

# EAT THE RICH

*Health & Beauty*

DECEMBER 2020

20 *of* 20



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**Special Thanks:** Every single person who has patiently waited for this issue to appear <3

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## PRODUCERS' NOTES

We've got two different themes this issue: health, and beauty.

The way capitalism constructs and packages identities is near and dear to my heart. I worked in consumer insight (market research) for years, including for the beauty sector, and watching the careful interplay of fear and hope that underlies beauty marketing was predatory and borderline abusive. I'm delighted to have a chance to jam a stake through the heart of the entire concept.

In the UK, we have fully socialised healthcare, at least for the time being. The pitches that came in around healthcare and the pharmaceutical industry read like dystopian novels. To most of the world these adventures are cautionary tales. We have it good, but that's guaranteed. If we don't fight to hold onto our right to medical care, mental health treatment, and the social care that goes along with them... this is our future.

When we first put out the call for pitches for this project, we were truly overwhelmed by the number that focused on healthcare. It was a real eyeopener for me. I am privileged to live in Canada where we have universal health care. Our system is far from perfect, but I know I'm not going to go bankrupt if I have to go to the hospital. But these adventures serve as a stark reminder that extreme-right populism is on the rise across the globe, and none of us are guaranteed safe from it.

We also have some really great work being done around beauty. In contemporary society, beauty is often linked to health. People who do not fit society's beauty standards are often painted as people who don't care of themselves in other ways. Fat people, like me, are seen as unhealthy. Disabled folks are treated as lesser-than, rarely shown as beautiful and/or sexual beings. But GREAT NEWS, we've got capitalism here to tell us if we just buy the right products, spend enough money, and work harder...we can be the picture of both beauty and health.

Honestly, how have we not burned this whole fucking thing to the ground yet?

-- Alicia Furness

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# How To Use This Zine

You can run all of the adventures Eat the Rich using only the 5e SRD. If statistics aren't shown in the adventure, you can find them at <https://5thsrd.org/>

New creatures, items, and maps are provided at the end of each adventure.

Now go forth and set the world to rights.

These adventures contain READ OUT TEXT (in orange boxes) and SIDEBARS (red boxes), for the DM's info only



The background of the entire image is a dense, chaotic pattern of pink and magenta splatters, dots, and streaks of varying sizes, creating a textured, energetic feel.

# HEALTH & BEAUTY





# FOR YOUTH AND BEAUTY

Level 5

Sarah Breyfogle

DM Sarah is a writer and professional gamemaster with a passion for collaborative storytelling. By day, she's pursuing a PhD in media studies. In her free time, she enjoys making art, PC gaming, and dogspotting.

People throughout town are raving about a fabulous new anti-aging potion, but despite its fanatical following, nobody can determine if it actually works. Don't tell that to the salesfolk, though - they tend to react harshly.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

A few months ago, a handsome human named Marcus Pentecost came to town looking to hire a few people to work for him. He asked them to help sell his anti-aging potion, *meleme*, offering them the promise of both riches as people fell in love with the potion's results and a chance to take on leadership roles and really make something of themselves. Those who first applied came back raving about the man - how kind he was, how much they enjoyed what they were doing, how great *meleme* was - and how well their small investment had paid off.

Better yet, Pentecost was still hiring!

However, as the weeks went by, cracks started showing. Those who joined later found that they had to keep buying *meleme* in order to stay employed, but that it was becoming progressively harder to sell. Those who quit found themselves isolated from those still selling *meleme* and in some cases, outright shunned. Eventually, a woman named **Carrin Hedgeworth** reaches out to the adventuring party for help.

## Dramatis Personae:

**Carrin Hedgeworth** (she/her): A short human woman with a small, ramshackle house on the outskirts of town. She's concerned about her daughter, who recently started selling *meleme* and has been acting a bit odd ever since.

**Rose Hedgeworth** (she/her): Carrin's daughter. She started selling meleme to pay for magical training and has since been charmed by Marcus Pentecost and made to serve him.

**Marcus Pentecost** (he/him): A fiendish yet charming demagogue who hungers to control others. He developed the business of selling *meleme* in this town and aims to expand to other provinces. When masquerading as human, he takes the form of a handsome, if fairly short, gentleman with fair skin and slicked-back light brown hair.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

**T**his adventure is investigation-heavy until the very end. Carrin asks the party to find her daughter, Rose, who recently started selling meleme and has been acting strangely ever since. The adventurers must discover the true nature of Pentecost's organization, talking with townsfolk and attending a recruitment event hosted by Pentecost himself. At the event, they determine that Pentecost is secretly an evil, shape-changing fiend, but cannot discern his master plan. That night, Pentecost determines that the party is a threat and sends succubi to take them out. The next night the party attends a more private event, this time at Pentecost's home, where they find Rose. They must confront Pentecost and free Rose from his control before she sacrifices herself for his dark goals. Based on how that conflict goes, the organization can be dismantled, or continue to spread.

## Adventure Hooks

**T**his adventure can be set in any town, but it works best if the adventurers are from that town or have spent substantial time there. The NPCs should feel

like friends rather than strangers. If you're running this as a stand-alone adventure, Carrin may be a character's long-time neighbor or relative. If you're incorporating it into a larger campaign, perhaps the party has returned to a familiar place after several months away to find that all is not as it seems. Regardless, they receive a note from Carrin referencing their past heroics and asking them to meet her at her home.

## PART 1: INTRODUCTION

The adventure opens with the party receiving a letter from a familiar address. When they are ready to begin, read or paraphrase the following:

The house in front of you is small, its roof desperately in need of reshingling. A tidy garden takes up the space between the house and the street, and the curtains over the single window are drawn.

After a moment, the curtains twitch and Carrin Hedgeworth welcomes the adventurers into her home. Carrin is a human woman short enough to have some dwarf or halfling blood in her. Her welcoming manner is offset by the lines of worry around her mouth. She tells the party the following:

- A few months ago, her daughter, Rose, became involved with a business run by a man named Marcus Pentecost. One of Rose's friends recommended her for a job that she said could help her afford to get the proper magical training she wanted.
- Rose was hired to sell some kind of anti-aging potion called meleme (mel-EEHM). She had to put up some money to buy product to sell, so Carrin helped her get started. She even bought a bottle for herself, which she shows the party. If asked if she's tried it, she says she doesn't care for how it makes her feel.



- The next month, Rose again asked for her help to buy more product so she could hit the minimum to continue selling. When Carrin asked questions, her daughter was evasive, saying she valued what she was learning and the mentorship she was receiving.
- Carrin began to ask around and has heard mixed stories about this Pentecost fellow and his product. Some people claim that meleme is a scam and that he's stealing their money, while others flaunt their fine clothes and talk enthusiastically about the skills they've learned and the friends they've made.
- This month, Rose asked for money again. Carrin refused, and the two had a fight, where Rose accused her mother of not believing in her. The two haven't spoken since.
- Carrin doesn't want to be an overbearing parent, but she's scared. She asks that while the adventurers probe, they do what they can to avoid making Rose suspicious.

If the party investigates the bottle of *meleme*, detect magic reveals that it isn't magical. A DC15 Wisdom (Nature)

or similar check reveals that while the potion is made of a variety of herbs, it is functionally a mild diuretic and laxative. While repeated use will cause an individual to lose weight, it's hardly a miracle cure for aging - or even particularly healthy.

Carrin asks the party to find out what's going on and make sure Rose is alright. "She's a smart girl, aye, but I haven't been able to give her much since her father passed, and I'm worried her ambition is getting the better of her." If the party asks for a description, Carrin says Rose is a short woman with short dark hair and a tattoo of a crescent moon behind her ear.

## PART 2: INVESTIGATION

**F**inding townsfolk who have had dealings with Pentecost or with *meleme* is hardly difficult - nearly any tavern can yield at least two or three leads. If the party decides to visit Rose's house, Rose is not home, but consider having one of these characters as a neighbor or roommate. Roll on the table below to determine who the party encounters, or allow enough time to speak with all of them.

1D10	RESULT
1	Xora Luminos (she/her), a tall, willowy elf woman with gold worked into her tight braids. She genuinely believes that selling <i>meleme</i> has given her unparalleled leadership skills, and she's made a good amount of coin from building her team. She plans to use what she's earned to start her own merchant business importing fabrics.
2	Miriam Therine (she/her), an elderly human woman with a walking stick who swears by the effects of <i>meleme</i> and will talk at great length about how much she likes the nice young woman who sells it to her.
3	Ann Neryes (she/her), an exceptionally shy half-orc whose faith is incredibly important to her. If the adventurers are kind to her, she reveals that she attended one of the events that Pentecost put on, but had to leave halfway through because of the awful smell - an indication to any paladins in the group that she has some Divine Sense. As far as she could tell, nobody else could smell it.



1D10	RESULT
4	Robin Thistlewick (they/them), a nonbinary halfling who just came out and was hoping to use the gold they earned from selling meleme to purchase a new, more appropriate wardrobe. Instead, they have a chest full of potions they haven't been able to sell and have never used.
5	Irene Rockhammer (she/her), a short-tempered dwarven woman wearing an apron. She throws a drink in the face of the adventurer who asks about meleme, loudly declaring she won't be pitched that stupid herby concoction one more blasted time.
6	Aiden Equento (he/him), a human man whose smile has quite a few swooning. He has nothing but good things to say about meleme, but if pressed on how the potion actually works, he becomes uncomfortable and evasive.
7	Haymer (he/him), an older human man with wild white hair and wilder eyes. He flinches violently when asked about Pentecost or meleme and mumbles something about evil, making a defensive sign in the air and stumbling away quickly.
8	Frey Stirwick (ze/hir), a genderqueer half-elf who tried selling meleme for a while. Ze made a little money, but didn't like having to pitch the product to hir friends and family.
9	Marie Candlewick (she/her), a halfling woman who hates selling meleme and is thinking about quitting. She's concerned that she will be ostracized if she quits - people who quit tend to quietly vanish from that social circle, and she's made friends she doesn't want to lose.
10	Shiné Okoya (she/her), a robed and scholarly human woman who is attempting to study the actual effects of meleme. She's reached out to Pentecost several times and received responses ranging from dismissive to chilly to outright hostile. So far, she's encountered several examples of meleme making people sick when they take too much of it.

Note: these characters should be roleplayed compassionately. They, along with the other people involved in the scheme, are not necessarily bad or unintelligent. Most of them made the best decision they could with the information they had.

**a**ll of these individuals, regardless of their feelings towards meleme and Pentecost, can tell the party that there is a recruitment event tonight which can help them learn more about the situation.

The recruitment event is held in an upscale inn, the Dragonturtle's Repose. When the party enters, read or paraphrase the following:

The sound of faint, upbeat music hits your ears as you step into the inn's common room. The tables and chairs have been swept away to make room for standing groups of people - mostly women - and a ramshackle stage at one end. An exceptionally fit young man offers you goblets of wine from a metal tray.

The tavern is approximately 40 ft by 50 ft including the bar, and reasonably crowded. The attendees are excited, nervous, feigning boredom, or a combination of all



three, but the complimentary wine is causing conversation to flow freely. Three of the servers are **succubi/incubi** in disguise, and a detect magic spell reveals an aura of abjuration magic coming from the inside of their right forearms.

If the adventurers talk to the attendees, they may hear the following statements:

1D4	RESULT
1	"I've heard Marcus Pentecost is an extraordinarily good looking man."
2	"Honestly, I'm just here because my friend wouldn't shut up about it."
3	"With this money, I can finally afford to take care of my baby girl - she's with my mother right now. What about you?"
4	"Hell, I'll try anything once, even if it's selling weird leaf juice."

Any conversation or eavesdropping is cut short by a chord from the unseen musicians and the entrance of a dapper gentleman, **Marcus Pentecost** (a **demygogue** in human form, Appendix A). Read or paraphrase the following:

The man - Marcus Pentecost - strides onto the stage and claps his hands together. "Welcome!" his voice booms. "I'm so happy to see you all here. Tell me, how many of you have a goal you've been wanting to achieve, but haven't had the time or the gold to make it work?" There is scattered applause and a few cheers.

Pentecost rattles on for quite some time, interspersing personal anecdotes with promises of success, before clapping his hands again and inviting those present to sign up for a special in-depth session at his house the next evening, where he will "share all the secrets of



success" that he's learned over the course of his career. The audience is rapt, all eyes on him.

A paladin who uses Divine Sense learns immediately that Pentecost is a fiend, as does the use of a *detect evil and good* spell. A DC19 Wisdom (Insight) check, made with advantage if the adventurer utilizes knowledge learned earlier in the day, also reveals that Pentecost's form is perfect - too perfect to be human. If the party goes looking for Rose, she is not present, but several of Pentecost's staff know her. In fact, they compliment her sales tactics and mention that she's likely to rise to leadership soon. Perceptive adventurers will remember that Carrin said Rose was struggling, but if pressed, the staff do not give any other answer.

As the evening ends, the party is strongly encouraged to attend the next event at Pentecost's house. Pentecost himself disappears shortly after the conclusion of the program, before the party can attempt to speak with him.

### PART 3. THE ATTACK

**W**hether or not the party discovers Pentecost's true nature, they are ambushed on the way home by two succubi in human form. Pentecost noticed the adventurers at the inn and sees a potential advantage in getting one or two of them under his control.

As you walk through the now-deserted streets, you can't shake the feeling that you're being watched.

If the party is successful on a DC15 Wisdom (Perception) check, read or paraphrase the following:

Sure enough, as you turn a corner and look behind you, you catch a glimpse of a slender woman standing in a doorway. Her eyes almost seem to glow in the darkness.

#### Tactics

The succubi aim to use stealth to get near the party without being observed before using their *charm* ability. If they succeed in charming someone, they attempt to leave again, unspotted, without their target even knowing. If they are revealed, they fight to the death, unable to shift to the Ethereal Plane.

If the party is large or of higher level, add an additional succubus/incubus to the encounter.



#### Development

Each succubus has a small, circular brand on the inside of her right arm. A DC12 Intelligence (Arcana) or Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that it is magical in nature. While these are not the same succubi who were present at the event, a DC16 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that the brands bear the same aura of abjuration magic felt from the staff of the event.

Each succubus carries 2d10 gp in a small velvet pouch and wears jewelry worth 25 gp.



## PART 4: THE EVENT

**a**t this point, the adventurers have several reasons to go to Pentecost's second event. In the meantime, they may decide to investigate further or speak to the townsfolk they met earlier (refer back to the table in Part 2). They may also decide to research succubi, in which case they learn everything in the traditional succubus stat block. If they disclose the attack to Carrin, she becomes panicked and begs them to find her daughter.

Pentecost's house is not hard to find - it is an ostentatious two-story mansion lit with magical lights to make the exterior appealing even in the dark. The evening has less to do with learning and more to do with celebrating success. As the party investigates, smiling individuals walk up the stairs to accept gilded potion-bottle trophies that commemorate their sales.

