adopted by the flumphs when they discovered a temple to Helm in the ancient dwarven city they now inhabit, but he has no memory of his life or duties if asked. Flaflofur wears a holy symbol of Helm, but seemingly has no knowledge of what it is or means. Flaflofur will not vote for the characters' plan, but on a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check, a character will notice his odd behavior. If the characters are able to identify that he is under the influence of an intellect devourer, they receive a success.

Councilor Phlerflafly (they/them) is actually an angel (**deva**) of Helm, disguised as a flumph, who was sent to protect their society and help them flourish. It seems that Humphoresia has a part to play in Helm's plans, though they do not know what it might be. Phlerflafly is secretly in favor of the flumphs staying in Humphoresia, but does not want to blow their cover while the rest of the council is dissenting. They claim that they are concerned about losing the flumphs' great annals and written histories if the illithids attack, but this is a cover. A DC 0 check on any ability is needed to convince Phlerflafly to go along with the characters' plan.



PART 3: WE HAD A GOOD PLAN...

Once the characters have decided which plan they wish to enact, they may present it to the king and his council, who provide feedback and offer support according to their position and background. If characters need to contact other factions from Part 1 to enact their plans, allow them to do so now.

The characters' chosen plan will determine the rest of this adventure, which is decidedly variable to allow the players to shape the world. You are empowered to customize these endings to fit the narrative your players wish to tell, using DM discretion to fill in any gaps. Choose one of the following wrap-up sections that best fits your narrative, or devise one of your own design.

FIGHT THE ILLITHIDS

Depending on the nuances of the plan, this fight may take place on open ground (for instance, inside a catacomb of purple worm tunnels near the city) or may occur when the illithids begin to siege the walls. Allow characters to set up traps or defenses as they see fit. Each trap should take a character 1 hour to set up.

Once the characters are ready, the illithid forces attack (two **mind flayers**, one **mind flayer arcanist**). If this combat proves to be too easy, add additional waves (five **gnoll** slaves, one **mind flayer**) to provide a satisfying experience. If the characters put forth significant effort in raising defenses and creating battle plans, be sure to award their precautions and strategic thinking in game.

ALLIANCES

This section is highly variable, but below is some guidance to help you adjudicate this option. As a DM, you are empowered to run this section in a way that makes sense for your party and is fun for your players.

Illithids. The illithids are proud and ruthless, but not stupid. If the characters can give them good cause for backing down, such as trade in the form of slaves or prized land, they will cut a deal. These checks should be difficult (DC 20) with difficulty decreasing as characters offer illithids things that they would value. Under these circumstances, the illithids have every reason to believe they could crush the flumphs easily in combat. If characters aren't careful, they may create a temporary truce that could have unforeseen consequences for the Underdark. If negotiations begin to sour, the illithid ambassador and his entourage attack (two **mind flayers**, one **mind flayer arcanist**).

Other cities. If characters have adventured in the Underdark previously, they may wish to reach out to other cities for support (Gauntylgrim, Menzoberranzan, etc.). If characters are able to forge an alliance with a

strong-enough power, they may be able to intimidate the illithids into retreating. Be sure to roleplay the characters' discussions with ambassadors to those cities, and their introduction and alliance with Princess Floophlathrum.

FLEE!

If the characters cannot convince the council to side with Princess Floophlathrum, the kingdom of Humphoresia enacts evacuation plans over the next hour. As the flumphs flee their stronghold, the illithid forces attack. Characters must cover the flumphs' retreat as they are overwhelmed by illithid forces (two **mind flayers**, one **mind flayer arcanist**). Narrate the fleeing of the flumph forces as they are mind-blasted and cut down by the illithid vanguard. Most of the flumph forces are able to escape but, as they flee, the characters see mindflayers swarming the ancient stronghold as ancient statues and relics are destroyed. The mood of the flumphs is one of mourning, as they all shed the same midnight blue light of deep sorrow.

AFTERMATH

Success. After the events of this adventure, King Phoomthalrup comes to value his daughter's leadership and decides to step down from the throne. Princess Floophlathrum rises to power over her kingdom. Her father acts as counsel, providing his daughter support during their early days as Queen. Councilors who the characters especially enjoyed interacting with stay on as their advisors. If the characters were able to develop any alliances or allegiances in Part 1, these continue to flourish. If characters grew especially close with Princess Floophlathrum, they ask the characters to join their council.

Failure. The flumphs flee to a nearby **kuo-toa** stronghold, where they maintain an uncomfortable truce with the kuo-toa for the time being. Who knows how long the alliance will last, or how long it will be before the illithids catch up? Provided that the characters genuinely helped to support Princess Floophlathrum, they will thank them for their help and stay in contact with characters regarding concerns in the future.



FURTHER ADVENTURES

Below are some questions that you may use to guide the characters' future adventures in the region:

- What is the future of Humphoresia? What will the Princess's first months and years in power look like?
- How will they deal with their myconid neighbors? Will they develop trade or peace?
- How will Menzoberranzan view the rising flumph powers in the Underdark?
- Will Humphoresia forge alliances with surface worlds? Will the characters act as ambassadors for these efforts?
- Will flumphs be able to travel to the surface world and act as ambassadors for good-aligned creatures in the Underdark?





HEIR TO CHAOS



PETER K. HARRIS

HEIR TO CHAOS



Whispers among the Silverlee royal family speak of a curse that lies dormant in the family line. The heir to the throne, Anaia Silverlee, is convinced that she is suffering from this curse, and has fled the safety of her palace to seek answers in her ancestor's tomb. Can the

characters help the princess be rid of her affliction, or is there a better way to assist her?

A four-hour adventure for 6th through 10th level characters.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The characters respond to reports of strange lights and sounds coming from deep within the forest. They find Princess Anaia, a human mage suffering from uncontrollable outbursts of magic, as she attempts to enter an ancient tomb.

At Anaia's request, the characters escort her through the tomb, overcoming traps, challenges, and ancient guardians. As they delve deeper, Anaia is forced to confront the nature of her power.

The characters bring Princess Anaia to the heart of the tomb, where she faces a choice. Her decision depends on her interactions with the characters over the course of the adventure.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

For centuries, the Silverlee royal succession has consisted exclusively of mages. The tradition was established 700 years ago by their first queen, Elster Silverlee (she/her), who was herself a powerful sorcerer. Since her powers were so

vital in establishing her rule, she decreed that only those able to wield magic could take the throne.

Very few people outside of the royal family know that Queen Elster was a rare sort of mage—one whose command of magic was unpredictable. Her control grew with time, but only through great personal hardship and a series of difficult choices. Not wanting any descendants of hers to face the same struggle, Elster chose to make her burial site a testing ground and learning opportunity for future wild mages of her line.

As time went on, the story of Elster's wild power faded from common memory. Today, only the Silverlee family remembers it, though the facts have gotten confused over the centuries. Family legend now warns of Elster's Curse, which might someday manifest again in the royal line. Unfortunately, Princess Anaia Silverlee has begun showing signs of just such a curse since she came of age a few years ago. Her parents have done all they can to keep this a secret, but the royal court has heard vague rumors of Anaia's struggle, and gossip is spreading that the princess may have to cede her claim to the throne.

For her part, the chaotic surges of magic have terrified the princess. Several times already, she has come close to hurting her tutors, friends, and family, and Anaia lives in constant fear that her next outburst might kill someone. With nothing to turn to but old family tales, she has stolen away from the palace and set out to find her ancestor's tomb. There, she hopes, she might find answers—and a way to rid herself of this curse once and for all.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is balanced for a party of five 7th-level characters.

In addition to overcoming the tomb's challenges, success in this adventure is determined by Princess Anaia's personal growth. The players' treatment of her directly impacts the adventure's outcome. Characters will be able to complete most challenges on their own, but to gain their

reward, they must encourage Anaia to actively engage with her ancestor's lessons.

Encourage characters to interact with Anaia, especially during lulls in the action such as short rests, or after completing a challenge. Consider rewarding particularly thoughtful or empathetic roleplay with inspiration or rolling checks with advantage.

The three challenges in Chapter 2 outline conditions for success and failure. Tally these up to determine Anaia's ultimate choice in Chapter 3. If she falls unconscious, count that trial as a failure.

ADVENTURE HOOK

FIND THE PRINCESS

Characters are summoned by King Rolan Silverlee (he/him) to find his missing daughter, Princess Anaia. Though her parents will not reveal why she has run away, her attendants say that she has been obsessed with finding her ancestor's tomb, which is rumored to be hidden in a temple in the forest. Old maps, dusty tomes, and star charts strewn around the Princess' chambers point the direction to this ancient site. The characters are warned that, should the characters breathe a word of their mission to anyone, they will face dire consequences.

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

PRINCESS ANAIA SILVERLEE

Princess Anaia (she/her) is a human princess in her early 20s. She is a wild magic sorcerer who uses the mage stat block, with the following adjustments:

- Anaia has 72 hp.
- Whenever Anaia casts a spell of 1st level or higher, roll twice on the Wild Magic Surge table in the *Player's Handbook* and pick one result. Alternatively, you can use the Wild Magic Surge table included in this anthology, or combine the two tables to your liking.

Anaia is a courageous young woman with a wry sense of humor whose confidence has been deeply shaken by the trauma of her wild magic. At the beginning of the adventure she is frightened, uncertain, and uncomfortable being physically close to other people, having accidentally hurt others in the past. She is prepared to risk everything to be rid of her curse.

As Anaia succeeds at the tomb's challenges, her confidence slowly grows, especially if her wild magic surges have beneficial results. Though she might dismiss initial successes as flukes, over time she begins to question her assumptions about herself and her magic.

As she grows more comfortable with her power, she becomes a little more relaxed around her allies. She might stand straighter, keep less distance from others, or speak more decisively. Use your best judgement to pace and describe her personal growth. Bear in mind that failures and harmful surges might cause her to draw back in on herself.

Additional guidance for roleplaying Anaia can be found in each section of the adventure.

Personality Trait: I avoid casting magic around other people unless absolutely necessary.

Ideal: My powers are a curse, and I must rid myself of them.

Bond: I love my family and subjects, and would never want to accidentally hurt them.

Flaw: I lack self-confidence due to my lack of control.

CHAPTER 1: THE CHAPEL OF CHANCE

LOCATION HISTORY

During Queen Elster Silverlee's reign, this temple was dedicated to Tymora and served as the royal place of worship. When she died, Elster was buried beneath it in an elaborate tomb. Over the centuries, however, the royal family distanced themselves from Elster's abilities and faith. The kingdom's official religion was eventually changed, and the Chapel of Chance was forgotten and fell into ruin.

ABOUT THE LOCATION

Characters follow the bursts of light and intermittent rumblings which lead them deeper into the forest. As the characters enter the forest glade, read the following:

Iridescent light flashes from inside a dilapidated temple across from you. Moments later, a unicorn trots out from the ruined doors. It gives you a long-suffering look before cantering away into the forest. When the sounds of its retreat fade away, you hear a quiet sobbing coming from within the temple.

The Chapel of Chance is a crumbling building with a peaked roof. Inside, the temple is a long rectangular structure. Two lines of rotting wooden pews lead to a mossy stone altar at the far end of the room. Parts of the roof have collapsed, and tangled vines spill from the gaps onto the fern-strewn floor below. Despite the decay, a stained-glass window behind the altar remains in perfect condition.

Princess Anaia Silverlee is kneeling in front of the altar, weeping in sheer frustration. She wears fine clothes that have been torn, stained, and scorched. When characters approach, she reacts out of startled instinct:

"Stay back!" The girl flings her hand back towards you, and there's a detonation of energy. When the glow fades, the girl is sitting with her knees hugged to her chest, and the plants around her are withering to dust.

"I'm sorry," she whispers, staring at you with frightened eyes. "I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to—please, just don't come closer!"

Anaia is more worried about harming the characters than vice versa. She asks them who they are and why they have come here. If reassured that they are here to help, Anaia shares the following information:

- Anaia is next in line to the Silverlee throne.
- According to long-held law, only magic users can take the throne.
- Anaia suffers from a curse that afflicted the first of their line, the Wild Queen Elster Silverlee. She cannot use magic without unforeseen, often devastating side effects.
- There have been several times in her life where she believes her magic may have inadvertently harmed people—usually attendants or tutors. These servants were replaced, and although her parents always assured her that no harm came to them, she's paranoid that her parents lied to spare her feelings.
- Anaia is scared that she will eventually kill someone outright. That the volatility of her curse might disqualify her from taking the throne is a secondary concern.
- Her ancestor, Elster, was said to possess a powerful artifact that controlled the curse.
- Queen Elster was buried with this artifact, and her tomb is below this temple. Anaia ran away from home to recover it.
- Anaia has been trying to unlock the tomb for almost three days, with no success, and is at her wit's end.
- Her only clue is a family legend that says to "kneel in Lady Luck's radiance, and present your fortune."

Because Queen Elster's story has mostly faded from memory, it is unlikely that characters would know anything about her or her tomb. Characters who succeed at a DC 25 Intelligence (History) check recall the information about her that is provided in the **Adventure Background**.

Characters who succeed at a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check see that Anaia has been working hard to open the tomb. Days-old patches of strangely colored plant life or scorched stone show where her control has slipped. They also spot that Anaia is wearing a homemade strung necklace of coin-sized golden discs. If asked, she confesses that she made it herself.

A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that despite her pain and frustration, Anaia is grimly resolute in her quest, and will not be persuaded to leave without the artifact.

After getting to know the characters, Anaia asks them to help her access the tomb and reclaim the artifact. She promises them 10,000 gp if they are successful.

Altar. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check shows that the stone altar is built to move along a set of grooves. Anaia has already noticed this, and points it out if characters do not spot it. No amount of pushing or pulling will move the altar.

Window. The stained-glass window depicts the goddess Tymora standing triumphant over her foe, Beshaba. An aura of abjuration magic keeps it from breaking. Three beams of lights radiate from her raised hand, pointing to the **left**, **right**, and **bottom** of the window. Following the path of those beams brings characters to three flagstones with small circular indentations the size of a coin. Though the window faces west, the surrounding forest has grown to block any sunlight from reaching it.

Unlocking the Tomb. To unlock the tomb, a gold piece must be inserted into each indentation, with the 'heads' side facing out. The discs on Anaia's necklace can also be used. Finding these indentations without following the window's design requires a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check.

If characters are stuck, they can attempt a DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check. On a success, they are reminded that the holy symbol of Tymora is a face-up coin.

When the puzzle is solved, the altar slides forwards with a loud grinding noise, revealing a stairway that leads underground.

CHAPTER 2: THE WILD QUEEN'S TOMB

LOCATION HISTORY

Before Queen Elster died, she worried what might happen if wild magic resurfaced in her bloodline. Despite its dangers, she saw her power as an asset, and wanted her descendants to have a controlled environment in which they could learn to safely harness their gift. To that end, she designed her tomb as a series of challenges, so that any of her lineage who came seeking answers might realize their potential. Though specifically designed not to harm any heir of the Silverlee line, the tomb can be deadly to others.

ABOUT THE LOCATION

The walls of the tomb are made from polished stone, grey-blue and cool to the touch. Glowing gems embedded in the walls at regular intervals cast a steady white light. Unless otherwise specified, the ceilings are 10 ft. high.

Magical Realism. Several of the rooms in this tomb involve magical projections or illusions. These are no less deadly for being constructs; they are solid to the touch and deal damage as normal.

Heir's Resistance. Anaia has resistance to all damage dealt by traps and constructs in the tomb.

Royal Barriers. Several key locations are surrounded or blocked off by walls of translucent light. Only Anaia is able to pass them. Any character who touches one is dealt 2d8 radiant damage and must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, they are blinded for 10 minutes.

The barriers can be dispelled with *disintegrate* or *dispel magic*, requiring a successful DC 25 spellcasting ability check. Otherwise, Anaia dispels them when she passes through.

SUB-LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to map 1.1.

L1. ENTRYWAY

This hallway extends north for 30 ft. A **royal barrier** blocks the way from the stairs to the Undercroft (Area L2).

The air grows cooler as you descend the stairs into a hallway beneath the temple. A steady white light shines from gems embedded in the walls at regular intervals. At the bottom of the stairway, a passageway leads ahead, but is blocked by a wall of magical force.

The tomb is enchanted to ward against any creatures not of the Silverlee line. If a character teleports into the tomb before this barrier is dispelled, they take 3d10 acid, cold, fire, force, lightning, poison, psychic, or thunder damage every six seconds. The damage type is determined at random by a d8 roll.

Roleplaying Anaia. Anaia is overcautious and stays at the back of the group. She does not approach the barrier on her own volition, though persuading her to do so requires no skill check.

Passing Through. When Anaia approaches within 5 ft. of the barrier, a disembodied female voice says: "Heir of my line, cross this threshold and claim your inheritance."

The gateway allows Anaia to pass. When she does, it dissipates and does not reform.

L2. UNDERCROFT

The strange, steady light glitters off a high ceiling in this chamber. Three stone doors are set into the walls opposite you. In the center of the room, a tall statue of a human woman stands on a dais, wearing a diadem and fine robes carved so finely from marble that they look soft to the touch. Her empty hand reaches out, palm up, in a welcoming gesture.

"Queen Elster..." Anaia sounds awed as she approaches the statue. "That must have been her voice!"

The ceiling in this room is 30 ft. high. The chamber is hexagonal with a 40 ft. diameter. Three doors opposite the entrance lead to the challenges that will unlock the way to Queen Elster's burial chamber.

Doors. On each door is a hand-shaped indentation. Any character can press their hand to a door to open it.

Elster's Statue. The statue of Queen Elster is 10 ft. tall, with a 4 ft. high plinth. On the dais are three diamond-shaped indentations. When a **key gem** from Area L3, L4, or L5 is inserted, a bright blue flame appears in the statue's hand. Inserting more key gems adds more color to the fire—first red, then green—and causes the flame to spread up the statue's arm.

Roleplaying Anaia. When she first enters this room, Anaia is preoccupied with the statue. If no other characters inspect it, she points out the three indentations on the plinth. If she has not done so already, she tells the characters what she knows of Queen Elster's story.

Unlocking the Burial Chamber. When the key gems from areas L3, L4, and L5 are all inserted into the plinth, the statue's arm is wreathed in opalescent flame. The statue raises its arm and shoots a column of fire at the ceiling, causing the floor to descend 50 feet. When it stops, the fire burns out, and an archway leading to Queen Elster's burial chamber (**Chapter 3**) is revealed.

L3. HALL OF COURAGE

A 30 ft. long corridor leads from the doorway to a vast square chamber, 100 ft. long and wide, with a 40 ft. tall ceiling. The room is illuminated only by a knee-high fog that glows with a pale white light.

When Anaia reaches the center of the room, a sliding door seals the entrance.

The fog suddenly glows brighter, momentarily blinding you. When your vision clears, you stand in a throne room. Banners hang from thick stone pillars, which run from the entryway to a pair of thrones ahead of you. Two burned bodies lie at Anaia's feet, flames still licking at their finery and the nearby banners. She stares down in horror as the doors are flung open and royal guards rush into the room.

"Mom... dad..." Anaia falls to her knees, clutching her father's body as the guards shout, "Regicide! Monster! Kill the girl!"

The room is enchanted to manifest a Silverlee heir's deepest fear.

Guards. The guards attack as **knights**, but do not use ranged weapons. Their goal is to attack Anaia, though they defend themselves against characters if attacked. If a guard is killed, another rushes through the door to replace them.

Roleplaying Anaia. Anaia is convinced that she has killed her parents with a surge of wild magic. She takes no actions in combat, and does not snap out of her grief unless convinced to by a character (see "**Success**", below). Even if attacked, she is too overwhelmed to move or defend herself. If no characters successfully interact with her during a combat round, she unleashes a spontaneous wild magic surge on her turn.

Success. Anaia must overcome her fear. As a bonus action, characters can attempt a DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check to convince Anaia that this is an illusion,

or to fight back with her magic. This DC is reduced by 2 for each challenge Anaia has already successfully completed. Each success halts Anaia's building wild magic surge, and causes the illusory room and guards to briefly shimmer.

After three successes, Anaia stands up and orders the incoming guards to halt. They do so, and the scene evaporates into glowing fog.

Failure. Each time Anaia is hit, the illusory room and guards flicker jarringly. If the guards score three hits on Anaia, the illusion is dispelled. Anaia remains hunched on the ground and, unless prompted, does not move until long after the illusion fades.

Outcome. When the illusion fades, a pedestal containing a **key gem** has appeared at the far end of the room, surrounded by a **royal barrier**.

When Anaia takes the gem, Queen Elster's disembodied voice speaks:

"Power is a terrible thing, if not moderated by compassion. A good queen fears for those she cares for—her family, her subjects, her kingdom—and rules more wisely for it. Heed your fear, but do not let it control you."

If this is the final trial, refer to "**Unlocking the Burial Chamber**" in **L2**, then proceed to **Chapter 3**.

L4. LAIR OF STRENGTH

A steep staircase descends to a winding, 50 ft. long corridor. At the end of it is a large, irregularly-shaped room. The walls are faceted at odd angles approximating the contours of a cave, and several pillars connect floor to ceiling. Spaced around the edges of the room are ledges in 10 ft. high tiers.

Once all characters have entered the room, a sliding door seals the entrance.

Motes of light appear in the center of the chamber. They quickly multiply and coalesce into a shining mass. Within seconds, they've formed an enormous creature—a dragon made of raw magic, its skin and scales rippling as muscles tense beneath them. It unfurls two dazzling wings, and lets out an ear-splitting roar.

Behind you, Anaia says shakily, "Are you *kidding* me, Elster?!"

To access the key gem, the characters must slay the magical construct guarding it. The **thaumatic dragon** uses the **young red dragon** stat block with these adjustments:

- **Larger than Life.** Its size is huge.
- **Built to Serve.** Its alignment is lawful neutral.
- **Magical Construct.** It lacks immunity to fire, but is immune to the *charmed*, *exhaustion*, and *frightened* conditions.
- **Chaotic Breath.** Its breath and claw weapons deal acid, cold, fire, force, lightning, poison, psychic, or thunder damage chosen at random. This is determined by a d8 roll each time they are used.
- **Antimagic Susceptibility.** It is incapacitated while in the area of an antimagic field. If targeted by *dispel*

magic, the dragon must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or vanish for 1 minute, after which it reappears in the same space.

Ledges. The ledges require a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check to climb.

Roleplaying Anaia. Though Anaia is intimidated by the dragon, she is even more worried about casting spells so close to her companions. When combat begins, she hides behind a pillar and does her best to ride out the fight without endangering the characters.

Success. Anaia must show her strength. As a bonus action, characters can attempt a DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check to convince Anaia to attack the dragon. This DC is reduced by 2 for each challenge Anaia has already successfully completed. On a success, Anaia throws caution to the wind and joins the fight.

Failure. If the characters defeat the dragon without Anaia's help, she emerges from hiding after the fight looking deeply regretful.

Outcome. When reduced to 0 hp, the thaumatic dragon shatters into radiant shards. A pedestal containing a **key gem** appears in its place, surrounded by a **royal barrier**.

When Anaia takes the gem, Queen Elster's disembodied voice speaks:

"What use is a crown without the strength to keep it? Few can access the power of raw, untamed magic. It is among your greatest assets."

If this is the final trial, refer to "**Unlocking the Burial Chamber**" in **L2**, then proceed to **Chapter 3**.

L5. GAUNTLET OF LUCK

A 30 ft. long corridor leads to a 45 ft. wide room, which is bisected into two corridors.

Across the room from you stands a golden statue of Tymora. She holds out her hands as though gesturing to the two archways on either side of her. To her left is a plain passageway with a patterned floor. To her right is a black chasm, with a platform floating in the air five feet from the edge.

"Something's different in here." Anaia says cautiously. "Can any of you feel that?"

This room is designed to challenge the Silverlee heir into taking a calculated risk. To access the key gem, the characters must navigate either 50 ft. corridor to reach the chamber on the other side.

Magical Dampening. The chamber is enchanted with an antimagic field that targets creatures' innate magical abilities. Magic items such as wands, staffs, and the room's own traps function normally.

Tymora's Statue. The phrase "Fortune Favors the Bold" is carved into the statue's plinth. Characters who succeed at a DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check recall that Tymora's faithful often put themselves in dangerous situations as an

act of devotion, making her a popular deity for adventurers.

Safe Path. Dark floor tiles mirror the locations of the invisible platforms in the opposite path. Characters standing at the entrance to this path must succeed at a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to discern the exact locations of the two farthest sets of tiles.

