



THE TEMPTER

The people of Oraşnou are desperate. The village is on the brink of starvation and has little chance of surviving the harsh winter. Even if they had enough food and supplies, Lord Strahd's taxes are due, and the ruler of Barovia does not accept excuses as payment. The Burgomaster and others in the village have recently learned of a wealthy estate that might have enough resources to solve both of Oraşnou's problems. It is a temptation he cannot afford to resist or can he?

Part Nine of *Misty Fortunes and Absent Hearts*

A Two-Hour Adventure for 5th-10th level Characters



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Adventure Code: DDAL04-09
Version 1.0

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DDEX4-09 The Tempter

Introduction

I can resist everything except temptation.
—Oscar Wilde

Welcome to The Tempter, a D&D Expeditions™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Curse of Strahd*™ storyline season.

This adventure is designed for 5th through 10th level characters, and is optimized for five 5th-level characters. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure. See the section on Determining Party Strength for making adjustments especially if the party is made up of characters all of 7th level or above.

The adventure takes place entirely in the barony of Barovia, in the Ravenloft campaign setting. Most of the adventure takes place at a hidden estate on the edge of the Svalich Forest.

Adjusting This Adventure for *Curse of Strahd*

Since this adventure occurs in the Svalich Woods near Mount Bartok (page 39 of *Curse of Strahd*) this adventure can be tailored to insert into your *Curse of Strahd* campaign.

Instead of being asked to visit by Grigori, the characters are traveling through the woods and happen upon the estate. Invited as be “special guests” for this evening’s events. Allow them time to mingle more with the guests. Add rumors to wet their curiosity:

- The mistress of the house has recently broken up with one everyone was sure she would finally wed.
- Some claim that the reason the family has continued to be affluent for so long is that they dabble in witchcraft
- Others believe there is a hidden magic treasure from which they derive their good fortune.

The D&D Adventurers League

This adventure is official for D&D Adventurers League play. The D&D Adventurers League is the official organized play system for DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®. Players can create characters and participate in any adventure allowed as a part of the D&D Adventurers League. As they adventure, players track their characters’ experience, treasure, and other rewards, and can take those characters through other adventures that continues their story.

If you’re running this adventure as a part of a store event or at certain conventions, you’ll need a DCI number. This number is your official Wizards of the Coast organized play identifier. If you don’t have

a number, you can obtain one at a store event. Check with your organizer for details.

D&D Adventurers League play is broken up into storyline seasons. When players create characters, they attach those characters to a storyline season, which determines what rules they’re allowed to use to create and advance their characters. Players can continue to play their characters after the storyline season has finished, possibly participating in a second or third storyline with those same characters. A character’s level is the only limitation for adventure play. A player cannot use a character of a level higher or lower than the level range of a D&D Adventurers League adventure.

For more information on playing, running games as a Dungeon Master, and organizing games for the D&D Adventurers League, please visit the D&D Adventurers League home at:

www.dndadventurersleague.org

Preparing the Adventure

Before you show up to Dungeon Master this adventure for a group of players, you should do the following to prepare.

- Make sure to have a copy of the most current version of the *D&D Basic Rules* or the *Player’s Handbook*.
- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you’d like to highlight or remind yourself while running the adventure, such as a way you’d like to portray an NPC or a tactic you’d like to use in a combat.
- Get familiar with the monster statistics in the Appendix.
- Gather together any resources you’d like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- If you know the composition of the group beforehand, you can make adjustments as noted throughout the adventure.

Before Play at the Table

Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information:

- Character name and level
- Character race and class
- Passive Wisdom (Perception)—the most common passive ability check

- Anything notable as specified by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Players that have characters outside the adventure's level range **cannot participate in the adventure with those characters**. Players with ineligible characters can make a new 1st-level character or use a pregenerated character. Players can play an adventure they previously played or ran as a Dungeon Master, but not with the same character.

Ensure that each player has an official adventure logsheet for his or her character (if not, get one from the organizer). The player fills out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for experience, gold, downtime, renown, and number of permanent magic items. He or she fill in the other values and write notes at the conclusion of the session. Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet.

If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array. Point players to the *D&D Adventurers League Player's Guide* for reference.

If players wish to spend downtime days and it's the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now. Alternatively, they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters' spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

Adjusting the Adventure

Throughout this adventure, sidebars provide information to assist you in making adjustments for smaller or larger groups and characters of higher or lower levels than the adventure is optimized for. This is typically used exclusively for combat encounters.

You may adjust the adventure beyond the guidelines given in the adventure, or for other reasons. For example, if you're playing with a group of inexperienced players, you might want to make the adventure a little easier; for very experienced players, you might want to make it a little harder. Therefore, five categories of party strength have

been created for you to use as a guide. Use these as a guide, and feel free to use a different adjustment during the adventure if the recommended party strength feels off for the group.

This adventure is **optimized for a party of five 5th-level characters**. To figure out whether you need to adjust the adventure, do the following:

- Add up the total levels of all the characters.
- Divide the total by the number of characters.
- Round fractions of .5 or greater up; round fractions of less than .5 down.

You've now determined the **average party level (APL)** for the adventure. To figure out the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very strong

Average party strength indicates no recommended adjustments to the adventure. Each sidebar may or may not offer suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

Running the Adventure

As the Dungeon Master of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You help guide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

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

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

- You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the

group interacts with the world of this adventure. Doing so is especially important and applicable outside of combat, but feel free to adjust the adventure for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time.

- Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group. Never being challenged makes for a boring game and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating one. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a chance to shine.
- Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately. Watch for stalling, since play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience. Try to be aware of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly
- Read-aloud text is just a suggestion; feel free to modify the text as you see fit, especially when dialogue is present.
- Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to proceed. Players should be given clues and hints when appropriate so they can tackle puzzles, combat, and interactions without getting frustrated over lack of information. Doing so helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues.

In short, being the DM isn't about following the adventure's text word-for-word; it's about facilitating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. The *Dungeon Master's Guide™* has more information on the art of running a D&D game.

Downtime and Lifestyle

At the beginning of each play session, players must declare whether or not they are spending any days of downtime. The player records the downtime spent on the adventure logsheet. The following options are available to players during downtime (see the D&D basic rules or the *D&D Adventurers League Player's Guide* for more information):

- Catching up
- Crafting (exception: multiple characters cannot commit to crafting a single item)
- Practicing a profession
- Recuperating
- Spellcasting services

• Training

Other downtime options might be available during adventures or unlocked through play, including faction-specific activities.

In addition, whenever a character spends downtime days, that character also spends the requisite expense for his or her lifestyle. Costs are per day, so a character that spends ten days of downtime also spends ten days of expenses maintaining his or her lifestyle. Some downtime activities help with lifestyle expenses or add lifestyle expenses.

Spellcasting Services

Any settlement the size of a town or larger can provide some spellcasting services. Characters need to be able to travel to the settlement to obtain these services.

Help From Who!?

For the current storyline season, *Curse of Strahd*, the rules for spellcasting services are changed for characters adventuring in Barovia. In Strahd's bleak domain, there simply aren't any settlements where spellcasters can accommodate such needs, and those places of worship that might otherwise provide spellcasting services are overrun with monsters. As such, unless otherwise detailed in an adventure, the only individual able to provide spellcasting services is **Jeny Greenteeth**. This will no doubt lead to some uncomfortable situations and unforeseen consequences.

Refer to Page 7 of the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* for more details.

Spell services generally available include healing and recovery spells, as well as information-gathering spells. Other spell services might be available as specified in the adventure. The number of spells available to be cast as a service is limited to a **maximum of three per day total**, unless otherwise noted.

Spellcasting Services

Spell	Cost
<i>Cure wounds (1st level)</i>	10 gp
<i>Identify</i>	20 gp
<i>Lesser restoration</i>	40 gp
<i>Prayer of healing (2nd level)</i>	40 gp
<i>Remove curse</i>	90 gp
<i>Speak with dead</i>	90 gp
<i>Divination</i>	210 gp
<i>Greater restoration</i>	450 gp
<i>Raise dead</i>	1,250 gp

Acolyte Background

A character possessing the acolyte background requesting spellcasting services at a temple of his or her faith may request **one spell per day** from the Spellcasting Services table for free. The only cost paid for the spell is the base price for the consumed material component, if any.

However, no religions have established places of worship here of sufficient size to provide spellcasting services. Because of this, characters with the Acolyte background gain no benefit from this trait.

Character Disease, Death, and Recovery

Sometimes bad things happen, and characters get poisoned, diseased, or are killed. Since you might not have the same characters return from session to session, here are the rules when bad things happen to characters.

Disease, Poison, and Other Debilitating Effects

A character still affected by diseases, poisons, and other similar effects at the conclusion of an adventure can spend downtime days recuperating until such time as he or she resolves the effect to its conclusion (see the recuperating activity in the *D&D Basic Rules*).

If a character doesn't resolve the effect between sessions, that character begins the next session still affected by the debilitating effect.

Death

A character who is killed during the course of the adventure has a few options at the end of the session (or whenever arriving back in civilization) if no one in the adventuring party has immediate access to a *raise dead* or *revivify* spell, or similar magic. A character subject to a *raise dead* spell is affected negatively until all long rests have been completed during an adventure. Alternatively, each downtime day spent after *raise dead* reduces the penalty to attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks by 1, in addition to any other benefits the downtime activity might provide.

Create a New 1st-Level Character. If the dead character is unwilling or unable to exercise any of the other options, the player creates a new character. The new character does not have any items or rewards possessed by the dead character.

Dead Character Pays for Raise Dead. If the character's body is recoverable (it's not missing any vital organs and is mostly whole) and the player would like the character to be returned to life, the

party can take the body back to civilization and use the dead character's funds to pay for a *raise dead* spell. A *raise dead* spell cast in this manner costs the character 1,250 gp.

Character's Party Pays for Raise Dead. As above, except that some or all of the 1,250 gp for the *raise dead* spell is paid for by the party at the end of the session. Other characters are under no obligation to spend their funds to bring back a dead party member.

Faction Charity. If the character is of level 1 to 4 and a member of a faction, the dead character's body can be returned to civilization and a patron from the faction ensures that he or she receives a *raise dead* spell. However, any character invoking this charity forfeits all experience and rewards from that session (both those earned prior to and after death during that session) and cannot replay that episode or adventure with that character again. Once a character reaches 5th level, this option is no longer available.

Resurrection Madness

In Barovia, the souls of the dead are as trapped as the souls of the living. They become caught in the mists and can't travel to the afterlife. When a humanoid who has been dead for at least 24 hours returns to life, either by way of a spell or some supernatural means, it gains a random form of indefinite madness brought on by the realization that its spirit is trapped in Barovia, likely forever. To determine how this madness is expressed, roll on the Indefinite Madness table in chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Vampirism and Lycanthropy

Vampires and lycanthropes are not included in the allowed rules for character creation or advancement (see the *D&D Adventurers League Player's Guide*). These conditions grant characters powers and abilities that are not suitable for organized play, and typically impose a restricted or prohibited alignment. As such, characters afflicted with vampirism or lycanthropy must have the affliction cured before the start of their next episode or adventure.

Afflicted characters have the following options:

- Lycanthropes can be cured with a *remove curse* spell. This spell is available as a spellcasting service for 90 gp (though Jeny Greenteeth might have additional requirements; see "Spellcasting Services" earlier in this guide).
- Vampires can be cured by a *wish* spell cast by a fellow player character (*wish* is not available as a spellcasting service). Alternatively, a vampire character can be slain and returned to life with

raise dead, at the normal cost of 1,250 gp. If a character chooses to end a vampiric curse in this manner, the Dark Powers (see Page 8, *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*) **do not** offer a free *raise dead*, though Jeny Greenteeth might be willing to make a deal (see “Spellcasting Services” earlier in this guide).

An afflicted character who does not end his or her curse is retired from play until able to do so by one of the means above, or through the application of DM rewards to the character.

The Demiplane of Dread

This adventure is set within the *Ravenloft* campaign setting, in the lands of Barovia which exists in the Demiplane of Dread. There are several atmospheric and thematic elements to keep in mind at all times while running your game:

The Land is Bleak

By the will of the Dark Powers, the sun never fully shines in the lands of Barovia. Even during the day, the sky is dimmed by fog or storm clouds, or the light is strangely muted. Barovian daylight is bright light, yet it isn't considered sunlight for the purpose of effects and vulnerabilities, such as a vampire's, tied to sunlight. Nevertheless, Strahd and his vampire spawn tend to stay indoors most of the day and venture out at night, and they are subject to sunlight created by magic.

Winter in Barovia

The winters are cold, wet, and stormy here. The natives of the Demiplane are prepared—well, as prepared as they can hope to be.

The characters, however, are unfamiliar with the realm. Thankfully, the region they came from was experiencing the worst winter in living memory, and are likely to possess winter clothing. If they are not, then, preparations are in order. The village has a single shop called The Hare & Hair where they are able to procure such supplies if they wish.

A dark sentience infuses the very soil, twisting and contorting everything within. In places where you would normally expect wildlife such as deer, rabbits, or squirrels, you instead find wolves, rats, and mangy dogs. Vegetation is rotted and dead, and forests are filled mostly with gnarled, thick trees with bare branches. Colorful, vivacious things simply do not exist.