If the adventurers enter through the main entrance, they find themselves in area 1. If they seek out an alternate entrance, they find a kitchen door around the back that leads them into area 6. The party is not required to sneak in - they are welcomed at the door - but clever and stealthy choices give them an investigative advantage.

If the succubi were successful in charming an adventurer, reveal it to them discreetly when they see the succubus who charmed them. Charmed adventurers attempt to convince the party to leave, only turning to fight against the party openly in Pentecost's company.

### 1: Main Hall

Before you, the doors swing open to reveal an elegant foyer dominated by a sweeping staircase leading to a mezzanine. Marble columns support this balcony and fabric-draped tables have been set up underneath to hold food and drink. Groups of people circulate around the floor, engaging in polite conversation. Leaning on the balcony, chatting with a few others, is a short, dark-haired human woman who looks quite a bit like Carrin.

**T**he woman is **Rose Hedgeworth**, a **trainee mage** (Appendix A), and she is telling her friends that Pentecost has asked her to incorporate her magical talents into his work. She's clearly thrilled about the opportunity, but she is also *charmed* by Pentecost's *extended charm* ability, which makes questioning her challenging.

If the adventurers confront her directly, Rose's mood shifts to uncertainty and then, abruptly, to cold fury. When she leaves the conversation, she goes directly to Pentecost.

If the party uses more diplomatic methods and enquires about her new project, she excitedly reveals that she's researching magical binding mechanisms. According to Rose, making *meleme* is difficult work, and Pentecost is wondering if he can use creatures from other planes to do the lion's share. Any mention of Rose's mother causes her to become annoyed and leave the conversation.

## 2: Study

**T**his relatively small room on the ground floor contains a desk with many documents regarding *meleme*. Adventurers who spend at least ten minutes examining the documents discover that the majority of *meleme's* profits actually come from its salespeople buying product to meet the minimum quota to continue selling, and that very few people have actually made any significant income from the potion.

One of the drawers in the desk has a secret compartment which requires a DC15 Wisdom (Perception) check to spot offhand or a DC12 Intelligence (Investigation) check if the desk is specifically searched. Inside is a strange marble and iron wand - the *wand of ethereal control* (Appendix B). A *detect magic* spell also reveals the wand and by proxy the desk compartment.

## 3: Dining Room

**T**his room contains a large oak table, chairs, and an armoire full of plates and silver cutlery. Thick rugs on the floor are actually two **rugs of smothering**. They are a form of security, only attacking if the party attempts to make off with the silver.

## 4: Sitting Room

**T**his elegant living room is currently being used to store coats. A single, bored-looking **incubus** in human form handles the coat check. If threatened or attacked, he pretends to be human and calls for help.

## 5: Guest Bedroom

**T**his appears to be an immaculate bedroom. A door on the far wall leads to a small room containing a chamber pot and wash basin. A DC15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a locked trapdoor underneath the bed. The lock requires a DC20 Dexterity check with thieves' tools to pick or can be opened by the key in area 10. The trapdoor leads to an unfinished basement where Pentecost stores the gold from his endeavors (approximately 80,000 gp). The amount is too large to be easily transported.

## 6: Kitchen

The kitchen is bustling as black-clad men and women move back and forth, bringing out trays of appetizers and drinks.

**T**he kitchen is sufficiently crowded that characters who stand there for more than a few moments are admonished by irritated servers and told to get out of the way. Due to the cramped quarters, Dexterity (Stealth) checks in this room are made with disadvantage for anyone size Medium or larger.

If party enters the building from this direction, they have the opportunity to disguise themselves as servers:

By the door, you see two extra sets of black livery, as well as two matching hats and aprons.



## 7: Bedroom

**T**his room is locked. A DC15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools reveals Pentecost's bedroom, eerily tidy. Several pressed suits hang in a wardrobe, but otherwise there is no sign of anyone living there. Pentecost maintains the room purely to keep up appearances.

## 8: Storage

**T**his room contains approximately six hundred cases of *meleme*. Each case contains thirty bottles. The cases are stored on plain wooden shelves.

## 9: Bath

**T**his room contains a large, luxurious tin tub and some fluffy towels, all eerily unused.

## 10: Library

**T**his large, grand library has shelves on every wall containing many leather-bound books. A desk in the center of the library contains Pentecost's notes on summoning and binding succubi and incubi, including theoretical instructions for how to use the *wand of ethereal control*. There is also a small key which opens the trapdoor in area 5. Insightful adventurers with proficiency in Arcana may notice that the theory behind the wand sounds very similar to the theory behind what Rose is working on. The desk also contains a blue sapphire which, if *detect magic* is used, radiates an aura of conjuration magic. An *identify* spell reveals that this is an *elemental gem* - part of Pentecost's last line of defense.







## Development

**P**entecost appears for a final showdown, if the party has not yet attacked him.

### **PART 5: PENTECOST**

**I**f the party gave themselves away to Rose, Pentecost immediately retreats to the library and asks her, telepathically, to join him. The pair is waiting when the party enters. If the party did not reveal themselves and does not publicly challenge him, Pentecost and Rose enter the library shortly after they do.

Having attempted to dispose of the party once already, Pentecost now views them as a legitimate threat. His best chance to defeat them is in the library, where he can take advantage of its defenses. However, if the party challenges him publicly or lures him to another area, he is unable to utilize his *elemental gem* and is a significantly weakened target. Wherever he goes, Rose accompanies him.

#### Tactics: Pentecost

Pentecost has no desire to attack the party openly - the consequences for his business would be dire. If they choose to attack him within view of others, he defends himself with his rapier and attempts to *charm* attendees into defending him (some will fight genuinely - 1d6+2 attendee **guards** come to his aid). If the party is able to reveal Pentecost's true form - for example, by using a *moonbeam* spell - the same attendees are horrified and come to the aid of the party.

If given the chance to attack the party in private, Pentecost does not hold back. He has no qualms about shifting back into his true form and



using Rose as a pawn. He does not engage the air elemental unless it is to cover his retreat to the Ethereal Plane or if the adventurers bind him to this plane with the *wand of ethereal control*.

#### Tactics: Rose

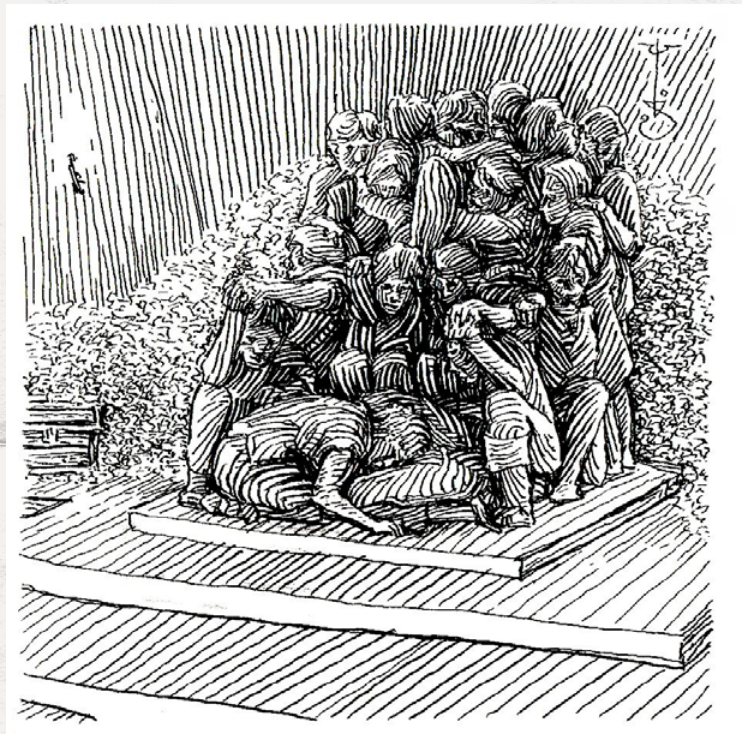
Rose opens combat by casting *fear*, aiming to splinter the party and make them easier for Pentecost to eliminate. If Pentecost shifts form, Rose gets an immediate Charisma saving throw against Pentecost's *extended charm* ability due to the shock. She makes an additional Charisma save every time she is dealt damage, potentially freeing her from the *charm*. On a successful save, she recognizes Pentecost's true nature and fights alongside the party. Otherwise, she will fight to the death in Pentecost's defense.

## PART 6: CONCLUSION

**Conclusion A:** If the party kills Pentecost and reveals his true nature to the gathered guests, their first concern is what has happened to their investments. The few who had been successful selling *meleme* are horrified by the revelation but also slightly bothered that their opportunity is gone. Those who have not been as successful are angry and want their money back. The newly-freed succubi and incubi flee, shifting blame onto Pentecost or the party wherever possible. The party can calm the crowd by offering to redistribute the money in Pentecost's cellar - if so, Rose volunteers to handle the task. Two weeks later, she comes by with 200 gp for each character - "A token of gratitude," she says, "from the people involved. They wanted you to have it."

**Conclusion B:** If the party kills Pentecost but makes no effort to reveal his work or dismantle his efforts, one of the succubi formerly under his control puts out the word that he tragically passed away of natural causes and that she will be taking over the business. The hit to the business is marginal, and the exploitative practices continue unabated, but the adventurers are likely able to abscond with much more coin. Whether or not the succubi hold a grudge is up to you.

**Conclusion C:** If the adventurers free Rose and run, or are unable to free Rose, Pentecost eventually expands into other towns and cities with a similar model. Eventually, authorities determine that what he is doing can be classified as a scam and start to crack down, but every time he simply pops up in another city with another product. Eventually, his aspirations start to grow bigger...



# APPENDIX A: MONSTERS & NPCs

## DEMYGOUE

*Medium fiend (shapechanger), neutral evil*

**ARMOR CLASS** 15 (Natural Armor)  
**HIT POINTS** 115 (20d8+24)  
**SPEED** 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8	18	13	15	12	20
(-1)	(+4)	(+1)	(+2)	(+1)	(+5)

**SKILLS** Deception +9, Insight +5, Perception +5, Persuasion +9, Stealth +8

**DAMAGE RESISTANCE** Cold, Fire, Lightning, Poison, Bludgeoning, Piercing and Slashing From Nonmagical Weapons

**SENSES** Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

**CHALLENGE** 7

**LANGUAGES** Abyssal, Common, Infernal, Telepathy 60 Ft.

**TELEPATHIC BOND.** The fiend ignores the range restriction on its telepathy when communicating with a creature it has charmed. The two don't even need to be on the same plane of existence.

**SHAPECHANGER.** The fiend can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid, or back into its true form. Without wings, the fiend loses its flying speed. Other than its size and speed, its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**FIENDISH WEAPONS.** The fiend's weapon attacks are magical.

## ACTIONS

**MULTIATTACK.** The fiend makes two attacks with its claws or rapier.

**CLAW (FIEND FORM ONLY).** Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

*Hit:* (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

**RAPIER (HUMANOID FORM ONLY).** Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* (1d8+4) piercing damage.

**EXTENDED CHARM.** One humanoid the fiend can see within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed for up to a week. The charmed target obeys the fiend's verbal or telepathic commands. Once per day, or if the target suffers any harm or receives a suicidal command, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on a success. If the target successfully saves against the effect, or if the effect on it ends, the target is immune to this fiend's Charm for the next 24 hours. The fiend can have up to three creatures charmed this way.

**UNCANNY INSIGHT.** As a bonus action, the fiend can make a Wisdom (Insight) check against a creature it can see that is not incapacitated, contested by the creature's Charisma (Deception) check. If the fiend succeeds, the fiend gains advantage on attacks made against that target until the end of its next turn, and may add 2d10+4 psychic damage to the damage of those attacks. The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw against this magic. On a failure, the target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

**ETHEREALNESS.** The fiend magically enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa.



## TRAINEE MAGE

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

ARMOR CLASS	12 (15 With Mage Armor)
HIT POINTS	23 (5d8)
SPEED	30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9	14	11	15	12	11
(-1)	(+2)	(+0)	(+2)	(+1)	(+0)

SAVING THROWS	Int +4
SKILLS	Arcana +2, History +2
SENSES	passive Perception 11
LANGUAGES	Any two languages
CHALLENGE	3

**SPELLCASTING.** The trainee mage is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The mage has the following wizard spells prepared:

*Cantrips (at will):* fire bolt, light, mage hand, prestidigitiation

*1st level (4 slots):* detect magic, mage armor, magic missile, shield

*2nd level (3 slots):* misty step, shatter, invisibility

*3rd level (2 slots):* lightning bolt, fear

## ACTIONS

**DAGGER.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

**DAGGER.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

## APPENDIX B: ITEMS

### Wand of Ethereal Control

Wand, rare

This wand has a marble handle and an iron ring affixed to the tip. Inside the ring is a strange sigil.

As an action, you may touch the tip of the wand to the exposed flesh of a creature with the etherealness ability and expend a charge to force it to make a Charisma saving throw (DC 17). On a failure, the creature becomes unable to travel to the Ethereal Plane, for 1d4 days. If the etherealness ability was a result of a spell, that spell ends.

The wand has 8 charges. It regains 1d4+1 charges daily at sunrise.



AMELIA NG  
2020



# BIG FARMAH

Level 5-8

R. Morgan Slade

R. Morgan Slade ([@rmorganslade](#) on Twitter) is a writer/narrative designer/sea shanty enthusiast excited to hear how your party fared during their time at Big Farmah!

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

**A**n ailing farming town overrun by basilisks struggles under the rule of Farmah, a Dragonborn Paladin who controls the villagers' supply of anti-petrification medicine...

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

**A**dventurers will discover a corrupt system overburdening an entire farming town, and a deadly Basilisk den underground. Can they overthrow Farmah, the Dragonborn Paladin (secretly a Young Green Dragon) who rules with heartless greed before the town crumbles?

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

- Tales of a farming town having trouble protecting their crops is enough to convince most glory-seeking adventurers to rush to their aid, with rumors of reward
- Whispers of a tyrannical Dragonborn Paladin ruling over an ailing farming town may inspire warriors of justice to offer their aid

## The Farming Town of

### Big Farmah

**A** small community of approx. 80 people. The homes and shops are cabin-like, cobbled together with wood and sweat. Acres of cropland with buckwheat, sunflowers, corn, and oats in full harvest surround the town.

## BIG FARMAH

**B**asilisks underground enrich the soil, providing the town with uniquely bountiful crops. Without them, the yields will be slim and the town will suffer. The town is inoculated against petrification thanks to the arrival of Farmah, a towering dragonborn paladin, unaware that Farmah's medicine is watered down and heavily addictive. Farmah's expensive prices and predatory business practices have resulted in his ownership of most major businesses in town, all rebranded in his name. The villagers are unable to leave town, addicted to Farmah's medicine and unable to escape his greed, powerless to resist his rule.