Indestructible crystals embedded in the walls every 10 ft. emit rays whenever a creature crosses their path. Characters must succeed at a Dexterity saving throw to avoid being hit. If hit by a ray, that character is teleported to the statue of Tymora at the room's entrance. There are five pairs of crystals in total with increasingly difficult saving throw DCs, as follows:

- 1: DC 8
- 2: DC 12
- 3: DC 16
- 4: DC 20
- 5: DC 24

Risky Path. By Tymora's grace, any character taking this path has advantage on all ability checks and saving throws made along it.

This chasm is bridged by platforms which mirror the dark tiles in the opposite path. All but the first are invisible. On a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check, a character will notice that the visible platform and first set of tiles are mirror images of one another.

If a character's Strength score is less than 10, jumping from one platform to the next requires a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. Characters who fall into the chasm are teleported to the statue of Tymora at the room's entrance.

Indestructible crystals embedded in the walls every 10 ft. emit rays whenever a creature crosses their path. The rays, their saves, and their effects are as follows:

- 1: DC 15 DEX save, 2d8 fire damage.
- 2: DC 15 CON save, 2d8 cold damage.
- 3: DC 15 DEX save, 2d8 lightning damage.
- 4: DC 15 STR save, 2d8 force damage.
- 5: DC 15 INT save, 2d8 psychic damage.

Characters take half as much damage on a successful save. Anaia has a +2 bonus to her saving throws for each challenge she has already successfully completed. This, along with her advantage, manifests as impossible luck as she leaps and dodges rays.

Roleplaying Anaia. Anaia wants nothing to do with the risky path and attempts to take the right-hand corridor, growing more and more frustrated with each failure. No matter how many times she is rebuffed, she will avoid danger unless the characters persuade her otherwise.

Use your discretion when deciding how quickly and frequently Anaia attempts this, bearing in mind her overall progress relationship with the characters at this point. Be sure to give characters the opportunity to persuade her before the Failure condition is met.

Success. Anaia must take a risk. Characters can attempt a DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check to convince Anaia to try the left path. This DC is reduced by 2 for each challenge Anaia has already successfully completed. On a success, Anaia agrees to trust in luck.

If the characters can help Anaia navigate the safe path before the below failure condition is met, count it as a success. After all, she is lucky to have found such helpful companions!

Failure. If Anaia fails at traversing the 'safe' path more than four times, her anger and frustration grow to the point that she unleashes a wild magic surge. Though it is quickly snuffed by the room's antimagic effect, her confidence is badly shaken. She urges the characters to go on ahead without her, leaving them to reach the other side and turn off the room's defenses on their own (see "Outcome" below).

Though she can still be persuaded to tackle the risky path and thereby convert a failure into a success, any check to do so is made at disadvantage, and the DC is raised to 20.

Outcome. A pedestal containing a **key gem** waits at the far end of the chamber, surrounded by a **royal barrier**.

When Anaia takes the gem, Queen Elster's disembodied voice speaks:

"The Weave governs more than magic. Your gift lets you twist fate itself to your favor. There is a deeper order in chaos. All you need do is embrace it."

If this is the final trial, refer to "**Unlocking the Burial Chamber**" in **L2**, then proceed to **Chapter 3**.

CHAPTER 3: ELSTER'S CHOICE

LOCATION HISTORY

Queen Elster owned two artifacts relating to her gift. The first had the power to remove magical ability, and the second, to heighten it. They were conflated as her story was retold over centuries, becoming a single item with the power to control wild magic. Elster's final resting place therefore offers her scions an unexpected choice: relinquish their power and renounce their claim to the throne, or embrace and enhance their gift.

ABOUT THE LOCATION

Queen Elster's burial chamber is a hexagonal room with a 15 ft. high ceiling. The walls are made of a crystalline material that is lit from within. Queen Elster's sarcophagus stands on a short dais in the center of the room, surrounded by a **royal barrier**. When Anaia enters the room, Queen Elster's voice speaks for a final time:

"Heir of my line. I am sorry." The ancient queen's voice sounds weary. "The trials you've faced are harsh, but I wish I'd learned these lessons sooner. If I had, perhaps things might have been different..."

"I enacted the laws of succession to prevent future monarchs from wavering as I did. But your gift—our gift—can be a heavy burden to bear. I therefore offer you a choice."

Two small spheres appear above the sarcophagus, one marbled pink and green, the other jet-black. "The colored stone will amplify your power. It will be hard, and you may never fully control your gift, but you will have a chance to use it for the kingdom's good."

The other stone will quash all magic in you. By the laws I laid down, you will not rule. But you may live unburdened by chaos.

"Know that whichever you choose, you go with Tymora's blessings, and mine."

As the voice fades, Anaia stares, stunned, at the two spheres. "But... the stories only mentioned one..."

Sarcophagus. A marble carving of Queen Elster lies atop the ornate sarcophagus. An *ioun stone of leadership* and a *dampening stone* (see appendices) float above her head. The sarcophagus cannot be opened.

Anaia's Decision. To determine which artifact Anaia chooses, tally up her successes and failures. She chooses the *ioun stone* if successful overall, and the *dampening stone* if unsuccessful.

Characters can make a last-ditch attempt to influence her decision either way with a successful DC 25 Charisma (Persuasion) check. The DC is reduced by 2 if Anaia has already had a success or failure in that direction. If characters try to convince her to take the marbled stone, consider granting advantage to this check if the players have shown care, consideration, and investment in Anaia's emotional and mental health during the adventure.

When Anaia is ready to choose, read the appropriate text below:

Overall Success:

"This whole time, I've thought I was cursed." Anaia stares at the sarcophagus. "I mean, what else could it be, right? But Elster calls it a gift, and with everything that's happened... I don't know what to think anymore." Anaia looks over her shoulder at all of you. "Whatever it is. Whatever happens. You've helped me realize that it doesn't have to be who I *am*. Thank you for that."

She shrugs, and grins nervously. "Fortune favors the bold, right?" With a deep breath, Anaia Silverlee reaches out, and grasps the marbled stone.

Overall Failure:

"This is stupid." Anaia shakes her head, tears spilling from her eyes. "This is so, so *stupid*. What kind of choice is this? What do you *want* from me, Elster?" She strides towards the sarcophagus, her voice rising with each step. "You think this is a gift? Living in constant fear of myself is a *gift*? You show me my parents, dead, and then ask me to *choose*?" Her voice echoes off the walls, but there's no answer from the Wild Queen.

Anaia wipes her eyes with a bitter laugh. "The kingdom's better off without me. My parents... I'm not going to live like this anymore. I'm done hurting people." With a deep breath, Anaia reaches out, and takes the black stone.

Once Anaia has made her choice, she instantly attunes to the stone she has taken. The remaining stone vanishes.

AFTERMATH

RESOLVING THE ADVENTURE HOOK

If Anaia chooses the *ioun stone*, she returns to her kingdom with the characters escorting her. As the group gets closer to the capital over days of travel, through conversations on the road and around campfires, it becomes clear that Anaia's anxieties over her magic and her responsibilities have not vanished. Though more comfortable with the characters, she voices fears that her progress might be undone when she returns to the stress and bustle of royal life. Nevertheless, she is determined to face these challenges head-on. On their return, the characters are hailed as heroes and given their 10,000 gp reward, and Anaia personally encourages them to stay in touch.

If Anaia chooses the *dampening stone*, she refuses to return to her kingdom. She knows that she has effectively chosen to abdicate her throne. Though firm in that decision, she has no desire to face her parents' disappointment and the judgement of an entire kingdom. She resolves to start a new life on her own terms, though this means that she cannot grant the characters their promised reward. It is up to the characters to decide whether to return to the kingdom with this unfortunate news. Alternatively, if characters commiserate with Anaia and suggest that the law of succession might be outdated, a quest to change the law itself might be an interesting direction for an ongoing campaign!



...TO WASH AWAY THIS DIRT



CARLOS CISCO

...TO WASH AWAY THIS DIRT

Hobgoblin conquistadors have ravaged the people of a once-hidden valley and taken Princess Xiomara captive. The elders summon the adventurers, not to rescue the princess, but to assassinate her. They believe Xiomara has abandoned her people, siding with the hobgoblin warlord, Kortax. Royal line be damned, the betrayer princess must die!

This is a four-hour adventure for 6th through 8th level characters.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

1. **Act 1:** The elders give the party their assignment. Deal with Xiomara... however they see fit.
2. **Act 2:** The party must scale a heavily guarded and treacherous mesa.
3. **Act 3:** With Xiomara's agenda revealed to both the party and Kortax, the characters must decide who to side with, if anyone.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

For ages, Marak'Tol, the Valley of Divine Abundance, remained hidden from the world. Its three Aasimar tribes harvested rare materials in service to the Archangel Zariel in peace through countless generations. When the Hobgoblin Warlord Kortax discovered the valley, he threw it into chaos. Princess Xiomara left her mountain tribe to negotiate peace but never returned. Since then, the warbands have decimated the desert and forest tribes and positioned themselves to attack the mountain tribe next.

Foul rumors and the speed of Kortax's conquest have led tribal elders to believe Xiomara has become Kortax's advisor. What no one knows is that Xiomara has used her captivity to seize power and, ultimately, protect her people. In the early days of her imprisonment, Xiomara was able to contact Zariel and learned of the archdevil's tragic fall. Her loyalty unwavering, she forged a pact with Zariel. She is to profane the temple atop the mesa by spilling the lifeblood of a conqueror within its walls. In return, Zariel will drive the hobgoblins from Marak-Tol will once again grant the valley protection. What Xiomara doesn't realize is that the contract defines "protection" as displacement from the Material Plane into Avernus. There Zariel's servants will strip-mine the valley for use in the Blood War.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

HOOK 1

The adventurers are the spirits of heroes summoned from the moments of their deaths, housed in adamantine mannequins by the elders with an ancient ritual.

HOOK 2

The group are warriors of Xiomara's mountain tribe. The elders call on them for this dark task.

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

XIOMARA

The mountain tribe's princess. A regal and devout woman who'd sacrifice everything to protect her people. Since her imprisonment, she has become a wedge between Kortax and his generals, usurping the power that Kortax commands. Xiomara sees her actions as a necessary evil to ensure the survival of this valley.

"Death is the only water to wash away this dirt."

Personality Trait: If you do me an injury, I'll crush you, ruin your name, and salt your fields.

Ideal: Tradition. The ancient traditions of worship and sacrifice must be upheld.

Bond: Nothing is more important to me than the people of my tribe.

Flaw: I am loyal to a fault, even to those who have long abandoned me.

WARLORD KORTAX

Kortax is the warlord of the Bloodfoot Conquistadors, a disciplined and well-organized warband. He has led a successful campaign through the divine valley only to find himself at an uneasy standstill. Kortax prefers a style of armor akin to what we would recognize as Toledo Plate, worn by Spanish Conquistadors and topped with the morions; heavy steel helmets with pronounced crests or combs on top and sweeping sides that came to points on either end.

"Your foolish prattle and malicious lies will gain you nothing here."

Personality Trait: I was born the strongest, and nothing I've experienced has shaken that view.

Ideal: The strongest will rule.

Bond: I want to be legendary, whatever it takes.

Flaw: My pride will probably lead to my destruction.

GENERAL MOLK

One of Kortax's generals falsely exiled for fathering a warborn child during the campaign. He would see those that sullied his name ground into bone dust.

"My dishonor goes by another name."

Personality Trait: I am wildly passionate, ruled by my emotions.

Ideal: Those that wrong me must be held to account.

Bond: Yara is my sister in battle. I would follow her into hell.

Flaw: I am overly concerned with how things should be done, to the point of inflexibility.

DEVASTATOR YARA

A former rival of Kortax who's clan was subsumed into the warband after a devastating loss, Yara rose quickly to number among his generals. Yara is the mother of a warborn child, and despite the taboo surrounding conceiving a warborn child during an active campaign, the loyalty of Yara's troops prevent any action taken against her by Kortax. The fault falls on the father's head.

"This child will lead us into the future. But her destiny lies elsewhere."

Personality Trait: I can stare down a hellhound without flinching.

Ideal: Tradition only holds us back. We must cut a new path.

Bond: My child will one day rule us all. I must keep her safe.

Flaw: My ambition exceeds my power.

ACT 1: A SOUL BITTEN INTO WITH WRONG

XO'TOL

Xo'tol (Zho-toll) is the home of Princess Xiomara and her mountain tribe. The population in this valley has always been small, though enough to complete the tasks laid out for them by ancient celestials. Xo'Tol is built upon veins of adamantine that burst up from beneath the earth like rivers of silver.

ABOUT THE LOCATION

The village is small but impressive. There are a mere six buildings, but each is formidable, constructed primarily of adamantine. The largest is the Palace of the Blind Justicar, a ziggurat built into the face of the mountain. Below it are two large halls for communal housing constructed of Burloak from the lower valley. Three of the buildings are forges that craft armor, weapons, and general goods. Nothing in Xo'tol is made of iron. Even horseshoes are adamantine. Despite the small number of structures, the population is vibrant and diverse, especially now with refugees from the other tribes. There are people of every race here, but they all exhibit aasimar traits.

L1. XO'TOL: PALACE OF THE BLIND JUSTICAR

When you begin the adventure, read or paraphrase the following:

From atop the gleaming adamantine ziggurat that is the Palace of the Blind Justicar, you can see the whole of Marak'Tol. The Valley of Divine Abundance is a strange, unnatural geological formation, with disparate biomes pressing against one another like spokes on a wheel. On one side, the gleaming Desert of White Glass and, on the other, the fog-shrouded forest of Burloak. In the center rises the grand mesa that housing the Temple of the Four Wings, a towering spire of rock.

A member of the royal guard approaches and says, "They are ready for you." The guard beckons you to follow.

L2. XO'TOL: COUNCIL CHAMBER

The guard leads you into the Council Chamber. Rich veins of adamantine spread across the uncarved stone walls like a circulatory system, converging toward a shining throne adorned with four adamantine wings. Two figures flank it on either side.

These are what's left of the Royal Councils. Arco (he/him), Piet (she/her), and Horte (she/her) are all aasimar **priests** (MM) of Zariel, following traditions that predate their patron's fall. Unaware of their patron's fall, they have continued without divine guidance for some time now.

The elders relay that Princess Xiomara has joined with the hobgoblin warband that has laid siege to the valley and decimated the other two tribes. The elders' opinions follow:

- Arco, a hard and practical man, sees Xiomara as a traitor to all the people of the valley, and thus she must be assassinated. Without his advisor, Kortax will surely fail.
- Piet, pious and tradition obsessed, sees Xiomara as a lost soul. She had little choice in the matter, but she is culpable in the deaths of thousands. Custom dictates she should stand trial.
- Horte, a peaceful and diplomatic woman, is silent during these proceedings, preferring to listen.

Whatever the adventurers decide to do with Xiomara, the council agrees that killing Kortax would only help the situation as it would throw the warband into chaos.

Kortax positioned his armies around the Mesa of the Four Wings, and scouts say they are gearing up for an attack soon. There are two methods to ascend: an ancient elevator guarded by the Hobgoblins OR a dangerous switchback where every step could be your last. The mesa is a day's travel to the northwest. The most advisable paths are through the forest or the desert. Traveling directly through the warcamp would result in a swift death for any but the most powerful adventuring parties.

The party may each requisition one of the following: a weapon or armor made from adamantine. If the party asks why they can't have more, remind them that the people of the town must also be prepared to defend themselves in case of failure.

Before departing, Horte approaches and implores the party to see Xiomara returned home safely so that she may lead her people from the valley. Land can be lost and reclaimed, but their lives are but one. Horte, who has known



Xiomara from birth, trusts that whatever she's doing is for the good of her people.

ACT 2: IN CHILDBIRTH GRIEF BEGINS

Whichever path they choose, the adventurers will encounter Lym and Molk.

BURLOAK FOREST

A forest of trees so ancient their rings are impossible to count. The wood radiates strong transmutation magic. The canopy allows only dim light through. Crown shyness creates rivers of light on the forest floor.

It becomes increasingly harder to tell the time of day the longer you walk the forest paths, but a gash in the canopy illuminates the ground ahead. Drawing closer reveals several Burloak stumps, the size of two-story houses. A figure crouches behind a stump, trying to stay out of sight.

DESERT OF WHITE GLASS

Glass blown from this white sand is the hardest known to those of this world. The Desert Tribe lived simply. Only scorched, unbreakable spines of glass remain where tents once stood around the many oases.

The sun glinting off the ivory dunes is so bright that it forces everyone to cover their eyes. Jagged fangs of glass grow from scorch marks left by the warbands explosives. Stumbling through the dunes you see a splash of red on the ivory sand.

TEMPLE REFUGEE

Lym (they/them), an aasimar **acolyte** from the temple has been hiding in the wilderness for days. They claim to have fallen descending the switchback. In exchange for healing, they'll give the party climbing gear (grants advantage on Athletics checks related to climbing) and directions. Lym also warns them that taking a life in the temple will profane it, which can only lead to further disaster.

DISGRACED GENERAL

At the edge of the forest or desert, the adventurers come upon an unarmored hobgoblin beset by 4 **hobgoblin iron shadows** (VGtM). The unarmored hobgoblin is Molk (**hobgoblin champion** [VGtM], he/him, with AC 12 and 60 HP remaining.)

Before you is a bloodied hobgoblin, stripped of his armor, wildly swinging a jagged greatsword. Four figures in fiendish masks and black gis attack him with abandon. When he spots you, his eyes plead for help.

Molk was one of Kortax's generals but was sentenced to exile for fathering a "warborn" with Yara, Kortax's other general. Warborn are hobgoblin children conceived during an active campaign, an act punishable by death. While this is typically taboo for both parents, in this particular warband the mother is favored over the father and often allowed to carry on to ensure the child grows into its blessed destiny. The father endures the punishment for both parents.

What Molk knows:

- The child belongs to Kortax. Xiomara convinced Kortax to blame Molk to avoid dishonoring himself and losing control of the warband.
- The losses they've faced are far greater than Kortax has reported.
- If Yara was leader she could convince the warband to leave the valley without losing face.
- For Yara to become leader Kortax must die, one way or another.
- If the party agrees to convince Yara to challenge Kortax, Molk will sever his top knot and give it to the party as a token "For Yara to remember her honor."

Whether they travel through the forest or desert, give the characters the opportunity to harvest some of the wood or glass, as it can come in handy later.

Burlwood twigs: A bundle of living twigs that seem to move of their own accord. They can be molded into any shape and harden within moments.

White Glass: Broken chunks of glass litter the desert. The glass is unusually sharp and hard. It is nearly impossible to shatter.

MESA OF THE FOUR WINGS

The mesa juts into the sky, a towering spire of rock and shrubs. Staring up at it gives a feeling of vertigo, even standing on solid ground.

L1. ELEVATOR

A mile from the main hobgoblin encampment is a mechanical lift that dominates one side of the mesa. From your vantage point, you can see nine hobgoblins guarding the base. A large, unlit brazier sits about 40 feet away from the lift.

Guarding the lift is a **hobgoblin captain** (MM), 8 **hobgoblins** (MM), and hidden from view is a **hobgoblin iron shadow** (VGtM). Any character wishing to sneak past them must succeed at a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check. On a failure the hobgoblins spot the party, close ranks, and attack, fighting to the death. One hobgoblin always

attempts to light the brazier calling for reinforcements. If the brazier is lit, 10 more hobgoblins arrive within 1 minute.

Operating the lift requires one person to hold the lever down at the lift's base until it reaches the top. Otherwise, it descends. It takes two minutes for the lift to reach the summit. A character can make a successful DC 15 Intelligence check using tinkers tools or thieves' tools to jam the switch. If reinforcements are called, they attempt to sabotage the lift, causing it to fall.

L2. SWITCHBACK PASS

Hidden behind some jagged boulders and scrub brush is a narrow and extremely steep switchback trail leading up the side of the mesa.

Scaling the pass forces the party to contend with three dangerous obstacles on their ascent. They can happen in any order.

Collapsed Walkway. A two foot wide walkway of wooden slats has partially collapsed, creating a 20 foot gap in the trail. Anyone who falls to the path below takes 3d6 bludgeoning damage from the fall.

Sheer Ascent. A portion of the path is a direct climb up a 20 foot, sheer surface. Climbing it requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

Poisonous Plants. Sixty feet of trail ahead is covered by toxic plants. Touching them causes 1d4 poison damage per round. Plants can be cleared with fire or a bladed weapon, but the latter requires a DC 13 DEX save to avoid contact. If burnt, the plants begin rapidly regrow within a minute.



ACT 3: DEATH IS THE ONLY WATER...

MESA OF THE FOUR WINGS

Atop the windswept mesa is a small, single-story temple. The temple takes up about half of the mesa top, with Kortax's elite guard and generals encamped near the lift with the switchback trail on the opposite side of the temple.

L1. ELITE GUARD CAMP/YARA'S TENT

Two large tents stand out. The tents belong to Kortax's generals. In the camp there are three **hobgoblin captains**, four **hobgoblin iron shadows**, and Yara (she/her), a **hobgoblin devastator** (VGtM).

Depending on which path the adventurers took to the top of the mesa, this could lead directly into a confrontation with the hobgoblins. If they approached via the back, they can avoid confrontation or get the jump on the group. Upon entering Yara's tent read the following text:

Pushing the tent flap aside reveals a powerfully built hobgoblin mother, breastfeeding her child. When she takes notice of you she stands, pulling the child into a sling with one arm and grabbing her metal quarterstaff with the other. She points it at you, its tip flaring with arcane fire. "You should not be here."

The party has moments to explain themselves. If they have Molk's topknot, any Charisma (Persuasion) checks are made with advantage. Without it, any effort to convince her to turn against Kortax are made with disadvantage. Making a compelling case and succeeding on a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check will cause Yara to stand aside while you deal with Kortax and Xiomara. If anything happens to him, she'll be made leader of the warband. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, she'll challenge Kortax to a duel for leadership and agree to leave the valley once it's secured.

Yara knows that Kortax is in the temple with Xiomara. They sealed it and are preparing a foul ritual to end the war. If the adventurers are unable to convince Yara, or simply do not try, she will unload her most powerful spells first while attempting to protect her child. The elite guard quickly comes to her aid.

L2. TEMPLE OF THE FOUR WINGS

The temple is perfectly round, roughly 50 ft in diameter, with three small chambers extending out as living quarters. Between them are three doors, each made from materials from this valley.

You'll see nary a chisel mark on the entirety of this temple. It looks to be raised from the stone of the mesa itself, smoothed and polished by divine will. The one-story temple is not large or heavily ornamented, but beautiful in its simplicity.

The Contract: Scrawled in red upon the outer walls, in Infernal, is the contract between Xiomara and Zariel.

A DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check made by a creature who can read Infernal reveals the terms of the contract:

- The temple must be profaned with the lifeblood of a conqueror.
- Fulfillment will result in the expulsion of the hobgoblin horde and Zariel's protection for the valley.
- Succeeding by 5 or more reveals:
 - "Protection" is defined as the whole of the valley being pulled into Avernus.
- Succeeding by 10 or more reveals:
 - Because of her lineage linked to Zariel, Xiomara is considered a "conqueror." Her death in the temple would fulfill the terms of the contract as well.

Three Doors: The three doors are magically sealed with magic that cannot be dispelled. Additionally, the doors are indestructible. They can be opened by touching them with the corresponding material (glass, burloak, or adamantium) sourced from this valley.

Once they open a door read the following text:

When touched, the door is bathed in holy light before fading into nothingness. Before you is a small bridge that extends over a moat of magma that glows with blue, radiant energy. In the center is a circular dias surrounded by a ring of light. The floor is trifurcated, made of the same materials as the doors.

Two figures stand on the dias. An aasimar woman garbed in robes of luscious crimson and a ceremonial feathered headdress paints runes on the black iron morion-style helmet worn by a powerfully built and heavily armored hobgoblin holding a greatmaul that looks like a massive, rune-encrusted meat tenderizer.

Radiant Moat: Each door has a bridge wide enough to cross the moat in a single file. While it gives off no heat, coming into contact with the radiant magma deals 10d10 radiant damage.

Xiomara was finalizing her ritual by painting the final words of her contract on Kortax's armor. Xiomara (she/her) is an aasimar **warlock of the fiend** (VGtM) and Kortax (he/him) is a **hobgoblin warlord** (VGtM) that wields the Arcanoclast instead of a greatsword.

ROLEPLAYING KORTAX:

Kortax is haughty, taunting the party that if they came to kill him, it is too late. He believes Xiomara's ritual is going to grant him the power to turn all who oppose him to ash.

He is not immediately hostile, patiently waiting for Xiomara to complete her ritual.