The Denizens of Oraşnou

Most Oraşnou residents are mundane laborers, farmers, fletchers and other folk who fall under common professions.

They typically have gaunt features, as crops often fail to take root, and creatures of the night frequently kill and devour their livestock.

Most are sullen, and often filled with fear, be it from the lands themselves, what lies within them, Lord Strahd, or their own tyrant of a Burgomaster; Ivan Randovich and his cronies. Be sure to play to the mindsets of these people who live threadbare existences, constantly on the precipice of horror during your roleplaying encounters.

As is the case with most of the denizens of Barovia, most of the people that reside in the village don't possess a soul. These people are empty shells created by Strahd's consciousness to populate his domain. However, about one in every ten people in Barovia are actually possessing of a soul—the souls of the original denizens of Barovia before its transition into the Demiplane. When a being with a soul dies in Barovia, its soul remains trapped until it is reincarnated later. Souls tend to wear clothing with a splash of color or have other features that demonstrate even a small bit of individuality.

Alterations to Magic

The land of Barovia resides in its own demiplane, isolated from all other planes, including the Material Plane. No spell—not even *wish*—allows one to escape from Strahd's domain. *Astral projection*, *teleport*, *plane shift*, and similar spells cast for the purpose of leaving Barovia simply fail, as do effects that banish a creature to another plane of existence. These restrictions apply to magic items and artifacts that have properties that transport or banish creatures to other planes. Magic that allows transit to the Border Ethereal, such as the *etherealness* spell and the Etherealness feature of incorporeal undead, is the exception to this rule. A creature that enters the Border Ethereal from Strahd's domain is pulled back into Barovia upon leaving that plane.

For the purpose of spells whose effects change across or are blocked by planar boundaries (such as *sending*), Strahd's domain is considered its own plane. Magic that summons creatures or objects from other planes functions normally in Barovia, as does magic that involves an extradimensional space. Any spells cast within such an extra-dimensional space (such as that created by *Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion*) are subject to the same restrictions as magic cast in Barovia.

While in Barovia, characters who receive spells from deities or otherworldly patrons continue to do so. In addition, spells that allow contact with beings from other planes function normally—with one provision: Strahd can sense when someone in his domain is casting such a spell and can choose to make himself the spell's recipient, so that he becomes the one who is contacted.

Cosmetic Spell Modifications

At your discretion, a spell can be modified cosmetically to enhance the horrific atmosphere of Ravenloft. A few examples are presented below:

Alarm. Instead of hearing a mental ping when the alarm is triggered, the caster hears a scream.

Bigby's Hand. The conjured hand is skeletal.

Find Familiar. The familiar is undead instead of being a celestial, a fey, or a fiend, and is immune to features that turn undead.

Find Steed. The summoned steed is undead instead of being a celestial, a fey, or a fiend, and is immune to features that turn undead.

Find the Path. A child's spirit appears and guides the caster to the desired location. The spirit can't be harmed and doesn't communicate.

Fog Cloud. Misty, harmless claws form in the fog.

Gust of Wind. A ghostly moan accompanies the summoned wind.

Mage Hand. The summoned hand is skeletal.

Maze. The surfaces of the demiplane's maze are made of mortared skulls and bones.

Phantom Steed. The steed resembles a skeletal horse.

Rary's Telepathic Bond. Characters linked together by the spell can't shake the feeling that something vile is telepathically eavesdropping on them.

Revivify. A creature restored to life by a *revivify* spell screams upon regaining consciousness, as though waking from some horrible nightmare.

Spirit Guardians. The spirits appear as ghostly, skeletal warriors.

Wall of Stone. A wall created by the spell has ghostly faces sculpted into it, as though tortured spirits were somehow trapped within the stone.

Count Strahd Von Zarovich

Lord Strahd is the Darklord of Barovia. He rules his domain from Castle Ravenloft as Strahd IX; a descendent of Strahd I. In actuality, Strahd I and Strahd IX are the one and the same--a vampire. As a mortal, Strahd fell in love with Tatyana Federovna; the bride of his younger brother Sergei. In his jealousy, Strahd murdered his brother and became the Darklord of Barovia; which was swept away into the Demiplane along with its ruler. Since then, Strahd is cursed to seek incarnations of Tatyana for eternity. NOTE: Strahd is not present in this adventure.

Not Without Humor

The bleak and oppressive landscape must give way now and then to some moments of respite, not only does this break up the taxing mindset that Ravenloft can evoke, but it also provides good chances for

horror to sneak back up on players just as they least expect it.

Horror

This adventure contains scenes that are meant to challenge characters' sanity and unnerve them. As a result, some images may be a bit disturbing, such as the "birth" of the spider swarm in Part 1.

Please warn the players ahead of time that some of them may find the adventure's depictions to be a little extreme. If any players seem sensitive to that, please adjust the depictions accordingly.

Horror involves more than simple fright. It entails revulsion and anguish. Often it arises when adventurers see something completely contrary to the common understanding of what can and should occur in the world, or upon the realization of a dreadful truth. In such a situation, you can call on characters to make a Charisma saving throw to resist the horror. Set the DC based on the magnitude of the horrific circumstances. On a failed save, a character either becomes frightened or gains a short-term form of madness that you choose or determine randomly. Use your discretion when determining the effect of a failed horror check. Take your players into consideration and the activity in which they are participating.

A character afflicted with **short-term madness** is subjected to an effect from the Short-Term Madness table for 1d10 minutes.

Short-Term Madness

d100	Effect (lasts 1d10 minutes)
01-20	The character retreats into his or her mind and becomes paralyzed. The effect ends if the character takes any damage.
21-30	The character becomes incapacitated and spends the duration screaming, laughing, or weeping.
31 - 40	The character becomes frightened and must use his or her action and movement each round to flee from the source of the fear.
41 - 50	The character begins babbling and is incapable of normal speech or spellcasting.
51 - 60	The character must use his or her action each round to attack the nearest creature.
61-70	The character experiences vivid hallucinations and has disadvantage on ability checks.
71 - 75	The character does whatever anyone tells him or her to do that isn't obviously self-destructive.
76- 80	The character experiences an overpowering urge to eat something strange such as dirt, lime, or offal.
81-90	The character is stunned.
91-100	The character falls unconscious.

Adventure Background

Oraşnou is a small village that has fallen on hard times. Most of the village's food supplies have been lost or destroyed, and their tax payment to Lord

Strahd (which must be made in goods, food, and livestock) is due. The village faces a choice between dying slowly of starvation or dying quickly to the wrath of Barovia's Dark Master.

During DDAL04-08 *The Broken One*, adventurers discovered a map to an estate along with a letter from its owner, Marilena Fidatov. In the letter, she suggests that she has more than enough supplies to last the winter. One would think the Burgomaster would be quick to try and expand this offer of aid to the whole village, but he seems reluctant.

The villagers know that the Burgomaster and the Lady once courted, and wedding seemed likely. In reality, the two were merely lovers; both of them convinced that they were manipulating the other for their own ends. Eventually, however, Lady Fidatov began to doubt his devotion. A Tarokka reading confirmed her doubts and—unwilling to share her wealth—she left him.

Enraged, Ivan plotted and bribed a servant to poison the Lady's food and drink—killing not only the Lady, but all of her guests as well. Not content to let Ivan win, however, Marilena rose as a banshee. Learning this, the Burgomaster declared her a witch and ordered that the villagers were forbidden from venturing to her home.

Grigori, the proprietor of the Hair and Hare (a shop in Oraşnou) has learned of the letter. He knows the Burgomaster won't venture to the manor, so he and Marku (the owner of the Seven Tables Tavern) conspire to petition adventures for help.

What no one realizes, however is that Marilena Fidatov is no mere banshee. As she lay dying, she realized who had poisoned her; she beseeched the Dark Powers to protect her treasure so that it would never benefit anyone but her. In response, she and everyone else who once lived on her estate suffer from a terrible curse. Each day they relive the final hours of their mortal lives; farmers work the fields, the members of the house party participate in a hunt, and a grand gala celebrates the Fidatov family's bounty. A few hours after nightfall, at the exact moment when Lady Fidatov died of the poison, everything becomes a dark, twisted reflection of its former splendor. All of its inhabitants become crazed undead while those with souls become wererats. Ever waiting to exact her revenge, Lady Fidatov patrols the grounds wailing and wallowing in self-pity—searching for anyone foolish enough to steal her treasure. The next day, everyone awakens with no memories of the previous night.

Only Lady Fidatov herself knows the truth of the curse. She has no desire to assist Oraşnou and fights to keep what is hers, as she has done for many years and will for many more.

The Curse By Day

Every living thing and every object—from the Lady herself down to the rare weed in the garden—on the Fidatov estate plays a part in the curse. By day, people carry out their normal tasks and duties, preparing for the grand party. The guests arrive and the festivities commence. At the fateful hour, Lady Fidatov dies of poisoning, as arranged by Ivan Randovich long ago.

At that moment, the curse transforms the estate and everyone on it into a dark reflection of itself. Living creatures collapse and die, rising moments later as undead. Some objects animate by the curse's magic. Terror descends upon the estate as the frenzied denizens tear each other to pieces while the Lady roams the grounds wailing her deadly song. The next morning at sunrise, the curse restores everything to the way it was the day before, and no one other than Lady Fidatov are any the wiser of the night's events.

Adventure Overview

This adventure is divided into a brief introduction, and four parts. It is designed to run in a two-hour time slot, but can easily be stretched to run in four hours (or longer) as provided in the "Extending the Adventure" sidebars.

Part 1. The characters attend a gala at the Fidatov estate and meet Lady Marilena Fidatov. She makes it clear that she is unwilling to assist the village (and especially Ivan Randovich) in any way, but invites the adventurers to stay the night as her guests before they leave in the morning. The choice they make determines where they are when Part 2 begins.

Part 2. The curse takes effect as the party winds down—transforming the estate and its denizens into monsters. If the characters agreed to stay night, they witness the transformation firsthand as the grand ballroom descends into chaos. Otherwise, they are attacked by undead farmers and animals in the gardens. The characters set out to search the estate for Lady Fidatov.

Part 3. The characters must search the manor house for clues to the location of the vault which contains Lady Fidatov's treasure.

Part 4. When the characters open the vault and activate the altar within, Lady Fidatov in her true banshee form arrives to defend her wealth. The adventurers must destroy her to end the curse. The characters must then decide what to do with the treasure. Is it too risky to return to Oraşnou? Will they think that they have broken the curse or that the benefits outweigh the risks?

Whatever they decide, they return to Oraşnou, and report back to Grigori and Burgomaster Randovich.

Keep Things Moving!

To finish this adventure in a two-hour time slot, you need to move at a brisk pace. (If you have a four-hour time slot, then you can afford to take your time and explore these scenes in more detail.)

If time is not a concern, **DM Appendix: Extending the Adventure** (see below) provides guidance on extending the adventure beyond the two-hour time allotment; including additional interacting with Lady Fidatov and exploring the manor before its transformation. If you choose to extend the adventure, no additional XP or gp are awarded.

Part 1: 15 minutes. Establish the situation, introduce Lady Fidatov and let the characters interact with her, before finally arriving at her refusal of assistance.

Part 2: 30 minutes. If they accept the offer to stay, then the adventurers have a very brief chance to mingle with the guests before the curse triggers; if they decline, then they must leave the manor and the curse triggers while they are out on the property. Either way, the characters face a combat encounter against the newly-risen undead.

Part 3: 30 minutes. After fending off the undead attack, the characters explore the transformed manor. They must discover the location of the treasure (in the family crypt) and find out how to get it (a ritual involving an old family crest). They learn which specific crest they need by reading Lady Fidatov's journal, they research what it looks like in the library, and they retrieve it from the art gallery, which requires fighting some guardians.

Part 4: 30 minutes. The characters enter the crypt and place the crest on the altar, which causes the treasure to appear (it is in the Border Ethereal until summoned, a very effective anti-theft measure). Lady Fidatov in her banshee form arrives to confront them, and they must defeat her to break the curse (she also tries to tempt them by offering a deal).

Conclusion: By this point you should be very close to the end of the session, but if you can save 5-10 minutes along the way, that gives the players a chance to debate what to do with the (formerly) cursed treasure, return to Burgomaster Randovich, and make their report. They have probably also learned a bit more about the situation than the Burgomaster wanted them to know, which should lead to some interesting roleplaying if time permits.

Adventure Hook

If the characters begin this adventure from within the Forgotten Realms or a setting other than Ravenloft, have them be transported to the Demiplane of Dread just outside Oraşnou via an unnaturally thick fog or mist while traveling overland, preferably at night. See *Welcome to Barovia*, below.

An Envoy from Oraşnou. Those characters that participated in DDAL04-08 *The Broken One* recovered a letter from Lady Fidatov inviting Luca's

father to her manor. Eventually, this letter (and the map to the Lady's estate) made it into the hands of Burgomaster Ivan Randovich. Dubious of the letter's intent, he has asked the characters to make the trip themselves and petition the lady for her assistance in gathering sufficient supplies to both see Oraşnou through the winter, and to pay the tax that is due to Lord Strahd soon.

The characters travel to Fidatov Manor and, after meeting Lady Fidatov, are invited to an evening of excess and indulgence. The adventure begins after the party has wound down and everyone has settled down for the night.