## PART 1: THE SUNFLOWER FIELDS (TOWN MAP #1)

**S**houlder-high sunflowers in full bloom hide a well-used underground tunnel.

Shoulder-high sunflowers in full bloom bend and sway as laughing children play within.

### Features of The Sunflower Fields

**The Sunflower crop:** with most of the sunflowers standing at a full 10 feet tall, the sunflower crops are considered difficult terrain and reduces vision to 30 feet within the crops.

**No Basilisk Den Entrance:** It is important to note that there are no tunnel entrances into the underground basilisk dens within the Sunflower Fields.

**Playing Children:** Four young children will rush out onto the road, enjoying a game of Stone Tag. **Adahm, Brendt, and Rahbyn** run away from **Ahvetahl** who is currently 'it'. The other children taunt Ahvetahl with the chant "Hey hey! Ho ho! Don't you turn me into stone!" as Ahvetahl playfully chases them back to town.

**Knowlah** (human, age 20-50, CN Priest, she/her): on patrol, recognizes capable adventurers and directs them into town to meet Farmah, and offers them each one Potion of Protection from Petrification at no cost if she believes they've never taken one before.

Features of The Corn, Oat, and Buckwheat Fields (Town Map #2, 3, and 4)

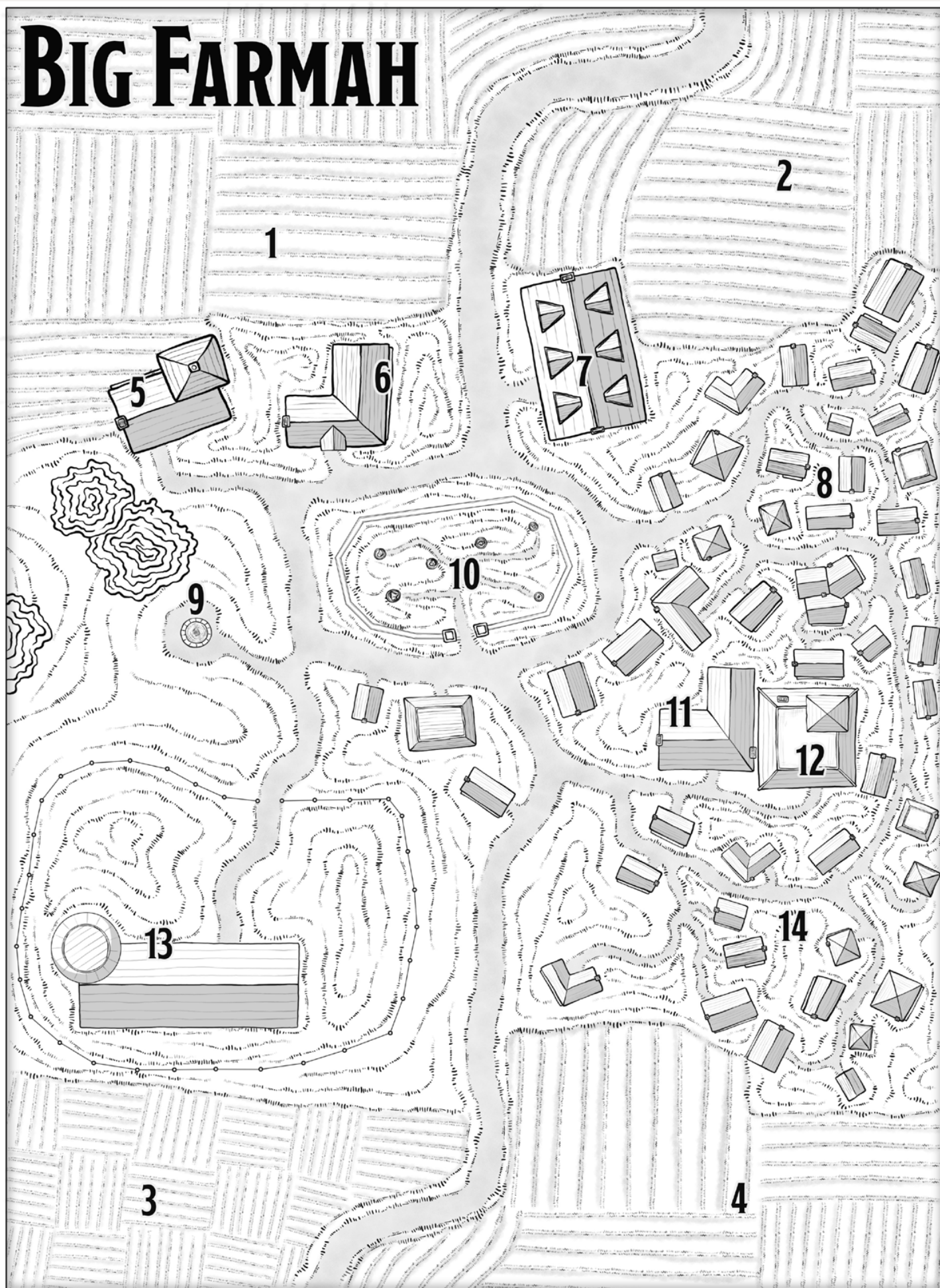
**Harvest crops:** The dense crops are considered difficult terrain and reduce vision to 30 feet within the crops.

**Scarecrows:** Each field has one stone Scarecrow raised on a platform to stand partially above the crops. A DC 12 Perception (Wisdom) check reveals the statue to be a Petrified villager.

**Basilisk Tunnel Entrances:** Each of these crop fields obscure a tunnel entrance to the basilisk dens underground. Each tunnel entrance is 10 feet by 10 feet and appears dug out from underground to the surface.



# BIG FARMMAH





## PART 2: THE TOWN OF BIG FARMAH

**T**he town beyond the fields stands as a monument to better days; run down and in need of costly upkeep. As the characters reach the town entrance, read or paraphrase the following:

The town entrance is a simple wooden arch, with a sign that reads "Welcome to Big Farmah". Villagers walk the muddy streets, sullen and lost in thought, overwhelmed with errands and worry. The buildings appear worn and in desperate need of repair. In the distance, a well kept Statue Garden is an oasis among the dreary townscape.

### Features of the Farming

#### Town

**The Town Sign:** The sign appears to be nailed over a much older sign. If removed, the town name will be revealed to be "Baskilli".

**The Statue Garden (Town Map #10):** At the centre of town where the roads converge rests 6 lifelike statues. A DC 12 Perception (Wisdom) check will confirm that the statues are Petrified villagers.

**Statue of Rahburt (Town Map #10):** Rahbyn can usually be found at Rahburt's statue, rambling about her day. Rahburt's pose is standing tall, calm, deviant. If Farmah ever were to stand in front of Rahburt's statue, they would meet a perfect gaze from 5 feet apart.

**Statue of Yufa (Town Map #10):** Yufa's pose is seated on the ground cross-legged, smiling, neck craned up looking at something. If Farmah ever were to stand in front of

Yufa's statue, they would meet a perfect gaze from 5 feet apart.

**Farmah's Hirelings:** Acting as peacekeepers, they are quick to confront anyone who disparages Farmah, threatens to leave town, or questions the high price of Farmah's potions. They won't start a fight unless provoked, and attempt to seek backup whenever outnumbered. They all carry 3x Potions of Protection from Petrification, which they will sell for 1gp each. Farmah's Hirelings are always considered to be under the effect of these potions. They will discreetly report back to Farmah with any information about new visitors.

**The Well (Town Map #9):** The town's former water source. Farmah has convinced the town that the basilisks have contaminated the groundwater. In truth, the groundwater has been shared with both the town and the basilisks and acts as a True Potion of Protection from Petrification. Townspeople get their water from The Temple of The Daghdha, which is created with a Jug of Alchemy, provided to the temple by Farmah.

#### Relevant NPCs:

**Farmah (Town Map #5) (see Appendix A for complete stat block):**

- Farmah is a young green dragon disguised as a Dragonborn Paladin through the use of Change Shape
- Farmah lives and works in Lynne's Apothecary, forcing Lynne to live and work in Rahburt's Archives nearby.
- Farmah will offer the promise of a lifetime of free room and board at The Farmah Inn if the adventuring party can clear out the basilisk dens, secretly hoping they will perish so he can collect their valuables.



- Farmah owns all major shops and inns in town, rebranded after himself.
- Farmah "heroically" found Rahburt's petrified body and set him in the statue garden after Rahburt confronted Farmah privately one evening four months ago.
- Farmah also turned Yufa to stone, leaving her in the Sunflower Fields for Ahvetahl and the other kids to discover, doing so because he could.
- Farmah revels in his own success and triumphs, and will constantly brag about how without him, the town would fall to the basilisk threat.

Farmah sells a *Potion of Protection from Petrification* at the cost of 1gp each, which means that one day's dosage costs 3gp for three potions lasting 8 hours each. Farmah has ample supply, but will not lower his prices and will only give the first one away for free.

#### **Farmah's Hirelings:**

- **Tochs, Grymm, Filx, and Dyari** (human, age 20-50, CN **Veteran**, he/him)
- **Quidd** (human, age 20-50, CN **Mage**, he/him)
- **Knowlah** (human, age 20-50, CN **Priest**, she/her)
- Farmah's Hirelings work around town to collect shipments of potions from Lynne, sell potions for 1gp each, and protect Farmah's interests.
- Farmah's Hirelings are unaware he is actually a dragon, and rebel against Farmah if he reverts to dragon form in their presence.
- Farmah's Hirelings all drink Potions of Protection from Petrification, and will freely give exactly one potion to any adventurer who has never received one before. Additional potions cost 1gp each and will not be given freely, no matter the circumstance.
- Farmah's Hirelings do not know that Farmah is capable of using Petrifying Gaze, that he is actually a young green dragon, nor do they know about his lair underground.
- Farmah's Hirelings obey Farmah's word as the rule of law, and are paid well for their service, but if they discover that Farmah started the rumours about the well water, or that he is a Young Green Dragon, they will abandon his cause.

#### **Relevant NPC children of the Farming Town:**

- **Adahm** (half-orc, age 8, LG **Commoner**, he/him)
  - Adahm is protective of his friends, and will stand in harm's way for all of them without a second thought.
  - Adahm regularly forgets to drink his Potions of Protection from Petrification, and has started today by forgetting to bring any.
- **Brendt** (human, age, 9, LN **Commoner**, he/him)
  - Brendt claims to be the inventor of Stone Tag, and sells parchments with the rules written on them for 5sp each.

- **Ahvetahl** (half-elf, age 11, NG **Commoner**, she/her)

- Ahvetahl wants to study and train herself to one day become a heroic adventurer to one day reverse Yufa's petrification. She hasn't decided what class she wishes to study, swayed to pursue a class harnessed by adventurers who display both confidence and empathy.
- Ahvetahl can naturally calm basilisks, as they recognize her as a creature who occasionally shares berries and treats, and will insist to the adventurers that the basilisks aren't dangerous unless attacked.

- **Rahbyn** (halfling, age 6, CN **Commoner**, she/her)

- If left alone, Rahbyn will visit Rahburt's statue, where she will usually ramble to him about her day. Rahbyn will often waste a Potion of Protection from Petrification on Rahburt, hoping that it might reverse his petrification.

- **Yufa** (half-elf, age 7, CN **Commoner**, she/her)

- Currently petrified within the Statue Garden. Yufa's pose is seated on the ground cross-legged, smiling, neck craned up looking at something. If Farmah ever were to stand in front of Yufa's statue, they would meet a perfect gaze from 5 feet apart.

- **An important note about the children:**

- The children all sneak water from the town well to wash their faces after a long day of playing in the sunflower fields, and have been drinking the water even though they've been told not to. As a result,

Basilisks smell the familiar scent of their own kind on the children and will protect them like their own young. This is why the town and basilisks have co-existed in peace prior to Farmah's arrival: anyone who drinks or bathes from the well is treated like a trusted member of the basilisk herd.

- The children miss the Basilisks, and will insist they aren't dangerous, even though they can't explain why so many villagers have succumbed to Petrification.

#### **Relevant NPC parents of the above children:**

- **Kruhvahn (Town Map #11)**, Parent of Adham (half-orc, age 54, LG **Veteran**, he/they), owner of 'Farmah's Tools n' Trade' (formerly Kruhvahn's Kiln.)
- Kruhvahn is currently unable to afford Farmah's potions for tomorrow and has given Adham enough doses to last one day (3 doses), unaware of their side-effects. When Kruhvahn meets the adventurers, consider his last dose to have just worn off.
- **Henry (Town Map #7)**, Parent of Brendt (human, age, 48, LN **Priest**, he/him), innkeeper of The Farmah Inn (formerly The Temple of The Daghdha.)
- Henry receives 10% of all donations and profits made by 'The Farmah Inn', and sends 90% to Farmah daily, but receives free potion rations in exchange for himself and Brendt.
- Henry spends most of his time resting and casting Create or Destroy Water, to supply the town with fresh drinking water for donations.



- Henry won't risk ruining his business deal with Farmah for fear of retaliation and will report any rumours of uprising to Farmah.

point Farmah personally turned Rahburt to stone using his Petrifying Gaze ability.

### Creatures

There is a pen of livestock (**Town Map #13**) raised by the town, currently 8 **Elk**, 6 **Boar** and 2 **Giant Goat**. These creatures are domesticated, but will attack if provoked. Characters with a passive Perception of 13 or higher notice these creatures are well-kept, and that the Giant Goats are prime for milking.

### Development

Some townsfolk will offer to sell trinkets, wares, or limited goods, but their goal is always to make at least 3gp, which is the cost of 3 of Farmah's *Potions of Protection from Petrification*.

### Common villagers' items for sale:

Simple jewelry made of stone petrified rodents, non-magical musical instruments, handmade flower pots, curated crop seeds/harvest, elk and boar jerky, town guide/information/errands

### Rare villagers' items for sale:

*Bag of Beans* (DMG 152), *Candle of Invocation* (DMG 157), *Chime of Opening* (DMG 158), *Deck of Illusions* (DMG 161), *Eyes of Minute Seeing* (DMG 168), *Folding Boat* (DMG 170), *Quall's Feather Token* (DMG 188), *Ring of Warmth* (DMG 193), *Sovereign Glue* (DMG 200).

Villagers offering these rare magic items consider them precious heirlooms, aware of their magical properties, hoping to earn enough to support their families for as long as possible.