What he wants: Ultimate Power

ROLEPLAYING XIOMARA:

Like Kortax, she is overly confident—not out of ego, but because she has the backing of an extraplanar being of immense power. She believes she cannot possibly lose, so what does she have to gain by being rescued? If the party is hostile, she assists Kortax—to a point. When it becomes clear that either she or Kortax are close to death, she turns on Kortax, having reserved her most powerful magic for him. If she is confronted with the truth of her contract, she will give herself up.

What she wants: To protect her people by fulfilling her contract.

ROLEPLAYING YARA:

If Yara is with the party she issues a challenge to Kortax. If she is not previously convinced to take it outside, she won't. If Kortax accepts Yara's terms, Xiomara attempts to kill him then and there.

What she wants: Control over the warband, and Xiomara out of the picture.

If either Kortax or Xiomara die within the confines of the temple, advance to Resolution 1 in the Aftermath section.

AFTERMATH

RESOLUTION 1: WHO CAN STOP GRIEF'S AVALANCHE ONCE IT STARTS TO ROLL?

The radiant magma flares an angry red as a conqueror's lifeblood is spilled. A ring of fire bursts from the ground, creating an impassable wall of flame. The floor rumbles as magma flows around the adamantine floor.

The floor collapses, along with a third of the mesa, crashing onto the nearest tents of the hobgoblin encampment before the mesa belches forth a wave of magma that covers the whole of the valley floor. A howling wind precedes another quake, but this time it is the sky that shakes as a hole in the material plane is torn asunder, giving a hellish vision of Marak'Tol's final destination: the wartorn wasteland of Avernus.

Three massive, black iron chains spill forth from the wound in the mesa, extending over the length of the valley. The last thing you feel is the ground caving from beneath your feet as your body and this entire valley is wrenched from this plane.

And then... black.

RESOLUTION 2: NONE CAN HAPPY BE.

If Yara did not get involved and Xiomara is killed outside the temple or captured/rescued, the adventures may return to Xo'Tol with proof of her demise, or with Xiomara herself. Depending on which elder they side with it could lead to:

If they kill her: Arco commends your swift judgment and rewards each member of the party with another piece of adamantine equipment. He expects them to stay and help the city prepare for an assault.

If they brought her to face trial: While tribal infighting threatens to rip Xo'Tol apart the hobgoblins advance on the city, regardless of who is in charge. Without preparation the city stands little chance of defending itself.

If they convince Xiomara to lead her people away Horte comes out with full, unwavering support of their princess. As the warband advances Xiomara leads her people through the valley's hidden tunnels. The hobgoblins conquer an empty city.

RESOLUTION 3: MORTAL FATE IS HARD. YOU'D BEST GET USED TO IT.

If Yara is successful in claiming leadership she'll do as she agreed and lead the warband from the valley, never to return. Depending on what the adventurers chose for Xiomara's fate refer

to Resolution 2. There's no imminent threat and the adventurers are instead free to leave or help with refugee resettlement efforts.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

Depending on how the adventure shakes out further adventures can explore any number of directions.

- The party could be trapped in Avernus if Xiomara's contract is fulfilled.
- They could help defend the city against the hobgoblin assault.
- They could assist in the evacuation efforts and eventual reclamation of the valley.
- The party could assist in resettling the displaced refugees.





THE SILVER PRINCESS

BY BRITTNEY HAY

THE SILVER PRINCESS



fter previous expeditions failed, King Ferdem IV puts another call out to the brave people of his kingdom, seeking heroes to rid the land of a dragon menace and rescue his daughter, Princess Ennette, from the beast's clutches. The king has hired the party to escort one of his latest "heroes" in their quest to rescue the princess and win his favor.

A four-hour adventure for 5th through to 7th level characters.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

1. **Chapter 1: Some Day My Prince Will Come**
2. **Chapter 2: The Quest Begins**
3. **Chapter 3: A Daring Rescue?**

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Princess Ennette was the firstborn daughter of King Ferdem IV and Queen Helayna. Her birth was jubilantly celebrated by the entire kingdom, though followed shortly after by grief, as the queen took ill and died. From then on, Ennette was doted on even more by her father. From a young age, Ennette showed an innate aptitude for magic, but as her power grew, her body began to transform and change. Silver scales grew on the right side of her body, easy to conceal at first. As she aged, her secret proved more difficult to hide, as she grew a tail, horned ridges on her head, and one clawed hand and foot. King Ferdem believed his daughter cursed and locked her away—"for her own safety," he said—but he was terrified of the monster he believed she was becoming and fashioned for her a circlet

to suppress the "curse" and disguise her transformation. As Ennette's isolation grew, and no cure was found, only those who could be fully trusted knew of the princess's "illness."

Unbeknownst to the king, Queen Helayna was a distant descendant of dragonkin, though the blood hasn't manifested in hundreds of years—until Ennette. Unfortunately, Queen Helayna died before she could pass on this knowledge to her daughter.

During adolescence, Ennette's dragon blood had not yet fully manifested; however, her volatile moods became more frequent as she aged, with the two sides of her nature warring against each other. Ennette became afraid of hurting those that she loved the most, and when a moment presented itself, she escaped. Free at last to embrace her true self, the full manifestation of her powers took hold and she transformed into a dragon for the first time. By day, Princess Ennette is a young silver dragon, and by night, she is her human self. Not wishing to harm those of her father's kingdom, she has made her new home in the ruins of an abandoned castle.

Not long after Ennette's escape, a silver dragon was spotted winging around the ruins of an abandoned castle. Believing the vile dragon was responsible for his daughter's disappearance, King Ferdem sent out nobles and vassals to vanquish the beast and rescue his daughter; none returned, or if they did, they were never heard from again. As her father's knights and vassals hunted her mercilessly, Ennette defended herself, taking a life only when she absolutely had to. She never admitted her true nature for fear her would-be vanquishers would think it just some "dragon trickery," caring for nothing beyond the riches and rewards slaying a dragon would bring. In a mixture of denial and foolishness, the king has never put two and two together to realize that the dragon and his daughter were one and the same. With lands to spare, King Ferdem has decreed that whomever rescues the princess and slays the dragon will be rewarded with an estate and titles befitting their new station.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

A PRINCE BY ANY OTHER NAME

King Ferdem has put out another call to any adventurer who will brave the dragon's keep and rescue his daughter from the monster's grasp. Three answered, but when the King suggested that they work together, they rejected the notion because they did not wish to share in the reward. King Ferdem then offered to provide the NPCs each a group of adventurers to help them complete their quest, which is where the player characters come in. The party can choose to accompany either Lord Aron Jedsyn, "Prince" Elliot of Zirus, or Lady Knight Oriole Brimstone.

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

KING FERDEM IV

He/him, human noble, neutral good

King Ferdem IV is a middle-aged man with dark hair and copper skin. He is neat and orderly in his everyday life, though not so good with money. A dragon horde would be a boon to his floundering kingdom. While he recognizes it was harsh to keep his daughter locked up, he did it out of misguided love mixed with fear that she would be found to be incapable of ruling because of her condition. When briefing the adventurers on their mission, he does not tell the adventurers anything about Princess Ennette's "curse" to protect her reputation and that of the royal line. He does give a physical description of Ennette when she is wearing the *circlet of disguise* (Appendix A), but he does not mention the circlet's role in her appearance. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check intuits that there is something he's left out of the story, though it will require a successful DC 25 Charisma (Persuasion) check to learn about her reptile-like traits that emerged in adolescence and that he believes her cursed, possibly by a powerful dragon.

Personality Trait: I would rather make a new servant than a new enemy.

Ideal: I didn't ask for this life, but I do what I can for myself and those under me.

Bond: Although I don't say a lot of kind words and can seem cruel, I still care for others in my own way.

Flaw: I like to obtain unique collectibles. And when I want something, I get it.

PRINCESS ENNETTE

She/her, modified half-red dragon veteran, lawful good

Princess Ennette is a young woman that has her father's copper skin and piercing green eyes. The right side of her

body is covered in silver scales as well as a tail and horned ridges on the right side of her head. She holds herself with a regal manner but can be incredibly clumsy at times. Ennette has run away from home for fear of her dragon side taking over and one day hurting those she loves the most. By day she is a **young silver dragon** and by night she retains her human form.

Personality Trait: I am horribly, horribly awkward in social situations.

Ideal: The path has been taken from me, so I make my own.

Bond: My family is everything and I must protect them from what I have become.

Flaw: I have a deep fear that I could turn on those that I love at any time.

LORD ARON JEDSYN

He/him, half-orc knight, lawful good

Lord Aron Jedsyn is a younger son of one of the vassals of King Ferdem. He is very sure of himself and his prowess, and his place in the world. He has sandy brown hair and a fair complexion with greenish undertones, though his hands tell a story of a man who has done manual labor in his time.

Personality Trait: Despite my noble birth, I do not place myself above other folk. We all have the same blood.

Ideal: I do what I must and obey just authority.

Bond: My loyalty to my sovereign is unwavering.

Flaw: People are just another set of tools to achieve my goals.

"PRINCE" ELLIOT OF ZIRUS

They/them, wood elf bard (VGtM), neutral

"Prince" Elliot of Zirus is not actually a prince, but rather a con artist, and thief better known by Rasp Quickfingers. They are charismatic, charming, and a performer, truly becoming whatever part they are currently playing.

Personality Trait: The first thing I do in a new place is analyze the location, situation, and the people to know how to manipulate them.

Ideal: I'm determined to make something of myself.

Bond: I owe someone and I need to put that behind me.

Flaw: I would quite literally kill to acquire a noble title.

LADY KNIGHT ORIOLE BRIMSTONE

She/her, human veteran, neutral good

Lady Knight Oriole Brimstone makes her own way in life. She is self-assured, confident and wants nothing more than to seek out challenge and adventure. Oriole has fiery red

hair, dark amber eyes, and a diagonal battle scar that goes from temple to chin.

Personality Trait: I face problems head-on. A simple, direct solution is the best path to success.

Ideal: I must prove that I can handle myself without the coddling of my family.

Bond: My house must evolve, and I'll lead the evolution.

Flaw: By my words and actions, I often bring shame to my family.

CHAPTER 1: SOME DAY MY PRINCE WILL COME

After being given their mission by the King, the characters can rendezvous with their client and learn a little bit about them (or might wish to interview all three before choosing a client). The two NPCs not chosen will still pursue the dragon on their own, becoming obstacles to hinder the player characters' path and recruiting their own small band of NPCs.

LORD ARON JEDSYN

Lord Aron meets the characters in a well-appointed manor house within the city. He is a childhood friend of Princess Ennette's and is deeply concerned for her safety, though he hasn't seen her since her affliction became too hard to hide.

GOALS

Lord Aron wants to restore the Princess to her rightful place and chase away the dragon who has been rumored to keep her captive, as he was one of her childhood playmates before she was sequestered away. He is firm in his resolve with this quest and sees only the end objective.

If not selected, Lord Aron pursues the dragon on his own, accompanied by four companions (one **priest**, two **scouts**, and two **thugs**).

"PRINCE" ELLIOT OF ZIRUS

Prince Elliot, aka Rasp Quickfingers, meets the characters in a very swanky tavern. They are lavish in their appearance and are quick to charm the characters with tales of far-away places. Behind this charismatic exterior is a very calculating individual that sizes up the characters the moment they meet.

GOALS

Rasp Quickfingers is here for the titles and gold, and will do whatever they can to acquire them. If the characters catch on to their true motives and origins, Rasp is quick to bribe them with whatever they think the party might want; gold, favors, etc., even if it's not within their means of acquiring.

While Rasp accepts the character's help in this endeavour, they don't entirely trust them, and even if they are the chosen NPC, Rasp still takes their companions with them,

having them follow at a discreet distance in case the characters decide to double-cross Rasp.

If not selected, Rasp pursues the dragon on their own, accompanied by five companions (one **scout**, two **thugs**, one **druid**, and one **spy**).

LADY KNIGHT ORIOLE BRIMSTONE

Lady Knight Oriole meets the characters in a modest inn. Her gear is practical and battle-worn. She has a determined expression on her face, though the excitement of a new adventure is also present there.

GOALS

Oriole simply wants to prove herself capable to her family, and even more, to herself. She sees the title and lands that the King will grant as a means to get out from under the thumb of her father and family. Her life has been a series of obstacles and challenges, and she has faced each head on, with determination, much as she wants to do with this quest.

If not selected, Lady Knight Oriole pursues the dragon on her own, accompanied by four companions (two **scouts**, one **priest**, one **druid**).

CHAPTER 2: THE QUEST BEGINS

The characters set out with their chosen NPC towards the abandoned castle believed to be the dragon's lair to rescue the princess. The journey is a relatively easy one, taking 2 days of travel at a normal pace, though the forest surrounding the abandoned castle has its own set of dangers.

THE BRAMBLEWITCH FOREST

For each day of travel, roll a d20 three times each day and consult the Bramblewitch Encounters table to determine what, if anything, the party encounters, rerolling for duplicates. Alternatively, you can choose which encounters the characters face.

D20	ENCOUNTER
1-13	No Encounter
14	Hunting Party
15	Woodcutter
16	Uprooted
17	Shambling Mound
18	Dragon Worshippers
19	A Princely Meeting
20	Scraps

HUNTING PARTY

The characters stumble upon the campsite of a hunting party comprised of a human **scout** (they/him), half-orc **priest** (she/her), and halfling **druid** (she/her). After a quick glance around the area, characters notice that there are more tents than NPCs present, as well as several freshly dug graves. The halfling is currently attending to the human, who is gravely injured and babbling incoherently, "It's not what it seems." If the characters inquire, the half-orc tells the party that they were hunting in the forest, gathering food for their village, when the dragon attacked, and they were the only members of their party who got away. Any character who makes a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check notices the half-orc isn't being truthful. If pressed, they will admit that it was one of their now-dead companions who provoked the creature.

WOODCUTTER

The characters come across a woodcutter (**commoner**) who is out gathering firewood. If asked about the dragon, she confesses to seeing it, but it hasn't bothered her. The woodcutter is in a chipper mood because for the past few months, she has had several new clients purchase her firewood, which has been great for business. She is only slightly annoyed that they always pick up their bundles after sunset.

UPROOTED

While traveling in the forest, the characters come across a clearing. At first glance, it seems to be natural, but any character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 12 or higher notices that the trees have been uprooted by something rather large. There are also large claw marks and footprints in the soft loam, but any attempts to track the dragon from here are ineffective, as it took to the air.

SHAMBLING MOUND

Roll a d2 when a **shambling mound** encounter occurs. On a result of 1, the characters hear the creature trudging through the forest before it attacks them. On a result of 2, the shambling mound lurks within a mass of vegetation before attacking, where it can be noticed by any character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 18 or higher. When the shambling mound reaches three-quarters (102 or less), half (68 or less), and one-fourth (34 or less) health, it spawns 1d2+1 **vine blights** on its next turn.

DRAGON WORSHIPPERS

Any character who has a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 12 or higher hears commotion nearby. If they choose to investigate, they come upon a group of three **kobolds** and two **winged kobolds** arguing in Draconic. If approached in a friendly manner, the kobolds are suspicious but do not flee. They tell the characters that they were sent by their clan to see the dragon. Their leader had a vision of a silver dragon who would lead them to glory and riches, and they have come to pledge themselves to her.

A PRINCELY MEETING

While making their way through the forest, the characters come upon one of the NPCs not chosen in "A Prince By Any Other Name". This encounter can be chosen twice, using the other NPC for the secondary encounter.

Lord Aron Jedsyn. The characters come upon Lord Aron and his companions (one **priest**, two **scouts** and two **thugs**) making their way through the forest. If approached in a nonviolent manner, Lord Aron takes the time to speak with the characters, attempting to see if they have a plan for defeating the dragon and rescuing the princess. He tries to dissuade the characters from continuing with the quest, believing it is his destiny to fulfill it. If the characters are insistent, he promises this is not personal, and tries to subdue the characters, either by restraining them, or knocking them unconscious.

If he is successful, the characters encounter him again in **Chapter 3, Resolving Character Hooks**, confronting Princess Ennette in human form.

"Prince" Elliot of Zirus. Rasp has laid a trap for the characters. Any character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 10 or higher hears a cry for help. If they investigate they find Rasp bloody and bruised, tied to a tree. They tell the characters that they were ambushed by a group of thugs and left for dead. Characters can tell something is off with a successful DC 25 Wisdom (Insight) check. While Rasp has the characters distracted, the rest of their companions (one **scout**, two **thugs**, one **druid**, and one **spy**), attempt to ambush the characters. Those with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 16 or higher are not surprised. Rasp frees himself once the battle turns in their favor and assists their companions in knocking the characters unconscious.

If Rasp is successful, the characters encounter them again in **Chapter 3, Resolving Character Hooks**, confronting Princess Ennette in human form.

Lady Knight Oriole Brimstone. The characters encounter Lady Knight Oriole Brimstone and her companions (two **scouts**, one **priest**, and one **druid**) mid-battle. They were ambushed by three **vine blights** and two **awakened trees**. Oriole is currently at half health, and two of her companions are unconscious, slowly being covered in vines on the forest floor.

SCRAPS

Characters who have a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 15 or higher spot a bright colored piece of fabric near the roots of a tree. Upon further investigation they see the ruins of what was once an expensive dress shoved in the hollow of said tree. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that though the dress is now in tattered ruins, there do not appear to be any blood stains. It seems as though the dress was shredded from the inside outwards.

THE HEALER'S HUT

Shortly before reaching the castle ruins, the characters come across a cozy hut along their path. If they knock on the door, they are greeted by a elderly male dwarf (**druid**). If they ask about anything strange, he says that a few months ago, he found a young woman who was gravely injured and spent a fortnight nursing her back to health. One morning, he returned to the house to find the woman gone, leaving nothing behind but a jeweled bracelet (worth 500 gp). Since then he has noticed things gone missing, such as seeds for the garden, a large cooking pot, and clothing off the washing line.

CASTLE RUINS

As the party approaches the abandoned castle, read or paraphrase the following:

All that remains of this once-magnificent castle is a solitary tower standing in the northeast corner of the clearing. The forest has come to claim the remnants, with grass shooting through the crumbling stones and vines crawl up to pull down the last vestiges of the outer shell.

L1. MAIN CASTLE

The main structure of the castle lies in ruins and there is nothing of value among its rubble. However, characters who succeed on a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check notice large claw marks among the stone rubble of the building leading towards the one intact tower. At the base of the tower is a hidden trap door, leading downward, that characters can find with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check. If the characters fail at this check, their NPC notices that unlike the rest of the ruins, there is no dust or overgrown vegetation in this area. Any character who spends more than 5 minutes searching reveals the trap door.

L2. THE TOWER

The tower is the only section of the castle remaining intact. It is a 30-foot-high structure with a crumbling facade and a staircase that winds upwards.

The topmost part of the tower holds a small room. There is a singular bed, endstand, and small table along with a hearth and fireplace.

This 15-foot-radius room is the only room at the top of the tower. A character that makes a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check can see that the bed has recently been slept in, and there are warm coals in the fireplace. Any character who looks out the lone window notices that there are claw marks on the windowsill.

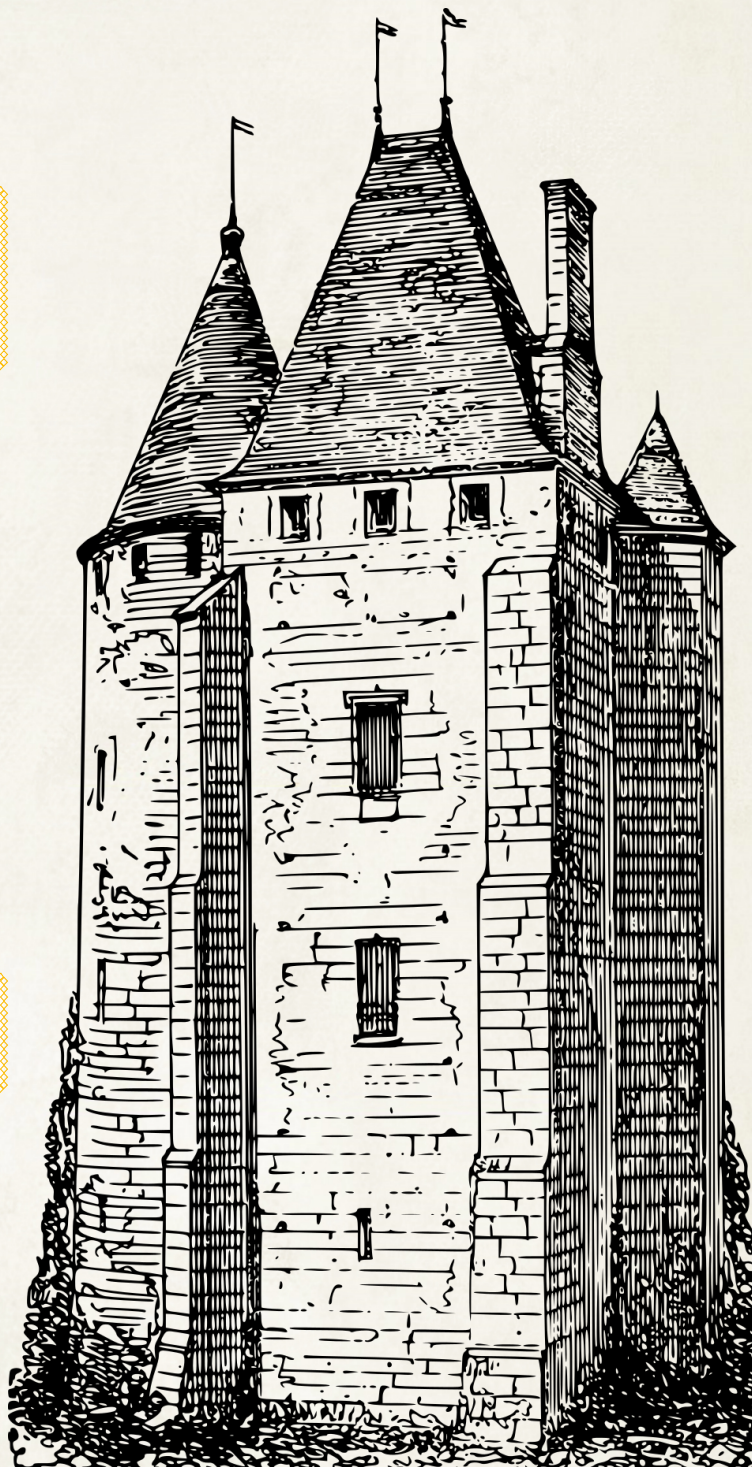
L3. THE DRAGON LAIR

The trapdoor leads down a roughly hewn tunnel that is 20 feet wide. Characters who have a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 15 or higher notice that this tunnel

was carved recently and by a very large creature. The tunnel widens into a large underground oasis with a garden, small pond, campfire, and cylindrical door recessed into the far wall. There is a 50% chance that Ennette is not home during the day when the characters discover her hidden underground oasis but she always returns an hour before sunset.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Pond: The pond is fed from a larger lake topside. It is also the way that Ennette gets in and out of her lair when she is in dragon form. Characters who take a closer look at the pond can see the same familiar claw marks that appear in the tunnel, as though something was pulling itself along underwater.



Faerie Lights: Dancing above the garden is a beautiful array of tiny lights that allow the plants to grow. These lights come from the *faerie light bottle* (Appendix A) that sits just on the outskirts, shedding magical light upon the area.

Campfire: There is a pot on the fire that is bubbling away with some kind of stew.

Cylindrical Door: The door leads to a smaller, one-room cave that has a singular bed, a small chest underneath, and a small table and chair. A character who succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Carpenter's tools) check or a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices that all the furniture in this space, including the door, lacks any tool marks or other signs they were crafted by a carpenter. If this discovery is made, any character proficient in Arcana recalls that results like this are commonly seen with the *fabricate* spell.

Reward: The small chest under the bed is locked and requires a successful DC 18 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check to open. Inside are 350 gold coins, a jeweled bracelet worth 500 gp, a few well-worn books, and a *circlet of disguise* (Appendix A).

Developments: If the characters reach the area during the day, Ennette is not home. She returns just before sunset, emerging from the small pond in her lair as a young silver dragon before transforming at sundown back to her human form, using *prestidigitation* to dry herself off.

If the characters arrive after sunset, Princess Ennette is sitting out by the campfire, reading *The Cinder Princess*, a favorite childhood story of a princess who sacrifices for her people, then is resurrected as a powerful phoenix.

CHAPTER 3: A DARING RESCUE?

The characters confront Princess Ennette and attempt to "rescue" her from the dragon. Princess Ennette has no desire to go home. She is quite content with the simple life that she has built here.