A Blessing of Fate! Those characters new to Barovia happen upon the Hair & Hare where the raised voices of Grigori and Marku can be heard inside. Over a night of drinks and hot foot, they manage to convince the characters to venture to a nearby estate and petition its owner to send food and coin to the village to stave off the wrath of the Devil Strahd!

Welcome to Barovia

Some characters may be arriving from Faerûn for the first time. For those characters describe a heavy fog bank rolling through their travel path while they are in the Quivering Forest, and when it eventually clears, they are on the outskirts of a small mountain village. It's heavy-handed, but such is the way of the Demiplane.

Any character that participates in this adventure earns **The Demiplane of Dread** story award if they do not have it already. They should be made aware that until this story award is removed, they may not participate in any adventure that does not take place in Barovia.

NOTE: This adventure may touch on some morally dark moments. Please be careful to gauge your player's comfort with such things, and remember that the goal of a *Dungeons & Dragons* game is for everyone to have fun!

Curse of Strahd Adventures

The adventures for the Curse of Strahd Season of Dungeons and Dragons Adventurers League deliver the most impactful experience when played in numeric order (i.e.: 04-01, then 04-02, and so on) but this is not required. Please carefully read the following pages and be prepared to adjust encounters, especially where key NPCs are concerned! Although DM tips may be found in the adventure, they are unlikely to cover every table or situation.

For a *Ravenloft* game, the world itself should be treated with great respect—it is a character unto itself, and the Dark Powers rarely respond positively to hand-waving and outright dismissal...

Any character afflicted with lycanthropy must receive the benefits of a *remove curse* at the end of this adventure in order to be rid of this horrible affliction. Characters that choose to remain afflicted or cannot afford this spell, become NPCs and are no longer playable in D&D Adventurers League games.

Part 1. A Night to Remember

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

The characters arrive at the Manor in the late afternoon, well before the evening's festivities are set to begin.

If you have plenty of time to run this adventure (at least four hours), use the information in DM Appendix: Extending the Adventure to run an extended introduction. This gives the players more time to explore the estate and interact with Lady Fidatov and her servants.

A Firm Refusal

What a night! All of the food, drink, and dancing has left you weary. Lady Fidatov has ordered chairs, couches and tables to be brought into the ballroom so that she and her guests can share conversation over drinks before retiring for the evening. If there was ever a time to petition for her aid, it is now.

You find her on a lounge, reading a book. Noticing you, she smiles "Ah, the history of the Fidatovs. Always fascinating."

She closes the book gently, "Taltos," she says, beckoning her seneschal over, "please return this to the library and bring us a second bottle." She smiles at you as she lifts the delicate glass to her lips.

This is the final chance for the characters to plead their case. Marilena listens gravely to whatever they say and then shakes her head. Read or paraphrase the following:

"Foolish Ivan knows that my estate thrives while his own holding suffers. He has sent you to ask me to share the bounty of House Fidatov. I am flattered, but afraid that my answer is no."

The characters may bring up a couple poignant topics during the course of the discussion:

Burgomaster Randovich. She becomes visibly upset. She says only, "*My past dealings with Ivan were...uncomfortable. I would appreciate him not being a topic of discussion.*"

Costel and Luca Barbu. "*I offered refuge for him and his son only. I was repaying a debt—nothing more.*" She refuses to elaborate.

Roleplaying Lady Marilena Fidatov

Marilena is physically beautiful but her soul is dark and twisted. She is overconfident, prideful, capricious, and selfish. She is also ruthless and cunning; a master manipulator. She reveals only what she wants to reveal and every facial expression, gesture, and word is a carefully chosen weapon. Her downfall is due to her inability to detect Ivan Randovich's own greed and deceit; she has had a long time to brood on this. She didn't love him; she was simply outplayed. She wants nothing more than to bestow upon him the same hellish existence that she herself now endures—and her plan is almost complete.

Quote: "Oh, you simply must try this. It's to die for."

Development

As pleasant as the characters might be, Lady Fidatov is implacable. She won't aid the village of Oraşnou.

Eventually, she makes it known that she doesn't intend to continue the conversation.

"If I aid this village, word will spread. All of Barovia would be at my door with hat in hand. I can't allow that to happen."

She pauses. "Regardless, You've travelled far. I am willing to invite you to stay the night as my guests. You can return to Orasnou in the morning, and I will make sure that you are well-provisioned for the journey. Do you accept?"

Lady Fidatov is not offended if the characters decline her offer of hospitality. She knows that, even if they characters intend to travel all night, the curse will make escaping the estate difficult.

The Characters Accept. If the characters stay the night, Lady Fidatov summons a porter to carry their possessions to the guest rooms upstairs. Proceed to Encounter A. Thank You Generous Hosts, below.

The Characters Decline. If the characters decline, and choose to leave the estate, she appears disappointed, but acquiesces. A porter appears with their possessions and she provides a pack containing enough food and wine for the trip back to Oraşnou. Proceed to Encounter B. A Walk in the Park, below.

Troubleshooting: Let's Just Kill Her Now

It's possible that twitchy players may decide to attack Lady Fidatov and get it over with. These stories do tend to end with an inevitable confrontation with the villain, after all.

Even if Lady Fidatov or another resident of the estate is killed during the day, the body does not rise as an undead until the curse triggers.

The characters can commit mass murder and ransack the estate during the daytime over and over again without changing a thing; the curse resets everything the next morning at sunrise with no one the wiser. Any items stolen from the manor or the grounds crumble to dust and reappear in their appropriate places the next time the curse resets.

A *remove curse* spell is of no avail; the Dark Powers of Ravenloft are far stronger than any mortal magic. The only way to change this insane tale is to play it out to its conclusion—and then write a new ending.

Part 2. The Transformation

Estimated Duration: 30 minutes

Shortly after the characters encounter Lady Fidatov, the curse manifests itself.

Proceed to Encounter A if the characters accept Lady Fidatov's offer to remain at the manor as her guests. Otherwise, proceed to Option B if the characters decline.

A. Thank You Generous Host(ess)

Lady Fidatov is well pleased if the characters accept her offer of hospitality. The characters have about only a half hour to kill; the characters are free to socialize with the guests and servants, or simply explore the manor (provided they are sneaky about it).

As the characters interact with the guests, dispense the clues provided in **Player Handout 1**—either one at a time or all at once. Once the characters have slaked their need for social interaction, the adventure progresses depending on whether or not the characters accepted the Lady's invitation.

Where Do You Think You're Going?

In the hours following their retirement, the following rooms are off-limits to guests: the private salon (Area 12), the study (Area 14), the back stairs/servants' entrance (Area 15), and the entire second floor (the grand staircase is roped off and several men-at-arms politely but firmly deter anybody from going upstairs. *"The Lady requests that her guests remain in the public rooms for now"*). The gallery (Area 13) is open and the guests are invited to view, but not touch, the various works of art and family portraits on display.

If the characters manage to get themselves thrown out of the party for offending their hostess or causing a disturbance, then proceed to Encounter B, below; the curse triggers after they have left the manor and are walking across the estate.

Development

The shattering of glass halts a dozen conversations all at once. Lady Fidatov sways slightly and motions discreetly to her seneschal, who helps her from the couch and out of the room—the seneschal closing the doors behind them.

Moments later, a terrible scream rips through the manor. The musicians play on for a moment and then stop, confused as to why everyone has stopped dancing. All conversation comes to a halt. The doors crash open and the seneschal barges into the room. "Poison! The Lady has been..." The Seneschal coughs and stumbles. He puts his hand to his lips and it comes away covered in blood. He falls to his knees, choking and clutching at his throat. All around you, the rest of the party guests begin doing the same. Some fall to the floor while others rush for the exits.

The characters are not cursed; the poisoned food and drink does not affect them in any way. To create suspense, however, ask each character who partook of any of the food or drink to attempt a Constitution saving throw. For anyone who rolls particularly poorly, pretend to make a note of it, and say "nothing happens...yet." The players' imaginations will do the rest.

Ballroom Blitz

Give each character a turn to do what they wish in response to the terrible scene. Some may choose to head toward where Lady Fidatov was last seen, while others may want to aid the Seneschal or look to the other guests. Position everyone appropriately and then read or paraphrase the following.

All around you, the guests gag, retch, and fall to the floor—their bodies twitching and wracked with spasms. Candles and lamps flicker as a chill wind rips through the room. The screaming continues, louder and more insistent than before, one voice of terror becoming a chorus.

The bodies begin to glow with dark energy, thrashing and writhing. You hear the audible CRACK of someone's spine snapping. One man clutches at his skull—fur growing from his skin and his bones contort his body into a new form. Only you appear to be unaffected.

The now-furry man transforms into a **wererat**. Five of the other party guests and servants rise up as **ghasts**. These creatures should be scattered throughout the area so that they are harder to hit with a single area attack.

Tactics. The ghasts attack the nearest character, ganging up on a single target when possible. The wererat begins in hybrid form but uses his weapons if cornered. If a phantom warrior is present, it erupts from the seneschal's body and attacks characters openly wearing holy symbols.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for scaling this combat encounter. These are not cumulative:

- **Weak party:** Remove a **ghost**
- **Strong party:** Remove the **ghosts**; add four **phantom warriors**.
- **Very strong party:** Add a **phantom warrior** and a **wererat**.

Once the characters have dealt with the immediate threat, they can take stock of the situation. Likely they may want to search the manor for Lady Fidatov, or perhaps they will see this as an opportunity to search for anything of value to take back to Orasnou. Regardless of their plan, proceed to Part 3.

B. A Walk in the Park

If the adventurers decline Lady Fidatov's offer to stay for the party, she is gracious. She arranges for a parcel of supplies sufficient to return to Orasnou, and bids them good luck.

Blood-Soaked Fields

As the characters are crossing the grounds to leave the estate, the curse manifests. The characters happen to be passing between a livestock pen and some fields at the moment when the transformation occurs.

Read or paraphrase the following:

It is quite dark as you make your way back across the estate. Small huts, no doubt the homes of the farmhands, are scattered along the edges of the fields and a fenced-in livestock pen holding several bulls, and a kennel with a half-dozen or so hunting hounds.

From behind you, back in the direction of the manor house, a terrible scream rips through the air. It lasts for a moment and is then joined by more voices.

A chill wind sweeps across the area, unlike even the worst winter blast you have previously felt. As it passes, the creatures around you suddenly stiffen and fall to the ground as if dead! Man and beast alike are transfixed, shuddering and twitching as they collapse.

Give the players a chance to react: find out where everybody is positioned and what they want to do.

The workers begin staggering back to their feet, their skin drawn and tight, their eyes glowing red. The gate to the livestock pen crashes open as a large bull, its skeleton clearly visible as the flesh sloughs away from its bones, crashes through the gate. It turns and charges in your direction!

Farmhands and laborers transform into four **ghosts**. Two of the Lady's prize steers are transformed into **skeletal bulls**. If hell hounds are encountered here, they break free from the kennels.

Other undead rise up all across the estate, but they either attack each other in a mad frenzy or scamper off into the woods. The characters are part of a much larger fight, a chaotic maelstrom that takes place every night.

Tactics. The skeletal bulls crash through the gate in an attempt to gore the nearest characters. The ghosts swarm one character at a time.

Adjusting the Encounter

- Here are recommendations for scaling this combat encounter. These are not cumulative:
- **Weak party:** Remove a **ghost**
- **Strong party:** Remove the **ghosts**; add four **hell hounds**
- **Very strong party:** Add a **hell hound** and a **skeletal bull**

Once they deal with the sudden attack, the adventurers presumably head back to the manor to investigate; proceed to Part 3, below. By the time they reach the house, most of the undead have torn each other to shreds or are scattered throughout the property, so the characters do not happen across the encounter in A. Thank You Generous Host, above.

Part 3: The Cursed Manor

Characters outside must first make their way back to the manor house. Along the way they can hear the sounds of the remaining undead tearing one another to shreds. Read or paraphrase the following:

The elegant manor house has transformed into a scene of horror and destruction. Everything seems to have changed; fine draperies now hang tattered and rotted, the floors are stained and cracked, and even the walls and ceilings sag a bit.

Everywhere you look you see the dead: piled in corners, splayed across the back of a chair, hanging limply in the jagged glass of a shattered window. The immediate danger seems to have passed but you can still hear the sounds of fighting in the distance.

The characters (and the players) are at a bit of an information disadvantage. They know that something bizarre has happened but they don't really know why. The most logical thing to do is search for Lady Fidatov, since it was her screaming that seems to have heralded the transformation. However, they can search the rooms of the manor in whatever order they wish.

Confronting Lady Fidatov

There are four events things that need to happen before they can confront Lady Fidatov:

- **Area 10: Private Salon.** The characters need to see Lady Fidatov's spirit. This gives them the clue that she can only be confronted in the family crypt at the center of the gardens.
- **Area 11: Study.** The characters should discover *Lady Fidatov's journal*. This tells them how to get into the crypt and that the family vault is protected by a ward which can only be disabled with the crest of the Seventh Son of the Seventh Son of the House's founder.
- **Area 4: Library.** The characters must figure out what the family crest looks like. There are history books here that can show them.
- **Area 12: Art Gallery.** Here, the characters find the Fidatov family crest needed to open their family crypt.

With the proper family crest in hand and armed with the knowledge that Lady Fidatov has fled to the crypt, the characters can proceed to Part 4, confront Lady Fidatov, and end the curse.