- **Ysrahul (Town Map #12)**, Parent of Ahvetahl and Yufa (half-elf, age 82, NG **Scout**, he/him), runs The Farmah's Market (formerly called Ysrahul's Necessities)
- Ysrahul believes that eradicating the basilisk threat is the clear solution to save the town, and loathes Farmah for overpricing his potions.
- If Rahbyn is present, Ysrahul will always give her one of his Potions of Protection from Petrification, and Rahbyn will thankfully accept.
- **Lynne (Town Map #6)**, Parent of Rahbyn (halfling, age 61, CN **Druid**, she/her), former owner of Lynne's Apothecary (now closed.)
- Lynne lives in Rahburt's Archives, a small shack next to her former business, as Farmah has commandeered her property as his personal abode along with all her research and supplies.
- Lynne acts as Farmah's employee, and creates the Potions of Protection from Petrification to Farmah's exact specifications in exchange for free potions for her and Rahbyn.
- **Rahburt (Town Map #10)**, Parent of Rahbyn (human, age 38, LG **Mage**, he/him), former owner of Rahburt's Archives' (now closed). Rahburt is currently a petrified stone statue positioned within the Statue Garden.
- Rahburt was held hostage by Farmah after confronting Farmah about price gouging until his Potion of Protection from Petrification wore off, at which



## PART 3: AN ENTRANCE TO THE BASILISK DENS (DENS MAP C, F, G)

**T**here is an entrance located in each of the buckwheat, oat, and corn fields; tunnels that descend 120 feet below ground. Read or paraphrase the following:

The tunnel twists and descends 120 feet before opening into a pitch black dirt cavern. The smell of ripe fertilizer overwhelms you.

### Features of an Entrance to the Basilisk Dens

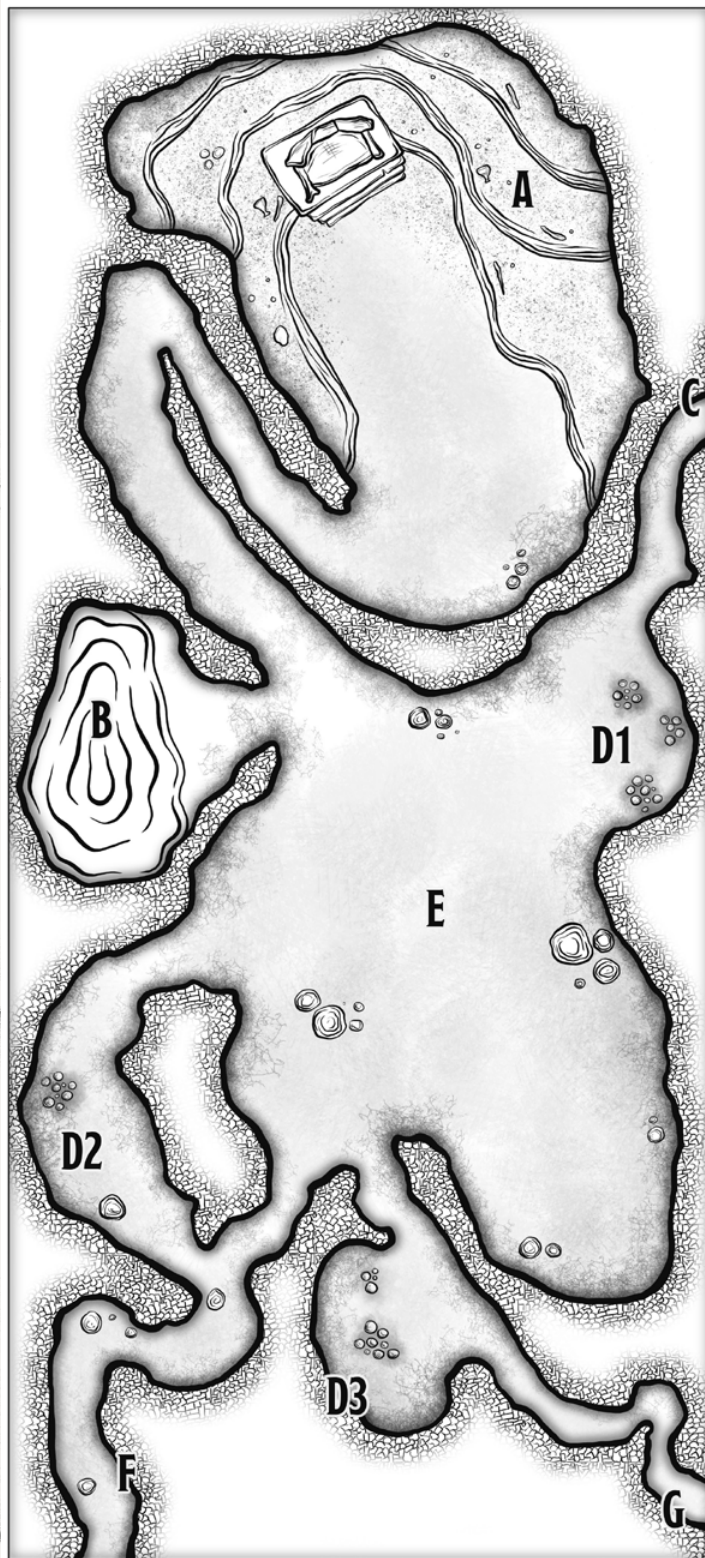
**Darkness:** There are no light sources in these tunnels.

**Tracks:** A DC10 Nature (Intelligence) check reveals basilisk tracks, however, A DC14 Nature (Intelligence) check reveals several human footprints, and a DC20 Nature (Intelligence) check reveals one set of tracks to be Dragonborn.

**Stench:** The first time any creature travels 60 feet inside an entrance tunnel, they must make a DC13 Constitution saving throw or risk coughing and alerting any creatures within 60 feet of their presence.

**Basilisks (Dens Map E):** Basilisks within the dens are resting and not anticipating danger, but will notice if anything fails a DC9 stealth check vs their passive perception. They are starved, and can be satiated with sufficient food. If they or their young are threatened, the Basilisks attack.

**Well Water Pool (Dens Map B):** Collecting from underground streams and 80 feet deep, Basilisks and their young will drink from this water, infusing it with enzymes that



prevent Petrification. The water is safe to drink, and any creature bathing in this water will not only be treated as a friendly creature by Basilisks for 24 hours, but will also be cured of Petrification should they be turned to stone.



## Creatures

6 **Basilisks** roam the underground caverns, with several basilisk hatcheries scattered about the caves. Treat any **Hatchling Basilisks** encountered during this adventure as **Lizards** with the *Petrifying Gaze* ability (with a range of 5 feet and with a DC5 Constitution saving throw) and **Pack Tactics** (Hatchling Basilisks have advantage on an Attack roll against a creature if at least one ally is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't Incapacitated.) Within each basilisk hatchery, 1D6 **Hatchling Basilisks** are ready to hatch at the sound of movement within 20 feet.

## Tactics

**Basilisks** always use Petrifying Gaze before attacking a creature whenever possible, or the first time they make eye contact with a creature. Unless directly controlled by Farmah, the basilisks will not attack first unless provoked or if their young are in immediate danger. The Basilisks will not attack the children or any creature who has bathed or drank from the well, even when directly controlled to do so by Farmah because such creatures are considered allies by all Basilisks unless that creature threatens a Basilisk or its young.

**Hatchling Basilisks (Dens Map D1, D2, D3)** swarm the closest hostile creature, or join the largest swarm. If no threats are present, hatchlings will gather near the closest Basilisk. Any creature that has either bathed or drank from the well water within 24 hours will be playfully swarmed by Hatchling Basilisks, but the hatchlings will not attack such a creature.

## Development

Basilisks will prioritize protecting their young. Destroying an egg or killing a Hatchling Basilisk will cause any Basilisks within line of sight to focus their attacks on the culprit.

## Rewards

Hatchling Basilisk Eggs can be collected by the party if desired. If properly trained and cared for, they can hatch and become pets. Ahvetahl can offer advice, and grants the adventurer advantage on animal handling checks when training a Hatchling Basilisk in her presence.

## Difficulty Adjustments

Make the following adjustments if the party is weak or strong:

- If the party is very weak or weak, Basilisks will attempt to help their young escape.
- If the party is strong, the Basilisks will hunt any hostile adventurer they discover within their dens to the death.
- If the party is very strong, a **Basilisk Matriarch (MM 24, with AC18)** patrols the dens and will attack any hostile creature to the death.





## PART 4: FARMAH'S LAIR (DENS MAP A)

**B**eyond the central basilisk den is a large open cavern. Read or paraphrase the following:

A cavern widens, brightly lit by torches. Carved levels and steps betray the natural formations of the cave. Treasure and glistening gems and gold reflect the torchlight, covering most of the floor. Farmah lounges upon a grand stone throne, carved to resemble farmers, villagers, and adventurers from all walks of life draped over each other to create a throne-shaped tableau. Only they're not carvings. Farmah grins.

### Features of Farmah's Lair

**Bright Torchlight:** Farmah's lair is lined with torches that provide bright light.

**A Throne of Terror:** The sight of a throne built by forcing people to shape themselves around fellow petrified villagers is frightening. Upon laying eyes on this throne, the adventurers must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. Frightened creatures cannot willingly move closer to their source of fear, and have disadvantage on ability checks and attack rolls while the throne is within line of sight.

**Scattered Gold:** Farmah's lair is considered difficult terrain, and any creature taking the dash action must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone after movement.

### Development

Farmah believes himself to always be capable of gaining or maintaining control and in exchange for a truce,

Farmah will offer part ownership of the town: 250gp per week deposited to the party through a small magic bag: *Farmah's Bag of Dividends*.

*Farmah's Bag of Dividends*, upon casting Identify or other magic, is revealed to be *Farmah's Bag of Devouring*, and Farmah has no intention of going through with such a payment scheme. Anything inanimate that the bag devours is spit out into Farmah's treasure hoard.

Farmah always carries with him the deed which grants him legal ownership of the town, as well as a tome containing Lynne's Research on curing petrification. With this research returned, Lynne will discover that combining 3 Potions of Protection from Petrification creates 1 Stone to Flesh potion.

If Farmah decides he is outmatched, he will threaten his own throne, attempting to hold it hostage, promising to destroy it unless the adventuring party retreats. Farmah will use any delay offered by such a stalemate to spend a lair action, then attack the most immediate threat among the adventurers. Farmah would rather die than abandon his treasure hoard.

### Rewards

Farmah's treasure hoard includes: Treasure Hoard Challenge 5-10 (DMG 137), as well as an *Ioun Stone of Sustenance* (DMG 177), a *Ring of Three Wishes* (DMG 193), a *Saddle of the Cavalier* (DMG 199), a *Wand of Secrets* (DMG 211), and a *Ring of Telekinesis* (DMG 193).

### Difficulty Adjustments

Make the following adjustments if the party is weak or strong:

- If the party is very weak or weak, have Farmah insist on offering to strike a deal with the adventurers, and avoid lethal



blows, unless they refuse and attempt to escape.

- If the party is strong, have Farmah target characters wearing the lightest armor first.
- If the party is very strong, equip Farmah with a *Ring of Invisibility* (DMG 191).

## CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

**F**inding and researching Lynne's notes regarding petrification will reveal that the well water, filtered naturally through basilisk-tilled soil, is the reason the basilisks and the town have co-existed in peace: the water prevents petrification, and the basilisks recognize the scent of their kind on townsfolk drinking from the well, sustaining an unlikely peace.

Any surviving townsfolk will celebrate if Farmah has left and Lynne is able to reopen her apothecary and conclude her research, she will discover that the active ingredient is actually the town's well water filtered through soil tilled by the basilisks, and that Farmah's specific processes were designed to dilute away the benefits of the well water. All the town has to do to survive moving forward is to reintroduce the well water into their diet.

Any remaining Basilisks will not attack the town, and will return to their burrows underground. The resulting tilling of the soil underground will cause the harvest to flourish, and the town will have their most successful harvest season in years.

All businesses adopt their original names. The town sign is torn down, revealing the town's original name to be "Baskilli."

If Ahvethal survived and met the party, she will choose one of the

adventurers who exemplified their abilities as a capable hero and model her studies toward becoming an adventurer of that class, vowing to bring justice to those who prey upon the vulnerable.

The following day, any children seen by the adventurers will be playing with their new Hatchling Basilisk pets. The next time they see Ahvethal, she will be comforting a young adult Basilisk, feeding it berries in the sunflower fields. Unless otherwise inspired by an adventurer during the ordeal, Ahvethal will reveal a desire to train toward the path of the Ranger. She then introduces her new Basilisk loyal companion named Flesh to the adventurers.

## CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

**I**f the farming town has been freed of Farmah's tyranny, the town will need to rebuild. There are several local efforts the adventurers could undertake should they wish to help rebuild the town (depending on the relationship they have with the adventuring party):

- Kruhvahm accepts help acquiring rare smithing metals as they rebuild their inventory for 'Kruvahm's Kiln'
- Henry accepts help restoring 'The Temple of The Daghdha' to its former glory and help earn favor with the gods before harvest season
- Ysrahul needs help getting the word out about his shop 'Ysrahul's Necessities', and will provide discounts and afford to acquire rarer items as his shop expands
- Lynne and/or Rahburt will reward adventurers who bring components and tomes to help reopen their apothecary and archives respectively

- Guiding Ahvetahl on her new journey to train to become a heroic adventurer, offering training and/or equipment to help her succeed

## APPENDIX A: MONSTERS & NPCs

### FARMAH

*Large dragon, lawful evil*

**ARMOR CLASS** 18 (natural armor)  
**HIT POINTS** 136 (16d10 + 48)  
**SPEED** 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19	12	17	16	13	15
(+4)	(+1)	(+3)	(+3)	(+1)	(+2)

**SKILLS** Deception +5, Perception +7, Stealth +4

**SENSES** Blindsight 30 ft., Darkvision 120ft., Passive Perception 17

**LANGUAGES** Common, Draconic

**CHALLENGE** 8 (3,900 XP)

**AMPHIBIOUS.** Farmah can breathe air and water.

**CHANGE SHAPE.** Farmah magically polymorphs into a humanoid or beast that has a challenge rating no higher than its own, or back into his true form. He reverts to his true form if he dies. Any equipment he is wearing or carrying is absorbed or borne by the new form (Farmah's choice). In a new form, Farmah retains his alignment, hit points, Hit Dice, ability to speak, proficiencies, Legendary Resistance, lair actions, and Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, as well as this action. His statistics and capabilities are otherwise replaced by those of this new form, except any class features or legendary actions of the form.

**COMMAND BASILISKS.** Up to three Basilisks within 120 feet will act as Farmah sees fit, provided that such action does not harm itself, another Basilisk, or any of the children.

### ACTIONS

**MULTIATTACK.** Farmah makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

**BITE.** Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 10ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) piercing damage.

**CLAW.** Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

**PETRIFYING GAZE.** If a creature starts its turn within 30ft of Farmah and the two of them can see each other, Farmah can force the creature to make a DC14 Constitution saving throw if Farmah isn't incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature magically begins to turn to stone and is restrained. It must repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn. On a success, the effect ends. On a failure, the creature is petrified until freed by a greater restoration spell or other magic. A creature that isn't surprised can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its turn. If it does so, it can't see Farmah until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If it looks at Farmah in the meantime, it must immediately make the save. If Farmah sees his own reflection within 30ft of it in bright light, and has restrained a creature with this ability during this round, Farmah accidentally targets himself with his own gaze.