DRAGON BY DAY

If confronted in her dragon form in a nonviolent manner, Ennette can be convinced that the party means her no harm with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) or Charisma (Deception) check. If successful Ennette does not leave, but asks instead that the party wait until nightfall to speak with her further. If they deceive her or confront her in an aggressive manner, she attempts to escape back through the pond, using her *Paralyzing Breath* to first immobilize the characters. Ennette avoids doing lethal damage to them, and if she is reduced to 0 hp in her dragon form, she immediately reverts back to a human.

If confronted in her human form, Ennette is quick to dismiss any notion of leaving, and says that the dragon

is harmless. She doesn't want to hurt anyone and just wishes to be left here in peace. It's easy to see that she is holding back information. If characters succeed on a DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion or Deception) check, Ennette tells them that she ran away to protect those she loved because she is the dragon. Characters that succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check notice that Ennette is still not telling the whole truth, and if pressed, she retrieves the circlet, explaining about its magical properties and how her father had it made to help her appear to be normal when she was required to make a formal appearance. She also explains how the magic became unreliable, and she was eventually unable to control the circlet's disguise. Upon making her home here, Ennette discovered it had other hidden magical properties that helped suppress her draconic nature from fully manifesting, and after she stopped using it, she was able to transform into a dragon.

When in human form Princess Ennette uses the half-red dragon veteran statblock with the following changes:

- She has a +3 to her Charisma.
- **Armor Class.** Ennette's AC is 15 due to her draconic ancestry.
- Her **Fire Breath** attack deals cold damage instead of fire.
- **Spellcasting.** Ennette is a 7th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Ennette has the following sorcerer spells prepared:
 - Cantrips: *blade ward, control flames, frostbite, mending, prestidigitation*
 - 1st Level (4 slots): *absorb elements, color spray, ice knife, shield*
 - 2nd Level (3 slots): *darkness, misty step*
 - 3rd Level (3 slots): *enemies abound*
 - 4th Level (1 slots): *fabricate, ice storm*

RESOLVING THE CHARACTER HOOKS

After listening to Ennette's story, the characters have some choices to make.

A PRINCE BY ANY OTHER NAME

When confronted with the truth each "Prince" will react differently with the information. King Ferdem IV will also react differently depending on whether or not Ennette decides to return.

Lord Aron Jedsyn. He tries to convince Ennette that her place is with her father. He believes that the king didn't mean any harm by the enchantments placed on the circlet, and it was clearly a misunderstanding. If she refuses to go back, he then asks to stay with her, which she also declines.

"Prince" Elliot of Zirus. They don't care that Ennette is the dragon, it actually makes matters simpler in their eyes. They demand that Ennette show the characters where the

treasure horde is, disbelieving her when she insists there is none. They insist that she return to the king with them. On the return trip they will arrange a little accident for the princess. If Ennette refuses to leave, Rasp's companions show up, if they haven't already made themselves known to the party previously, and attempt to force all parties into compliance.

Lady Knight Oriole Brimstone. She admires Ennette and her bravery and respects her choice. Oriole wonders if there is some way that Ennette can stay out from under the thumb of the king, one that also hopefully allows herself to do the same with her own father. She is willing to listen to any suggestions either Ennette or the party have.

King Ferdem IV. He is surprised to hear that his daughter and the dragon are the same, but is relieved to hear she is well. He did not know that the circlet suppressed her draconic nature, only that it disguised her appearance. Ferdem had it made for her when it became harder to conceal her draconic change, and does not know the true name of the maker because they disappeared shortly after presenting the circlet to the king, and have not been heard from since. As for her return, he is cautious but optimistic that the people will grow to love her in time. If the characters convince Princess Ennette to return to her father and accompany her, he rewards each character with 500 gp, in addition to giving the party two magic items from the royal treasury (roll twice on **Magic Item Table F** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). He rewards the NPCs who accompanied the characters with the titles and lands that were promised.

ALTERNATIVE ENDING

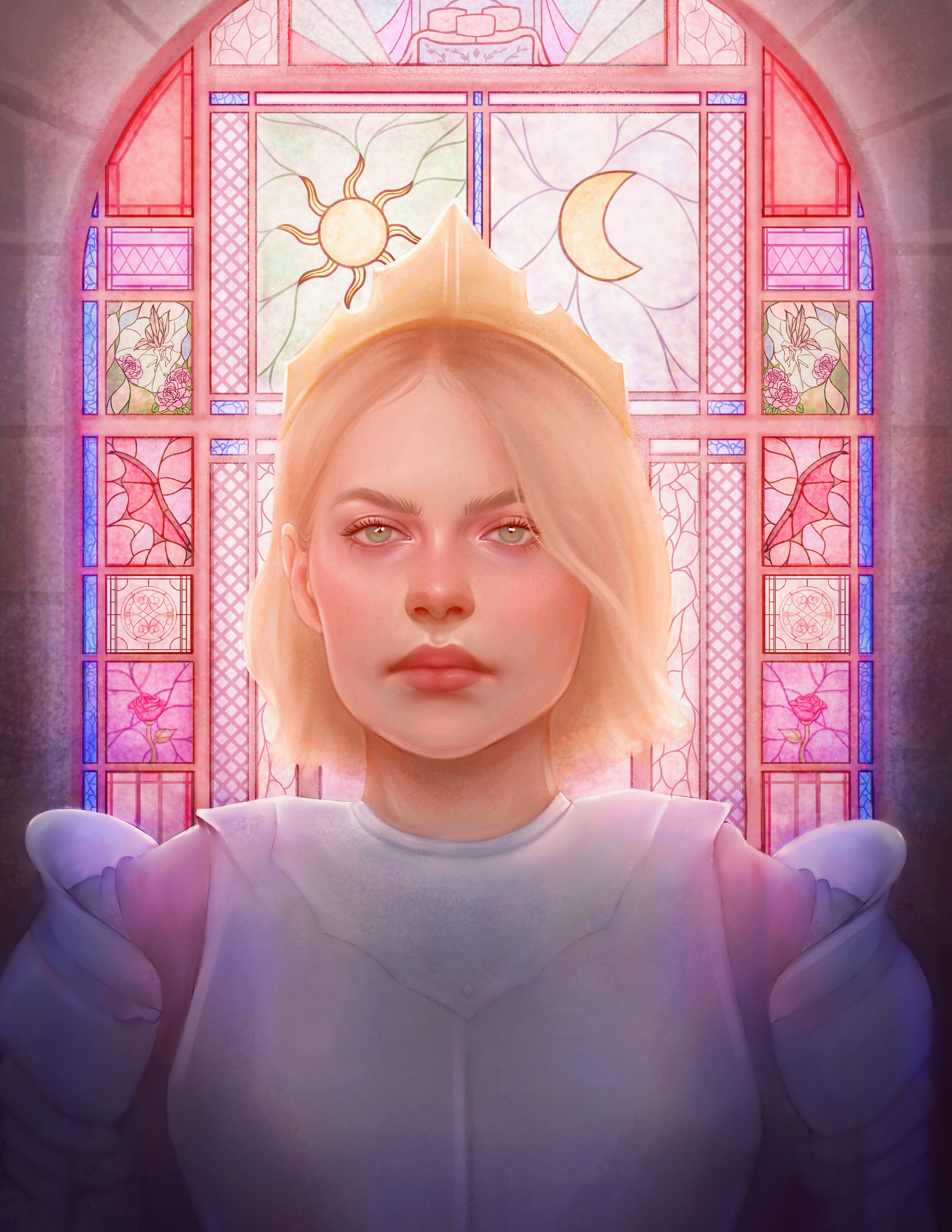
If you wish to add further challenges to the end of this adventure, you may have the other two NPCs that the characters did not choose show up, either individually or together. When this happens, use "Resolving the Character Hooks" above to see how the NPCs react to finding the princess.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

If you wish to follow Ennette's story in further adventures, here are some ideas to explore:

- If the characters were unable to convince Princess Ennette to come back home, the King does not give up on his daughter that easily. He wishes for them to help her see that her place is with her people, this is her birthright.
- Track down the maker of the circlet and see why they put that suppression magic on it, and how they knew of Ennette's draconic lineage.
- Princess Ennette has been welcomed back home by her father but there are those in the kingdom that still do not trust the princess now that her secret has been revealed. Several assassination attempts have been thwarted and the King is desperate to find those that mean his daughter harm.





GOLDEN PLATES AND GOLDEN RULES



JESSICA MARCRUM

GOLDEN PLATES AND GOLDEN RULES



Having survived a century-long coma, sexual assault, and the attempted murder of her children, Sleeping Beauty wants vengeance on the fairy who started it all. Even the fey are bound by rules, however, and some problems are greater than two individuals.

A three to four-hour adventure for 10th through 12th level characters.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

1. **The Thorny Rose**
2. **Carabosse's Castle**
3. **Sidh Stipulation Supervision Center**

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

While many are familiar with the bones of the Sleeping Beauty story, few know the truth. Princess Talia's tale is better told to frighten children awake than send them off to blissful rest. There are no charming princes and no happily ever afters. Only destiny, laws, and survival.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

Princess Talia, more famously known as Sleeping Beauty, has lived an ignominious life. For her christening, her parents invited twelve local fairies to bless her with gifts, serving them on twelve golden plates. Furious at the snub, the thirteenth local fairy, Carabosse, arrived unexpectedly and cursed Princess Talia to prick her finger on a spindle

and die on her sixteenth birthday. The twelfth fairy who had not yet bestowed her gift on the infant changed the curse into a hundred-year ageless slumber.

For Princess Talia's added protection, her parents had every spindle in the kingdom burned, and no one was permitted to mention spindles around the princess. Unfortunately, fate laughs at those who would thwart it, and on her sixteenth birthday, the princess encountered an old woman, possibly Carabosse in disguise, spinning in the attic. Fascinated by the mechanism, the princess asked to be taught. As soon as she touched the spindle, she pricked her finger on a piece of flax, and fell into a hundred-year sleep.

Immediately, the rest of the castle fell into a deep sleep, though the twelfth fairy had only remembered to make Talia ageless. The princess slept, eternally sixteen, while all her friends and family grew old and died in their slumber. The years went by, and briars with wicked thorns grew all around the castle. With the royals and nobles gone, the common folk went about their lives, beholden to no one. Neighboring rulers attempted to conquer the castle, but could never get through the thorns. Legends grew of the sleeping princess.

After nearly a century had passed, a traveling king heard the legends and insisted on seeing the sleeping princess for himself. He fought his way through the briars, saw the sleeping Talia, and forced himself upon her. After he was finished, he returned home to his queen—but he could not get the sleeping princess out of his mind and returned to Talia frequently. Eventually, Talia gave birth in her sleep to twins. One of them, looking to suckle, sucked the flax out of her finger, and she awakened. She saw the two infants and a strange man in her bed. Everyone else she had ever known was dead, her castle full of skeletons.

A NEW LIFE

Overjoyed to see his victim awake, the king took the stunned Talia home along with their twins, whom she named Sun and Moon. The king informed his wife that she was being replaced, as Talia had already borne him two children—something the queen had failed to do in decades of marriage—and he planned to marry Talia immediately.

Outraged, the queen ordered her cook to bake Sun and Moon into a pie and serve them to the king. Horrified, the cook served a rabbit and a lamb instead, hiding the children in sacks of flour. The queen encouraged the king to eat heartily, which he did. She next ordered the cook to make Talia into soup and serve it to the king. The cook, getting desperate, hastily informed Talia, who began screaming. The king heard the noise, and after hearing Talia and the cook's word, threw his first wife into the stewpot. He did not eat her.

The king crowned Talia his queen and announced a writ proclaiming Sun his heir, and Moon after him. With her children thus protected, Talia gutted her husband as he slept and assumed the role of Queen Regent. She has lost everything, but gained two children and a kingdom. Three years into her regency, she wants revenge on the fairy she holds responsible.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

1. THE THORNY ROSE

Adventurers meet Queen Regent Talia and are sent on their quest to destroy Carabosse, the 13th fairy.

2. CARABOSSE'S CASTLE

A brutal climb up the forbidden mountains ends at a large castle where Carabosse welcomes the adventurers and invites them to dine with her. She explains her motives and proposes an alternative to fighting.

3. SIDH STIPULATION SUPERVISION CENTER

Adventurers arrive at the center of fey bureaucracy and have an opportunity to overthrow the system, at least temporarily.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

HOOK 1

Queen Regent Talia puts out a call for brave adventurers willing to destroy an evil fairy. She offers a minor noble title and 2,000 gp total as reward. All interested parties must come to the palace for an interview.

HOOK 2

In a dark corner of a pub, adventurers overhear a whispered conversation between two mysterious figures. One of them is Talia, disguised as a mercenary under the name Briar Rose. She talks to a bounty hunter about "Code Thirteen" and the bounty hunter gets nervous. If approached, she tells characters to go to court the next day, saying Briar Rose sent them for her majesty.

HOOK 3

Traveling characters meet Sir Robyn, a young knight accompanied by a band of minstrels, as she is leaving Talia's kingdom. She informs them she had initially answered the queen's call for brave adventurers, but when she learned the target of assassination was an ancient and powerful fey, she decided to bravely seek adventure elsewhere.

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

PRINCESS TALIA, AKA BRIAR ROSE

She/her, assassin, neutral

The Sleeping Beauty of legend and currently Queen Regent of her land. She is famed for her beauty as well as her fierceness, though her top priority is the safety of her two children.

Personality Trait: Hyperalert, I am constantly looking for danger and quick to draw my weapon.

Ideal: Safety is an illusion. The world is a dangerous place where only the strong survive.

Bond: Sun and Moon are all I have left of a family. I would do anything to protect them.

Flaw: I am terrified of sleeping, worried I'll wake up to something worse than last time. I force myself to stay awake until I collapse from exhaustion.

CARABOSSE

She/her, modified adult blue dragon, lawful neutral

The 13th fairy who cursed Talia on her christening, Carabosse is never seen without Eblis, her raven familiar. Though technically a dragon, she almost always appears as a noble eladrin and holds fast to the rules of fey society.

Personality Trait: I am grandiose and eloquent, but quick to insult any I deem unworthy of my time.

Ideal: I value dignity above all things.

Bond: Fey tradition is inviolate. Though I may disagree with other fey, I never break the rules.

Flaw: I've never quite fit in with the other twelve fairies and my pride is deeply wounded whenever I'm left out.

VERMILLION TACKINGTON

He/him, violet faerie dragon, lawful good

The head of bureaucracy and red tape in the Feywild, Vermillion has sacrificed much to maintain his current position. He wears a pince-nez and is typically covered in ink splotches. He views his work as very important, but worries that he may be missing out the grander things in life.

Personality Trait: I'm constantly in motion. Holding a pen in one claw, a pencil in the other, and a big rubber stamp in my tail, I only stop my paperwork to sleep, and then just in short bursts.

Ideal: I'm proud to be a significant cog in a well-oiled machine.

Bond: I spend so much time at work, I hardly see anyone apart from my coworkers. I can't admit it to myself, but my best friend is my paperwork.

Flaw: I struggle with shades of grey and am insistent that as long as everyone does their job, everything works out.

THE THORNY ROSE

When the adventurers enter the throne room in response to Queen Regent Talia's summons, they see the throne room is massive, with stained glass windows and marble flooring. Columns decorated with reliefs of gilded thorny roses line the grand hall. Talia sits on a large throne, a crown of golden roses atop her head. Beside her sit a young boy and girl in celestial raiment. Lining the hall are two dozen courtiers (**nobles**) and palace guards (**veterans**).

HAIL TO THE QUEEN

Talia (she/her, **assassin**) is not one to mince words and gets right to the point. She knows that were it not for the curse of Carabosse, the thirteenth fairy, she would never have slept for a century, lost the life she had, and been preyed upon by her deceased husband and his wife. She loves her

children and wouldn't give them up for the world, but resents the circumstance that brought them into her life. She wants revenge.

Characters who succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check discern Talia is deeply hurt. She knows killing Carabosse won't change her situation, but feels this is the only way to regain a semblance of control over her life and, most importantly, prevent anyone else from going through the same situation she did.

Talia provides directions to Carabosse's Castle, high in the Forbidden Mountains. She warns the trek is dangerous, but not nearly as dangerous as Carabosse herself. While she has no memory of the fairy, she knows her to be ill-tempered and evil, and warns the adventurers to be prepared for anything.

King Sun (he/him, **commoner**) and Princess Moon (she/her, **commoner**) are approximately 4 years old. They are kind-hearted, intelligent children with a tendency toward anxiety. Constantly under their mother's watch, they know little of the world outside their own castle and their mother's oversight. Sun enjoys using a big stamp to pass decrees his mother shows him, while Moon loves the fashion and music of the court. Both children enjoy reading, and are particularly fascinated by stories of fairies, dragons, and mystical creatures.

If asked why Talia does not simply take revenge upon Carabosse herself, she responds that she is far too busy as Queen Regent to leave. If asked why she doesn't send an army, she responds that the army is necessary to keep the royal family safe in case of war. Succeeding on a DC 18 Intelligence (History) check reveals there is no threat of war at this time, and the country is experiencing unparalleled peace and prosperity. Characters who succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check see Talia wants all the protection possible, magical and mundane, for herself and her children. She sees mercenaries and wandering heroes as expendable, though she is happy to reward a job well done.



DEVELOPMENT

Their task assigned, characters leave Talia's castle and begin the trek to the Forbidden Mountains. If requested, Talia has her servants provide the party with climbing gear.

CARABOSSE'S CASTLE

The Forbidden Mountains sit in the middle of a barren wasteland just beyond the borders of Talia's kingdom. No matter the time of day, a dark gloomy atmosphere hangs over the region. Lightning strikes at seemingly random intervals on the rocks, and the ground is covered in prickly thorn bushes.

A FOG OF DOOM

Lightning storms rage for 6 miles outside the castle bounds. Every hour of travel time, roll a percentile die. On 85-100, lightning strikes a random creature, dealing 17 (3d10) lightning damage. Creatures within 5 feet of the creature struck take half damage.

The rocky path to Carabosse's Castle is littered with thorny branches and lightly obscured by a thick fog. To navigate successfully through the fog and avoid having to deal with thorns, whichever character is designated as navigator must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom (Survival) check. On a failure, the party is unable to find a safe path up the mountain, and must carefully pick through thorn bushes; each character must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity (Acrobatics) saving throw or take 7 (2d6) piercing damage plus 5 (2d4) poison damage. Succeeding on a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check identifies the brambles as particularly nasty variants of the firethorn and crown of thorns plants.

The mountains are 2 miles high and take 10 hours to climb, provided no one falls. Each character must attempt a Strength (Athletics) check every two hours until they reach the summit; the first check has a DC of 12, and the DC increases by 2 for every subsequent check made before taking a long rest. Taking a long rest resets the DC check to 12, again increasing every 2 hours. Any character using a climber's kit makes this check with advantage. Characters who fail this check take 11 (3d6) bludgeoning damage from falling plus 7 (2d6) piercing damage and 5 (2d4) poison damage from landing in brambles.

Along the route, characters with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 15 or higher notice they are being watched throughout their journey by small groups of goblins, each containing five **goblins**, one **goblin boss**, and one **hobgoblin iron shadow** (VGtM). The goblin groups never attack unless attacked first. They are merely spying for Carabosse, and flee if approached. They can be hurt and killed by the storms, as well as the brambles.

Characters with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 17 or higher notice a **raven** flying far overhead throughout

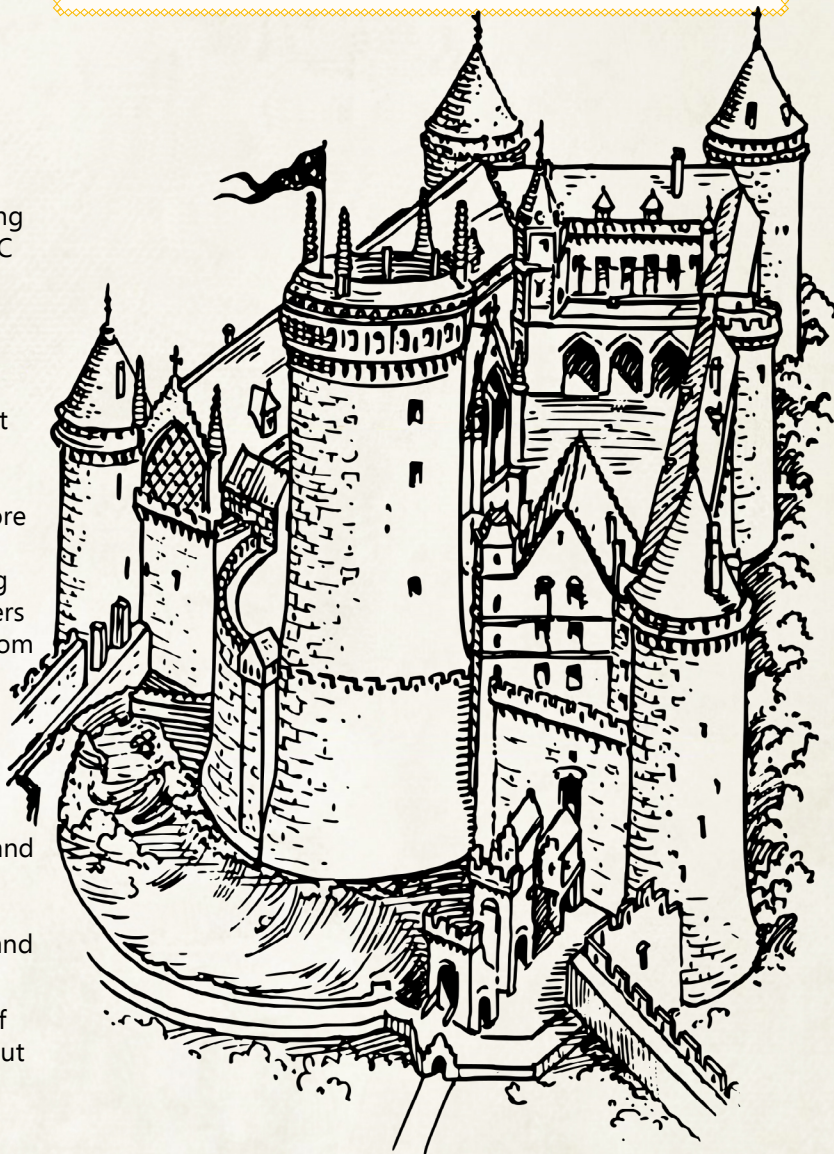
their journey. It is Carabosse's familiar, Eblis, and he never takes damage from environmental effects. He is also spying for Carabosse and flees if noticed.

YONDER TOPMOST TOWER

By the time adventurers reach Carabosse, she is aware of their impending arrival. Carabosse is an **adult blue dragon** with the addition of the *Change Shape* ability of adult silver dragons, plus the ability to innately cast spells. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks.) She can cast the following spells once per day, requiring no material components: *bestow curse*, *dimension door*, *find familiar*, *fireball*, and *plant growth*.

Carabosse awaits adventurers in the form of a tall, elegant, femme-presenting noble eladrin. She sits on a large stone throne in front of a massive bonfire, her raven familiar, Eblis, perched on her shoulder. Attending her are ten **goblins** and ten **kobold scale sorcerers**. Read or paraphrase the following:

"Well, my pet, it seems we have company. It's been so long since anyone came to see us, we were starting to think we'd been forgotten entirely. Please, travelers, make yourselves comfortable. What brings you so far up the Forbidden Mountain?"



Carabosse is genuinely shocked to have visitors. Due to her immense power and isolation, it is inconceivable anyone would be coming here to kill her. She claps her hands, causing a goblin to rush immediately to her side. She commands the goblin to bring food and drink for the party, inquiring as to their tastes. If adventurers agree to eat and drink, as soon as they give their order to the goblin, a kobold appears running up with their food order. Carabosse encourages them to eat, stating she would never harm a guest in her home. Succeeding on a DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check confirms this fact, and reveals Carabosse is attempting to put the party at ease by citing an ancient rule of guest right. Once a host and guest have dined together, neither can harm the other without risking eternal damnation.

If adventurers explain they have been hired by Talia to kill her, Carabosse is shocked to hear Talia is alive. If asked, she readily admits cursing Talia upon her christening, but denies being the old woman with the spindle in the castle, though she is not surprised to hear of a spindle surviving the mass purge. She notes every time a ruler prohibits something, commonfolk find a way to skirt the rules, even in the ruler's own home. She assumes no fault in Talia's fate, merely viewing it as the unfortunate girl's destiny to pay for her parent's inexcusable behavior. Succeeding on a DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check confirms her story. After cursing Talia, she left the castle and assumed her curse would work out. She had no idea it would result in a century of slumber instead. She finds that infinitely more horrifying.