General Features

The interior of the manor has the following general features.

Terrain. Though the house is sturdy enough, some areas of the floors may be buckled and broken, creating difficult terrain. Similarly, furniture and fixtures are tossed around the place. Paint is peeled and cracked, and wallpaper faded and torn. Even the plastered walls have chunks removed in some spots, revealing the timbers beneath.

Light. Outside, the night is dark with little of the moon visible beyond the clouds. It is even darker inside; no light exists here save for that which the characters possess themselves. Occasionally, ghostly lights can be seen around the corner, but disappear when the characters expect to find their source.

Smells and Sounds. Blood, burning flesh, rot. Screams, tearing of flesh, splintering wood.

Pacing and Gentle Nudges

Keep the pace brisk as you run this section of the adventure. If the players need a clue on where to go the characters might see a very large rat (a wererat in its rat form) darting about attempting to get into area 14, an incorporeal spirit passing through a wall into the library, or strange, green mist boiling out from beneath the door to the Study.

The Interior of Fidatov Manor

The following notes explain what the characters find in the transformed manor. The room key is the same.

1. Outside the Manor

If the characters did not stay for the party, then this is where they arrive at the beginning of Part 3.

The double doors hang loosely from their hinges. The stone is cracked and pitted as if everything has aged decades overnight.

2. Entrance Hall

The bodies of several servants and men-at-arms are tangled up here. The soldiers seem to have hacked the servants to pieces before turning their weapons on themselves.

3. Grand Salon and Main Staircase

The salon is oddly quiet: there are no bodies or bloodstains here. However, the tall columns are cracked and the second-floor balcony tips forward at a precarious angle as if that entire section of the house could come crashing down at any moment. If the characters approach the staircase, a swarm of bats comes screeching down from above, flying past

them and around the high ceilings in a dark cloud before flying out the door into the night.

4. Library

The library is mostly intact. The books do not seem to have been affected by the transformation, or perhaps it is just that old books seem about the same when they are 5 years older or even 25 years older.

Clue. When the characters come here to search for the ancient Fidatov family crest, it can be found within the volume of family history that the characters witnessed Marilena reading before the curse manifested. Provided they have the book and know which branch of the family they are looking for; no check is required to find the correct answer.

Treasure. An ancient *scroll of mass cure wounds* is folded inside one of the books of the family history.

Area 5. Dining Room

The food and drink in the dining room have rotted and turned into black goo. Mold creeps along the walls and floor. A massive formal dining table is still intact, but the chairs are smashed and destroyed. A dead woman lies in the center of the table with an apple stuffed in her mouth and a dagger in her back.

Treasure. The dagger has a jeweled hilt and is worth 50 gold pieces.

Area 6. Ballroom

If the characters attended the party, this is where they begin Part 3.

The dance floor is piled with bodies. Blood has soaked into the wood and other dark stains are splattered on the walls. The doors leading to the terrace are shattered, as are the windows. When a character crosses the room, one of the chandelier ropes suddenly snaps and the huge glass and crystal structure comes crashing to the ground, missing the character by inches.

Area 7. Terrace

Vines from the garden have grown up onto the terrace. Several skeletons are entwined within their coils. A set of stairs leading to the garden are cracked and bloodstained.

Area 8. Gardens

The bushes here have elongated thorns that slowly drip blood and writhe of their own accord. Hedges and topiary animals have grown unchecked and the characters must hack their way through if they wish to reach the family crypt at the center.

Area 9. Drawing Room

The fine furnishings in this room seem to have been chewed up and shredded by massive claws. The stuffing of the pillows is scattered everywhere.

Area 10. Private Salon

The doors to the salon are closed and locked. They are splintered and bulge outward slightly as if some great force slammed into them from the other side. Opening them requires thieves' tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check; alternatively, may be forced open with a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

When the characters enter the room, read or paraphrase the following:

This looks like a lady's private salon. It has a couch along with a small armoire, dressing table, and various cosmetic supplies. A variety of ornate masks hang on the walls. The body of Lady Fidatov lies on the couch.

As you enter, a ghostly form rises up from the body, its features and bearing identical to those of the Lady, and seems to stare right through you. "Ivan... Ivan, is that you?"

The ghost pauses for a moment and a frightened look crosses her face. "You! I remember you. He sent you to distract me while he steals my treasure! My Family wards it forever; he'll never have it!"

The ghost issues a scream that tears at your mind and body before it turns and flies through a nearby wall.

Marilena recognizes the characters, of course. She alone retains her mind and memories despite the effects of the curse. Seeing the characters alive, she is afraid that Ivan is making a move to claim her precious treasure.

The characters can follow her through the manor, out into the garden where she passes through the overgrown hedges and disappears into a dark building at the center. The characters must cut their way through or navigate the hedge maze, so they cannot reach the building before she is gone. See Part 4 for details when the characters are ready to approach the crypt.

Treasure. Most of the masks are costume jewelry, but one of them is beaded with pearls and is worth 60 gold pieces.

Area 11: Study

The door to the immense study is locked (thieves' tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check to open. However, it also has been ravaged by time and only requires a DC 11 Strength(Athletics) check to force it open.

The ledgers and other documents dealing with the finances of the family are still here, but they have mostly rotted away. Lady Fidatov's journal is still in the desk. (If the characters were here before the curse triggered, then any locks they opened are still open, anything they took is still gone, and the trap is not reset.)

Trapped Desk. The desk is locked and requires a set of thieves' tools and a DC 15 Dexterity check to open. It has a **poison needle trap**. Detecting the trap requires a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The trap is disabled with a similar Dexterity check. A creature triggering the trap is struck by a needle and takes 1 piercing damage and must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 11 (2d10) poison damage and be poisoned for 1 hour. If successful, the creature takes only half damage and is not poisoned.

Clue. The characters find **Player Handout 2** inside the desk.

Treasure. Inside the desk is a wooden box containing 75 gp in various denominations.

Area 12. Art Gallery

By reading Marilena's journal the characters learn that in order to get into the crypt, they need the crest of the seventh son of the seventh son of the founding father of the Fidatov clan. They find out what that crest looks like by researching it in the library. The physical crest itself is found here, in the gallery. Read or paraphrase:

This long hallway is lined with oil portraits of the various men and women who have led the Fidatov family over its many generations. Floor-to-ceiling mirrors make the space seem much larger than it is. Glass display cases hold various art objects and the personal crests of each scion of the family.

As you enter the room, reality seems to ripple and shift and the room suddenly appears to be much larger than it previously was.

The room is an extradimensional space; the room is twice as large on the inside as it appears on the map (see Appendix). What is in this room largely depends on the time available (see Time Check, above).

Family Crest. If the characters know that they need a Fidatov crest (because they've read Marilena's journal) but they don't know what it looks like (because they haven't been to the library) then they might just decide to take them all. There are 13 individual crests on the walls. They can still go to the Library and figure that out.

Treasure. If they characters did not come here before the curse triggered, then they find art objects

worth a total of 100 gold pieces. If they already took treasure from this area, then everything except for the family crests is smashed and worthless.

Time Check

The encounter that follows can be long; if you don't have at least 75 minutes remaining in the game session when the characters reach this encounter, you should either run it entirely as Theater of the Mind (narratively) and resolve it very quickly, or remove the combat entirely. The characters can simply search the gallery for the crest they need.

Mirror, Mirror (Optional Encounter). If the characters don't yet know what they are looking for, they might just decide to loot the gallery randomly. Whether they go for something specific or just take whatever isn't nailed down, as soon as anyone touches anything valuable, the guardians attack.

Read or paraphrase the following:

At the far end of the room, one of the tall mirrors begins to shimmer and ripple. A tall figure steps through the mirror from the other side. It appears to be made of body parts stitched together from a variety of other creatures – a hideous monster of stolen flesh. It roars a challenge and leaps deftly toward you!

The **mirror golem** is clearly visible, but the **reflection guardian** is not due to its *false appearance*. Each time it starts its turn, it leaps to a different mirror and changes its form so that it looks like a different character. This has no game effect but being attacked by their own reflection should be unsettling to the characters.

While the golem engages the closest enemy, the reflection guardian is cunning. It saves its reaction to use *counterspell* and otherwise supports the golem with *crown of madness*. A reflection guardian that is concentrating on *telekinesis* can hurl vases and shards of glass at a character as an action.

Ranged Spell Attack: +5 to hit, range 60 feet. **Hit:** 10 (3d6) bludgeoning or slashing damage.

Vulnerability. The golem is a flawed construct. Although it appears to be a normal flesh golem, the appearance is illusory. In reality, the golem is constructed of hundreds of tiny, interlocking mirrors. As such, it has a number of weak points. A character viewing the golem through a mirror sees past the illusion and identifies these weak points.

If a character looking through a mirror uses the Help action to aid someone else, the character being helped can attempt a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check. If successful, that character's next attack bypasses the golem's damage reduction and scores a critical

hit on a roll of 19 or 20. A character that can see through illusions automatically sees the golem's weak points without needing someone else to point them out.

Alternatively, a character averting his eyes is unaffected by the illusion and gains the benefits of the golem's vulnerability (albeit with disadvantage on the attack roll and without the benefit of the Help action).

Smashing the Mirrors. There are a five, floor-to-ceiling length mirrors spread throughout the hall. The guardian is always in one of these mirrors. On its turn it can leap to a different mirror using its move.

If a character smashes the mirror that the guardian is currently in (AC 12; 10 hit points; immune poison and psychic damage), it leaps to a different intact mirror. If all the mirrors in the room are destroyed, the characters can no longer exploit the golem's special vulnerability, but the guardian is immediately destroyed as it has nowhere else to hide.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for scaling this combat encounter.

- **Weak party:** The DC of the Wisdom (Insight) check is 13.
- **Strong party:** Add a second **reflection guardian**. The golem has 133 hit points.
- **Very strong party:** Add two **reflection guardians**. The golem has 198 hit points and gains +1 to attack rolls and deals 17 (3d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Area 13: Back Stairs/Servants' Entrance

The back stairs have collapsed. The bodies of several servants are entombed in the rubble, with just their skeletal hands sticking out, as if they were reaching for help when they died.

Area 14: Herb Garden

What was once a lovely herb garden is now a series of empty planter boxes.

Area 15: Kitchen

The pantry and kitchen are filled with rotted food. A limbless torso is laid across the chopping block, the bloody cleaver still clutched in the hand of the now-dead cook. The severed limbs and head are in the cooking pot. Most of the bottles in the wine cellar have been smashed, and the few that survive contain vinegar.

Part 4: Breaking the Curse

In order to escape the Fidatov estate, the characters must break the curse. The only way to do that is by confronting Lady Marilena. She has fled to the family crypt, where her treasure is hidden. The characters cannot enter the crypt until they have the family crest needed to deactivate the wards.

If the characters flee without ending the curse, the various undead on the estate rise and follow them. While the characters easily outrun them, the undead eventually happen upon if they leave the grounds to lick their wounds. However, they don't get very far; at sunrise, they disappear as the estate and everything in it returns to its previous state when the curse resets itself.

The Hedge Maze

The crypt is located in the center of the gardens. The hedges are semi-sentient while the curse is active and they actively seek to deter people from reaching the crypt, forming a living maze. However, in the interests of time, simply describe moving through the maze quickly even as the maze tries to delay them by closing off paths, tripping them and pulling at their clothes.

Extending the Adventure

This would be a fine place to add content if you are looking to lengthen the running time of this adventure. Since the maze is semi-sentient, it actively opposes the characters as they try to break through it. The characters can solve the maze (using appropriate Intelligence or Wisdom checks (DC 15 to DC 20), such as Investigation, Insight, Nature, or Survival).

They can take the brute-force option and simply hack their way through the hedges using Strength (Athletics), edged weapons, or fire. Alternatively, consider giving the hedges the ability to magically regrow. The maze itself could be a puzzle for the players to solve while they seek the ever-changing path to the center.

When the characters reach the center of the maze, read or paraphrase the following:

A weathered stone building in the shape of a cross stands at the very center of the garden. Unlike everywhere else you have been, this place seems untouched by the chaos and madness that has swept across the estate. The building is unadorned with decor, save for the word FIDATOV in solemn block lettering.

Where there should be a door is a thick stone slab with no apparent hinges. In the center is a depression about the size and shape of a kite shield.

Troubleshooting: Crest? What Crest?

It's quite possible that the characters might come here too early (by pursuing the spirit of Lady Fidatov when they discover her body in the manor). In this case they simply can't get into the crypt. Don't let them waste too much time; remind them that they have not fully explored the manor house and they should get the hint. A DC 11 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that some sort of ward is likely preventing the use of *etherealness*, *stoneshape*, or other magic to gain entry into the crypt.

Placing the correct *family crest* into the center of the stone slab yields a satisfying click. The crest then springs outward slightly. The character must remove the crest, whereupon the slab shudders to life and sinks into the ground.

Placing an incorrect crest causes the slab to surge with dark energy. The character must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) necrotic damage on a failed save and half that amount on a success. If the characters brought all 13 crests from the gallery because they didn't research the correct one in the library, then it may be painful, but they'll eventually get in.