## **APPENDIX B: ITEMS**

### **Potion of Protection from Petrification**

*Potion, rare*

When you drink this potion, you are no longer considered Restrained due to petrification effects for 8 hours. This potion does not cure petrification and is ineffective on creatures already turned to stone. An identify spell reveals its true nature as a Lesser Potion of Protection from Petrification.

### **Lesser Potion of Protection from Petrification**

*Potion, rare*

When you drink this potion, you are no longer considered Restrained due to petrification effects for 8 hours. This potion does not cure petrification and is ineffective on creatures already turned to stone. After 8 hours, you must succeed on a DC13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, your skin begins to harden and are considered Restrained and you must repeat the saving throw after one minute. On a success, the effect ends. On a failure, you are Petrified. Drinking another Lesser Potion of Protection from Petrification while restrained ends the Restrained effect, but will have no effect on a Petrified creature.

### **Baskilli's Well Water**

*Potion, rare*

Drinking this pure well water grants immunity to Petrification for 24 hours. Basilisks encountering the creature will be friendly toward the creature unless provoked. Pouring three of these over a Petrified

creature will reverse the effects of their Petrification.

### **Farmah's Bag of Devouring**

*Wondrous Item, very rare*

This bag superficially resembles a bag of holding but is a feeding orifice for a gigantic extradimensional creature. Turning the bag inside out closes the orifice.

The extradimensional creature attached to the bag can sense whatever is placed inside the bag. Dead animal or vegetable matter placed wholly in the bag is devoured and lost forever. When part of a living creature is placed in the bag, as happens when someone reaches inside it, there is a 50 percent chance that the creature is pulled inside the bag. A creature inside the bag can use its action to try to escape with a successful DC 15 Strength check. Another creature can use its action to reach into the bag to pull a creature out, doing so with a successful DC 20 Strength check (provided it isn't pulled inside the bag first). Any creature that starts its turn inside the bag is reduced to 1 hit point and is trapped inside until the bag swallows its contents once per day. Inanimate objects can be stored in the bag, which can hold a cubic foot of such material. However, once each day, the bag swallows any objects inside it and spits them out into Farmah's Lair. If the bag is pierced or torn, it is destroyed, and any items within it are deposited into Farmah's Lair.







Oct 20 20

Timothy McCown Reynolds



# THE COST OF A LIFE

Level 12

Danielle Maurer

Danielle is a writer, gamer, cosplayer, and known fear witch. "The Cost of a Life" is her first published D&D adventure. She is proud to use D&D to address a topic that negatively impacts so many of her loved ones, and she thanks her husband James and her bestie Lamb for the many ears they've lent her during the course of this project. When she's not hiding under her writing rock, you can find her marketing things at her day job, reading while she walks like a modern-day Belle, or singing loudly as she plays the piano. You can find her on Twitter as [@wryraconteur](https://twitter.com/wryraconteur), on Instagram as [@thalialata](https://www.instagram.com/thalialata), and at her website [www.daniellemaurer.com](http://www.daniellemaurer.com).

Until recently, Ordham was known for its people's good health. But with its famous temples under new management and a plague sweeping the city, adventurers must stop a business-minded cleric before it's too late.

This setting-neutral adventure is optimized for 4 12th-level characters.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Ordham has long been famed for its temple network dedicated to Apollo, god of healing. Ordham's citizens, in turn, were known for the good health they enjoyed, whether rich or poor.

Four weeks ago, a powerful cleric named Martin Dian arrived with a clever business idea. Posing as a fellow cleric of Apollo, Martin demonstrated the high-level magic

he could teach the other clerics—and the exorbitant prices they could charge in exchange. Martin also visited Vam Shahun, Ordham's governor, and offered him a sizable kickback if Vam supported his plan. Martin spent the next two weeks wooing the temple clerics with the lure of money, aided by some clever magic.

At the next meeting of the Circle of Apollo, which runs Ordham's temples, the Circle ousted its previous leader, Hymn, and selected Martin instead, choosing to believe he was sent by Apollo to increase the temple coffers. Little do they know that Martin isn't a cleric of Apollo at all.

Shortly after Martin's arrival, the city suffered an outbreak of Midnight's Kiss in its poorer districts. Normally, this would be no trouble for Ordham—but the

poor can't afford the now-costly treatment. As the poor sicken and die, many start to worry...

## **Dramatis Personae:**

### **Martin Dian (LE human, he/him):**

A cleric of Hades, god of coin, posing as a cleric of Apollo. A shrewd businessman, he sees the temples as an avenue for profit.

### **Vam Shahun (LN human, he/him):**

The governor of Ordham, secretly accepting kickbacks from Martin in exchange for stymying any attempt to change the new for-profit model of the temples. Not necessarily a bad person, but has succumbed to the lure of money.

### **Hymn (CG tiefling, they/them):**

A cleric who leads one of the five major temples in Ordham; they previously led the Circle of Apollo but were recently supplanted by Martin. They became a priest to help others, and they quietly but actively seek to unseat Martin so the temples can do good again.

### **Meline (CN halfling, she/her):**

A sick street urchin who will die without healing. Sunny and cheerful disposition, despite her illness.

**Iliren (CN elf, she/her):** An old friend of Martin's, hired as an insurance policy against anyone who might want to kill him. Stays because he's paying well, but his actions leave a bad taste in her mouth.

## **ADVENTURE SUMMARY**

**T**his adventure consists of four main parts:

**Entering the City** - Adventurers arrive in Ordham and meet Meline and Hymn. They learn about the city's current situation, including Martin's takeover and the plague, and see the sick firsthand.

**How This Happened** - Adventurers visit the temples and/or the government to learn more about how Martin took power and how they might undermine him. They meet Governor Shahun and/or Martin.

**Gathering Secrets** - Adventurers seek information on Martin by visiting different locations: Martin's personal quarters, Governor Shahun's office, and/or the small inn where Iliren is staying. Discoverable information includes Martin's payments to Shahun, Martin's true allegiance to Hades, and Martin's role in the plague outbreak.

### **The Final Confrontation** -

Adventurers confront Martin. This encounter can take place publicly or privately.

## **Hooks**

**A Whisper of Trouble:** Adventurers have heard rumors of trouble in Ordham, including a mass exodus of nervous townsfolk. The cause of this trouble hasn't yet leaked out of the city. Sounds like there might be an opportunity for enterprising adventurers.

**Stricken by Disease:** An adventurer or a loved one recently contracted Midnight's Kiss. The only healers able to cure this potentially fatal disease are the healers of Ordham, so the adventurers travel in search of help.

**Request for Aid:** As famous adventurers, the party often receives requests for assistance. A letter from a cleric named Hymn arrived two days ago, requesting their aid in expelling a predatory cleric from Ordham.



# THE COST OF A LIFE

**T**his adventure focuses on the importance of healthcare for all and the perils of corporate greed. As you progress through the adventure, emphasize these themes as often as possible.

## Part One: Entering the City

**A**s the party arrives, they encounter a city already suffering the effects of disease and greed. Read or paraphrase the following:

Ordham, the City of Spires. From the outside, it looks beautiful, with innumerable slender spires reaching for the distant sun, each one glittering with white marble and gold. But as you approach the gates, you easily spot the streams of people fleeing--and when you enter the city you smell the reason. Disease. Death. Something is very wrong in Ordham.

Adventurers enter Ordham with no trouble. At your discretion, they can encounter Beltaar (LG male half-orc knight, he/him) at the city gates. A captain of the Dawn Legion, Ordham's military force, Beltaar can provide basic details regarding the Midnight's Kiss outbreak. He can also provide directions to the nearest temple, the House of the Dawn, though he advises adventurers to leave Ordham.

### Features of Ordham City Streets

**Grim Atmosphere:** Passersby are furtive and move quickly, keeping their heads down. Many wear masks. Alleyways overflow with the bodies of the indigent sick.

**Foul Stench:** The sickly sweet scent of decay, disease, and death hovers like a miasma.

Adventurers can learn more about the city's goings-on by talking to citizens on the street. Getting anyone to talk requires a DC 10 Persuasion or Intimidation check. On a success, the citizen can provide similar information to Beltaar.

After adventurers have spoken to a few people, read or paraphrase the following:

"Pssst! Oi, you!" You turn at the sound and spot a wisp of a halfling girl no more than eight or nine years old. Her hair is matted with dirt, and she's missing a tooth or two. Raised black welts streak her exposed arms and legs. Yet despite this, she's smiling at you. "Ain't seen you afore. Can you do a healin' like the priests? My sores hurt something fierce."

The girl is Meline (CN female halfling **commoner**), and she is experiencing the early stages of Midnight's Kiss (Appendix B). She presses the adventurers to heal her, explaining that she doesn't have enough money to pay at the temples but she can help them with whatever they need. Despite her illness, Meline is relentlessly upbeat; she doesn't seem to understand she's dying.

No standard magic can cure Meline. Spells like *greater restoration* fail unexpectedly. Any adventurer who gets close enough to try and treat Meline must make a DC 10 CON saving throw or contract Midnight's Kiss. They do not realize this immediately; describe the symptoms as they appear.

After the party has interacted with Meline, read or paraphrase the following:

"Meline!" a clear voice calls out as a hooded and robed figure steps into the alley. "Meline, are you there?" The halfling girl runs toward the figure with a squeal and wraps herself around their legs. The figure lowers their hood to reveal long horns that sweep back over their head. "I brought what I could, Meline. This should help you feel a bit better."

This is Hymn (CG nonbinary tiefling **priest** with 18 WIS, 2 4th level spell slots, 1 5th level spell slot, and *greater restoration* prepared). Hymn snuck a special healing potion out of the House of the Dawn's stores to give to Meline. It's not enough to cure her, but it wards off the disease for a few more days.

Hymn displays great interest in Meline's "new friends" and, recognising them as adventurers, invites the party to accompany them back to the House of the Dawn, where they can speak more freely in private.

#### Features of the House of the Dawn

**Divine Serenity:** The temple is quiet and peaceful. Daylight filters down through stained glass windows, bestowing a golden glow.

**No Sickness Here:** Clerics and supplicants move about the temple, but no one is in a rush. The mood is lighter than the streets outside.

Hymn motions the adventurers away from prying eyes and shares the following:

- The temple now charges what Hymn considers to be exorbitant fees for healing. Basic care such as *cure wounds* now costs 250 GP, while curing *Midnight's Kiss* requires 5,000 GP for the full dose of potions.

- Hymn used to lead the Circle of Apollo, which operates the temples. Now, they have been relegated to Prior of the House of the Dawn, the least-favored temple. Hymn doesn't mind running the House, but they don't like the Circle's new policies.
- A cleric of Apollo named Martin Dian arrived a month ago. Hymn didn't think much of it, until Martin ingratiated himself with other clerics and the government. He showed off new healing magics and promised to share them. Hymn suspects Martin used magic to influence others, but they can't prove it.
- The Circle voted Hymn out of their position and installed Martin two weeks ago. Martin immediately proposed new costs for healing.
- Hymn wants to remove Martin. However, Martin is too powerful for them to take on alone, and they are peaceful by nature. They would prefer to discredit Martin if possible.
- The *Midnight's Kiss* outbreak began around the same time Martin came to town. Hymn believes the outbreak to be a punishment from Apollo. It breaks their heart to watch so many people dying, but they would be imprisoned by the Dawn Legion for violating temple law if they tried to help *pro bono*. Still, Hymn does what they can.

Hymn formally asks for the adventurers' assistance ousting Martin.



## Development:

Once the adventurers agree to help, Hymn recommends they investigate Martin and gives them directions to the Dome of Noon, the largest temple in Ordham. Martin resides there and wanders the temple providing "sermons."

Hymn also suggests talking to Governor Vam Shahun. They provide directions to the Legionnaire's Palace, Ordham's seat of government. A DC 10 Insight check reveals that Hymn distrusts the governor greatly.

## Rewards

Hymn promises free healing for an adventurer or a loved one, if needed. Otherwise, they promise a reward of 5,000 GP from the "dirty gold" in the temple treasury.

## **PART TWO: HOW THIS HAPPENED**

### The Dome of Noon

The Dome of Noon is located in the wealthy heart of Ordham, a 20-minute walk from the House of the Dawn. As adventurers approach, read or paraphrase the following:

The Dome of Noon floats above the nearby buildings, its golden curve held aloft by walls of shimmering alabaster. Four minarets rise around it, doors set into their bases. Entering the Dome is like walking into the sky; footsteps echo on the pure-white marble floor and soft light suffuses the decorated ceiling above. In one of the alcoves, a choir sings quietly, covering the city noise outside.

### Features of the Area

**Perpetual Daylight:** The Dome of Noon's interior is always lit, no matter the hour.

**False Gold:** In one alcove, craftsmen gild the walls with gold leaf to make the Dome more impressive.

In another alcove, Martin Dian (LE male human, Appendix A), a charismatic middle-aged man wearing white robes trimmed with gold, preaches to a small crowd of citizens and clerics. The sermon states that the gods respect those who take care of themselves and that comfort is a sign of the gods' blessings.

If the adventurers allow Martin to finish, he approaches them. Read or paraphrase the following:

The man steps down from his pulpit and runs a hand through his shoulder-length silver-streaked hair, eyes scanning the dispersing crowd until they land on you. His face breaks into a gleaming smile as he approaches. "Welcome, friends! I've never seen you here before. What brings you to the Dome of Noon?"

Martin presents similar information to Hymn, but flatters himself. He emphasizes the greater knowledge he has brought and the wealth that enables better facilities and healing techniques. If asked about his relationship to the government, he states that he convinced Governor Shahun to help him enforce the new prices, but denies the connection runs any deeper. If asked, he flatly denies using magic against his fellow clerics. A DC 16 Insight check reveals he is lying.

Adventurers who speak with other people in the Dome can learn the following:

- Martin lives in the northeast minaret. His chambers are near the top, so he can watch the dawn and dusk.
- Governor Shahun frequently enters Martin's minaret and leaves several hours later. Martin's devotees believe he provides valuable guidance so the city enjoys Apollo's blessings.
- Martin has been spotted leaving the minaret at night, wearing a cloak and his armor. Nobody knows where he goes, though many of his devotees believe he goes on holy missions.

A DC 15 Insight check reveals that some devotees' feelings toward Martin seem unnatural. Anyone proficient in Arcana knows that most clerics are incapable of magic that can influence the minds of others (e.g., *suggestion*, *charm person*).

## Development:

**A**fter consulting with Hymn or discussing amongst themselves, the party has two leads to consider: sneak into Martin's minaret, or follow him when he sneaks out at night.