Carabosse refuses to apologize for Talia's life or take responsibility for the entirety of Talia's misfortunes. If told the whole story, she views it as a bunch of unfortunate circumstances that, if anything, started because Talia's parents broke an ancient law and snubbed a fey over the triviality of golden plates. Characters who succeed on a DC 14 Intelligence (History) check know the twelve fairies invited to the christening were all **pixies**, most of whom live in small groups of three or four, which could further explain Carabosse's sense of isolation, even if the character is unaware Carabosse is a dragon.

Carabosse cannot be persuaded to change her mind and is positive she acted appropriately, according to the bylaws of faerie code. Characters wanting to know why the code is so important to her can attempt a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. On a success, she explains that laws and codes keep everyone honest, and keep the world fair. Without codes in place, the world would descend into chaos and disorder. It doesn't matter to her that one person's life may have been ruined by enforcing the law, because she demonstrated to hundreds of other people the danger of breaking it.

Carabosse tells adventurers if they are so determined to find someone to blame, they should seek out Talia's parents and scold them for their lack of etiquette. Barring that, she recommends taking her portal to the bureaucratic faerie hub, the Sidh Stipulation Supervision Center, and speaking with Vermillion Tackington himself. She guarantees safe transportation to—though not from—the Feywild. She

offhandedly says Vermillion has little patience for mortals and assumes he'll send them back wherever they need to go, as soon as they're finished pestering him. She queries the party for what languages they speak. Anyone who does not speak Draconic or Sylvan is given a dragonscale amulet (see Appendix).

DEVELOPMENT

Characters who take Carabosse up on her offer to go to speak with Vermillion walk through a pillar of green flame, but are unburned. Instead, it feels slightly ticklish. Go to *Sidh Stipulation Supervision Center*.

If characters attack Carabosse at any point, she transforms into her dragon shape and calls upon her minions to fight alongside her. Goblins and kobold scale sorcerers fight to the death. When Carabosse is reduced to 75 hit points, she attempts to flee by flying out a castle window. If she escapes, go to *Aftermath: Carabosse Escaped*. If Carabosse is killed, go to *Aftermath: Carabosse Defeated*.

SIDH STIPULATION SUPERVISION CENTER

After stepping through Carabosse's portal, the flames subside and characters find themselves in a busy office full of twenty **faerie dragons** and fifteen **pixies**, all flying through the air carrying forms or huddled over thick stacks of paperwork. At the center of the room, on a much taller desk than the rest, sits Vermillion Tackington, a violet **faerie dragon**. He holds a pencil in his left claw, a pen in his right, a large rubber stamp in his tail, and sifts through paperwork with his right foot while sitting perched on his left.

RED TAPE BUREAUCRACY

Vermillion peers at characters over half-moon spectacles, while never stopping signing, stamping, and shuffling various papers. A good-natured dragon who loves his job, he is happy to explain the intricacies of faerie bylaws and contracts to anyone and everyone. He explains the prohibition against cold iron, the binding qualities of a bargain, the importance of never eating fairy food, and more. Characters wishing to keep him on the task at hand must succeed on a DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) or DC 15 (Intimidation) check in order to encourage him to maintain focus.

If told Talia's story, Vermillion becomes distressed, momentarily pausing his paperwork. Succeeding on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals he is genuinely shaken that adhering to the "rules" resulted in harm for someone. He shakes off his doubt and resumes working faster than before unless stopped by characters.

Characters with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 12 or higher notice Vermillion is working much harder than anyone else in the office. If asked about this, he responds

he didn't get to be the office supervisor by slacking, and again expresses how much he loves his job. Succeeding on a DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals a hint of regret in his voice. If probed about it, he explains that he has made a lot of sacrifices for his job, namely his relationships with friends and family, as well as any semblance of self-care.

To convince Vermillion to change the rules so the punishment for a missed invitation is no longer cursing a family member, a character must succeed on a DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check. The DM might reward exceptional roleplay by granting advantage on this ability check.

To convince Vermillion he is truly unhappy at his job and might be better off letting the system go without rules, a character must succeed on a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

Vermillion is able to work amidst countless distractions and entertains questions from characters as long as they remain non-hostile. Without a push from characters, he is happy to continue overseeing bylaws and contracts for the rest of his life, feeling only a slight twinge that something is missing.

When the characters are ready to leave, Vermillion happily points them to a corner of the room enchanted to transport anywhere on the mortal plane they choose. If Vermillion is killed, the portal can be discovered by succeeding on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check, using the detect magic spell, or interrogating any remaining office dragons. If Vermillion is killed and adventurers fail to discover the portal, they may return using *dimension door* or *teleportation circle*. Otherwise, refer to *Further Adventures*.

If attacked, Vermillion telepathically summons all the faerie dragons in the room to assist him. On the second round of combat, the pixies join in, seeing their friends in need. On the third round of combat, fifteen additional faerie dragons are telepathically summoned from another office to assist.

DEVELOPMENT

Following their interaction with faerie bureaucracy, adventurers are free to return via portal to Talia's castle for their reward.

AFTERMATH

ANARCHY REIGNS

If Vermillion quits his job, the bureaucratic branch of the Feywild briefly falls into chaos. Contracts and deals are rife for renegotiation, and bylaws Carabosse clung so dearly to are completely thrown out. The next faerie dragon to take Vermillion's

place, Rosamund Adhezion, finds there is room for negotiation in everything, and does away with most laws in which she can find a loophole. Hardly any laws remain, though the fey breathe a sigh of relief they are again able to make contracts on a regular basis.

Queen Regent Talia, though initially irritated that Carabosse is still alive, takes comfort in the idea that no one will ever go through what she did.

She pays the adventurers 2,000 gp and offers each of them a minor title in her court, along with a small plot of land.

CARABOSSE DEFEATED

If the adventurers kill Carabosse, Queen Regent Talia breathes a sigh of relief that the evil witch she feared her entire life is dead, never to trouble her again. She pays the adventurers the promised 2,000 gp and offers each of them a minor title in her court, along with a small plot of land.

Meanwhile, all over the realms, feyfolk continue to enforce strict rules and exact harsh punishments on those who fail to meet their standards. All within the confines of bureaucracy, of course.

CARABOSSE ESCAPED AND/OR VERMILLION IS STILL HARD AT WORK

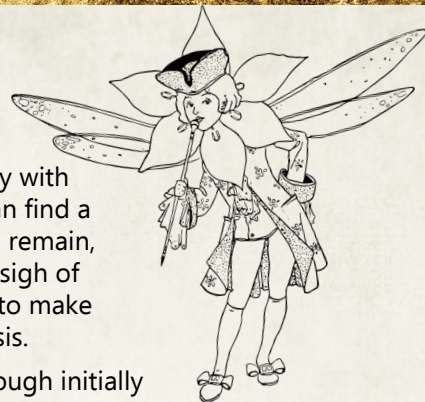
If the adventurers return to Queen Regent Talia without resolving any of her concerns, she questions why they bothered to return when a job is unfinished. She pays them 500 gp in travel expenses for surviving the trip, then bans them from her kingdom. She conscripts additional castle guards and army recruits, as well as commissioning several court wizards in order to protect herself and her children. The kingdom becomes increasingly isolated and trade suffers.

Meanwhile, all over the realms, feyfolk continue to enforce strict rules and exact harsh punishments on those who fail to meet their standards. All within the confines of bureaucracy, of course.

TRAPPED IN THE SIDH STIPULATION SUPERVISION CENTER

If adventurers killed the faerie dragon staff and were unable to find a portal home, they are trapped in the heart of the Feywild. The bureaucratic branch of Faerie briefly falls into chaos, and the party is wanted for mass murder. Feyfolk bounty hunters from all Seelie and Unseelie Courts are keen to bring them in hopes of restoring justice and some semblance of contractual order to the Feywild.

The adventurers have succeeded in their task for Queen Talia, but they'll need to find their way home safely to receive their reward...

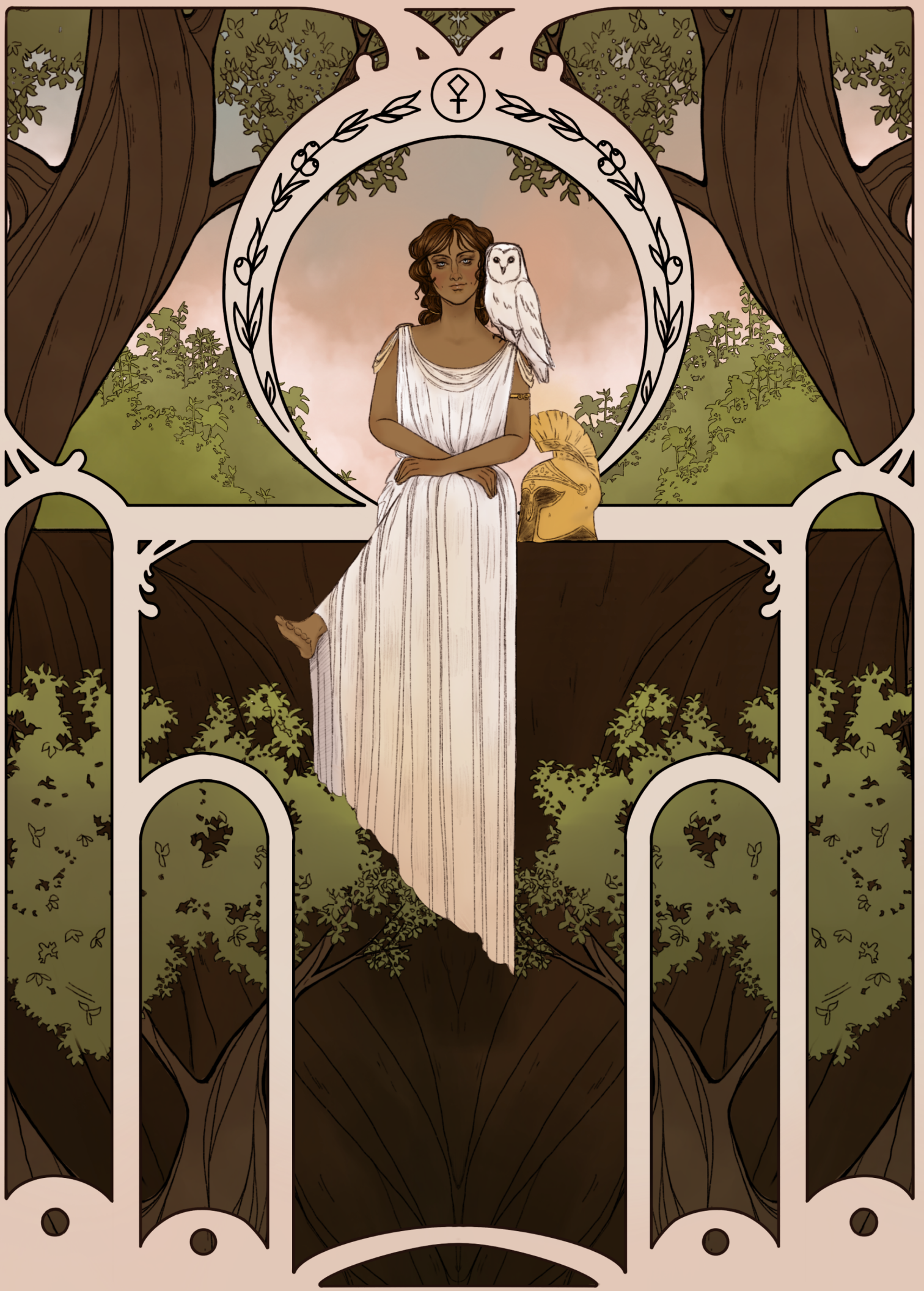




FURTHER ADVENTURES

Talia's story needn't end here! Consider exploring the following adventures:

- Adventurers may be trapped in a tiny office in the Feywild! Their next step is figuring out who they can trust—considering they massacred a bunch of office workers—and finding a way home.
- Nobility comes with privileges as well as costs. When a kingdom goes to war, nobles are called to financially support it as well as command squadrons. When Talia faces invasion from the Snow Queen, adventurers are called to help the mysterious Robber Girl lead her squadron into the icy land to the north.
- Depending on the outcome, adventurers may either have befriended or seriously aggravated a powerful dragon. When she next appears at their time of great need, one can only hope she will be in a generous mood.



THE REGENT OF ITHACA



CATHERINE EVANS

THE REGENT OF ITHACA



Penelope's husband Odysseus has been away for almost twenty years, first at war and then taking the longest possible route home. Meanwhile, she's made their island kingdom, Ithaca, prosperous and peaceful. Odysseus is due home soon, and Penelope's not ready to resume her role as his subservient wife. She's hired adventurers to make sure Odysseus finds another few years' worth of distractions.

A four-hour adventure for 10th- through 11th-level characters.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

How this adventure progresses is driven entirely by the characters' actions. After they arrive on the island of Kimmetus, where Odysseus is currently sojourning, they are presented with a range of possible threads to pull on to keep Odysseus from returning to Ithaca. Player characters may choose to explore all of them or focus on a select few.

Events 3-7 can be run in any order.

1. Meet with Penelope
2. Travel to the Island of Kimmetus to intercept Odysseus
3. Help Odysseus hook up with a princess
4. Convince a witch to curse Odysseus
5. Lead Odysseus on a wild goose chase for an imaginary monster
6. Frame Odysseus for the theft of an artifact
7. Intercede with Athena on Penelope's behalf
8. Receive Penelope's reward

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Penelope's always been clever and good with people. She was helping Odysseus run the kingdom of Ithaca from the day they were married—a fact he's always conveniently overlooked. When her husband went to war, she took up the reins of power and turned an island known only for fishing and goat farming into a prosperous kingdom famous for its textile industry and its merchant fleet.

The Trojan War kept Odysseus away for a decade, and, so far, his journey home has taken just as long. He keeps extending the journey with foolhardy adventures, ill-advised heists, and flings with nymphs and princesses. Penelope's quite pleased with this: she's almost forgotten what her husband looks like by this point, let alone missing him. She doesn't enjoy the prospect of fading back into the background and letting Odysseus run Ithaca again or—worse—keeping it running while he takes the credit.

Penelope is as sure as she can be that Odysseus wouldn't be happy even if he did come back to Ithaca: he's an adventurer at heart, not a ruler. So, for both their benefits, she's looking for a group of adventurers capable of finding her husband a distraction that will keep him away for at least another few years.

HISTORY, MYTH, AND FANTASY

This isn't really ancient Greece. It's a fantasy adventure that happens to have some classical set-dressing. Don't feel compelled to make your version of the adventure "historically accurate." (It's fan-fiction about a myth, so that's probably doomed). If you need Ithaca to be somewhere in the Forgotten Realms' Sea of Fallen Stars, and Odysseus is foiled by three goblins and a paladin in plate mail, so be it!

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is extremely player-driven. Some suggested strategies are included in each encounter in chapter 2 (Kimmerus), but these are backups. Let the players' creativity run wild here and be their biggest fan. Encourage them to use the story elements provided to create exciting, clever, funny, or just weird strategies and always err in favor of letting them work—at least partially.

Use Odysseus, specifically the risk of him being alerted to the characters' activities, and the threat of him leaving Kimmetus for Ithaca, to create a sense of pressure and opposition.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

THE PROFESSIONALS

Word reaches the characters through a trusted ally or broker that a powerful woman requires a creative, powerful, and—above all—discreet team of adventurers to help with a long-term problem. Once the characters are sworn to secrecy, the broker sends them to Penelope.

DIVINE INTERVENTION

Poseidon, God of the Sea, loathes Odysseus. He's tried repeatedly to drown him and otherwise ruin his life. An emissary of Poseidon appears to the characters when they are near or on the sea and directs them to go to Penelope and accept her quest.

HOMETOWN HEROES

The characters are from Ithaca or reside there. Penelope asks them to help for the good of the kingdom in exchange for land, titles, or other marks of status.

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

PENELOPE OF ITHACA

Ruler of Ithaca. An elegant woman in her fifties with wise, dark eyes and a face full of laughter-lines.

Personality Trait: Insightful, compassionate, and shrewd

Ideal: Everyone deserves to do what they are good at.

Bond: Ithaca's success is my success.

Flaw: I'm used to holding power, and I don't like sharing it.

ODYSSEUS

Penelope's husband. War hero, trickster, and know-it-all. A grizzled man in his early sixties with a bright smile and piercing blue eyes.

Personality Trait: Clever, confident, and silver-tongued

Ideal: To stop learning and exploring is to stop living.

Bond: I only take advice from my patron, Athena.

Flaw: I overcomplicate every plan.

IANEIRA OF KIMMETUS

Princess of the island kingdom of Kimmetus. Romantically interested in Odysseus. A short, slender woman in her mid-twenties, with an infectious laugh and sparkling eyes.

Personality Trait: Adventurous, joyful, and carefree

Ideal: There is always hope.

Bond: I have to see the world and bring back the best of it to my island home.

Flaw: I believe the best of everybody.

CTESA OF THE SEA CAVE

The Witch of Kimmesus. A loyal servant of Poseidon. Ctesa has clashed with Odysseus already and developed an immediate loathing for him. A tall, sharp-featured woman with wild hair and a stern demeanor.

Personality Trait: Proud, cunning, and cruel

Ideal: All we have, we owe to the gods; we should do their will.

Bond: I get my power from Poseidon, and I obey him out of gratitude.

Flaw: I can't resist flattery.

ATHENA

The gods are multi-faceted. The traits presented here offer one view of Athena, which happens to be relevant to this adventure.

Goddess of intellect (amongst other things) and Odysseus' patron. Manifests in this adventure as a handsome, brown-skinned, armored woman with a powerful presence and a white owl on her shoulder.

Personality Trait: Intelligent, rational, and warm

Ideal: It is the duty of the wise to use their wisdom for the betterment of the world.

Bond: I protect those worthy of my attention.

Flaw: I adopt human champions like stray cats.

THE REGENT'S THRONE ROOM

LOCATION HISTORY

Until Penelope's reign, Ithaca was ruled from a dilapidated palace built centuries ago. It stood on a headland overlooking the sea, far from the villages and farms of the populace. When her treasury filled up, Penelope abandoned the old palace and built a new one closer to her people.

ABOUT THE LOCATION

The palace is a brightly painted stone building in the middle of the largest town on Ithaca (Tymessos). It is airy and sun-drenched, and a hive of activity. Courtiers—including several would-be suitors—loiter around the courtyard and public areas; the business of trade and government is carried out by a diverse range of officials; and a small number of well-trained, well-equipped **guards** are highly visible throughout the palace.

THRONE ROOM

The throne room is on the south side of the palace. Large windows carry in the scent of sea breezes and olive groves. Penelope is seated on one of two thrones on a dais at the back of the room. She sends for food and wine, then dismisses the few courtiers, advisors, and guards present and converses with the characters alone in a relatively informal meeting.

Penelope presents the situation in the following terms:

- Her husband Odysseus has been away a long time, and is due to return soon—he has reached the Isle of Kimmetus, just a few days' travel away.
- He is a great hero, a veteran of many wars, and an ingenious man. Ithaca is "too small for his mind," as she puts it: Odysseus isn't suited to ruling a small, quiet kingdom.

- Characters who succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check can infer that, while she means that sincerely, she also doesn't *want* her husband home.
- Characters who succeed on a DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check convince her to admit she doesn't want Odysseus back, either as a husband or a monarch.
- Characters who succeed on a DC 12 Intelligence (History) check know that Penelope's rule has been a blessing to Ithaca, improving the economy, education, and strengthening alliances with neighbors. Characters local to the area, or who are proficient in History know this without making an ability check.

Penelope wants the characters to go to Kimmetus and find a way to distract Odysseus. Ideally, she'd like a solution that will keep him away for another decade or even permanently. She doesn't want any harm to come to him: she bears her husband no ill will; she just doesn't see any need for him to be back in Ithaca, getting in her way.

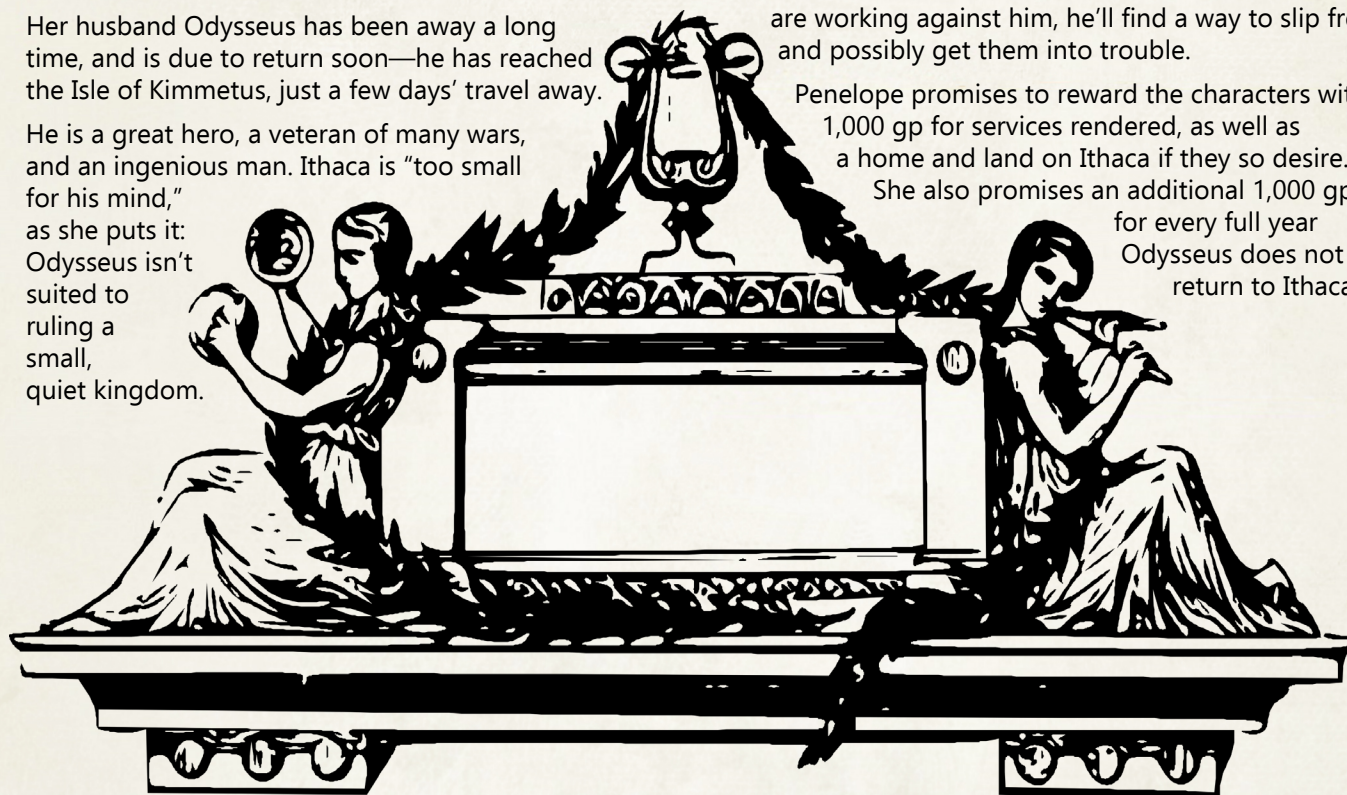
Penelope has no particular plan in mind, but advises the characters that her husband is

- easily distracted by attractive women.
- absurdly overconfident.
- guaranteed to find the most complex solution to a simple problem.
- embroiled in a feud with the sea god Poseidon. (She says this with a weary resignation like this isn't even the most foolish thing Odysseus has ever done.)
- likely to call on his patron, Athena, to get him out of a tight spot.

Penelope also warns that Odysseus is genuinely very clever, and if he catches on to the fact that the characters are working against him, he'll find a way to slip free, and possibly get them into trouble.

Penelope promises to reward the characters with 1,000 gp for services rendered, as well as a home and land on Ithaca if they so desire.

She also promises an additional 1,000 gp for every full year Odysseus does not return to Ithaca.



SMOOTH SAILING?

If you're running this adventure as a one-shot, assume the characters' journey to Kimmetus goes smoothly and skip to the next chapter. If you want to extend the adventure, the anthology *Encounters On The Savage Seas III* is free to download from the DMs Guild and offers a number of level-appropriate encounters.

THE ISLE OF KIMMETUS

LOCATION HISTORY

Kimmetus is an island slightly smaller than Ithaca and in the same region. It's never been remarkable. It has produced no famous heroes or notable works of art. It is a peaceful place, which comes alive once every five years for a storytelling competition attended by the best bards, poets, and liars of the region.