Inside the Crypt

When the characters enter the crypt, read or paraphrase the following:

Bronze lamps spring to life as you enter the crypt. The Fidatov's family crypt is surprisingly understated considering the magnificence of the manor house. Stone sarcophagi line the walls, each bearing a simple brass nameplate etched with the name of its occupant. A plain stone altar stands on the far side of the room.

Something glitters beyond the altar. The entire back of the room is piled with treasure; gemstones, jewels, thousands of coins, and even a fine suit of plate armor. Something isn't right, however; the treasure seems indistinct—as if it isn't really there.

Characters trying to touch the treasure find that their hand passes right through it. Spells such as *detect magic* reveals that it isn't an illusion, but it appears that the treasure is not entirely present on this plane. The treasure rests on the Border Ethereal.

The altar has a depression of the same size and shape as the one in the door. It should be obvious to the characters that the family crest is again called for. This time it locks into place and cannot be removed.

The Cursed Treasure

When the characters place the Fidatov family crest upon the altar the wards are disabled and the treasure returns from the Ethereal plane. It also draws Marilena Fidatov for the final confrontation. The curse has one last trick to play on the characters, however. Read or paraphrase the following:

The crest locks into place as you place it on the altar. The treasure begins to glow, becoming more and more substantial. Moments later it has fully manifested before you, gleaming and glittering and looking so beautiful...so, so beautiful...

The treasure is enchanted to **enrapture** those that view it. Unless someone specifically said that they wanted to stay entirely outside the crypt, it is likely that all the characters are affected.

Each character who views the treasure when it appears must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw be enraptured by the treasure. An enraptured character can't take reactions and must roll 1d10 at the start of each of its turns to determine its behavior for that turn. This is an enchantment effect, and creatures that are immune to being charmed are immune to this effect.

Rapture Behavior

d10	Behavior
1-5	The creature uses all its movement to move toward the treasure. If it is already in a space containing treasure, it drops prone and uses its action to roll around in it.
6-7	The creature views anyone else as a threat who might steal the treasure. The creature uses its action to make a melee attack against a randomly determined creature within reach. If there is no creature within reach, the creature does nothing this turn, instead shouting about how no one else can have the treasure.
8-10	The creature doesn't move or take actions this turn. It stares raptly at the treasure, unable to tear its gaze away from the glittering beauty.

At the end of each of its turns, an affected creature can repeat the saving throw with a cumulative +1 bonus for each previous failure. If it succeeds, this effect ends for that creature and it is thereafter immune. The cursed denizens of the estate (which includes Marilena and her allies) aren't affected by the sight of the treasure.

Roleplaying the Temptation

Any character whose flaw would be especially appropriate for this effect (such as a weakness for shiny objects, excessive greed, a love of money, or an inability to resist temptation) can voluntarily choose to fail the initial saving throw against the treasure's effect. If the player chooses this option and roleplays his or her character's flaw appropriately, you may choose to grant that character advantage on his or her saving throws against Marilena Fidatov's Wail and Horrifying Visage abilities. The character still makes the second and subsequent saves against the rapture effect as normal.

Wail of the Banshee

At the end of the second rounds after the characters summon the treasure, **Marilena Fidatov** arrives. At the same time, two **swarms of creeping coins** animate and emerge from the piles of treasure. The treasure's enchantment isn't intended to doom the entire party, so if half or more of the characters are under the effects of the treasure after their second saves, then delay the banshee's arrival by another round.

When Marilena does arrive, read or paraphrase the following:

The ghostly figure of Lady Marilena Fidatov floats through the wall of the crypt. She gasps when she sees the treasure spread out before you. "How?! Pah! It does not matter. He was too cowardly to come himself so he sent you to do his work. You are obviously skilled thieves, but this ends now. I gave everything to protect this. EVERYTHING! I shall not allow the likes of you to take it from me!"

Lady Fidatov gestures, and the pile of coins begins to shift and stir. Glittering gold rises up and crashes down with the force of thunder. The suit of armor jerks to life. The lids of the sarcophagi begin to tremble as if even the ancient bones of the Fidatovs rise up to defend their former wealth.

Creatures. The most obvious threat is Marilena Fidatov herself, a **banshee**. There is also a suit of **Strahd's animated armor** and two **swarms of creeping coins**.

Marilena uses her *horrifying visage* on her first turn and *wail* on her second. She keeps her distance from melee characters, using *incorporeal movement* to move through walls to obtain advantageous positions. If a character does engage her in melee, the swarms of creeping coins attack that character. If Lady Fidatov is not threatened, they attack the nearest enemy. The armor is intelligent, and uses tactics to defend Lady Fidatov.

When Lady Fidatov is destroyed, read or paraphrase the following:

The banshee's form begins to dissipate. For the first time since you met her, Marilena Fidatov's face shows true fear. She calls out to the heavens: "Mistress! Hear me! You promised me that I would have my vengeance! Where are you now? Where are y—"

With a final scream, Lady Fidatov disappears. Thousands of coins crash to the floor. The cursed treasure is silent at last.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for scaling this combat encounter.

- **Weak party:** Replace the Strahd's animated armor with four **animated armor**.
- **Strong party:** Add four **animated armor**
- **Very strong party:** Add a **banshee**

Legendary Actions: If the group is particularly strong, the banshee has 3 legendary actions per round. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The banshee regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

- **I'll Be Over There.** The banshee moves up to her speed without provoking opportunity attacks.
- **Let Me Touch You.** The banshee uses Corrupting Touch.
- **My Treasure!** The banshee commands a creeping coins within 30 feet of her that can take a reaction to use its reaction either to move up to its speed or to make a melee attack against a creature within its reach.
- **Deadly Phasing (Costs 2 Actions).** The banshee moves up to her speed without provoking opportunity attacks. During this movement, if she passes through a square containing a living creature, the banshee makes a Corrupting Touch attack against it. A creature may not take this damage more than once per round.
- **Got My Voice Back (Costs 2 Actions; 1/Encounter).** The banshee's Wail recharges.

Treasure. Aside from the entirety of the Fidatov family wealth (5,000 gp), there are some less fraught rewards. When Marilena dies, the jewelry that she was wearing when she died becomes corporeal and remains. These beautiful sapphire pieces have a total value of 850 gold pieces. There is also a suit of *glamoured studded leather armor* atop a nearby pile of coins.

Choices and Consequences

None of the residents of the estate (including Lady Fidatov) regain their living forms the next morning—they are truly dead. However, whether or not the curse is broken is unclear. The characters must decide what to do with the treasure.

The characters may wish to use spells or abilities to try and determine if the treasure remains cursed

even after Lady Fidatov's destruction. It appears normal to all physical senses, but it does continue to radiate magic, though the characters can sense that the aura seems to be fading. How long that might take is impossible to know.

Keeping It. The characters could decide to keep the treasure for themselves. They might feel as though they have earned it, after all. The Dark Powers find this highly amusing. The characters claim an additional 5,000 gold pieces by dividing up the hoard, but in so doing, a bit of the curse is transferred to them. Each character accepting a share of the treasure earns the **Cursed by Greed** story award (see below). This effect cannot be removed as long as the character remains within the domain of Ravenloft. Aside from spending 10 downtime days returning the gold to the Fidatov Crypt, only leaving Barovia will remove the curse.

Destroying/Hiding It. The characters may feel that the treasure is too dangerous to risk letting it back into the world. They can destroy it in a variety of ways: melting it down, throwing it into the bottom of a lake, burying it, or even sending it back to the Border Ethereal forever by reactivating the wards on the family crypt and then destroying the crest that is used to control the wards. This would make it virtually impossible for anyone else to ever recover the treasure.

Leaving It. The characters may feel that the treasure is simply too dangerous to deal with and decide to leave it here. With the curse broken, the estate can be plundered by any traveler. It doesn't take long before the treasure is discovered and divided up among various explorers and thieves, although it quickly acquires a reputation—every gold piece seems to bring a little bit of misfortune to whoever holds it, and those who carry Fidatov gold have a tendency to die from knives in the back.

Taking It to Orasnov. The characters were tasked by Grigori with finding resources to aid the village, and a giant pile of treasure is by definition a valuable resource. Transporting thousands of coins is easier said than done, however. The characters can find an old wagon in one of the outbuildings of the estate that is sturdy enough to transport the treasure, if they lack *bags of holding* or other means of moving such a vast amount of coinage.

Leaving the Estate

Once the characters have decided what to do about the treasure, there is nothing left for them to do at the Fidatov estate. They may choose to spend the rest of the night here or they may prefer to leave as soon as possible. Either way, with the curse broken,

the estate does not revert to its “intact” form the next morning. It remains in its run-down, decrepit state, with all the battle damage and several decades of accumulated neglect leaving the buildings ruined and the fields fallow. House Fidatov fell when its last scion was poisoned, but only now is it truly dead.

XP Award

Destroying the banshee frees the estate from its curse. Award each character 200 XP.

Conclusion

The journey back to the village is uneventful. The characters could easily draw a lot of attention to themselves if they are hauling a wagon full of treasure, but presumably they are wise enough to avoid presenting an obvious target for every ruffian and brigand in all of Barovia.

Although it is still winter and the condition of Oraşnou is still deplorable when the characters arrive back at the village, the death of Lady Fidatov has in some small measure improved the situation. She was adding her magic to strengthen the force of winter, hoping to draw Ivan Randovich out in person. Although that plan did not succeed, her demise does not produce a respite to the villagers as her addition to the cause of their misery was, in the end, small.

A Chat with the Burgomaster

Needless to say, Ivan Randovich is very eager to meet with the adventurers and hear what they have discovered. He sends a messenger to fetch them as soon as he becomes aware that they are back in Oraşnou. Read or paraphrase the following:

“You have returned. I and the good Grigori had begun to worry, perhaps, just a little. What did you find? Was the Fidatov estate as rich as the letter said? More importantly, will Lady Fidatov consent to share her bounty with the poor, suffering people of Oraşnou?”

Roleplaying Ivan Randovich

Ivan is the Burgomaster (Mayor) of Oraşnou and is accustomed to being listened to and obeyed. He interrupts and talks over others and can't imagine anyone would disobey his orders. He is a vain man and regularly prims and preens over his clothing, distractedly flicking lint from his doublet or worrying over a scuff in his boots. Ivan has a weakness for mystics and fortunetellers, and sprinkles the concepts of fate and divine will in his conversation.

In this case, Burgomaster Randovich knows that he is likely skating on thin ice with the characters. He took a big risk by not telling them everything he knew about the Fidatov estate. His main goal in this conversation is to convince the characters that he knew nothing and is completely surprised by everything that the characters discovered.

Let the players decide how much or how little they wish to press Ivan concerning the things that they learned. He answers their questions, to a point.

- He insists that the last time he saw her, Marilena was alive and well (if broken-hearted; he says that he was the one to end their relationship, because she was only interested in money, while he was looking for true love).
- He absolutely denies knowing that she was under a curse, that she was a banshee, or that she died of being poisoned (and there is no direct evidence implicating Ivan in her death, so the characters can't really confront him too stridently on this question).
- Ivan is intensely interested in what Lady Fidatov said when she died. If they relate her final words, Ivan says that he has no idea who this “Mistress” is that she called out to in her final moments, but it obviously can't be Strahd.

If the characters brought the treasure back and offer it to Ivan to be used for benefit of the village, the Burgomaster is elated (though he tries hard not to show it). If the characters bring back clothes or wood that could be used for firewood, then adjust the text to reflect their smart thinking.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The Burgomaster sighs thoughtfully. “Not to disparage your efforts in any way, but a pile of coin is not exactly the assistance that I was hoping for. To be quite frank, a man cannot eat gold or use it to plug the holes in his walls, or burn it in his fireplace to stave off the winter chill. We would rather have had grain or cattle, or even warm clothes.”

Sensing that his story is probably not as credible as he would have hoped, the Burgomaster decides that the time has come to take the adventurers to the Amber Temple. They are probably becoming more and more suspicious of him, and he wants to regain control of the situation.

“There is one more thing that I wish to ask of you. You mentioned that Lady Fidatov was apparently in the service of some more powerful entity. There is an old temple, long abandoned, where I believe we might be able to learn more, and perhaps even find some magic of our own to protect the village. Soon, I will make the journey myself to this place. I may have need to call on you then...”

Fin.

Rewards

Make sure players note their rewards on their adventure logsheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

Experience

Total up all **combat experience** earned for defeated foes, and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For **non-combat experience**, the rewards are listed per character. Give all characters in the party non-combat experience awards unless otherwise noted.

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP per Foe
Ghast	450
Wererat	450
Hell hound	450
Skeletal Bull	450
Phantom Warrior	700
Mirror Golem	1,100
Reflection Guardian	200
Animated Armor	200
Swarm of Creeping Coins	50
Strahd's Animated Armor	2,300
Lady Marilena Fidatov (Banshee)	1,100

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP per Character
Break the Fidatov family curse	200

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 1,310 **experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 1,750 **experience points**.

Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Characters should attempt to divide treasure evenly whenever possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Consumable magic items should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

Permanent magic items are divided according to a system. See the sidebar if the adventure awards permanent magic items.

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP value
Jeweled dagger	50
Pearl-studded mask	60
Art objects in the gallery	100
Marilena's jewelry	850
The Fidatov treasure	5,000

Permanent Magic Item Distribution

D&D Adventurers League has a system in place to determine who is awarded permanent magic items at the end of a session. Each character's logsheet contains a column to record permanent magic items for ease of reference.