## The Legionnaire's Palace

**T**he Legionnaire's Palace is also located in Ordham's heart, a 20-minute walk from the House of the Dawn or a 10-minute walk from the Dome of Noon. Read or paraphrase the following:

The Legionnaire's Palace is an imposing building, all commanding gray stone and thick buttresses. Crenellated spires rise from the building's top, and a large set of double doors stand at the head of a path running through three pairs of halberd-wielding guards. When you reach the doors, two guards swing them open, revealing a room filled with stylish but uncomfortable-looking chairs and a human man seated behind a desk. He barely looks up as you enter. "Do you have an appointment?"





## Features of the Area

**Military Fortress:** The Legionnaire's palace is built for security, with few frills and decorations. Guards are stationed at regular intervals. Stealth checks in this area are made with disadvantage.

Any DC 10 interaction check, or the successful use of an appropriate spell, gets the secretary to contact the governor, who agrees to meet with the adventurers. A pair of guards conducts the party to an audience chamber. Read or paraphrase the following:

The doors open to reveal a plain square room with a closed door on one wall, a modest desk and a high-backed wooden chair. Other than the chair's occupant and two guards stationed behind him, the room is empty. The seated man wears a military uniform with gold epaulettes and rows of medals. He rises as you enter. "Always pleased to meet with the storied adventurers that pass through our city," he says, offering you his hand.

Governor Vam Shahun (LN human male **veteran**) has served in the Dawn Legion for decades. He was once a good man, but years of politics have corrupted him. He seems friendly and open, at least at first.

If adventurers question him about Martin, he freely admits to visiting. He assures them that nothing untoward is happening; he simply values the cleric's advice. A DC 12 Insight check reveals this as a lie. If adventurers push the matter, Vam's friendliness vanishes and he quickly dismisses them. He doesn't like troublemakers here.

## Development:

**a**fter consulting with Hymn or discussing amongst themselves, it is clear Governor Shahun and Martin's relationship is deeper than either will admit. Visiting Shahun's office might yield additional information.

## **PART THREE: GATHERING SECRETS**

**a**dventurers have three leads on information that could discredit or weaken Martin's influence. They do not need to pursue all three; if you're running short on time, introduce a time-sensitive element, such as a big announcement Martin plans to make.

### Martin's Minaret

**a**dventurers must pass a DC 15 Stealth check to sneak into Martin's minaret. Grant advantage if the adventurers set up a suitable distraction, such as hiring Meline, or if they take other precautions. When they reach Martin's chambers, read or paraphrase the following:

Martin's private quarters are opulent beyond belief. Rich tapestries cover the walls, interspersed with beautiful oil paintings. A fluffy comforter and down pillows lie on the carved four-poster bed, and the elaborate shrine in the corner contains an icon of Apollo painted in gold and silver. Papers and spell components litter a mahogany desk.

A DC 12 Investigation check to examine the papers reveals promises to "compensate" Governor Shahun, but does not specify how. A DC 16 Investigation check on the desk

turns up a secret compartment, inside which is Martin's journal, written in code. Another DC 16 Investigation check to decode the journal reveals Martin to be a devotee of Hades, god of coin.

Any adventurer with passive Perception 14 or higher who examines the shrine notices a strange hinge. A DC 14 Investigation check reveals how the latch works. When the adventurer activates it, the icon of Apollo vanishes, revealing an icon of a god with coins tumbling from his hands. Any adventurer proficient in Religion recognizes this god as Hades.

#### Development:

If the party does not put everything back as they found it, Martin notices his possessions were moved. This puts him on high alert, and the next day he summons Iliren to shadow him. In any combat, Iliren joins during the first round instead of three rounds after Martin summons her.

### Following Martin

**a**dventurers must succeed on a DC 20 group Stealth check to follow Martin without being noticed. Grant advantage if adventurers take reasonable actions to increase their stealth (e.g., following from farther behind, dressing in black, etc.). If Martin notices them, he tries to lose his tail. Adventurers then must succeed on a DC 15 Survival check to keep up their pursuit.

Martin's destination is the Gruntled Cat, a homey inn with warm firelight shining out of its windows. Martin spends 20 minutes inside before returning to the Dome of Noon. Adventurers who snoop around spot him whispering to an elf woman wearing an unhealthy number of

knives (Iliren, CN female elf assassin).

The party can confront Iliren about Martin. Initially reluctant to talk, Iliren can be persuaded with a DC 12 Persuasion check. She shares the following:

- She and Martin used to travel together. He got her out of many scraps and even resurrected her once after an encounter with a dragon.
- He asked her to come to Ordham because he needed a discreet bodyguard. He offered to pay quite well, and she missed her friend, so she accepted.
- Upon arrival, he explained his plan to take over the temples. Iliren isn't opposed to making money, but earning off the backs of the sick and dying doesn't sit right with her.
- Martin is getting more ambitious, and his plans for Ordham are getting worse.

A DC 18 Persuasion check moves Iliren to share her biggest secret: Martin started the latest outbreak of Midnight's Kiss and plans to use it to raise prices even further.

Regardless of whether the adventurers learn about Martin's greatest crime, they can convince Iliren to turn on him with an additional DC 15 Persuasion or Intimidation check. Bringing up the sickness of innocents (such as Meline) grants advantage.

#### Development:

If the party convinces Iliren to wash her hands of Martin, she does not answer his call to join combat, should it arise.





## Governor Shahun's Office

**a**dventurers who wish to break into Governor Shahun's office must succeed on a DC 18 group Stealth check. Grant advantage if they take appropriate measures to increase their stealth.

The governor's office is just off the receiving room the adventurers visited earlier. Add additional obstacles here, if desired. When they reach Shahun's office, read or paraphrase the following:

The governor's private office is neat and orderly, the manifestation of a military mind. Folders and papers are stacked in even piles, books are alphabetized on the shelves, and a simple yet stylish portrait of the governor hangs behind his massive wooden desk.

Any adventurer examining the desk can make a DC 16 Investigation check. On a success, they discover a file labeled "Dome of Noon," which contains general information on Martin and handwritten notes from him cajoling the governor to support his new prices.

Any adventurer with passive Perception 14 or higher who examines the portrait notices a glint of silver behind it. Removing the portrait reveals a hidden wall

safe (DC 18 Sleight of Hand check with thieves' tools to unlock). Inside the safe, in addition to an impressive amount of money, is a ledger of payments that notes several kickbacks from Martin.

### Rewards:

The party can take the gold from the governor's safe, if they wish. The safe contains 2235 GP.

### Development:

**i**f the party steals the money or doesn't put the papers back neatly, Governor Shahun knows someone has been in his office. He contacts Martin, who calls in Iliren for additional support. See Development under Martin's Minaret. The governor doubles his security and interrogates his staff, searching for anyone who saw the adventurers.

## PART FOUR: THE FINAL CONFRONTATION



armed with the information they have discovered, the adventurers confront Martin.

If they plan to discredit him, this encounter should take place in public, such as the Dome of Noon or the plaza outside the Legionnaire's Palace. If they plan to kill Martin or otherwise defeat him in combat, they may seek out a private encounter.

### Discrediting Martin



Martin is easy to find in the Dome of Noon, delivering another sermon or announcing further changes to the temple prices in light of the worsening Midnight's Kiss situation.

The adventurers must sway the gathered crowd of clerics and townsfolk in order to convince them of Martin's sins. This requires three DC 18 Persuasion checks. Announcing any of the key pieces of information they have discovered (Martin isn't a cleric of Apollo, Martin started the Midnight's Kiss outbreak, Martin is paying kickbacks to the governor) causes murmurs throughout the crowd and grants advantage on one check each.

#### Development:

If the party succeeds on three checks before reaching three failures, Martin recognizes the crowd turning against him. With a glare and a promise of vengeance, Martin casts plane shift and vanishes (though a quick-thinking adventurer may be able to prevent his escape). If the adventurers reveal the governor's corruption as well, the crowd marches toward the Legionnaire's Palace.

If the party reaches three failures before three successes, Martin gives them a smirk and calls on them to leave before they make fools of themselves. Adventurers may need to resort to violence.

### Fighting Martin

There are several private places within the Dome of Noon where the party might confront Martin, including his minaret or a side chamber. Before the fight, Martin may monologue and reveal his intention to create more plagues and leverage them to become governor. If a fight drags on, it attracts increasing attention.

#### Tactics:

As a level 20 cleric, Martin is a formidable foe. On his first turn, he uses a bonus action to summon Iliren. He focuses first on bolstering his defenses by casting spells such as spirit guardians and death ward. He doesn't have any particular desire to kill the adventurers, so he will attempt to immobilize or neutralize them with spells like hold person or banishment. If that fails, Martin resorts to true violence such as earthquake or firestorm. He holds some of his first-level spell slots in reserve so he can use inflict wounds with his reaction. If his deception has not yet been revealed, he knows a public confrontation is more beneficial to him, and he tries to draw attention to the fight.

#### Iliren's Choice:

If adventurers didn't visit The Gruntled Cat or failed to convince Iliren that Martin should be stopped, Martin's summon is successful. It takes Iliren three rounds to arrive; she joins the combat on Martin's side.



### Equipment:

Martin carries two potions of supreme healing which he can drink as a bonus action. He wears +1 half plate and carries a +1 mace.

### Development:

**I**f adventurers knock Martin unconscious, they decide what to do. Possibilities include blackmailing him to leave Ordham, orchestrating a public dressing down or hauling him to prison.

If adventurers kill Martin and/or Iliren, they must dispose of the body. Murder is illegal in Ordham and the party may be thrown into prison. This threat also applies if their confrontation becomes public. If Hymn learns of the adventurers' crimes, they will intercede to save them, but refuse to work with them again; their life's work is one of mercy.

If Martin defeats the adventurers, he leaves them alive and hands them over to the Dawn Legion, accusing them of assault. Adventurers can still try to discredit Martin at their trial.

### **CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE**

**I**f the adventurers successfully discredit Martin, the Circle of Apollo disavows him as unworthy. Hymn and their supporters exile Martin from Ordham and the City Council impeaches Governor Shahun at the public's urging.

If the adventurers fight or kill Martin without revealing him, the temple clerics seem to wake from a spell. If Martin's body is found, he is cremated, and an investigation

begins into what happened.

Either way, the Circle, once again led by Hymn, reinstates the policy of free healing and accepting donations. Meline can now be cured. Adventurers receive the reward(s) Hymn promised, along with their lasting gratitude.

### **CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE**

**Y**ou can build off this adventure by using Ordham as a setting or providing plot hooks through these NPCs. Here are some suggestions:

**Another Day, Another Disease:** Hymn approaches the adventurers with another request for help. The Midnight's Kiss outbreak is cured, but a patient with a new disease appeared yesterday—and none of the temple's spells can cure it. Even worse, the cleric who treated the patient is now exhibiting the same symptoms.

**Martin's Revenge:** If the adventurers didn't kill Martin, they have made an enemy for life. Martin sets out to destroy their reputation with his resources. Perhaps he frames the adventurers for a murder or makes a pact with a devil to destroy part of Ordham.

# APPENDIX A: MONSTERS & NPCs

## MARTIN DIAN

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

**ARMOR CLASS** 17 (+1 half plate + shield)

**HIT POINTS** 160 (20d8 + 60)

**SPEED** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16	12	16	14	22	18
(+3)	(+1)	(+3)	(+2)	(+6)	(+4)

**SAVING THROWS** Wisdom +12, Charisma +10

**SKILLS** Arcana +14, History +8, Medicine +12, Perception +12, Persuasion +10, Religion +14

**SENSES** Passive Perception 22

**LANGUAGES** Common, Elvish, Celestial, Infernal

**CHALLENGE** 12 (700 XP)

**DAMAGE DEALER.** Martin adds his Wisdom modifier to the damage he deals with any cleric cantrip or first level spell.

**SUPERIOR CONCENTRATION.** Martin has advantage on CON saving throws to maintain concentration when he takes damage. He can cast magic while holding weapons or shields. Additionally, Martin can maintain concentration on two spells if he chooses.

**SPELLCASTING.** Martin is a 20th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 20, +14 to hit with spell attacks). Martin has the following cleric spells prepared:

*Cantrips (at will):* guidance, mending, resistance, sacred flame, thaumaturgy

*1st level (4 slots):* command, cure wounds, detect magic, guiding bolt, identify, inflict wounds, shield of faith

*2nd level (3 slots):* augury, hold person, lesser restoration,

silence, spiritual weapon, suggestion, zone of truth  
*3rd level (3 slots):* bestow curse, dispel magic, nondetection, sending, speak with dead, spirit guardians

*4th level (3 slots):* arcane eye, banishment, death ward, confusion, stone shape

*5th level (3 slots):* contagion, geas, greater restoration, legend lore, scrying

*6th level (2 slots):* harm, heal

*7th level (2 slots):* firestorm, plane shift

*8th level (1 slot):* earthquake

*9th level (1 slot):* mass heal

**SHARK TELEPATHY.** Khella can magically command any shark within 120 feet of her, using a limited telepathy.

## ACTIONS

**CHANNEL DIVINITY.** As an action, Martin can use his Channel Divinity and choose either of the following options. Martin can use this ability 3 times per long rest.

*Turn/Destroy Undead:* As an action, Martin presents his holy symbol. Each undead he can see or hear within 30 feet must make a WIS saving throw. If it fails, and its CR is below 4, it is destroyed. If it fails and its CR is higher than 4, it is turned.

*Opened Mind:* As an action, Martin chooses one creature he can see within 60 feet. That creature must make a WIS saving throw. On a success, the creature becomes immune to this ability for 24 hours. On a failure, Martin can read the creature's surface thoughts for 1 minute. During that time, Martin can influence the target (as *suggestion*).



**DIVINE INTERVENTION.** Martin calls on Hades to intervene on his behalf. The intervention automatically succeeds. The DM chooses the nature of the intervention. Once Martin uses this ability, he cannot use it again for 7 days.

**MACE.** Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**WHEN COIN CHANGES HANDS.** Martin can spend at least 1 minute in meditation to receive shadowy glimpses of recent events related to business, trade, or coin. He can meditate for a number of minutes up to his Wisdom modifier and must maintain concentration during that time. He can use this feature once per short or long rest.

## REACTIONS

**OPPORTUNISTIC CASTER.** When a hostile creature's movement provokes an attack of opportunity, Martin can use his reaction to cast a spell. The spell must have a casting time of 1 action and must target that creature (but not only that creature).