ABOUT THE LOCATION

Kimmetus is a beautiful, crescent-shaped island set in a rough, choppy blue sea. Its interior is covered in lush forest occasionally broken by stone ruins of forgotten purpose, and the coastline is composed of black cliffs, except for the Bay of Belos, where most ships arriving at the island drop anchor. The island is sparsely populated, with a few villages and surrounding farms, and the larger town of Ossa, scattered along the shore of the Bay of Belos.

The population of Kimmetus is human, with exceptions as noted for specific NPCs.

KIMMETUS LOCATIONS

A1. ELOSSE

The town of Elosse is a riot of color. Roofs are made of blue slate, walls are painted bright colors, and plants spring up between buildings and hang from window boxes. Narrow, crooked streets wind back from the beach, and a cluster of taller buildings suggest the path to the town center.

Elosse serves as a central hub for the visiting characters. It's a place to gather information, obtain services and support, and a base from which to explore other locations on the island.

It offers the following locations:

The Agora. Central marketplace and assembly area. The goods on offer are fairly humble (food, locally produced crafts), and there are workshops (pottery, furniture, etc.) around the market square. The real value of visiting the agora is the information to be obtained there, particularly from the following people:

Myro (he/him): a man in his seventies who sells delicious sweet pastries from a trolley. Myro knows everyone, or claims he does. His daughter is a servant at the palace, so he gets all the best gossip. He tends to embroider the truth, adding details that make a story better but have no grain of truth.

Lia (she/her): a singer and storyteller who performs in the agora. She's something of an expert on local history and legend, for example, regarding the Witch of the Sea Cave and Pherinope's Treasure.

Nysa's House. Nysa (she/her) is a young widow who lets the spare rooms of her house to visitors. She offers affordable lodging (2 sp per room, per night), as long as the characters don't mind the attention of her three cats (Alecto, Tisiphone, and Megaera) and two young children (Aelo – he/him, 4 years old; Phryne – she/her, 6 years old).

The Vine. This inn off the agora offers upscale lodging for 5 sp per person, per night. It is run by the middle-aged siblings Argeia (she/her) and Pratino (they/them) who bicker endlessly but provide luxurious rooms and excellent food.

The characters can learn the following information from anyone in Elosse. Make it easy for them to obtain all possible info: this adventure relies on them having lots of building blocks from which to form a plan. The fun, and the challenge, is in how the players decide to use the info, not how they get it.

- There is no "Odysseus" currently on Kimmetus, but a ship docked in the harbor several months ago. It wasn't a merchant ship, but a very battered, damaged, warship with only a skeleton crew. It needed substantial repairs, which are now almost finished. The captain, a charming man calling himself Metis (meaning "no one"), is staying at the palace and intends to depart after participating in the island's storytelling contest. He has an Ithacan accent.
- Captain Metis has begun a flirtation—perhaps even an affair—with Princess Ianeira. The king and queen approve of Metis and will probably start pushing for a betrothal soon.
- Severe storms frequently wrack the western side of the island and are believed to be the work of the Sea Witch, also known as Ctesa, a servant of Poseidon.
- Kimmetus's famous storytelling contest is coming up in ten days. Performers will start to arrive from neighboring islands soon. The contest is held in honor of, and supposedly was founded by, the golden dragon Pherinope, who makes her home deep inland.
- Deep inland, marked only by the ruin of a tower, is the lair of the golden dragon Pherinope. There, she guards numerous treasures she's accumulated over the years, but the most precious is a legendary book that makes anyone who reads it impossibly persuasive and charismatic.
- The hill known as The Gods' Overlook, to the east of town, is kept free of any buildings or human activity. The gods gather there to watch the storytelling contest.

WHO'S WATCHING WHOM?

If the characters draw attention to themselves or start specifically hunting for Odysseus (a few inquiries won't be enough on their own), Odysseus hears about it and starts looking for information on them. The more Odysseus believes the characters have an agenda that concerns him, the harder it will be for them to convince him of any course of action where their involvement is obvious and the more subtle they will have to be. If he becomes too suspicious, he persuades the king that the characters are spies for some enemy and has them thrown off the island, forcing them to sneak back and work in secret.

A2. THE ROYAL PALACE

The palace is old and overgrown. Flowers and vines burst through ancient stone and strangle glorious bronze and marble statues, and weeds spring up between paving stones.

There are a number of things to do at the palace, most of them revolving around the royal family. The characters can also register to participate in the storytelling contest, with an overworked, short-tempered dwarf named Thano (he/him).

Ianeira. Ianeira is a loud, outspoken young woman with a love of adventure. She was immediately drawn to the mysterious seafarer "Metis," and they've been carrying on a romance almost since he arrived. They would be an excellent match, and it would take very little to convince one of them to whisk the other away to a life of adventure on Odysseus's repaired ship.

Odysseus. The characters may encounter Odysseus, calling himself Metis, around the palace. He takes an interest in colorful, larger-than-life characters, and proactively suggests trading stories of their adventures. At no point does he disclose his true identity.

Mentioning Ithaca, Penelope, or Odysseus makes him suspicious, and he starts to investigate their activities on Kimmetus. If he develops any serious concern that the characters are acting against him, he has King Admetus arrange for soldiers to escort them off the island.

King Admetus. Admetus (he/him) is a former soldier, and still a hale and hearty man. He enjoys good conversation, good wine, and the status quo. He's unaware of his daughter's fling with Odysseus, but he wouldn't disapprove. He's fully aware of Odysseus's identity, but he's too polite to say anything and offend an honored guest. Marrying into such a heroic line would give him great satisfaction, as long as it's what Ianeira wants. He'd be quite happy to annul Odysseus and Penelope's marriage. This would be of questionable legality, but everyone involved would be happy with the solution.

Odysseus may persuade Admetus the characters are working against him. If they can turn the tables and convince Admetus that Odysseus is scheming against him, they might be able to get him imprisoned for a very long time. It's not Penelope's ideal solution, but she'll take it.

A3. PHERINOPE'S LAIR

A shimmering, opalescent mist coils playfully around you, not heavy enough to obscure your path but enough to make berries on branches and fallen leaves sparkle like gemstones. Chunks of stone as large as a human are your first indication that you're near a building. Within a few hundred feet, you see the jagged form of a crumbling tower before you, parts of its upper stories broken and tumbled into the clear pool beside the ruin. This is the lair of the **ancient gold dragon** Pherinope.

When the characters arrive, Pherinope does not appear to be present. However, within a couple of minutes of their arrival, a human woman strolls out of the woods on the far side of the tower. Armed with a shortbow, she claims to be a hunter called Sophia, who regularly hunts for deer in the area. She claims that the dragon hasn't been seen on Kimmetus for many years and enquires what the characters want with the wyrm's lair.

Characters with a passive Wisdom (Insight) of 15 or higher, or who succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check realize that there's something not quite right about the huntress. She has a knowing smile, like she's laughing at some private joke, and seems to know a startling amount about the dragon.

Pherinope loves a good story and a spot of intrigue, and if the party explain they want the dragon's help—or even want to use some of her treasure—to trick the infamous trickster Odysseus, she's happy to get involved, returning to her true form to continue her conversation with the characters.

If the characters don't make a good impression on Pherinope in her human disguise (e.g., threatening her or suggesting that they are treasure hunters), she warns them that the dragon's lair is well defended by traps and they would be wise not to intrude. If the characters insist on entering, Pherinope reverts to her true form. Pherinope doesn't want to fight, and happily accepts an apology and a more collaborative approach (as above). If the characters are persistently rude, she intimidates them into leaving... and only if that fails does she fight them until they retreat.

Amongst her other treasures, Pherinope has a *tome of leadership and influence*, and she suggests that a man like Odysseus would do a lot to obtain one.

If the characters don't formulate a plan of their own, Pherinope suggests the following:

- The party could send Odysseus off to gather gold, jewels, and pearls, which Pherinope would willingly exchange for the book.
- Alternatively, she would be willing to hide the book somewhere far away and help the party formulate some cryptic clues to send Odysseus off on a lengthy hunt for it.

In return, she asks only that when this story is told, her part is not forgotten, and that the characters obtain Penelope's permission for Pherinope to visit her, (if the characters mention Penelope): the queen of Ithaca intrigues her.

A4. ATHENA'S OVERLOOK

It's a hard climb to the overlook. There is no path, the slope is steep, and the crumbling rocks treacherous. A plateau of bare, brown stone is the only reward for your exertion, as well as a spectacular view of Elosse.

You are not alone upon the overlook. A brown-skinned woman sits cross-legged on the ledge, watching the town. Pieces of golden armor are neatly stacked nearby, and a huge, white owl perches on her shoulder.

Characters proficient in Religion immediately recognize that this woman has all the right attributes to be Athena. Others may make a DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check, learning the same information if they succeed.

Athena makes no effort to hide her identity. She explains that the other Olympian gods will arrive shortly to watch the storytelling contest. With their divine vision, they have a perfect view of the Agora from the Overlook. She is here early keeping watch over Odysseus.

Athena protects Odysseus because he's interesting and amusing. She thinks of him rather like a pet: a little surprised that he has so much character, but ultimately very much a lesser being. She won't trick or mislead him directly, but she does admit that the thought of Odysseus returning home and running a small, boring, island kingdom is disappointing. She'll lose a great source of entertainment when that happens.

It's up to the characters what they do with this knowledge.

- If the party can plant this idea in Odysseus's mind, they could persuade him to stay away from home a while longer. He cares far more about his patron goddess than his kingdom. However, if they're too blatant about it, Odysseus concludes that they have an ulterior motive and immediately departs for Ithaca. Odysseus must believe he came up with this idea of his own accord.
- If the characters make an extremely positive impression on Athena—she likes cleverness, sharp wits, good humor, concern for one's fellow man, and a strong sense of right and wrong—she offers to loan them her owl, which Odysseus is familiar with, to help them stage some kind of omen suggesting Odysseus should not return home or should go somewhere else.
- If the characters reveal their quest and that they work for Penelope, Athena laughs and admits to a fondness for her; she even goes so far as to say Odysseus is entirely the wrong husband for Penelope.

A5. THE SEA WITCH'S CAVERN

Salt spray assails the cliffs, and the sound of the sea fills your ears. The rock is treacherous, slippery underfoot as you hunch against the wind and waves and slip inside the grotto worn into the cliff face. Ctesa, a water genasi witch, dwells in a cave in the cliffs on the western side of Kimmetus, accessible only at low tide.

Sounds echo within the cave, and unless the characters are absolutely silent, Ctesa is aware of their approach before they see her. The cave itself is barely tall enough to stand up in and smells strongly of salt and seaweed. Ctesa spends most of her time in a deep trance, communing with the water and the wind, whipping up storms to hammer the coastline and sending her consciousness out into them.

Needless to say, she does not have many personal possessions.

Ctesa does not welcome intruders and is hostile unless placated with charming speeches or gifts (pearls, sunken treasure, or anything else harvested from the ocean pleases her).

She knows full well that Poseidon loathes Odysseus and is delighted to make his life difficult. She would prefer to transform Odysseus into a fish, bird, or other coastal or aquatic creature or to ensure that a storm sinks his ship and he drowns as soon as he leaves Kimmetus. In fact, once she knows Odysseus is on the island, (which only happens if the characters tell her), she resolves to kill him. Poseidon will be pleased.

The characters might be able to intimidate or bribe her into merely blowing his ship massively off course.

Note that if the characters get Odysseus killed, they not only not receive their reward from Penelope, but also earn Athena's enmity.

Ctesa has the statistics of an **archdruid** (VGtM), with these changes:

- Ctesa has the Amphibious trait and has resistance to acid damage. She has the following druid spells prepared.
- Cantrips (at will): *druidcraft*, *mending*, *poison spray*, *produce flame*, *shape water*
- 1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds*, *entangle*, *faerie fire*, *speak with animals*
- 2nd level (3 slots): *animal messenger*, *beast sense*, *hold person*
- 3rd level (3 slots): *conjure animals*, *meld into stone*, *water breathing*
- 4th level (3 slots): *blight*, *locate creature*, *stoneskin*, *watery sphere*



- 5th level (3 slots): *commune with nature, control winds, maelstrom*
- 6th level (1 slot): *heal, heroes' feast, investiture of ice*
- 7th level (1 slot): *whirlwind*
- 8th level (1 slot): *tsunami*
- 9th level (1 slot): *storm of vengeance*

As a druid, Ctesa can swap any of her spells for other druid spells of the same level after a long rest.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The characters' plan likely shapes the finale of the adventure. Maybe a storm sent by Ctesa sends Odysseus's ship off course; perhaps they have a battle of wits that ends in convincing him to chase off after Pherinope's treasure. If it looks like the characters' schemes might be anticlimactic, use the storytelling contest, held in the agora of Elosse, to bring some threads together. For example, maybe they tell an outrageous story about the wyrm's treasure, have Athena's owl disrupt the contest just as Odysseus is about to speak, or arrange for Ianeira to propose to Odysseus.

AFTERMATH

Assuming the characters have managed to stop Odysseus going home, and he hasn't died in the process—this may not affect the Divine Intervention hook—they're entitled to the rewards Penelope promised them.

RESOLVING THE CHARACTER HOOKS

THE PROFESSIONALS / HOMETOWN HEROES

Penelope pays the promised rewards, as long as Odysseus lives.

DIVINE INTERVENTION

As far as Poseidon knows, Odysseus's only goal is to go home, so preventing him from doing so, (even if Odysseus is happy), satisfies him. He's disappointed if Odysseus is dead: he wanted to handle that himself. If Odysseus died through Ctesa's actions, Poseidon is satisfied.

If Poseidon is satisfied, he bestows a permanent blessing on each character: they gain the Amphibious trait and have a swim speed equal to their base speed.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

- Did the characters draw the ire of Athena, or even Poseidon? If so, everything they do in the future will be complicated until they make amends.
- Have the characters made an enemy of Odysseus? How will he feel if or when he finds out he's been played? Some overcomplicated revenge is very likely.
- If the characters have proven themselves clever and ingenious, Penelope may have further use for them. It's hard for a motherly, middle-aged woman to get respect when her peers are war heroes. Some clever plans may need to be enacted....





LOVE'S BIND



NOAH GRAND

LOVE'S BIND

When the archdevil Mammon arranges a wedding to try and lure the entire kingdom of Avatarium into his clutches, heroes need to foil the plot. Will you stand up for your values or give in to the corrupting avarice of Hell?

A four-hour adventure for 17th- through 20th-level characters.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

1. **There Goes the Bride.** Adventurers learn they were lied to; Helena's arranged marriage is a trap to lure them into the Nine Hells.
2. **Welcome to Hell.** Characters learn the strict hierarchy of Hell and must get into the wedding chapel.
3. **Here Comes the Groom.** The party can learn about Sigurd Duskbinder before confronting him about his plans to marry Helena.
4. **Death Do Us Part?** It's time to tell the hopeful, toxic groom some bad news. If characters fall into the archdevil's trap of fighting or killing him, instead of convincing him to annul the deal, they have to fight their way out of Hell.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Mammon, the archdevil of finance, made a deal with the Rosevalor family centuries ago. He sold powerful magical weapons and advanced technology as a way to help them gain wealth, while creating more strife and inequality throughout Avatarium. This has inspired more and more people to sell their souls for power. Recently, Sigurd Duskbinder, a naïve arms merchant, offered his soul to marry Helena Rosevalor. He knows nothing about her beyond her name and stories of her beauty.

Mammon wants to taunt Helena, knowing the increased corruption of her homeland will drive her or one of her friends to overreact in the name of revenge. That's where the adventurers come in. The archdevil's agents in the Rosevalor House have hired adventurers to escort Helena to the wedding and keep her safe from the Demon Lord Graz'zt's supposed plot to pervert the event.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure was designed for people to have a chance to play 20th-level characters. Because high-level play can be so different, there are three scaling options:

- *New to level 20:* For players who rarely experience high-level play and have a modest amount of magic items. Encounter strength follows the *Dungeon Master's Guide* guidelines.
- *Been Here Before:* For players with some experience and enough magic items or boons to make sure their primary ability score is more than 20.
- *I Make Murder Machines:* For relatively optimized characters who have a lot of magic items to play around with. DMs should plan more time for any combat encounters.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Legendary Loot. Aunt Theia Rosevalor runs the legendary Rosevalor Arms these days. Their enchanters are the best in the entire plane. Theia can arrange to get the party any two items of their dreams – items even 20th-level adventurers would aspire to obtain – if they protect Helena. Her offer seems completely credible and fits her reputation. No one who knows she got the items from Mammon is alive to tell the tale! Use this as a trap for greedy adventurers.

Here Comes the Fiend. Demons regularly raid Avatarium, seeking the kingdom's weapons, and their attacks have only grown more frequent. Because the

demons attack civilians, the Rosevalors have been able to portray themselves as the guardians and protectors of the realm. Characters with wide-ranging contacts may have heard stories of people speaking out against Avatarium's increased militarization disappearing under mysterious circumstances.

CHAPTER 1: THERE GOES THE BRIDE

Regardless of which hook works best, Theia Rosevalor gives the party a *teleportation circle* sigil to Spirits, the most exclusive tavern in Avatarium. Theia explains, "If Helena Rosevalor is anywhere in the kingdom, she is probably performing in the back room. Look for the dancing tiefling bard." Then Theia offers to cast *teleport* to get the wedding started more quickly.

As adventurers start to escort Helena Rosevalor to her wedding, they learn they were set up.

An invisible figure in a crushed velvet tuxedo offers drinks as a tiefling bard plays a jig on the violin.

As the dancing stops, an imp places a sealed letter next to the bard and tries to fly away. Before she can react, a muscular human carrying a huge battleaxe tears open the seal, skims the letter, and then asks, "Wait, your family is *that* family, Bee?" The bard sighs and replies, "Just call me Helena while we are *stuck* here!"

Helena "Beauty" Rosevalor (she/her), a powerful tiefling bard, has been adventuring under the tiefling valor name "Beauty" for a decade to get away from her family. Along the way, she fell in love with Morgan (they/them), a human warrior who went on adventures to bail their house out of debt. The letter is an invitation to Helena's marriage to Sigurd Duskbinder (he/him), which is quite a surprise to Helena and Morgan. Unless stopped, Helena shoots and kills the imp with a bow before talking.

HELENA "BEAUTY" ROSEVALOR

Personality Trait: Extravagant, compassionate, forceful

Ideal: "Freedom and pleasure mean helping people."

Bond: "Morgan taught me what love is."

Flaw: "I run when overwhelmed. Or shatter things."

MORGAN, "THE BEAST"

Personality Trait: Intuitive, proud, resilient

Ideal: "Better to die than betray my beliefs."

Bond: "My wife makes me a better person."

Flaw: "I hate having to be the calm one!"

Helena was traumatized by her family's warmongering and joy in sacrificing others to rise to prominence. She's never processed those feelings, and her family never interfered with her adventuring or romantic life before, so Helena hasn't opened up. Now her family has delivered a cruel, largely truthful ultimatum. Avatarium is in Hell and won't be returned until Helena gets married in front of Mammon and comes back to the family business. Helena is completely overwhelmed and wants to *plane shift* to Bytopia (a neutral good plane) to decompress.

Morgan knows their wife is unable to handle this crisis on her own and asks the party for help. They (correctly) suspect a trap, which the party is now a part of. The groom appears to be a weakling and far too easy to kill. He may be bait. Besides, violence against him isn't worth it. Helena refuses to hear any of this and insists that if she has to go to this wedding, she is dropping a *meteor swarm* on her family and the groom.

CHAPTER 2: WELCOME TO HELL

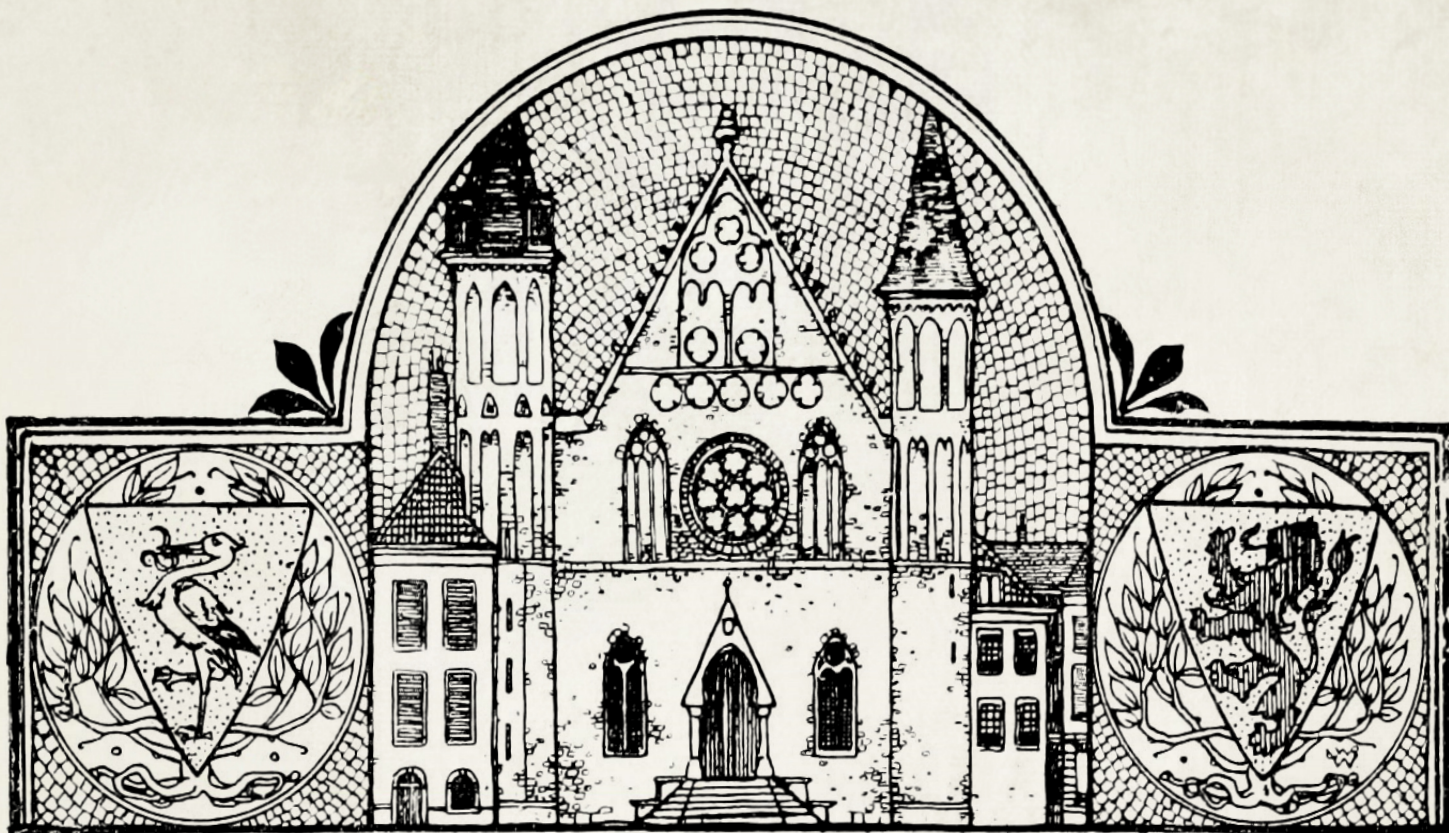
Instead of fire and brimstone, this small section of the third layer of Hell is like paradise, as long as people can pay. Mammon wants to deceive everyone in Avatarium until after the wedding, but can't stomach the expense, so he torments the less affluent.

As the party leaves Spirits, every building and signpost is inlaid with sapphires. Streets are paved with gold. A blue sun hangs low in a suddenly reddish sky. People in extravagant armor and gowns walk towards a massive chapel. Meanwhile, a dwarf dressed in simple clothes places one foot on the golden road, then recoils in agony.

Anyone succeeding on a DC 18 Intelligence (Religion) check can figure out they are in the Nine Hells, but this opulence doesn't fit any known layer of Hell, which should warn of unusual planar properties. On a failed check, an **imp** flies by as a greeter but doesn't give an explanation.

Helping the Commoner: Vistra Balderk (she/her) was walking home from her job in The Alehouse when Avatarium was sucked into Hell. The golden streets charge a 10 gp fee to anyone of insufficient power to belong in the capital, which Vistra clearly cannot afford. If a character tries to give her gold or wealth, she always fumbles it in her hands and cannot pick it up. Anyone proficient in Arcana or Insight can guess a planar magic at work.