- If all the players at the table agree on one character taking possession of a permanent magic item, that character gets the item.
- In the event that one or more characters indicate an interest in possessing a permanent magic item, the character that possesses the fewest permanent magic items gets the item. If there is a tie in the total number of permanent magic items owned by contesting characters, the item's owner is determined randomly by the DM.

Glamoured Studded Leather

Armor (studded leather), rare

Any illusion of normal clothing and other types of armor created by this item can appear only to be of the finest quality. No matter what form it takes, when you wear this item, your appearance draws the eye of those around you. In its natural state, this armor is tight and immodestly cut. A description of this item can be found in **Player Handout 3**.

Scroll of Mass Cure Wounds

A description of this spell can be found in the *Player's Handbook*.

Downtime

Each character receives **five downtime days** at the conclusion of this adventure.

Story Award

Characters have the opportunity to earn the following story awards during this adventure.

The Demiplane of Dread. You have traversed the mists and now find yourself in the Demiplane of Dread and, until this story award is removed, you

are unable to leave. So long as you are trapped, you cannot participate in any adventure or event that takes place outside of Barovia. Tread carefully during your time here, the Dark Powers are watching.

Cursed by Greed. Blinded by greed, you have been cursed by an ancient family. Because of this, you are affected by a permanent *bestow curse*. While so cursed, you have disadvantage on ability checks and saving throws made with an ability score determined randomly by the Dungeon Master. This curse can only be removed by spending 10 downtime days returning the Fidatov family treasure to the crypt or by leaving the Demiplane of Dread.

DM Rewards

For running this adventure, you receive **450 XP**, **225 gp** and **5** downtime days.

DM Appendix: NPC

Summary

The following NPCs feature prominently in this adventure.

Lady Marilena Fidatov (Fee-dah-TOV). Marilena is physically beautiful but her soul is dark and twisted. She has long blonde hair which she wears pulled back, and elegant, sharp features. Marilena is overconfident, prideful, capricious, and selfish. She is also ruthless and cunning; a master manipulator. She reveals only what she wants to reveal and every facial expression, gesture, and word is a carefully chosen weapon. Play her like the ultimate “mean girl” from a Jane Austen novel – unfailingly polite yet utterly cruel behind that smile.

Taltos (TALL-tosh). Seneschal of House Fidatov. Taltos is a tall, thin, dark-haired human, who looks sourly at everyone and everything as though he is perpetually suffering from a stomach ache. Everyone else in the household apart from the Lady herself defers to Taltos.

Ivan Randovich (EE-van RAND-oh-vich). Male human Burgomaster of Oraşnou is round of belly and wears a red velvet doublet over a fine linen shirt. When he speaks, his voice booms through the dining room. Unbeknownst to everyone in the village, he is Esmee Amarantha’s Third Obsession.

Gregori Wurlbach (gre-GOR-ee VURL-bok). Male human. Soul. Gregori is a soft, balding man with gnarled hands. He has worked hard for the comforts that he enjoys in the village—chief among these being that his food and drink is provided free of charge thanks to his ability to host the Vistani when they arrive every few months to peddle their wares. He is fair minded and often overlooks his own profits in favor of his community and friends. Unlike other denizens of the duchy, Gregori is friendly and welcoming of outsiders.

Marku Grelon (MAR-koo GREE-lawn). Male human. Owner of the Seven Tables Tavern. Knows all the best gossip, but never makes it up himself.

Appendix: NPC / Monster Statistics

Animated Armor

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	1 (-5)	3 (-4)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 6

Languages –

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Antimagic Susceptibility. The armor is incapacitated while in the area of an *antimagic field*. If targeted by *dispel magic*, the armor must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

False Appearance. While it remains motionless, the armor is indistinguishable from a normal suit of armor.

Actions

Multiattack. The armor makes two melee attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Banshee (Lady Marilena Fidatov)

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 58 (13d8)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis +2, Cha +5

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Detect Life. The banshee can magically sense the presence of living creatures up to 5 miles away. She knows the general direction they're in but not their exact locations.

Incorporeal Movement. The banshee can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. She takes 5 (1d10) force damage if she ends her turn inside an object.

Turn Immunity. While she is within her manor house or on the grounds of her estate, Lady Fidatov is immune to effects that turn undead. Any other undead within 60 feet of Lady Fidatov while her Turn Immunity is active has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn or destroy undead.

Actions

Corrupting Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (3d6 + 2) necrotic damage.

Horrifying Visage. Each non-undead creature within 60 feet of the banshee that can see her must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, with disadvantage if the banshee is within line of sight, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the banshee's Horrifying Visage for the next 24 hours.

Wail (1/Day). The banshee releases a mournful wail, provided that she isn't in sunlight. This wail has no effect on constructs and undead. All other creatures within 30 feet of her than can hear her must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature drops to 0 hit points. On a success, a creature takes 10 (3d6) psychic damage.

Swarm of Creeping Coins

Medium swarm of Tiny constructs, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 28 (5d6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	2 (-4)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 7

Languages –

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Antimagic Susceptibility. The coins are incapacitated while in the area of an *antimagic field*. If targeted by *dispel magic*, the coins must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

False Appearance. While it remains motionless, this creature is indistinguishable from a pile of normal coins.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a tiny coin. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage, or 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

Ghast

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 36 (8d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the ghast must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the ghast's Stench for 24 hours.

Turning Defiance. The ghast and any ghouls within 30 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Hell Hound

Medium fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (7d8 + 14)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +5

Damage Immunities fire

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages understands Infernal but can't speak it

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The hound has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The hound has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the hound's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Fire Breath (Recharge 5-6). The hound exhales fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Mirror Golem

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 104 (11d10 + 44)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	19 (+4)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerability force

Damage Immunities lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

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

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Aversion of Thunder. If the golem takes thunder damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Lightning Absorption. Whenever the golem is subjected to lightning damage, it takes no damage and instead regains a number of hit points equal to the lightning damage dealt.

Magic Resistance. The golem has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

Actions

Multiattack. The golem makes two fist attacks.

Fist. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. **Hit:** 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Reflection Guardian

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 5 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 0 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Antimagic Susceptibility. The reflection guardian is incapacitated while in the area of an *antimagic field*. If targeted by *dispel magic*, the guardian must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

Innate Spellcasting. The guardian's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12). The guardian can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

3/day each: *counterspell*, *crown of madness*, *hypnotic pattern*, *telekinesis*

False Appearance. While the figure in the mirror remains motionless, the guardian is indistinguishable from a normal mirror.

Phantom Warrior

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, any languages it knew in life

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The phantom warrior can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. The phantom warrior can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Spectral Armor and Shield. The phantom warrior's AC accounts for its spectral armor and shield.

Actions

Multiattack. The phantom warrior makes two attacks with its spectral longsword.

Spectral Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) force damage.

Etherealness. The phantom warrior enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

Skeletal Bull

Large undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d10 + 18)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages understands Abyssal but can't speak

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Charge. If the skeleton moves at least 10 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet away and knocked prone.

Actions

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d12 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Strahd's Animated Armor

Medium construct, lawful evil

Armor Class 21 (natural armor)

Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Skills Perception +3

Damage Resistances cold, fire

Damage Immunities lightning, poison

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 13

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Antimagic Susceptibility. The armor is incapacitated while in the area of an *antimagic field*. If targeted by *dispel magic*, the armor must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

False Appearance. While it remains motionless, the armor is indistinguishable from a normal suit of armor.

Actions

Multiattack. The armor makes two melee attacks or uses Shocking Bolt twice.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) lightning damage.

Shocking Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit (with advantage on the attack roll if the target is wearing armor made of metal), range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) lightning damage.

Wererat

Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger), lawful evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

Senses darkvision 60 ft. (rat form only), passive Perception 12

Languages Common (can't speak in rat form)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Shapechanger. The wererat can use its action to polymorph into a rat-human hybrid or into a giant rat, or back into its true form which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying is not transformed. It reverts to its true form when it dies.

Keen Smell. The wererat has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Actions

Multiattack (Humanoid or Hybrid form only). The wererat makes two attacks one of which is a bite.

Bite (Rat or Hybrid form only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid it must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with wererat lycanthropy.

Shortsword (Humanoid or Hybrid form only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Hand Crossbow (Humanoid or Hybrid form only). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Player Handout 1: Rumors

The Fidatov family has long been wealthy. Her parties are amazing. I've known her for years and have been in the house a hundred times, but still wonder where she keeps her family's riches?

Oh, don't mention Ivan around Lady Fidatov; that's a surefire way to make her angry. They were betrothed at one point, but they had a falling out very recently. I can't imagine that there's much love between them now.

Orasnou? That's Ivan Randovich's little burg, isn't it? ::stifles a laugh:: I hear things aren't going too well with him running things. Aren't Lord Strahd's taxes due soon?

Marilena adores history. I mean, look at her. Here we are in the middle of the best party I've been to in years and she's got her nose in a book.

To be honest, I'm surprised she attends her own parties. Everyone knows she spends most of her time in that lovely hedge maze behind the manor. Pity she won't let anyone else enjoy it.

Player Handout 2: Lady Fidatov's Journal

The time has come to break things off with Ivan. He has been an enjoyable plaything, but he grows increasingly insistent that we should marry. He believes himself irresistible, that I am in love and therefore stupid, but I play the game far better than he realizes. To think that I would give over not just my fortune, but dominion over my lands, over my very life, to a man? The idea sickens me.

The servants tell me that he has been roaming the manor at night, looking in the library for clues to where the vault might be hidden. Such foolishness. My father was no fool, and neither is his daughter. There is no vault because my ancestors stand eternal guard over our treasure. Only the personal seal of the greatest scion of our family; the seventh son of the seventh son of Valetian Fidatov, can open the way and disable the wards. Well, the second-greatest scion of our family, after me, of course.

Ivan was never going to get what he wanted, but he is still going to be upset when I end our dalliance. I shall tell him tonight and send him on his way quietly. I don't want him to make a scene at my party next week, and besides, perhaps there will be a new suitor or two to consider...