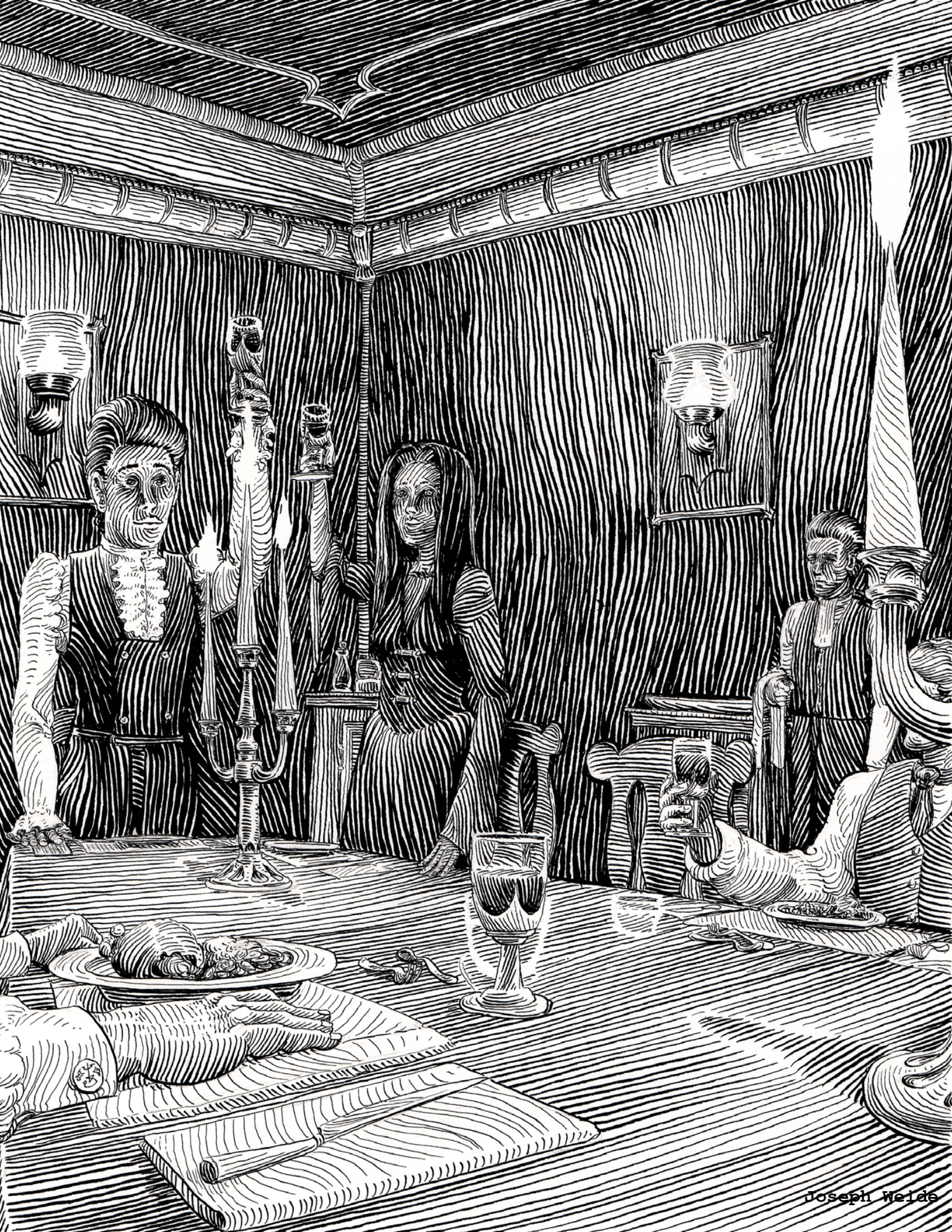
## APPENDIX B: MIDNIGHT'S KISS

Use this as a reference should an adventurer contract the disease. Midnight's Kiss can be contracted more than once.

- Day 1-3: Raised black welts appear on the infected's skin. The infected gains 2 levels of exhaustion as their body weakens. At the end of day three, the infected must succeed on a DC 15 CON saving throw or proceed to the next stage. On a success, the patient stabilizes and recovers in three days without the need for potions.
- Day 4-5: The black welts begin to connect and cover the infected's skin. The infected gains 2 more levels of exhaustion; most patients become bedridden. At the end of day five, the infected must succeed on a DC 15 CON saving throw or proceed to the next stage. On a success, the patient returns to the previous stage.
- Day 6-7: The black welts fully cover the infected's skin; infected falls unconscious. At midnight on day seven, the patient dies.

If the infected does not recover naturally, Midnight's Kiss can only be cured by a six-dose regimen of special potions, brewed under the noonday sun by a cleric of Apollo and imbued with the power of both a *greater and lesser restoration* spell. Most clerics in Ordham can brew these potions.







# THE BEAUTIFUL AND THE GOOD

Level 15

Jessica Marcum

Jessica Marcum, also known as [angrynerdgirl](#), is a social worker and adventure creator who dreams of crushing the patriarchy and recycling the wealthy. A brain witch and social justice bard by day, she spends her evenings creating games, supplements, and other ttrpg nonsense including the *Uncaged Anthology*, *Grandmother Crookbesom's Book of Hags*, and the *College of Caterwauling*. Find her and see amazing cat pictures [@Miss Jess03](#) on Twitter, watch her stream at [angrynerdgirl](#) on Twitch, or learn more about her work at [www.jessicamarcumwrites.com](#).

Initially founded as a company town, Noctis has grown into a bustling city with gorgeous, wealthy inhabitants and those who love them. The citizens believe all the secrets to eternal youth and beauty can be bought with enough coin, and while the bulk of the population suffers from strange illnesses and unsafe working conditions, they all dream of transcending their status. The lure of the Beautiful and the Good is powerful, and what harm can come of dreams?

This adventure is designed for 4-6 13th to 15th level characters and is optimized for 5 characters with APL 14.

Note: Depending on player choices, this can be a campaign-ending adventure.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Noctis is a bustling city run entirely by a group of vampires known as the Beautiful and the Good. Admired by all for their eternal youth, wealth, and beauty, their vampirism is known only to very few. Those who discover the truth are offered the gift of vampirism in return for a combination of keeping the Noctis elite's secrets and serving them devotedly for many years. The gift is passed on just occasionally enough to make aspirants believe that with enough hard work and determination, anyone can become Beautiful and Good. In practice, the group creates, at most, two new vampires each century. Meanwhile, Noctis Industries owns every business in the town and is the only employer. The elite feed on unwitting citizens at night, and

freedom from random illness is seen as a perk of becoming Noctis elite.

## Dramatis Personae

**Liara** (she/her, NE) — **Vampire Witch** (see Appendix A). A leader of the Beautiful and the Good renowned for her poise and glamour. Her makeup line, diet tips, and hair products are desired by all the living citizens in Noctis, but few can afford them. She lives in the Sanguineum Praetorium with the rest of the Beautiful and Good.

**Ozy** (they/them, LE) — **Vampire**. A leader of the Beautiful and the Good revered and feared for their absolute dominance over the justice system. They ensure that no vampire spends a day in prison for a crime against non-vampires, though they have imposed nominal fines for serious crimes. They live in the Sanguineum Praetorium with the rest of the Beautiful and Good.

**Roland** (he/him, CE) — **Vampire Spawn**. The latest addition to the ranks of the Beautiful and the Good. He spent decades advertising Noctis products utilizing only Beautiful and Good models and is now thrilled to taste eternal life. A young vampire, he is reckless and hot-headed. He lives in the Sanguineum Praetorium with the rest of the Beautiful and Good.

**Sarella** (she/her, NG) — **Human Commoner** (Strength 8, Constitution 6). Fatigued, sickly, and economically disenfranchised, she saves all her money to afford Liara's products and workshops. She is positive that by purchasing the right products, she can be just like Liara. Works three part-time jobs at Noctis Naughty Nighties, Noctis Grab 'n Go, and Noctis Nightcap.

**Gregor** (he/him, NE) — **Human Noble**. A wealthier citizen, but not a member of the Beautiful and the Good. Knows the town is run by vampires and is

sworn to the strictest secrecy. Desperate to become a vampire and believes he can do so by acting cruelly to his workers. Vehemently against regulation and a living wage. Manages Noctis Grab 'n Go.

**Maryelle** (she/her CG) — **Half Orc Commoner** (Darkvision, Constitution 8). A hard-working trans woman who is tired of seeing her friends and family die. Hates the Beautiful and the Good, but is viewed by her peers as jealous of their wealth and fame. She tends bar at Noctis Nightcaps during the day.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

### Part One

Adventurers arrive in Noctis and have time to explore the town. They learn the following:

1. The Beautiful and the Good are Noctis VIPs. They can get anything they want at any time.
2. Everyone wants to be Beautiful and Good and with enough hard work, they can be!
3. The Beautiful and the Good sell tools to emulate them (makeup, hair products, diet books) via Noctis Industries, which they own.
4. The bulk of the Noctis citizenry is weak, fatigued, overworked, and constantly sick.

### Part Two

The Beautiful and the Good notice the adventurers' inquiries and send some of their minions to deal with them.

### Part Three

The adventurers determine that the Beautiful and the Good are vampires feeding on the wealth and blood of the population. They may choose to inform the city about the true nature of the elite class



(Optional Interlude) or confront them alone. The Beautiful and Good of Noctis offer the adventurers the opportunity to become vampires. (If they accept, go to Conclusion A). Otherwise, they fight to defend their lifestyles.

#### Part 4

The townsfolk are distraught at the upset to the social order and a riot erupts. Adventurers can peaceably quell the riot or kill the wannabe vampire spawn (go to Conclusion B).

### Hooks

1. Adventures hear that the townsfolk in Noctis are suffering from strange illnesses despite the town's overall wealth. They are asked to investigate in case neighboring communities are at risk of disease.
2. A noble patron requests that the adventurers travel to Noctis to purchase Noctis Industries face cream, nutrition supplements, and hair serum by Liara. It's simply the best on the market.
3. Adventurers passing through the area are assailed by Noctis Industries' bright lights and magical, moving billboards advertising beauty products, healthy snacks, natural supplements, exercise tips, and fashion by Liara and Roland.

## **THE BEAUTIFUL AND THE GOOD**

**a**dventurers arrive in Noctis, home of Noctis Industries, and learn that not everything is quite as perfect as it appears.

## **PART 1: WELCOME TO NOCTIS**

**T**he adventurers have the opportunity to explore Noctis, meet the locals, and investigate some of the strange goings-on.

### Noctis Main Square

**N**octis is crowded, loud, and smells of perfumed sweat. Noctis Industries stores and taverns line the streets, interspersed with ramshackle housing. The flashing lights of magical advertisements bombard the senses: Thinne by Liara, Muscle Up by Roland, Noctis Naughty Nighties, etc.

#### Features of the Area

**Crowded:** Noctis's main square is busy. While outdoors, Small or Tiny characters must succeed on a DC 15 Strength or Dexterity saving throw every 15 minutes to avoid being trampled. Trampled characters are knocked prone and take 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage.

**Advertisements:** Magical ads are inescapable. Everywhere the party looks, they see images of the Beautiful and the Good floating before them, particularly Liara and Roland, trying to sell them various items. Adventurers who wish to ignore advertisements must succeed on a DC 25 Charisma saving throw to gain 30 minutes of peace. Failing the saving throw has no consequence apart from the ads continuing as normal. Characters immune to the charm condition are unaffected by advertisements.

**Ill Citizens:** Most Noctis citizens are sick. Adventurers who pass a DC 20 Wisdom (Medicine) check can tell that they are fatigued, malnourished, and severely anemic.

## Noctis Grab 'n Go

An affordable place to get an unhealthy meal, frequented by the average Noctis citizen due to the low price and fast service. Open only during daylight hours. Gregor is the manager. If it is afternoon, Sarella works up front.

Unsettlingly friendly to the adventurers, Gregor explains the founding of Noctis by the "ancestors" of the Beautiful and Good, and how they own all the property in town. Adventurers who succeed on a DC 25 Wisdom (Insight) check notice that Gregor hesitates on the word "ancestor" and is hiding something.

While Gregor praises all of the Beautiful and the Good for their leadership, he singles out Ozy specifically for consistently ruling against safety regulations and wage increases. He notes that it's been much easier for business owners like him to cut costs and increase profits thanks to Ozy's leadership.

If Gregor is asked about any of Roland's advertisements, he spits on the ground and darkly implies that Roland should have stayed behind the camera. Adventurers who succeed at a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check realize that Gregor is deeply jealous.

Adventurers with passive Perception 15+ notice that Sarella, if present, has multiple burn marks from hot oil on her hands and arms. Sarella also coughs frequently and drops food items. If asked, she responds that she is feeling a bit tired, but is saving for a trip to Liara's day spa for a blood rejuvenation cleanse.

Sarella raves about the dating life of the Beautiful and Good. Adventures who succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check ascertain that she aspires to be glamorous, admired, and above all, healthy.



## Noctis Nightcaps

**a** pub frequented by locals after work for a cheap, strong drink in a dirty glass. If visited at night, Sarella is tending bar and Maryelle is drinking whisky. If visited during the day, Maryelle is tending bar and Sarella is working elsewhere.

Note: if Sarella has already been approached at Noctis Grab 'n Go, her conversation here is much the same. She apologizes for being too tired to recognize the adventurers at first.

Maryelle is slow to open up and will noticeably avoid speaking to adventurers who praise the Beautiful and Good, other than to serve drinks if she is working. Adventurers who succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom (Insight) check notice that she appears tired of listening to the same conversations and being told her opinions don't matter. Those who succeed on this check may then attempt a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to get her to open up. Maryelle shares that she is tired of the Beautiful and the Good getting away with literal murder.



## Liara's Noctis Dreams Spa

**A** total wellness salon staffed by thin, impeccably coiffed humans. If adventurers ask for Liara, they are laughingly told that she is unavailable to meet with "common folk". Staff attempt to sell adventurers a variety of skincare, health, wellness, and fashion items. The staff rave about how they aspire to be just like Liara, Roland, and the rest of the B&G empire.

### Development

Adventurers are now aware of the poor health of the average Noctis citizen as well as the constant presence of the Beautiful and the Good in their lives.

## **PART 2: A FRIENDLY CHAT**

**G**regor and a group of like-minded citizens approach the party, accompanied by the easily recognizable Roland.

### Somewhere Private

**N**ight falls and the streets quickly empty as the common citizens head either home or to their second jobs. As the adventurers take in their newly deserted surroundings, a well-dressed group approaches.

A pale man in his mid-forties with rippling muscles and a smile you've seen all day in magical ads approaches, flashing perfectly white teeth. "You don't look nearly as menacing as old Gregor implied! Roland here, newest member of the Beautiful and the Good. And you are?"

### Features of the Area

**Roland:** Roland is desperate to prove himself to his peers. He wants to know why the adventurers are in town and how soon they plan to leave. If the adventurers appear impressed by Roland, he invites them to dinner at the esteemed Sanguineum Praetorium, the Beautiful and the Good's elite club and manor, tomorrow evening to meet Liara, Ozy, and their compatriots. If threatened or insulted, he attacks.