Attempting to pay the toll for Vistra prompts a telepathic message: "HIERARCHY IS STRICTLY ENFORCED." The generous character is rewarded with 7 (2d6) psychic damage and must make a DC 23 Charisma saving throw. On a failure, the gold used to try and pay the toll simply vanishes with no effect, as the adventurer cannot overcome the laws of this plane.



GETTING TO THE CHAPEL

The adventurers' invitation to the chapel authorizes them to be Helena's guards. Since adventurers were probably smart enough to let her stay behind, they've got a problem.

Magical Wards: The chapel walls prevent teleportation, dimensional travel, or divination magic from those outside trying to look in. High-level casters should know this, but players new to level 20 may not expect it.

Creatures: Emiko (she/her), a **pit fiend**, guards the entrance to the chapel. She wears an elegant silk gown that does not hide her weapons and will not burn or tear during combat. Emiko spent decades as a lowly imp spy until she overheard Sigurd's fantasy about being willing to do anything to marry Helena. One devious contract later, she got a huge promotion in the infernal hierarchy as reward for her subterfuge. So far, she loves using her newfound power for evil, and has already acquired seventeen souls from guests who would do anything to avoid waiting in the unreasonably long line.

The only thing that could ruin Emiko's joyous life is a group of powerful adventurers. If she dies in Hell, she dies permanently. But if she lets adventurers in and they cause trouble, it's back to being an imp! Ideally, the adventurers find a way to get her to another plane where she could start her own empire. She is willing to pay up to 20,000 gp in rubies for safe passage. If left to her own devices, she will escape to a new land to rule with fear and treachery, but she doesn't know that much about foreign lands and can be talked into more benevolent ways of advancing her interests. Try to roleplay this scene, using a successful DC

25 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check as a baseline for any interaction that doesn't involve a convincing plan.

EMIKO

Personality Trait: Cunning, dominant, effervescent

Ideal: "Eventually, I will see a woman in charge of things: *me!*"

Bond: "I always found joy in life, but, wow, is it easier with my new power and privilege."

Flaw: "I have only seen a small portion of the multiverse, and I know it!"

If combat ensues, Emiko enjoys bludgeoning people to death as much as negotiation, starting with the most arrogant party member. Any reinforcements, such as those listed below, start 60 feet behind the party, as guests waiting to get in.

MODIFYING THE FIGHT:

New 20th-level characters: Emiko has one use of Legendary Resistance and uses the *explosion* lair action every other round.

Been Here: Emiko has three uses of Legendary Resistance. Add an **erinyes** and a **warlock of the fiend** (VGtM) to the combat encounter. Rotate between the *darkness* and *explosion* lair actions.

Murder Machines: Emiko has three uses of Legendary Resistance. Add an **amnizu** (MToF) and two **chain devils**. Rotate between the *darkness*, *den of opulence*, and

explosion lair actions.

Legendary Resistance (see above for uses per day): If Emiko fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

LAIR ACTIONS

- *Explosion.* A *fireball* spell (DC 21 Dexterity saving throw) is fired from the arch of the cathedral at a point of Emiko's choosing.
- *Darkness.* A 20-foot-radius sphere of magical darkness appears at a point of the pit fiend's choosing. The *darkness* is a 5th-level spell and lasts until initiative count 20 of the next round.
- *Den of Opulence.* A chest of rubies appears within 15 feet of one character. Anyone within 15 feet of the chest must make a DC 21 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by the chest. Charmed characters must move towards the chest and pick up a 100 gp ruby (as an object interaction) on their next turn. Anyone failing the save by 5 or more is so busy picking up gems that they are considered restrained until initiative count 20 of the next round.

During or after a fight, characters can get Emiko's entire savings of 25,000 gp in rubies.

CHAPTER 3: HERE COMES THE GROOM

Morgan suspected the wedding was some kind of a trap. No matter how adventurers get inside the chapel, no one else inside knows how they got in. Adventurers could roleplay as much of this chapter as they want or charge to the altar, unaware of the trap!

Inside the chapel, everyone is wearing the finest gowns, doublets, or armor. Gold bars accentuate the floors of platinum and countryside murals of emerald. A butler approaches, asking, "Are you wearing *that*? I can upgrade your appearance to anything you desire, compliments of the Duskbinders."

Give players a moment to describe their costume changes, if any. These changes are all illusory, similar to the *disguise self* spell but holding up to physical inspection as well. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check is necessary to see the dozens of **veterans** in the crowd as guards.

Characters can buy unlimited refreshments for 5000 gp each. Anyone partaking gains the benefits of a short rest but has the unsettling feeling that they may have consumed the soul of an innocent to recover so quickly.

With a little chit-chat, characters can find four people with useful information.

The Ex: Myrria Brawnnavil (she/her) is attending the wedding, wearing fine dwarven plate armor with her clan emblem. Five years ago, she dated Sigurd for a couple of months before leaving him. Now she is here to use the wedding as a (dreaded) networking opportunity. If

adventurers seem like they disapprove of the union or the groom's mother, they find Myrria is eager to gossip.

Sigurd is charming, very attractive, and hardworking. He never thought it was unusual that a human and dwarf would start dating. This checked off all of Myrria's boxes at first. Then she learned just how clueless Sigurd is, repeating an outdated ideal of what a girlfriend should want instead of listening. He always wanted to treat her like a princess, taking care of her, protecting her, and doing all the hard work for her.

Militarization introduced Myrria to a cohort of female generals since she was born. She looks up to them as her heroes. She dumped Sigurd after he insisted men should bear the risks of war and are better suited for leadership positions. While Myrria would never put it this way, outsiders like the adventurers may notice that in Avatarium all genders have gravitated to certain forms of toxic masculinity, like exerting physical dominance over others as a way to solve problems.

MYRRIA BRAWNAVIL

Personality Trait: Industrious, militaristic, sarcastic

Ideal: "We all have to take care of ourselves!"

Bond: "I wish I could be a war hero, but I'm better at the forge."

Flaw: "I can only imagine one good way to solve a problem."

The Parents: The groom's parents, Quintus (he/him) and Eleanor Duskbinder (she/her) are thrilled to greet everyone on their precious boy's big day! He wears a fine black doublet; she wears an understated blue gown. Both are humans in their early fifties. Characters find the parents always work together, trying to win over people suspicious of their son's newfound success.

Quintus has no illusions about the marriage being a political arrangement with the Rosevalors. He (fairly correctly) assumes this is how elite society works and is thrilled to be a part of it. His son worked so hard, and now it's going to pay off. Sigurd is going to revolutionize Rosevalor Arms with his ideas for how to get magical weapons within the price range of the common soldier. Unfortunately, dad doesn't quite understand magic or how his son's plan would work.

Eleanor is convinced of her son's positive character and that he will make a great husband. He's so nice and talks so much about how important it is to treat his wife like a princess. Anyone succeeding on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check can tell from the tone in Eleanor's voice that she believes this is the way of the world. Characters can talk to other guests or succeed on a DC 20 Intelligence (History) check to confirm that many spouses in Avatarium try to marry into a decadent life of leisure, childrearing, or both, but associating this path with a particular gender is quite outdated.

QUINTUS DUSKBINDER

Personality Trait: Calculating, ambitious, unapologetic

Ideal: "Sacrifice is always worth it. Particularly others' sacrifices."

Bond: "We are all about to be rich and famous!"

Flaw: "Love is just an arrangement."

ELEANOR DUSKBINDER

Personality Trait: Conventional, social climber, unapologetic

Ideal: "It's best to work as little as possible."

Bond: "My offspring will be my legacy."

Flaw: "Everyone wants what I do, but I'm going to get it."

The Best Man: Lufaren (he/him) looks toward anyone who seems unfamiliar – like the adventurers – with a note of desperation. He has bailed his friend out of difficult situations ever since they were the only two in their squad to survive a demon attack. Now he is terrified that Sigurd is making a terrible mistake marrying someone he has never met. He also desperately wants to get out of his tuxedo and put on comfortable clothes.

Lufaren knows his best friend has terrible ideas about relationships and encouraged Myrria to dump him because neither would be happy in the relationship. If adventurers say they know Helena, he asks what she is like and whether she craves more independence than Sigurd envisions for his wife.

Out of all the guests at the wedding, Lufaren is the only one who stuck by Sigurd when he was a poor soldier coming back from the war, and he is one of the few who may stick around if the groom loses all his wealth. He is also the only person other than the groom and Mammon to see a version of the marriage contract. Lufaren knows that his best friend can annul the contract with no penalty at any point before the ceremony is concluded. However, he cannot be coerced or charmed into annulling it. If Lufaren knew this was a diabolical contract, he would be even more forceful in begging his friend to annul the deal.

LUFAREN

Personality Trait: Loyal, prodding, values relationships over possessions

Ideal: "It's a lot safer being the supportive sidekick!"

Bond: "Sigurd and I saved each others' lives."

Flaw: "I can't admit when others will never change."

Once adventurers have talked to as many guests as they want to, a bell chimes and a snooty butler says the ceremony will start in 10 minutes. Any of the bride's guests enter the chapel now for a last-minute rehearsal.

CHAPTER 4: DEATH DO US PART?

Adventurers have a chance to confront the groom. It's possible to talk him out of the wedding and his misguided ideals about love. If the party uses violence to stop the ceremony, they trigger the archdevil Mammon's trap.

Perhaps befitting the infernal nature of this affair, all the pews are made of iron. Murals of humanoids with the occasional devilish assistant conquering demons cover the walls and ceiling. A tall human in plate mail, wearing a crown on his head, stands before a golden altar encrusted with diamonds. He quietly recites the phrase "honor, cherish, and obey" in Common and Infernal, back turned to the door.

Chapel Dimensions: The chapel is 120 feet wide, 180 feet deep, and 100 feet high. The altar is 120 feet back, in the center. Aside from a 10-foot pathway down the center, iron pews fill the first 100 feet of the chapel, making those areas difficult terrain.

Wards: Anyone succeeding on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds a *glyph of warding*, *symbol* (discord), or both on the altar, depending on how the adventure is scaled. These wards only trigger if Sigurd is killed. At the two harder difficulty levels, another DC 18 *glyph of warding* is hidden on the organ in the back of the room. It stores a *feeblemind* spell, targeting the first adventurer to try and cast *dispel magic* on a ward on the altar.

Creatures: Sigurd (he/him), a **veteran**, stands all alone. He is shocked to see characters arrive without his bride-to-be. After all, he is going to treat her like a princess and make all her problems go away! The groom assumes adventurers are overprotective friends that he can win over. However, he is quick to threaten those who don't see things his way: anyone who stands against him will face the wrath of the almighty archdevil Mammon.

The archdevil sees this situation as a win-win. If Helena actually agrees to marry, it is a great sacrifice. What's far more likely is the bard is provoked and uses either a charm spell or physical violence to get out of marriage. Sigurd is bait for Helena or her friends and doesn't realize it! Mammon's "protection of Sigurd" clause gives him a long-term connection to Avatarium and doesn't require keeping Sigurd alive.

Adventurers can talk Sigurd out of marriage if they can explain why being "nice" and "courteous" and "treating someone like a princess" isn't enough. They also have to explain why Helena (and most women) want independence, and get Sigurd to accept that he was raised badly. Lastly, adventurers have to convince the groom that he can find vast economic success in other ways. Sigurd won't instantaneously become a good person, but he can make a start by annulling the wedding contract. Try to roleplay these scenes without using dice, and make sure every player who wants to speak to one of these points has a chance to.

SIGURD DUSKBINDER

Personality Trait: Naïve, self-absorbed, courteous

Ideal: "I will do anything to become the greatest tycoon."

Bond: "I almost died in the war with no magic weapon. Everyone should have one."

Flaw: "My parents said I'm the best boy, so I believe them."

FINALE

The last scene depends on the characters' decisions.

- If the party can convince Sigurd that he held toxic ideas, he tears up the wedding contract in frustration and the capital is returned to the Material Plane. Go to the Aftermath section.
- If the party coerces or charms Sigurd to annul the deal, a giant iron dragon emerges from the ceiling. Go to the Boss Fight section!
- If the party kills Sigurd, the ward(s) at the altar are triggered, and then the iron dragon emerges!

SCALING THE WARDS

New 20th-level characters: *Synaptic static* (DC 18 Intelligence saving throw) but with a 60-foot radius.

Been Here: *Symbol* (discord). Unlike the normal spell, this effect goes off once instead of lingering for 10 minutes. Its effects can be cancelled for all characters with a successful *dispel magic* against an 8th-level spell effect.

Murder Machines: Use both wards above.

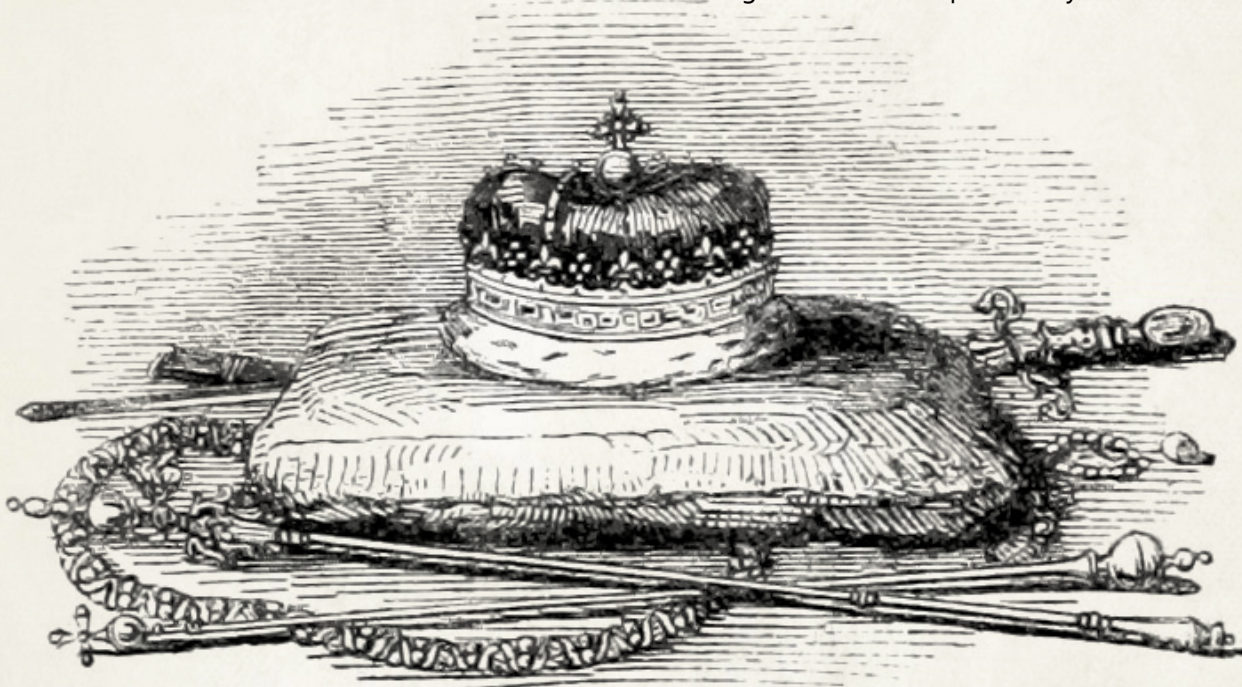
BOSS FIGHT

Creatures: The infernal iron dragon uses the base statistics of an **ancient red dragon** but also counts as a fiend (devil) and has the following features.

- It can innately cast six spells once per day each, without providing material components (DC 21): *dispel magic*, *far step*, *mind blank**, *prismatic spray*, *slow*, *true seeing**. It starts battle with *mind blank* and *true seeing* already cast.
- The infernal iron dragon's breath weapon does 49 (14d6) radiant damage and 42 (12d6) fire damage, instead of doing all fire damage.

Lair Actions: The infernal iron dragon does not get normal lair actions. Instead, it relies on the infernal organ in the back of the room to play them:

- **Reinforcement.** Characters hear screams from outside, and then a large-sized humanoid clad head to toe in a single piece of blood red armor enters the battlefield. This "humanoid" uses the statistics of a **glabrezu** and carries custom lances to serve as a focus for its *power word stun* spell. Anyone can end the spell effect by taking the lance with an action and succeeding on a DC 21 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check.
- **Tremor.** A tremor shakes the ground in a 60-foot radius around the altar. Each creature other than the dragon on the ground in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.
- **Death's Dance:** The organ plays a haunting melody. One creature of the dragon's choice must make a DC 18 Charisma saving throw. On a failure, a hellish chain links the dragon and that creature. Whenever the dragon takes damage, half of it (rounded up) is transferred to the target. The chain breaks at initiative count 20 of the next round.
- The organ is immune to fire, psychic and poison damage. Its AC and hit points vary.



MODIFYING THE FIGHT

New 20th-level characters: The organ has AC 18 and 150 hit points. It uses the *reinforcement* lair action on even rounds.

Been Here: Add an **ice devil**. Alternate between the *tremor* and *reinforcement* lair actions. The organ has AC 18 and 225 hit points.

Murder Machines: Add a **death knight** and two **star spawn seers** (MToF). Rotate between the three lair actions. The organ has AC 22 and 300 hit points.

AFTERMATH

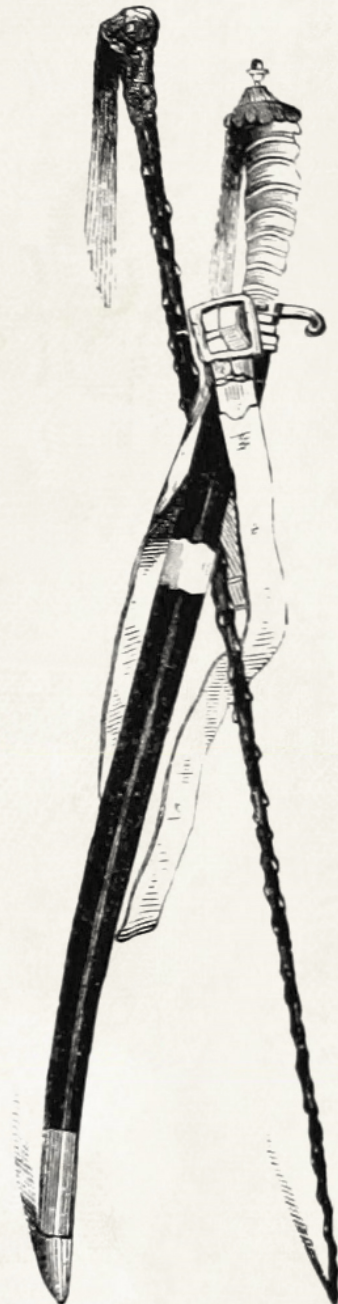
Depending on character choices, there are several possible outcomes:

- *Sigurd Annuls the Contract.* With the capital safely back from Hell, the groom asks permission to walk away. Months later, Helena and Morgan renew their vows in the capital and retire from adventuring to rule, spending Avatarium's resources on mass infrastructure projects to improve quality of life for the poor.
- *Fight, but PCs Don't Kill Groom.* The capital comes back from Hell, but Helena doesn't feel safe returning. She and Morgan keep adventuring.
- *PCs Kill the Groom.* The capital comes back but still has the opulent golden roads of Hell. Adventurers see two people sell their souls for safe passage in a kingdom made crueler.

In any case, the party gets a *staff of power* or *staff of the magi* (DM's choice) from under the altar and "The Edge of Desire," a unique *vorpal sword* that Sigurd thought was cursed. This unadorned sword reflects light like a prism and does not retain blood after strikes. It encourages the bearer to consider the needs of others. Once per day, the bearer can declare their love for someone else. If the recipient accepts and reciprocates these feelings of their own free will, for the next hour they both gain a +2 bonus to AC while standing within 30 feet of each other.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

- Mammon tricked the party and got away! Chasing him down could start an epic-level campaign!
- Bloodthirsty adventurers may also feel responsible for Avatarium if they killed Sigurd.
- Emiko, if alive, could form a crime family or need help dealing with confused adventurers assuming she's still evil.
- If Helena and Morgan come back to rule, the Demon Lord Graz'zt could try to crash their second wedding!



APPENDICES

TRINKET TABLE

01-02	A handled hairbrush that still has a single, extraordinarily long hair tangled in it.
03-04	A purple cloak made of a decadent fabric.
05-06	A decorative flail with gilded wood beads.
07-08	An oil lamp. It could do with polishing.
09-10	A finely made valiha (tube zither).
11-12	A signet ring. The heraldry is buried under a layer of old wax.
13-14	A red rose that never wilts.
15-16	A flower crown which changes blooms depending on the season.
17-18	An elaborately decorated diadem made of tin.
19-20	A shard from a large, heavily decorated mirror.
21-22	A tiny golden crown—too small even to wear as a ring.
23-24	A small kris (dagger) with a wavy blade.
25-26	A chipped teacup made of fine china.
27-28	A single tarot card—a beautifully illustrated and gilt Empress.
29-30	A pristine feather quill which is white on one side and black on the other.
31-32	A fly-whisk with an ornate handle.
33-34	A tiara made of realistic but false jewels that sparkle in the light.
35-36	A silver fork. It looks like it spent a long time underwater.
37-38	A jade amulet.
39-40	A small piece torn from well-crafted tapestry.
41-42	A tarnished hand mirror.
43-44	An ermine mantle.
45-46	A singing cricket in a small cage.

47-48	The pedigree papers for a seemingly royal family you've never heard of.
49-50	A green gemstone engraved with a spiral.
51-52	An ornate dagger stained with blue blood.
53-54	A dance card crammed with regal names in elegant handwriting.
55-56	A beautiful hand-painted fan.
57-58	A golden orb engraved with a holy symbol.
59-60	An outdated manual of etiquette filled with snarky marginalia.
61-62	An amulet engraved with a fleur-de-lis.
63-64	A recipe for a small, individually sized berry pie.
65-66	A handheld mirror bearing the heraldry of a house unknown to you.
67-68	An ermine "cap of maintenance" that once lined a monarch's crown.
69-70	A single glass slipper missing a heel.
71-72	A miniature painting of a castle nestled in the hills of a faraway land.
73-74	The paperwork for a small share in a dwarf-led mining operation.
75-76	An ampulla (spherical flask with two handles) said to have been used in a monarch's anointment.
77-78	An ancient coin bearing the profile of a queen on one side.
79-80	A scepter made of carved wood.
81-82	A spool of golden thread with only a tiny amount remaining.
83-84	A single tooth with a golden crown.
85-86	A pewter staff that jingles when moved.
87-88	A love letter to a long forgotten princess from someone who has signed with only a letter.

89-90	A hennin (cone-shaped headdress) with a gossamer cointoise (pendant scarf).
91-92	A handwritten account of a duel prompted by a princess's honor.
93-94	A piece of the coronation stone where monarchs of a fallen kingdom were once crowned.
95-96	A cap made out of embroidered glass beads.
97-98	A letter of introduction written by someone in the royal household.
99-00	A written account of advice passed from one queen to another.

WILD MAGIC TABLE

01-02	Roll on this table at the start of each of your turns for the next minute, ignoring this result on subsequent rolls.
03-04	You cast <i>armor of Agathys</i> on yourself.
05-06	You are surrounded by faint, ethereal music for the next minute.
07-08	You cast <i>beacon of hope</i> .
09-10	1d10 woodland creatures controlled by the DM appear in unoccupied spaces within 60 feet of you and are non-hostiles. They follow you for the next 1d4 days.
11-12	You cast <i>arrow of dwarvenkind</i> (see appendices) on yourself.
13-14	For the next minute, you must sing when you speak.
15-16	You cast <i>faerie fire</i> centered on yourself.
17-18	You prick your finger. Take 1d4 piercing damage and you fall unconscious. You can only be awoken with an action. Otherwise, the sleep lasts 1 minute.
19-20	You turn into a frog as if you were the target of a <i>polymorph</i> spell until the start of your next turn. If you drop to 0 hit points, you revert to your true form.
21-22	You gain the "reduce" effect of the <i>enlarge/reduce</i> spell for the next minute.
23-24	If you die within the next minute, you are unconscious instead. You are stable, but do not regain consciousness by any means for 24 hours.
25-26	You cast <i>silence</i> centered on yourself.
27-28	Your hair grows at a rate of one foot per hour for the next 24 hours.
29-30	You cast <i>Snillloc's snowball swarm</i> centered on yourself.
31-32	For the next minute, all your spells with a casting time of 1 action have a casting time of 1 bonus action.