Player Handout 3

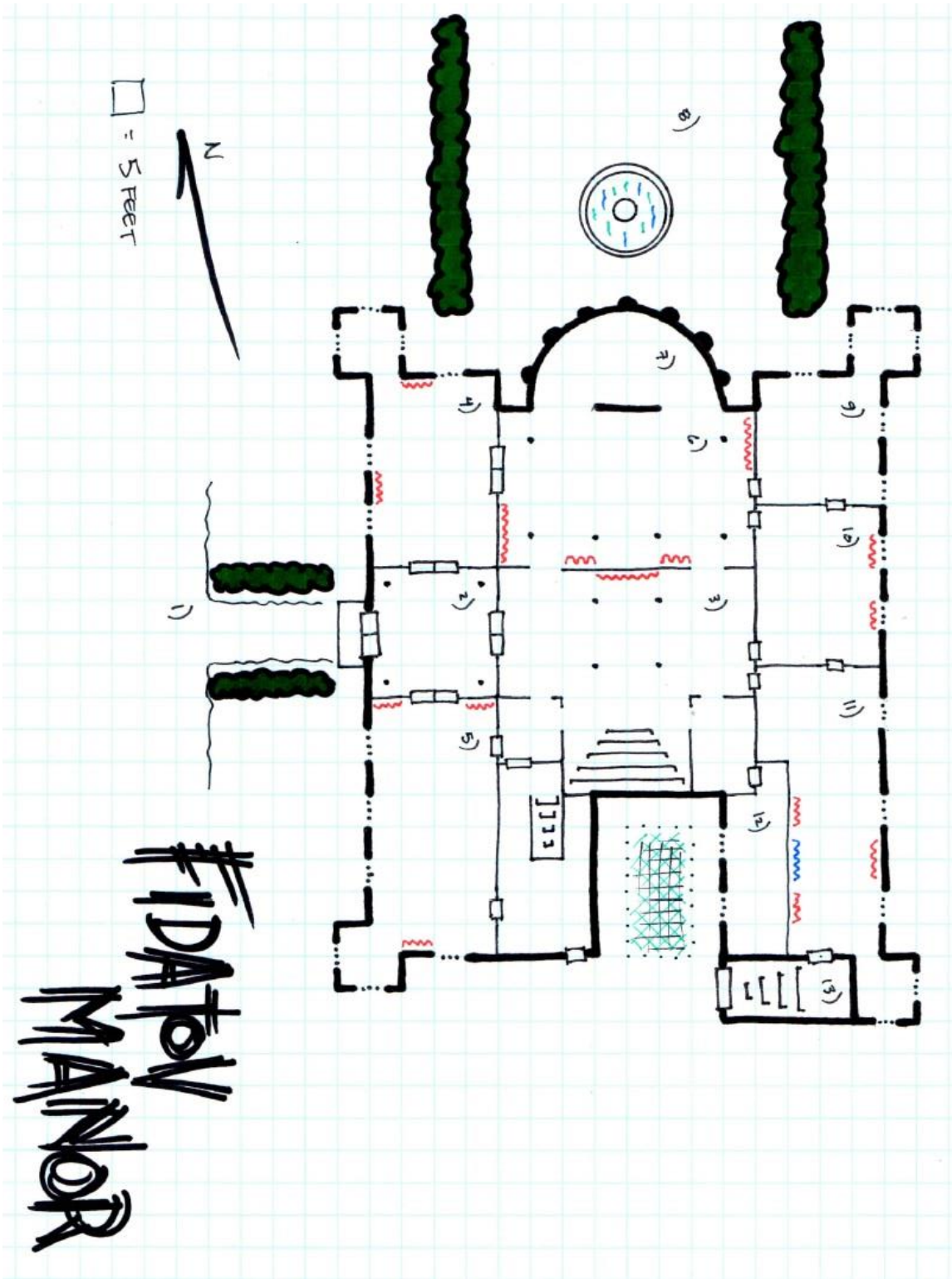
Glamoured Studded Leather

Armor (studded leather), rare

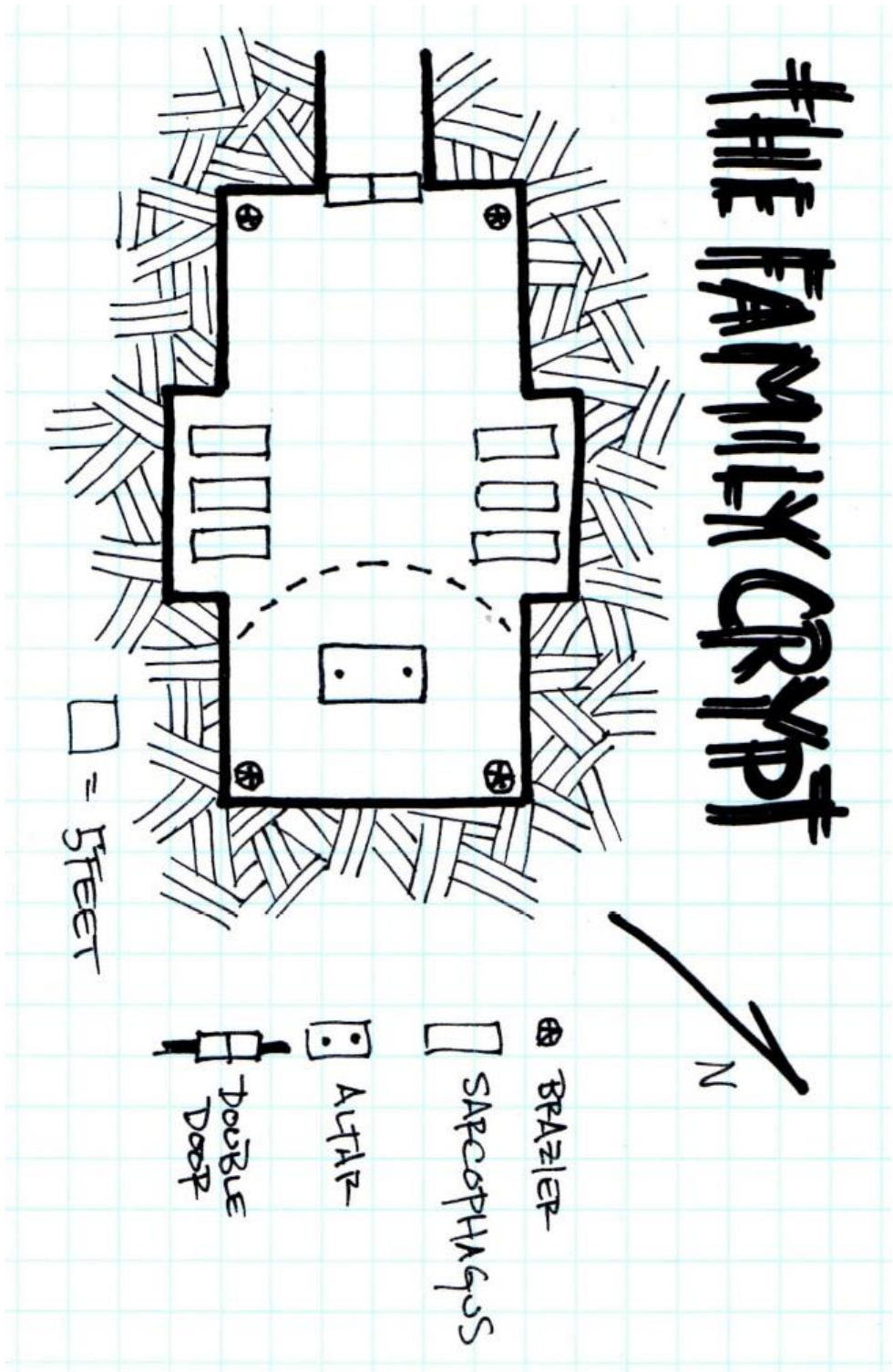
While wearing this armor, you gain a +1 bonus to AC. You can also use a bonus action to speak the armor's command word and cause the armor to assume the appearance of a normal set of clothing or some other kind of armor. The illusory appearance last until you use this property again or remove the armor.

Any illusion of normal clothing and other types of armor created by this item can appear only to be of the finest quality. No matter what form it takes, when you wear this item, your appearance draws the eye of those around you. In its natural state, this armor is tight and immodestly cut. This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Appendix: Fidatov Manor Map



Appendix: The Family Crypt
Map



DM Appendix: Extending the Adventure

If time is not an issue and the adventure is not confined to the standard, two-hour block of time, the following guidance can be used to introduce the characters to Lady Fidatov and the estate.

Note that this does not increase any of the rewards (XP, gp, or other treasure) that the characters might earn.

Lady Fidatov's Estate

As the characters approach the estate, read or paraphrase:

At first glance, this place seems like it would be the envy of just about everyone in Barovia except perhaps Lord Strahd himself. Even the chill wind seems to give up a little bit of its bluster as you round the corner and approach the walk that leads towards the estate.

A sign hanging from a battered signpost reads, in faded paint, FIDATOV.

The estate as a whole occupies about barely 10 acres, most of which is taken up by the rows of dense bushes and the snow covered fields.

Most of the land is given over to rows of bushes stubbornly clinging to a few leaves and fields covered in snow. A tiny orchard also appears to be thriving, though at this time of year the branches are bare of fruit. Livestock pens hold cattle, pigs, and chickens, all healthy and well-fed. Even from here you can see that the grain silo is full to bursting. Perhaps Grigori was right, and Lady Fidatov does have enough bounty to spare.

Small buildings and huts are scattered on the edges of the fields, while the grand two-story manor house looms in the distance at the end of a long well-maintained cobblestone road. You hear the sound of a blacksmith hammering iron while farmhands and laborers call out to each other as they go about their chores.

Lady Fidatov's Estate

The estate has the following general features

Buildings and Grounds. The estate has laborers and craftsmen, including a blacksmith. The workers live in small homes scattered throughout the grounds. Outbuildings are used for storage of tools and building materials. The largest buildings (apart from the manor) are the grain silo, and the barn.

Everything seems to be in good repair, especially compared to the dilapidated condition of most buildings (and people) in Oraşnou.

Crops and Livestock. Most of the crops having recently been harvested, but the plants are old stock and sturdy. Similarly, the livestock are healthy and well-fed. Lady Fidatov even keeps a few hunting dogs partly out of respect for her father's memory, but largely because it is often cathartic to subject a rather disobedient servant to their gnashing teeth.

Farmhands and Laborers. There are about over four dozen workers, servants, and guards living on the property. Most of the manor staff are cautious and reluctant to talk to strangers in the way all Barovians are.

As long as the characters don't do anything openly suspicious, they aren't challenged just being curious. The workers know very little about the Lady's personal affairs, but the characters can learn a few basic facts by talking to them.

- The Fidatov family has long been wealthy.
- Life is much better than any other place in Barovia (that they've heard of, anyway). The Lady can be a bit cruel, but she provides for them.
- A few of the workers have heard of Oraşnou, but don't know much other than it is a small village.
- They have also heard of Burgomaster Randovich, although the Lady referred to him as only as Ivan. They know that the two of them had a falling out, but no details aside from that.
- Lady Fidatov loves to throw parties for the few well-to-do folks in the area. There's a party happening tonight, in fact. Is that why you're here?

Approaching the Manor

The layout of the manor is detailed in Appendix: Fidatov Manor Map. The locations below are events are presented in the order in which the characters are likely to encounter them, but you may need to change things based on the characters' interactions with Lady Fidatov and her servants.

Area 1: Outside the Manor

A low stone fence follows the well-maintained road on both sides, leading up to a grand columned front porch with two huge mahogany doors. The building is two stories tall and constructed of solid stone. Expensive glass windows look out on the neatly-manicured lawn and gardens. The place is abuzz with activity in spite of it being the dead of winter; perhaps Lady Fidatov is expecting guests, but she can't possibly be expecting you. Can she?

If the characters scout around the manor house, they find that there is a lot of activity as the servants go through the same motions as they did on the day of the Curse.

Everyone is nervous and in a hurry; the Lady is throwing a party, and everything must be right. She can be very cruel to her servants and retainers if her entertainments do not go as well as she thinks they should. The groundskeepers are quite busy and direct the characters to speak to Lady Fidatov if they wish to attend the party.

The Seneschal. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters approach the main entrance to the house.

Gargoyles squat over carved double doors flanked by thick stone columns. Each door is set with a ring of heavy brass. The scale of the entrance seems designed to make visitors feel insignificant before the majesty of the house they are about to enter.

When the adventurers knock on the door, or do whatever it is they think they ought to do to announce their arrival, a servant opens the heavy door and peers out. She is dressed in a simple but well-made black dress with a white apron. If the characters look (or convincingly act) like people of importance, or simply intimidate her, she quickly goes to fetch the seneschal.

Taltos, the Seneschal of House Fidatov.

He is a tall, thin, dark-haired human, who looks sourly at everyone and everything as though he is perpetually suffering from a stomach ache. Everyone else in the household apart from the Lady herself defers to Taltos.

The Seneschal is not as easily impressed as a common servant, but it is important for the family not to offend anyone who might be important or powerful. As long as they seem even remotely credible,

Taltos invites the adventurers into the entrance hall so that he can interrogate them without the indignity of making them stand on the porch. If necessary, he believes he can summon enough men-at-arms to deal with anyone who needs to be evicted from the premises.

Then There Are Those Adventurers

The characters were given the task to TALK to Lady Fidatov and ASK for her aid. However, there are those groups for whom diplomacy is beyond them. If they at least inform Taltos, that they are here to discuss something with the lady and either show Luca's ring or the letter he can grudgingly allow them inside. However, he doesn't offer them refreshments and allows them only so far as the Entrance

Hall—under the eyes of a couple of strong footmen, until the Lady is ready to see them.

If the characters are rude, he offers to put them up in the loft in the barn until the morning. "The Lady is preparing for this evening's festivities and dealing with business and charity with such as you can wait till then." This gives the characters a chance to talk to servants. By offering this, they can be in the kitchen when the Curse activates. See Sidebar on page 15 for the dealing with the unruly types who decide to just take what the village needs.

If things go really badly, it is late enough in the day that the characters can only travel a few hours before needing to set up camp for the night. Their camp then gets attacked in the middle of the night as Lady Marilena sends her undead after them. See above for that encounter.

Area 2: Entrance Hall

The entrance hall is well-appointed, with a flagstone floor. Servants rush to help the visitors remove their cloaks. Double doors lead deeper into the manor, but the Seneschal pauses here to ascertain who the characters are and why they have come.

Taltos is a slave to protocol and has impeccable manners, but he runs the household with an iron fist. Any and all mistakes lead to a most unpleasant reprimand from his mistress. The characters must have come for a reason, which he politely wishes to know.

- If the characters claim to be here for the party, Taltos is surprised. All the invited guests are already here; they have been staying at the estate for over a day now. Also the guests are all known to him by sight and none of the adventurers have ever been here before. From whom did they hear about the festivities (he asks delicately) ...?
- If the characters mention Oraşnou, the Seneschal has heard of it, but is not aware of its current plight. He thinks it is strange that the village has fallen into such a state so soon after the harvest. He seems skeptical at the notion that the Lady would do anything to aid those less fortunate than herself, but it's not his place to say. Regardless, Taltos is willing to accept that the adventurers are here as official representatives of the village with only a small amount of persuasion.
- If the characters mention Ivan Randovich, the Seneschal seems to pale a bit, but quickly recovers his composure. He has been with the Fidatov family for many years and is well aware that Lady Fidatov's most recent paramour is a man named Ivan Randovich. Ivan has in fact spent a great deal of time here at the manor, or he did, until recently. Taltos absolutely doesn't speculate on why their relationship ended; it is not his place to do so.

- Keep in mind that as far as anyone on the estate knows, today is an ordinary day. To them, Ivan and Marilena have only recently broken off their relationship, when in reality that happened five years ago. Time is fluid in Barovia, which doesn't follow the Calendar of Harptos, but this should still seem like a jump.

Once Taltos is satisfied that the characters are not tradesmen or other lower-class individuals who would be inappropriate to introduce to the lady of the house, he invites them into the Grand Salon to take refreshments while they wait. (If they do claim to be mere merchants or messengers, he seems much less interested in introducing them to his mistress; a quick-thinking or glib character can save the situation with a few well-placed words.)