Adventures with passive Perception 18+ notice that Roland never blinks and has an unnatural fluidity to his movements. Those who succeed on a DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check or a DC 20 Wisdom (Survival) check know that Roland is a newly created vampire spawn under the control of a higher vampire. If asked directly if he is a vampire, Roland responds that after years of hard work, he has been elevated to the ranks of the Beautiful and the Good.

**Gregor and Pals:** Roland is accompanied by Gregor and a group of **nobles** and **vampire spawn** each equal to the number of adventurers. The humans are wealthy citizens fully aware that vampires run their town, and they serve them in hopes of becoming vampires themselves. Most, like Gregor, openly resent Roland for being this half-century's chosen, but will still fight at his command. The vampire spawn are older than Roland and are here to ensure that he accomplishes his mission.

### Tactics:

Roland's aim is to Claw then Bite anyone within range. Due to his eagerness to show off to his friends, he also gains the Reckless feature.

Vampire spawn see both the nobles and Roland as expendable. They will flee to their higher vampires if they are reduced to 35 HP or any

other vampire spawn are killed. They strike first with their claws, aiming to grapple and then bite anyone in range.

The nobles want to prove themselves to the vampires and will defend them with their lives.

### **SCALING FOR DIFFICULTY:**

If the party is very strong, have them confront 2 vampire spawn per party member.

### **Development**

Whether through conversation or altercation, adventurers are now aware that vampires are in some way connected with the Beautiful and the Good. They must decide whether to inform the town that they are being fed upon by vampires or confront the Noctis elite directly at the Sanguinem Praetorium.

## **Optional Interlude:**

### **Informing Noctis**

**T**he common folk of Noctis slumber, but a few wealthy, eerie citizens can be seen walking the streets. The adventurers must reveal Noctis's secret to its population, but must either wait until morning or find a way to rouse a large portion of the town.

### **Noctis Main Square**

**T**he streets are quiet in the darkness and busy in the light, but the glow of magical advertising is unending.

### **Features of the Area**

**Beautiful and Good:** The only "people" walking through Noctis in the dead of night are the occasional Beautiful and Good on the hunt. They do not attack the adventurers unless specifically targeted. Their goal is to sneak into workers' houses in Mist form, drink, and return home. If spotted by the party, they smile graciously and ask, "See you tomorrow at the Praetorium?"

### **Tactics:**

The vampires have no desire to fight while they are having dinner. If attacked, they revert to Bat or Mist form to flee.

**Waking the City:** Noctis comes to life at dawn and the square immediately fills. Prior to this, adventurers wishing to wake the cityfolk may do so by loudly playing instruments, casting thaumaturgy, shatter, or thunderwave, or acting generally destructive.

**Townfolk:** Most of the city is disinclined to believe vampires have been taking advantage of them for centuries. Adventurers must pass a DC 25 Charisma (Persuasion) check to convince them. Maryelle, if previously encountered, speaks on behalf of the party, reducing this check to DC 20. If the townsfolk are not convinced that the Beautiful and the Good are vampires, they are simply irritated with the adventurers for wasting their time. If convinced, they react with shock and anger. 10 (1d20) townsfolk including Maryelle volunteer to join the party confronting the Beautiful and the Good. Adventurers must pass a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to convince them that the party is better equipped to handle the situation. Maryelle asks why the adventurers bothered telling them if they're not going to let anyone help.



Note: Adventurers who destroy part of the town trying to rouse the population are viewed with caution and make Charisma (Persuasion) checks at Disadvantage.

### Development

With the town informed and potentially 10 or so commoners joining them, the adventurers are ready to confront the Beautiful and the Good.

## PART 3: NOCTIS VIPs

**a**dventurers confront the Beautiful and the Good, who are expecting them.

### Sanguineum Praetorium

**T**he Praetorium is massive and ostentatious. The sounds of wolves howling echo throughout the grounds. Inside is an entrance hall, a dining room, a well-kept



kitchen, and corridors leading to multiple locked rooms. At the back of the entrance hall is a large marble staircase covered in red velvet leading down to another locked door.

The door swings open at your approach. A soothing voice beckons you, "So you've arrived. Welcome to our home."

### Features of the Area

## YOU BROUGHT FRIENDS FOR DINNER

If townsfolk have accompanied adventurers (see Optional Interlude: Informing Noctis), they are asked to wait outside by the staff. Adventurers can convince the staff to let the townsfolk accompany them by passing a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check. If allowed in, townsfolk present when Liara and Ozy appear are temporarily Stunned by their beauty. They do not engage in combat unless forced by a vampire.

**Wolves:** Stalking around the grounds are 11 (3d6) **wolves**. They can be heard howling throughout the encounter, but do not attack unless the adventurers become hostile to any vampire.

**Swarms of Bats:** In the alcove above the entrance hall and in the dining room are 5 (2d4) **swarms of bats**. They can only be seen with Darkvision and by succeeding on a DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling or Perception) check.

**Locked Doors:** There are a number of locked doors designating private areas off-limits to guests. Each

door is rigged with the alarm spell and requires a DC 20 Dexterity (Thieves Tools) check to open. Behind the doors are piles of items the Beautiful and Good have collected over the years, along with their coffins. Refer to the Magic Item Index in the SRD. Succeeding on a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a rare magic item (DM's choice), a DC 16 check reveals a very rare magic item, and a DC 20 reveals a legendary item. On a roll of 11 or lower, adventurers find an art object worth 1d6x100 gp.

**Dinner:** The Beautiful and Good have prepared a delicious meal catering to each party member's palate, information they gleaned from the employees of the eating establishments they own. The beverages have been laced with a Philter of Pliability (see Appendix B); if the adventurers notice the philter and call attention to it, Ozy and Liara applaud their cleverness.

**Staff:** 3-5 vampire spawn wearing uniforms act as staff for the guests. If Roland is alive, he is among them. They guide the party through the house and serve dinner before Ozy and Liara dismiss them.

**Hosts:** Adventurers immediately recognize Liara from her numerous advertisements. She and Ozy warmly welcome them. The pair is honest about being vampires and toast the party's bravery. If asked, they share that they personally founded Noctis to be a vampire's paradise. "Why settle for just a wallet when you can drain a life, too?" Ozy and Liara lament the pressure of finding the perfect citizen to join their ranks to keep up appearances, stating that most of the townsfolk are weak and boring.

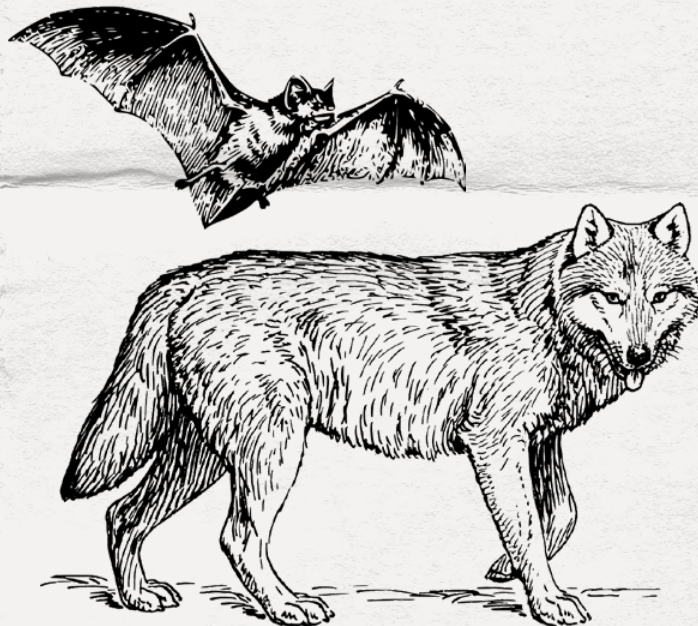
Ozy and Liara offer the party the opportunity to become Beautiful and Good immediately. They remind the party how desirable this is and heap

flattery upon them. If the party is torn, Liara casts dominate person on whomever appears to be the weakest-willed adventurer while Ozy attempts to Charm another to force them to persuade the rest of the party to their side.

Townsfolk, if present, are silent until the adventurers are offered immortality, at which point they shout that the adventurers are new and don't deserve it when they've worked their whole lives to become Beautiful and Good. Maryelle, if present, tries to convince the party and her fellow citizens that the offer is a trap. Adventurers have advantage on saves made against vampiric charm and domination attacks if Maryelle is present, alive, and conscious. If dinner erupts into violence, the vampires do not hesitate to use townsfolk to their advantage, either as a quick bite or by forcing them to join in the battle.

#### Tactics:

Wolves and bat swarms protect their vampire owners, utilizing pack tactics. They fight to the death to defend a vampire, but let vampire spawn fend for themselves. If the





vampires abandon the area, the wolves and bats flee.

Vampire spawn strike with claws followed by bite attacks, aiming to maximize their own health at the expense of others. They serve Ozy and Liara to the death.

Ozy and Liara do not fight unless directly attacked. They find insults amusing and are not easily provoked.

Liara starts by casting mirror image followed by Charming members of the party. She feeds on any nearby townsfolk to regain health and kill them, but she wants to turn adventurers into vampire spawn. Whenever possible, she attacks and casts from the shadows, attempting to strike from a place of nondetection using greater invisibility or fog cloud immediately followed by utilizing Mist form within the cloud. If townsfolk die in the fray, Liara casts animate dead as a 4th level spell on three of them at a time. If Liara is reduced to 50 HP, she will cast nondetection and attempt to flee Noctis completely.

Ozy makes liberal use of their Legendary unarmed strike actions, attempting to grapple and bite any who get near them. If any come close to hitting them, however, they take a Legendary action to Spider Climb up a wall away from danger followed by Charming the nearest target. If Ozy is reduced to 50 HP, they shift into either Mist or Bat form and attempt to flee.

### **SCALING FOR DIFFICULTY:**

If the party is very strong, have 3 additional vampires join Ozy and Liara. If the party is weak, keep the wolves outside. If the party is very weak, reduce the vampire spawn staff to 2 including Roland, if he is still alive.

## **Development**

**T**he party has faced the Beautiful and the Good. If they have accepted their offer of immortality, Go to Conclusion A. Otherwise, continue on to Part 4.

## **PART 4: REBUILDING**

The party informs the townsfolk that the Beautiful and the Good have been destroyed. A riot erupts between those who were desperate to become vampires and those who want vengeance against the wealthy.

## **Sanguineum Praetorium Gates**

The Sanguineum Praetorium lives up to its name as blood runs down the marble steps. A crowd has gathered outside the gates, waiting to hear news. Both Sarella and Gregor, if alive, can be seen among the confused faces. If Maryelle did not accompany the party to the Sanguineum Praetorium earlier, she is at the front of the crowd.

"Is it true, they actually met Ozy and lived?" "Is Liara really that beautiful in person?" As you approach, a hush falls over those gathered as they take in your appearance. Sarella runs to you, concern written on her face. "My friends, what happened?"

### **Features of the Area**

**Enraged Nobles:** Gregor, if alive, and approximately 20 of his fellow wealthier citizens are furious at the party for destroying their hopes of immortality. They attack the party immediately upon learning that the vampires are gone.

**Betrayed Commoners:** The average citizens are distraught at learning firstly that their idols were taking advantage of them for centuries, if they weren't previously made aware

by the party, and secondly, that the wealthier townsfolk benefitted from the arrangement. As soon as the wealthy attack the party, approximately 30 commoners including Maryelle attack the nobles.

**The Lost:** Some commoners, like Sarella, are distraught that their hopes of a better life are gone. They begin wailing and pleading with the party to move into the Sanguineum Praetorium and lead them, to offer them hope for the future.

**Breaking up the Riot:** Adventurers must demonstrate physical prowess, intellectual fortitude, or showmanship to quell the riot. Whether this is through fighting the combatants, talking them down through reasonable discussion, intimidating them, or distracting them with something new and exciting is up to them. Encourage and reward creativity here.

### Development

The riot quelled, the townsfolk ask the adventurers how to rebuild and what they should do. Go to Conclusion B.

## CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

### Conclusion A

**T**he party is now Beautiful and Good. Each adventurer gains the resistances, abilities, and weaknesses of **vampire spawn**. Some citizens are jealous that the adventurers have been chosen over families who have worked for centuries, but accept that the party must have performed some amazing feat in order to ascend. They will be honored by the townsfolk and respected in Noctis forever. They receive free goods from Noctis Industries indefinitely and may drink from townsfolk unimpeded, unless a higher ranking vampire has claimed

that citizen. While the party is free to continue adventuring, they may be summoned to serve at the whims of a higher Noctis vampire at any time. Hierarchy is everything.

### Conclusion B

**W**ith Noctis Industries and the elite destroyed, a new era dawns. Some townsfolk float the idea of an agrarian collective and ask the adventurers for advice while others propose that the adventurers lead them as a new Beautiful and Good: the Brave and the Wise. The rest of the citizens are wary, but intrigued by the idea of deciding their own future without an aristocratic class to tell them what to think and do. Adventurers are asked for ideas for a future government focused on rule of the people and sharing of resources. The Sanguineum Praetorium is sacked and its plentiful resources distributed throughout the town.

## CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

**i**f the party accepts Liara and Ozy's offer: The party of vampires is summoned back to Noctis. Maryelle, if alive, briefly left town but has returned with a band of orc warriors and some otherworldly beings that terrify the Beautiful and the Good yet are greeted with joy by the townsfolk: a furious **planetar** and their **unicorn** companions.

**If Liara and/or Ozy escape the Praetorium:** A wolf approaches the party and drops off a blood-streaked note reading: How could you be so stupid to turn down their offer? Come back to Noctis. I miss you. -- Sarella

If the vampires have been fully eradicated: Nearby nobles have become anxious seeing Noctis's



abrupt overthrow of the ruling class. Fearful that could happen in their own communities, they band together to conquer the town and prove that a ruling class is required.

## APPENDIX A: MONSTERS & NPCs

### Liara

Liara is a **vampire witch**. She uses the **vampire** stat block with the following additions:

**CHALLENGE** 15 (13,000 XP)

**SPELLCASTING.** The vampire witch is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). The vampire witch has the following wizard spells prepared:

*Cantrips (at will):* chill touch, mage hand, prestidigitation

*1st level (4 slots):* comprehend languages, fog cloud, sleep

*2nd level (3 slots):* detect thoughts, mirror image, spider climb

*3rd level (3 slots):* animate dead, bestow curse, nondetection

*4th level (3 slots):* blight, greater invisibility

*5th level (1 slot):* dominate person

## APPENDIX B: ITEMS

### Philter of Pliability

*Potion/Poison, Rare*

This silver-hued potion effervesces when shaken. A creature subjected to this philter must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or suffer two levels of Exhaustion, or one level on a successful saving throw. Additionally, the next time the affected is spoken to by a creature within 10 minutes after contact with this philter, they automatically become Charmed by that creature for 1 hour.

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