33-34	You cast <i>conjure animals</i> .
35-36	One random perishable item you are carrying is now poisoned as if by the pale tincture poison.
37-38	You cast <i>plant growth</i> . Though this wild magic effect takes only 1 action, its effect is that of the 8-hour casting time.
39-40	You can't speak for the next minute. Whenever you try, saltwater comes out of your mouth.
41-42	You cast <i>unseen servant</i> .
43-44	1d4 random creatures around you are transformed into brown bears as if targeted by the <i>polymorph</i> spell if they fail the saving throw. The DC is equal to the sorcerer's spell save DC.
45-46	You cast <i>Otiluke's irresistible dance</i> on every creature within 30 feet, including yourself.
47-48	You gain resistance to all damage for the next minute.
49-50	You cast <i>spirit guardians</i> . The spirit guardians appear as knights. You cannot designate creatures to be unaffected by this spell.
51-52	For the next minute, you are immune to cold damage.
53-54	You cast <i>false life</i> on yourself.
55-56	You gain the "Bear's Endurance" effect of the <i>enhance ability</i> spell for 1 hour.
57-58	A breeze surrounds you. All ranged attacks with a melee weapon directed at you for the next minute are made with disadvantage.
59-60	You cast <i>tiny servant</i> on an object of your choice in your possession.
61-62	Anything or anyone you touch in the next hour suffers 1d6 cold damage.
63-64	You cast <i>speak with animals</i> on yourself.
65-66	Illusory butterflies and flower petals flutter in the air within 10 feet of you for the next minute.
67-68	You cast <i>Mordenkainen's faithful hound</i> . The hound summoned by this spell will not attack any creature.
69-70	You glow with bright light in a 30-foot radius for the next minute. Any creature that ends its turn within 5 feet of you regains 1d6 hit points.
71-72	You cast <i>flame blade</i> .
73-74	You glow with bright light in a 30-foot radius for the next minute. Any creature that ends its turn within 5 feet of you takes 1d6 radiant damage.
75-76	You cast <i>cone of cold</i> in a random direction determined by a d8 roll.

77-78	An illusory crown appears on your head. Any Charisma-based check you make in the next minute is made with advantage.
79-80	You cast <i>heroism</i> on the creature nearest to you.
81-82	All creatures within 10 feet must succeed a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pushed 15 feet away.
83-84	You cast <i>word of radiance</i> on yourself.
85-86	You are immune to fear effects for the next 24 hours.
87-88	You cast <i>spiritual weapon</i> , which remains for the duration. The weapon's shape is a scepter.
89-90	All plants within 30 feet of you come into full vibrancy and bloom.
91-92	You cast <i>compelled duel</i> on the hostile creature with the highest challenge rating within a 30-foot radius.
93-94	For the next minute, if any non-hostile creature within 30 feet of you is subject to a <i>bestow curse</i> or <i>legendary curse</i> spell, you immediately remove the curse and reflect it onto the caster.
95-96	You turn into a swan as if targeted by the <i>polymorph</i> spell until the start of your next turn. If you drop to 0 hit points, you revert to your true form.
97-98	A nonmagical sword in your possession becomes a <i>frost brand</i> sword for the next 24 hours.
99-00	You regain all expended sorcery points

ITEMS

ARCANOCLAST

Magic weapon (greatmaul), very rare (requires attunement)

This weapon looks like an oversized, vicious meat tenderizer. When used to attack, previously invisible etchings alight in a myriad of colors. The *Arcanoclast* suppresses any spellcasting abilities the user possesses upon attunement.

If hit with a spell that is targeting only the attuned creature directly (not with an area of effect), the attuned creature may use their reaction to make an Intelligence check DC 12 + the Spell's level. On a failure, the spell's effect is canceled. A success redirects the spell effect back onto the caster. Once used, this ability cannot be used again until the next dawn.

ARMOR OF THE DRAGON ANCESTOR

Armor (plate), rare (requires attunement)

You have a +1 bonus to AC while wearing this armor. While attuned to this armor, you can also cast *thaumaturgy* at will.

CIRCLET OF DISGUISE

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

This simple rose gold circlet is adorned with one flawless diamond at its apex. Once, this circlet allowed its wearer to disguise themselves with a thought, but its magic has waned and it now functions unpredictably.

While wearing this circlet, you can use an action to attempt to activate the circlet's magic at will. When you do so, determine the effect by rolling a d100 and consulting the table.

D100	RESULT
00-25	The circlet works as intended and you cast the <i>disguise self</i> spell. The spell ends if the circlet is removed.
26-63	The circlet disguises you as a random humanoid for 1d4 hours, determined by the DM and it can't be used again until you take a long rest.
64-100	The circlet has no effect and it can't be used again for 1d4 hours.

Hidden Properties. While attuned to this circlet, it suppresses any draconic natures, transforming even the most ancient of dragons into a regular humanoid while they are attuned to the circlet. This property can be discovered with an *identify* spell or DC 22 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

CORONA'S GIFT

Wondrous item, uncommon

This glowing glass jar, 3 inches in diameter, contains one dose of a thick mixture that smells faintly of coconut. The jar and its contents weigh 1/2 pound.

As an action, one dose of the ointment can be swallowed or applied to the skin. The creature that receives it regains 3d8 + 2 hit points and has resistance to radiant damage for 1 hour. Additionally, the creature is under the effect of the *faerie fire* spell for 1 hour.

DAMPENING STONE

Wondrous item, very rare

While attuned to this item, this jet-black orb removes all

of your innate magical ability. You can no longer cast spells or use racial or class bonuses that rely on magic, though you are able to use magic items such as staves, wands, and potions. Ending attunement to this item also ends the effect.

DIADEM OF SNOW

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

This diadem embodies the majesty of nature, its motif one of snow-covered mountaintops. The diadem has 10 charges. It regains 1d4 expended charges daily at dawn. While wearing it, you can use an action to expend one or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells from it: *fog cloud* (1 charge), *gust of wind* (2 charges), *sleet storm* (3 charges), or *stone shape* (4 charges). You do not need to maintain concentration on any of these spells, but can dismiss a cast spell as a bonus action. The spell save DC for these spells is 15.

DRAGONSCALE AMULET

Wondrous item, rare

This necklace consists of a single blue dragonscale on a glimmering silver chain. While wearing it, the bearer can understand and speak both Draconic and Sylvan fluently.

ENCHANTED ACORNS

Wondrous item, very rare

A small satchel containing 1d4 acorns. When an acorn is buried in dirt and the command word is spoken, it grows into a small fruit tree. When the fruit from this tree is eaten it restores hit points equal to a long rest. Each tree produces enough fruit for each party member to have 1 (or GMs discretion). The command word is set by the owner writing the word on paper and putting it inside the satchel.

ENCHANTED QUILL

Wondrous item, common

When you speak the command word of this bejewelled quill, it transcribes anything you say until you speak the command word again. You must provide paper, parchment, or vellum, but the quill never runs out of ink.

FAERIE LIGHT BOTTLE

Wondrous item, common

This small mason jar dances with a multitude of multicolored lights, shedding dim light in a 5-foot radius. As an action, you can open the jar, speak the command word, and release the faerie lights. When you do so, the

lights shed bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional 20 feet. The faerie lights continue to dance over the designated area, lighting it, until you speak another command word as an action to return them to the jar.

HAG'S TAPER

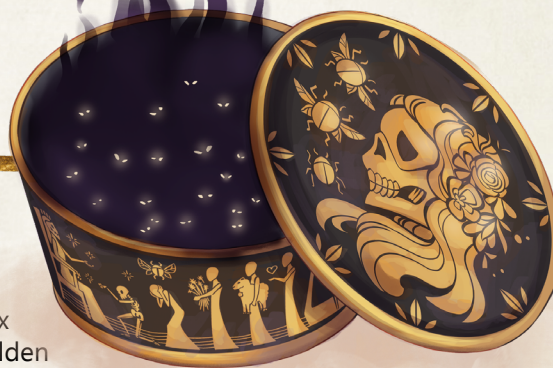
Wondrous item, rare

This item is a candle that can be used against a hag of any kind. It takes an action to light the candle. When lit within a ten foot radius of a hag, the target must make a successful DC 13 Wisdom save or become frightened. It burns for up to 1 hour.

THE QUEEN OF DEATH'S POWDERBOX

Wondrous item, uncommon

This powderbox, a black enamel box decorated with golden figures descending into the underworld, has 3 charges. While holding it, you can use an action to expend 1 of its charges and open the box. Roll 1d100 and consult the following table to discover what happens. Once used three times, this box becomes a nonmagical one worth approximately 500 gp.



D100	EFFECT
01-20	Grains of various types fall in a 60-foot radius centered on you. The area becomes lightly obscured. The grain falls until the start of your next turn.
21-40	A creature or swarm of creatures appears in the unoccupied space nearest you. The creature or creatures aren't under your control and act as they normally would. Roll a d100 to determine which creature appears. On 01-50, a swarm of insects appears; on 51-100, a sheep appears. See the <i>Monster Manual</i> for the animal's statistics.
41-60	The powderbox fills with golden wool, worth about 50 gp.
61-80	An undead servant emerges from the box, appearing in an unoccupied space of your choice within 30 feet of you. The undead servant uses the statistics of a zombie , wraith , or ghost (your choice), which serves you faithfully until either you or it are next reduced to 0 hit points. See the <i>Monster Manual</i> for the creature's statistics.

D100**EFFECT**

81-100

The next time you would be reduced to 0 hit points you return instantly to full health.

ROWAN BRACELET

Wondrous item, rare

A wooden bracelet that warms up and tingles when fiends are within 60 ft of the wearer. Adjusts its size to fit the wearer.

RUE POISON

Potion, very rare

A vial of poison with 4 applications. When applied, it causes 1d4 acid damage. If used against a plant creature, it deals 2d4 acid damage.

SCEPTER OF VOX POPULI

Staff, rare (requires attunement)

Created by a sorceress who had too long suffered under rulers unwilling and unable to listen to their subjects, this staff is inscribed in many languages—each imploring the wielder to hear and know their people.

The staff has 10 charges. While holding it, you can use an action to expend one or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells from it: *comprehend languages* (1 charge), *speak with animals* (2 charges), *speak with plants* (3 charges), or *speak with dead* (4 charges).

The staff regains 1d6 + 4 expended charges daily at dawn. If you expend the staff's last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the staff vanishes.

SCRYING MIRROR

Wondrous item, artifact (requires attunement by a creature of non-good alignment)

For many years the favored tool of an evil queen, this *scrying mirror* is stained by the queen's manipulation and murder. The gilt mirror is spotless and ornate, but viewing your reflection in it shows a horrible, decayed version of yourself.

You can cast the *scrying* spell (spell save DC 17) at will with this mirror. The mirror remembers and can report back the results of this spell.

Sentience. The *scrying mirror* is a sentient lawful evil wondrous item with an Intelligence of 16, a Wisdom of 17, and a Charisma of 14. It has hearing and

darkvision out to a range of 120 feet.

The mirror can speak, read, and understand Common, and can communicate with its attuned user telepathically. Its voice is an echoey mimicry of its attuned user. If no one is attuned, the *scrying mirror* does not speak. While you are attuned to it, the *scrying mirror* also understands every language you know.

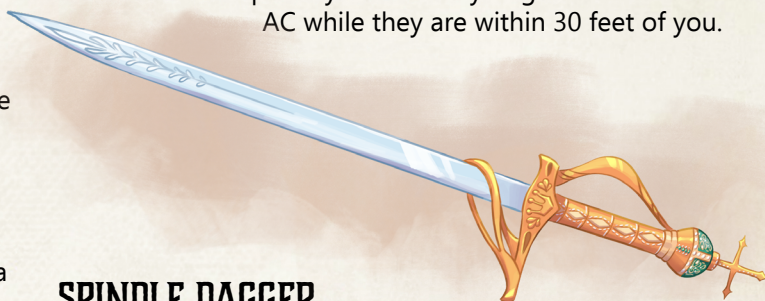
Personality. The *scrying mirror* is haughty, cruel, and opinionated, often mocking those who use it and those who it is used to scry upon. Most of all, the mirror fears again being abandoned and forgotten and despises being covered or silenced.

Destroying the Mirror. The *scrying mirror* appears fragile but is impervious to most damage. A *disintegrate* spell or one good hit from a magic weapon that deals bludgeoning damage is sufficient to shatter the mirror, however.

SWORD OF ACCOLADE

Weapon (longsword), rare

This elaborate sword was once used in ceremonies to confer knighthood. You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. As an action, you can tap the flat side of the sword on both shoulders of a willing creature. For the next 8 hours, the creature has a -1 penalty to AC and you gain a +2 bonus to AC while they are within 30 feet of you.

**SPINDLE DAGGER**

Weapon (dagger), rare

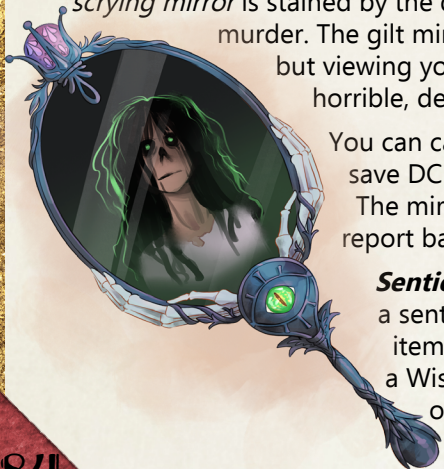
You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

When you reduce a creature to 0 hit points using the *spindle dagger*, they fall unconscious—but are stable—for 1d4 hours.

TOME OF SCHEHERAZADE

Wondrous item, legendary

This weighty tome seems filled with every great story of the world. If a story has been told, it can likely be found within its pages. You can read from the tome at your leisure, but you may only use one of the following effects per long rest. This item recharges daily at dusk.



- As an action, while reading aloud from the book, you can cast *calm emotions* (spell save DC 17) centered on yourself without the use of a spell slot.
- If you spend 10 minutes reading a story aloud to a group of up to 7 creatures that can hear and understand you, those creatures have advantage on all Wisdom-based skill checks made in the next hour.
- You can cast *legend lore* without requiring a material component or spell slot.

SPELL LISTS

ARTIFICER SPELLS

2ND LEVEL

Child of Triton

3RD LEVEL

Godmother's Grant

BARD SPELLS

1ST LEVEL

Mouse into Servant

2ND LEVEL

Child of Triton

Midnight Ride

3RD LEVEL

Friends on the Other Side

Godmother's Grant

5TH LEVEL

Legendary Curse

CLERIC SPELLS

2ND LEVEL

Child of Triton

3RD LEVEL

Friends on the Other Side

5TH LEVEL

Legendary Curse

DRUID SPELLS

2ND LEVEL

Ancestral Guidance

Child of Triton

5TH LEVEL

Legendary Curse

6TH LEVEL

Pecking Order

PALADIN SPELLS

2ND LEVEL

Ancestral Guidance

RANGER SPELLS

2ND LEVEL

Ancestral Guidance

Child of Triton

5TH LEVEL

Arrow of Dwarvenkind

SORCERER SPELLS

2ND LEVEL

Child of Triton

3RD LEVEL

Godmother's Grant

6TH LEVEL

Ice Castle

Pecking Order

WARLOCK SPELLS

1ST LEVEL

Mouse into Servant

2ND LEVEL

Midnight Ride

3RD LEVEL

Friends on the Other Side

6TH LEVEL

Pecking Order

WIZARD SPELLS

1ST LEVEL

Mouse into Servant

2ND LEVEL

Midnight Ride

3RD LEVEL

Friends on the Other Side

Godmother's Grant

5TH LEVEL

Arrow of Dwarvenkind

Legendary Curse

6TH LEVEL

Ice Castle

SPELLS

ANCESTRAL GUIDANCE

2nd-level transmutation

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Self

Components: V, S, M (incense worth at least 25 gp)

Duration: Instantaneous

You light a fire and throw incense into it, contacting the spirits of your ancestors to ask for guidance. You ask a single question concerning a specific goal, event, or activity to occur within 7 days. The DM offers a truthful reply, which is spoken through you.

Contacting your ancestors puts you in touch with mortality and is physically exhausting as you must reach across planes. You suffer one point of exhaustion until your next short or long rest.

The spell doesn't take into account any possible circumstances that might change the outcome, such as the casting of additional spells or the loss of or gaining a companion.

If you cast the spell two or more times before completing your next long rest, there is a cumulative 25 percent chance for each casting after the first that you get a random reading. The DM makes this roll in secret.

ARROW OF DWARVENKIND

5th-level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 90 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: Concentration, Up to 1 minute

A sparkling arrow streaks toward a target you can see within range and bursts into stars. The target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw. An affected target cannot take

reactions and must roll a d8 at the start of each of its turns to determine its behavior for that turn.

D8 BEHAVIOR

1	The target falls unconscious and prone and cannot take an action until it revives next turn.
2	The target is unable to breathe while sneezing uncontrollably. A creature affected in this way is incapacitated and suffocating.
3	The target is enraged and uses its action to make a melee attack against a randomly determined creature within its reach. If there is no creature within its reach, the target does nothing this turn.
4	The target ages 1d4 x 10 years. The aging effect can be reversed with a <i>greater restoration</i> spell, but only within 24 hours of it occurring.
5	The target is frightened of the caster. It has disadvantage on ability checks and attack rolls while the caster is within line of sight, and the target can't move closer to the caster.
6	The target is charmed by the caster and cannot take actions against the caster or its allies this turn. A target is unaffected if it is immune to being charmed.
7	The target uses all its movement to move in a random direction. To determine the direction, roll a d8 and assign a direction to each die face. The target doesn't take an action this turn.
8	The target falls unconscious and cannot take an action until the spell ends, the target takes damage, or someone uses an action to shake or slap the target awake. Once the target is woken from this effect, the spell ends.

At the end of each of its turns, the target can make a Wisdom saving throw. If it succeeds, this effect ends.

CHILD OF TRITON

2nd-level transmutation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M (a fork)

Duration: 1 hour

You adapt the target's body to an aquatic environment. They sprout gills and grow webbing between their fingers. The target can breathe underwater and gains a swimming speed equal to twice their walking speed.

The target retains the upper body of their race and, for the duration, the lower body of an aquatic creature of their choosing. If their choice of lower body would otherwise be able to attack, in this form they may make an unarmed attack, dealing damage equal to their unarmed damage

before transformation. Their skin and scales are adorned with shell decorations. Any gear they are wearing is altered to fit the new form.

FRIENDS ON THE OTHER SIDE

3rd-level necromancy

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self

Components: V S M (a card deck worth 25 gp)

Duration: Instantaneous

By laying out three ornate cards, you receive three answers, one each regarding the past, the present, and the future. Dancing shadows surround you as you ask a question regarding each time period and turn over the appropriate card. The card face now reflects an answer from the afterlife regarding the past, the present, or the future, as applicable.

The answer appears in the form of an image on the card face. The information you learn is accurate but couched in symbolism. You may leave cards unturned and questions unspoken by ending the spell.



GODMOTHER'S GRANT

3rd-level illusion

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 30 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: 8 hours

This spell allows you to change the appearance—including clothing, armor, weapons, and other belongings—of up to 8 creatures that you can see within range. You give each target you choose a new, illusory appearance. This spell does not affect physical appearance, such as body type or height.

The changes wrought by this spell fail to hold up to physical inspection. For example, if you use this spell to add a crown to a creature's outfit, objects pass through the crown, and anyone who touches it would feel nothing or would feel the creature's head and hair.

A creature can use its action to inspect a target and make an Intelligence (Investigation) check against your spell save DC. If it succeeds, it becomes aware that the target is disguised.

ICE CASTLE

6th-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: 1 mile

Components: V, S, M (a body of freshwater or heavy snow)

Duration: 24 hours

Your power flurries through the air and into the ground, and a frozen castle emerges before you that stays frozen for the duration, regardless of external temperature. You choose where the castle's one entrance is located. The entrance is 5 feet wide and 10 feet tall. The door opens only at your command, which you can speak as a bonus action. It is immune to the *knock* spell and similar magic, such as that of a *chime of opening*.

Beyond the portal is a magnificent foyer with numerous chambers beyond. The atmosphere is clean and fresh, but as cold as ice.

Each creature in the area where the fortress freezes into place must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10d10 cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. In either case, the creature is pushed to an unoccupied space outside but next to the fortress. You can choose whether terrain and objects in the area that aren't being worn or carried are within your castle for the duration or if they take this damage and are pushed away automatically.

You can create any floorplan you like, but the space can't exceed 50 cubes, each cube being 10 feet on each side. The place is furnished and decorated as you choose. It contains sufficient food to serve a nine-course banquet for up to 100 people.

Cold breezes capable of completing the tasks of any humanoid servants are completely obedient to your orders. A breeze can perform any task a normal human servant could perform in the time they could perform it, but they can't attack or take any action that would directly harm another creature. Thus the breezes can fetch things, clean, mend, fold clothes, serve food, pour wine, and so on. The breezes can go anywhere in the castle but can't leave it.

Furnishings and other objects created by this spell are made of ice, and nonmagical fires cannot be lit inside the castle. No fire melts the castle. Items removed from the castle crumble into snow. When the spell ends, the castle harmlessly melts, leaving anything or anyone inside on the equivalent block of terrain.

LEGENDARY CURSE

5th level necromancy

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: V, S

Duration: 8 hours

You touch a creature, and that creature must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or become cursed for the duration of the spell. When you cast this spell, choose the nature of the curse from the following options.

A *remove curse* spell ends this effect. At the DM's option, you may choose an alternative legendary curse effect, but it should be no more powerful than those described above. The DM has final say on such a curse's effect.

A Voice Unheard. You capture the target's ability to communicate. For the duration of the spell, the target cannot communicate verbally or cast spells with verbal components and, furthermore, cannot communicate with other creatures via thought, gesture, written communication, or other signal. The target's face is a calm, emotionless mask for the duration.

Eternal Sleep. The creature affected by this spell falls unconscious for the duration.

Beast. You transform the target into a beast of your choice. The transformation lasts for 12 hours each day for the duration of the spell. The new form can be any beast whose challenge rating is equal to or less than the target's (or the target's level + 5, if it doesn't have a challenge rating). The target's game statistics, including mental ability scores, are replaced by the statistics of the chosen beast's. It retains its alignment and personality. The target assumes the hit points of its new form. The target is limited in the actions it can perform by the nature of its new form, and it can't speak, cast spells, or take any other action that requires hands or speech.

At Higher Levels. If you cast this spell using a spell slot of 7th level or higher, the duration is 24 hours. If you use a 9th-level spell slot, the spell lasts until it is dispelled.

MIDNIGHT RIDE

2nd-level conjuration

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: 30 feet

Components: V, S, M (a pumpkin or other gourd)

Duration: Up to 8 hours or until midnight

You summon before you a carriage or other land vehicle with the same coloring as the gourd used in casting the spell. Along with the vehicle is your driver, who is humanoid in form but is a celestial, fey, or fiend (your choice) and considered proficient with land vehicles. The driver cannot leave the vehicle and cannot speak, but understands the languages you know.

Once on each of your turns as a bonus action, you can verbally give the driver instructions, such as "stop the carriage," "get us out of here," or "take me to the ball." The driver follows one instruction until completed, unable to continue, or directed otherwise.

The driver has an AC of 10 and 15 hit points. If the driver's hit points are reduced to 0, the spell ends early and the driver and vehicle disappear. Anything left in the vehicle when the spell ends tumbles to the ground.

MOUSE INTO SERVANT

1st-level transmutation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M (a button and thread)

Duration: 1 hour

You touch a nonhostile mouse or rat (or similar creature at your DM's discretion), transforming it into a humanoid servant for the duration whose appearance you choose.

Once on each of your turns as a bonus action, you can verbally command the servant to move up to 30 feet and interact with an object. The servant can perform simple tasks, such as fetching things, cleaning, mending, folding clothes, lighting fires, serving food, and pouring wine. Once you give the command, the servant performs the task to the best of its ability until it completes the task, then waits for your next command.

The servant cannot speak, retains its previous statistics, has an AC of 10 and reverts to its previous form if it takes damage. The servant has land and water vehicle proficiency.

PECKING ORDER

6th-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 300 feet

Components: V, S, M (bread crumbs and a shiny coin)

Duration: Concentration, up to 10 minutes

Swooping, pecking native birds fill a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on a point you choose within range. The sphere spreads around corners. The sphere remains for the duration, and its area is lightly obscured. The sphere's area is difficult terrain.

When the area appears, each creature in it must make a Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 5d10 piercing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature must also make this saving throw when it enters the spell's area for the first time on a turn or ends its turn there. A creature who moves more than five feet within the sphere must succeed on an additional Dexterity saving throw or fall prone.

The spell fails if you can't see an outdoor location for the birds to fly in from (for example, if you are in a windowless room).

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 7th level or higher, the damage increases by 1d10 for each slot level above 6th.