Area 3: Grand Salon and Main Staircase

The Grand Salon is where most visitors are entertained (only invited guests are allowed into areas such as the formal dining room and the ballroom). The room is quite large; it fills both stories of the estate, with a second-floor balcony looking down from upstairs. Tapestry-covered cushioned benches line the walls. Small tables are set up with a variety of refreshments. A wide, sweeping staircase leads up to the second floor, guarded by two men-at-arms wearing studded leather armor and carrying halberds.

There are no other visitors in the room at the moment, but Taltos explains that the Lady is throwing a fete this very evening the house guests preparing for the festivities. He sends a servant to fetch the mistress of the house. While they wait, the characters can enjoy sweetmeats, breads, hot tea, spiced wine, and other delicacies. The Salon is heated by several fireplaces and feels quite pleasant for such a large and high-ceilinged space.

After making them wait about 20 minutes for purposes of decorum, Lady Fidatov descends the grand staircase from the second floor and greets the adventurers. Read or paraphrase the following:

Sweeping down the wide staircase is a beautiful woman, perhaps thirty years of age. Her thick blonde hair is held back with a net festooned with small gemstones. Everything about her – from her elegant features to her elaborate hairdo to the finery she wears and the ease with which she wears it – speaks to a life of wealth and luxury.

"Honored guests," she purrs, "I am Marilena Fidatov, and I bid you welcome in my home. Will you walk with me?"

It would, needless to say, be most ungallant to refuse.

A Stroll with Lady Fidatov

Lady Fidatov knows what the characters discussed with Taltos. Even if the characters did not mention Oraşnou or Ivan Randovich, she knows why they have come. The curse allows only those invited by Marilena to find the Fidatov estate (such as by the map); others simply do not find the path leading to the estate.

Though she sent the map with the hopes that Ivan would come, she got the characters instead. They'll have to do.

Roleplaying Lady Marilena Fidatov

Marilena is physically beautiful but her soul is dark and twisted. She is overconfident, prideful, capricious, and selfish. She is also ruthless and cunning; a master manipulator. She reveals only what she wants to reveal and every facial expression, gesture, and word is a carefully chosen weapon. Her downfall is due to her inability to detect Ivan Randovich's own greed and deceit; she has had a long time to brood on this. She didn't love him; she was simply outplayed. She wants nothing more than to bestow upon him the same hellish existence that she herself now endures—and her plan is almost complete.

Quote: "Oh, you simply must try this. It's to die for."

Marilena, accompanied by several servants, takes the characters on a walk around the manor; showing them around and making small talk.

This is an opportunity for the adventurers to plead Oraşnou's case. Lady Fidatov has no intention of helping, of course. She is partly responsible for the village's situation, but she makes a great show of listening and pretending to consider what the characters say.

Lady Fidatov escorts the characters through Areas 4 through 8. Passing by each room, Marilena makes points out something that is any combination of beautiful, rare, or expensive. With each room, she asks a particular character (choosing a different person each time) about their opinion of the room, what could be added, what could be taken away, etc. If she likes the answer, she gives a brilliant smile and a warm laugh; if she does not, she makes a cutting remark.

Troubleshooting: Let's Just Kill Her Now

It's possible (but hopefully unlikely) that the players will just decide to attack Lady Fidatov now and get it over with. These stories do tend to end with an inevitable confrontation with the villain, after all.

Even if a resident of the estate is killed during the day, the body does not rise as an undead until the moment when Lady Fidatov dies and the curse triggers. (If Lady Fidatov herself is the victim, then she reincorporates in the manner of a ghost, reforming the next morning at sunrise.)

Should the characters decide that the easiest course of action is simply to slaughter everyone, they can probably do this with little difficulty, but it will accomplish nothing (apart from changing their alignment, perhaps). The curse simply cannot be broken unless and until Lady Fidatov is slain in her banshee form.

The characters can commit mass murder and ransack the estate during the daytime over and over again without changing a thing. The curse simply resets the estate to its previous form the next morning at sunrise with no one remembering anything that happened and all property damage repaired. Any items stolen from the manor or the grounds simply vanish and reappear in their appropriate places the next time the curse resets.

The *remove curse* spell is of no avail, as the Dark Powers of Ravenloft are far stronger than any mortal magic. The only way to change this insane tale is to play it out to its conclusion – and then write a new ending.

Area 4: Library

The library holds about 200 books on massive floor-to-ceiling shelves. Sliding ladders allow access to the entire collection. Reading desks and comfortable chairs dot the room.

Clue. Lady Fidatov proudly points out one bookshelf in particular. Read or paraphrase the following:

Lady Fidatov pauses next to one shelf and runs her hand across the spines of the books. “This is the entire history of my family, dating back generations. Every son and daughter, every marriage, and every family crest. I am afraid that I do not have the time to show you, but we also have a family museum of sorts, a gallery of artworks and icons representing all the chapters of the story of my family.”

The characters can return here in Part 3 to research the family history and identify the specific crest needed to open the vault.

“Ah, but enough talk of weighty matters and family histories. There’s my copy of Balthazar and Elishka. There is nothing like a good love story, wouldn’t you agree? What’s your favorite book?”

Area 5: Dining Room

The formal dining room has seating for thirty (with the Lady at the head, of course). Servants busily polishing the silver for this evening’s festivities, the smells wafting from the kitchen are delicious; the

characters can see all manner of meats and cheeses being piled high on platters.

“I do love the taste of venison. We so rarely get it any more, what with all the wolves. I shall have to speak to the master of the hunt about that. What kind of food did you grow up eating?”

Area 6: Ballroom

This is the party’s focus. A quartet of house musicians have set up their instruments in a corner, while two servants polish the dance floor. Two massive chandeliers illuminate the proceedings. Lady Fidatov asks the characters if they know how to dance:

“Can you dance? I say that a person who can’t handle the waltz can’t be trusted to handle anything else, either, if you know what I mean.”

Area 7: Terrace

The terrace adjoins the ballroom via glass doors. While it’s outside, a tent-like awning provides protection from the elements and a portable hearth has been set up in the center to warm those that take their conversations outdoors. Several wide staircases spiral down from the terrace, leading into the gardens.

“I spent many an evening out here on the terrace with my father. He taught me about the business of running the estate, so that I could carry on the family legacy. What did your parents teach you about life?”

Area 8: Gardens

The gardens are Lady Fidatov’s pride and joy. There are flower beds and trellises; boxwood hedges are trimmed into various shapes of animals, and deeper in the garden is a small hedge maze. At the center of the maze is the Fidatov family crypt. Marilena points out that six generations of Fidatovs are interred in that crypt, most recently including her beloved father.

“Aren’t my gardens beautiful? I could spend hours out here. Where do you like to go when you want to get away from the world?”

The Rest of the Manor House

Lady Fidatov doesn’t show the characters the rest of the manor, but that doesn’t mean that they won’t find a way to sneak off and explore them—either now or during the party (if the adventurers attend).

The following sections describe these rooms as they appear now and during the party (at any time before the curse triggers).

Unless otherwise mentioned, locked doors and containers require a set of thieves' tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check to open. Alternatively, they can be forced open with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check, though that rouses suspicion from the attendees. If the characters are caught snooping around, they are unlikely to successfully gain the Lady's help.

Extending the Adventure

If you have a group that enjoys roleplaying and wish to extend the run time of this adventure the house guests, a mix of local well to do merchants, extended family and hopeful suitors can be discovered wandering around the estate instead of resting up for the gala.

Area 9: Drawing Room

This small room is for entertaining and is lavishly appointed with small couches and tables.

Area 10: Private Salon

Lady Fidatov retreats to this room with her attendant in the event that she needs to "powder her nose" or make adjustments to her clothing.

It has a fainting couch along with a small armoire, dressing table, and various cosmetic items. A variety of ornate masks hang on the walls. The lady's maid (a **commoner**) can always be found in here when she is not attending to her mistress.

Area 11: Art Gallery

The walls of this long room are hung with floor-to-ceiling mirrors, oil portraits, and the family crests of many generations of Fidatovs. Glass display cases contain various art objects and other small valuables.

Encounter. This location is where the characters encounter the mirror golem (see Part 3, below). Before the curse triggers, however, the room is empty.

Clue. The characters need the personal crest of a specific scion of House Fidatov to deactivate the wards in the vault. Once they have identified the correct one by doing research in the library once they know which generation's crest is sought (see Study, below).

Area 12: Study

This is Lady Fidatov's personal study. The door is kept locked at all times (the DC to open the door is 20). Inside are various ledgers detailing the estate's finances. Lady Fidatov keeps a personal journal inside the desk.

Trapped Desk. The desk is locked and requires a set of thieves' tools and a DC 15 Dexterity check to open. It has a **poison needle trap**. Detecting the trap requires a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation). The trap is disabled with a similar Dexterity check. A creature triggering the trap is struck by a needle and takes 1 piercing damage and must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 11 (2d10) poison damage and be poisoned for 1 hour. If successful, the creature takes only half damage and is not poisoned.

Clue. The characters find **Player Handout 1** inside the desk.

Treasure. Inside the desk is a wooden box containing 75 gp in various denominations.

Area 13: Back Stairs/Servants' Entrance

These stairs provide a way for servants to reach the second story without disturbing the family or guests.

Area 14: Herb Garden

This small herb garden contains various plants used for cooking as well as some herbs with medicinal properties. A character proficient with healer's kits can find enough useful material here to add two uses to the kit.

Area 15: Kitchen

The kitchen is extremely busy. Bread bakes in the large oven, soup simmers in the caldron, and several sides of pork and beef turn on spits over the cooking fire. The cook and her assistants do not take kindly to interruptions and shout at the characters to stay out of the way.

The pantry holds ample supplies. A narrow staircase leads down to the root cellar, preserving room, and the wine cellar. The preserving room contains row upon row of preserves. The wine cellar contains hundreds of bottles—many of which are centuries old. Unfortunately, everything turns to vinegar (including any bottles pilfered by the characters) when the curse triggers.

Upstairs, Downstairs

The second floor of the manor contains guest rooms and Lady Fidatov's personal chambers. These areas are not detailed on the map and are not relevant to the adventure. Any servants who see a character trying to sneak up to the second floor immediately fetch the Seneschal, who deals with the offender as appropriate. During the party, the main staircase in the Grand Salon is roped off and guarded to prevent any of the guests from "accidentally" wandering upstairs.

If the characters agree to accept Lady Fidatov's hospitality, their traveling gear and any other bulky items can be left in the guest rooms that the characters are given to freshen up for the party. Since neither the characters nor any of their items were on the estate when the curse was originally invoked, they are unaffected when the manor transforms. Any items taken by the servants can easily be retrieved during Part 3 of the adventure, and it's not worth spending time on the details.

If the players become fixated on searching the rest of the second floor (either before or after the curse triggers), feel free to tell them flat-out that there is nothing of interest or value. For example, all of Lady Fidatov's personal possessions (ball gowns, day-to-day finery, jewels, etc.) that were not on her person when she died are ruined when the curse triggers.

A Firm Refusal

The tour ends in Area 8 (the Gardens). Lady Fidatov returns through the ballroom into the Grand Salon. If the characters have not yet broached the subject of aid for Orasnou, she asks if they have anything they wish to discuss, before she retires to change.

This is the final chance for the characters to plead their case. Marilena listens gravely to whatever they say and then shakes her head. Read or paraphrase the following:

"So. You heard that my estate was thriving while others suffer, and perhaps this is true. You ask me to share the bounty of House Fidatov. While I am flattered, I am afraid that my answer is no. It is nothing personal, I assure you. You seem like decent and honorable people.

"But where do such things end? If I aid this village, word will spread. What is to stop every peasant and beggar in all Barovia from coming to my door with hat in hand?"

She pauses. "Still, you have traveled far, and you have proven to be pleasant company. It would be ungracious of me to send you away empty-handed without offering you the hospitality of my house. I invite you to stay for the party this evening as my guests. You can return to Orasnou in the morning, and I will make sure that you are well-provisioned for the journey. What say you?"

No matter what the characters offer, Lady Fidatov is implacable. She won't aid the village of Orasnou. The only thing that causes her to raise her voice is if one of the characters specifically tries to bring Marilena's past relationship with Ivan Fidatov into the argument. In that case, she becomes visibly upset.

"You think I would aid Ivan Randovich, of all people! Ha! You can tell him that he will get nothing from me. NOTHING!" She pauses and gathers herself. "But I forget myself. I apologize. It is not your fault that my past dealings with Ivan were... uncomfortable. Let us speak no more of the matter."

If the characters ask, why she offered refuge to Costel and his son: "He had done a favor for me in the past. When I got his letter asking for advice on a creature preying on the village I offered refuge for him and his son only. It was payment for a debt—nothing more is all."

No matter how the characters press, Lady Fidatov doesn't go into detail about her relationship with Ivan or how it ended, other than to say that he betrayed her trust and that was the end of it.

Lady Fidatov is not offended if the characters decline her offer of hospitality, although she assures them that they will be missing out on "the party of the season" if they leave. She knows that, even if they attempt to travel all night instead of making camp at sunset (which is occurring soon) the curse stops the characters from escaping the estate before the undead have a chance to attack them, so her plan is unaffected either way by their decision.

Results Code: April – June 2016

If you are DMing this adventure during the months of April – June 2016, please show your players this page. The QR code below can be scanned, and will allow them to give feedback and results on the adventure to influence the storyline in the future!

If a player does not have a mobile device, please tell them to head to dndadventurersleague.org/results to enter their results.

