



Tomb of Tomes

A One-Round DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Adventure
for 4th- to 6th-Level Characters
CRIMSON CODEX™ Faction Adventure 4 for the
XEN'DRIK EXPEDITIONS™ Campaign

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Adventure Background

During its operations in Xen'drik, the Crimson Codex has accumulated an extensive collection of tomes, books, scrolls, magic items, and other records going back to the Age of Giants and beyond. Ohnal Caldyn and his immediate circle of scholars have taken the most important of these artifacts back to Khorvaire for study. The ones that looked to be of less relevance were studied briefly and then placed in a holding library known to the Crimson Codex as the "Tomb of Tomes."

Just because these tomes and other writings have been placed here does not mean that some very valuable information is not contained within them. In fact, several of them contain secrets overlooked by the Crimson Codex "tomes" in charge of reviewing them. The Blackwheel Company has learned of the presence and location of the Tomb of Tomes. They are preparing to raid the place and take the artifacts held there for their own use.

How the Blackwheel Company learned of the location of the Tomb of Tomes is an interesting story in itself. After capturing and interrogating a Crimson Codex operative, the Blackwheel Company was able to discern the approximate location of the repository. While a Blackwheel intelligence agent was scouting the area, and he came across a dark elf who not only gave him the exact location of the Tomb of Tomes, but also promised to work with the Blackwheel agent to offer a distraction that would make taking the place an easy matter. Plans were made, and the Blackwheel agent returned to pass the news to his superiors.

In the meantime, a dwarven Codex operative, believing the Blackwheel Company had something to do with the many attacks taking place against Codex interests, began investigating. She decided to trail the Blackwheel operative.

In the meantime, plans were set in motion within the Blackwheel Company to raid the Tomb of Tomes and take everything of value. Not fully trusting the dark elf he had met, the Blackwheel operative went back to investigate further, with the Crimson Codex operative following him invisibly. The Blackwheel operative found a cave complex near the Tomb of Tomes, and he stumbled upon the truth: the dark elf with whom he made a deal is involved with a colony of grell, all following the daelkyr known as Virulence. Before the Blackwheel operative could escape, the grell and their dark elf associate saw him. Before capturing the Blackwheel operative and enslaving him as future dinner for the grell, the drow admitted that the Blackwheel attack on the Tomb of Tomes was going to act as a diversion, allowing the grell to attack and secure the valuable tomes for their master.

The Crimson Codex operative heard this, but she too was noticed by the grell with their blindsight ability. She was able to escape the cave complex but could not outrun the pursuing grell. She was killed, but before the grell could take her back to their lair and eat her, a dragon attacked them. The dragon, following what he believes to be a part of the draconic Prophecy, carried the dwarf's body back to Stormreach where it could be found, and it left clues pointing to the conspiracy of the grell against both the Crimson Codex and the Blackwheel Company.

Further complicating matters is the sudden and mysterious disappearance of Zekeriff "Zeke" Brithlestone, the ranking member of the Crimson Codex on Xen'drik. No one is sure what has happened to him, and internal strife within the Codex has put everyone on edge. The intersection of these events is where the PCs find themselves at the start of the adventure.

Adventure Synopsis

The PCs begin the adventure with a summons by their handler, Fritz-Roy, to a meeting. Although Fritz-Roy cannot meet with them directly because some unknown force is watching him, the PCs receive a coded note from him starting them on their investigations. The PCs must first decrypt the note to find a Crimson Codex information broker posing as a fishmonger's assistant.

The fishmonger's assistant is only an information drop, but he can describe the dragonmarked elf who provided him with the information to pass on to the Crimson Codex. The PCs can use their knowledge and skills to locate her. She promises to give them further information if they assist her in a mission she must perform, which unknowingly tangles the PCs in a war between the rival dragonmarked Houses Phiarlan and Thuranni.

Having assisted her, the PCs are provided with the information necessary to locate a sergeant in the Blackwheel Company who is the PCs' best option at learning where the Blackwheel Company is planning to strike the Codex. The PCs are also shown evidence that the Blackwheel Company may have been tricked into making the strike. They can take this evidence into the encounter with the very inebriated Blackwheel sergeant.

Finally, if the PCs can get the information necessary out of the sergeant, they can go to the Tomb of Tomes and attempt to foil the plot of the grell. If they were successful in convincing the sergeant of the plot against both organizations, the grell forces can be split. If not, the PCs are forced to face the full force themselves.

Troubleshooting

As with any investigative module, dozens of things can go wrong for each element that goes right. With that in mind, the DM has the right and the responsibility to make alterations and additions to the adventure as needed. If the PCs get “off track” in the investigation, the DM can run encounters outside the scope of those presented here to accommodate their decisions and choices. When this happens, though, the DM should always look for opportunities to bring the PCs back into the realm of the encounters presented in the adventure.

The timeline presented in this adventure is by necessity fluid. If the PCs act as planned, the first three parts should take place on the first day, culminating in a late-night encounter with the sergeant in Part 3. At this point, the PCs have just a couple of hours to get to the Tomb of Tomes to foil the attack of the grell. However, some parties may take more time than this. As long as the delays are not a result of mistakes (getting arrested, ignoring obvious clues, etc.), simply alter the timing of the first three parts. However, once the PCs encounter the sergeant, the clock should start ticking to the grell attack.

In several parts of this adventure, the PCs might be tempted to perform illegal acts that may draw the attention of the Stormreach Guard. While specifics about dealing with the Stormreach Guard are given in each encounter, the stat blocks for the average members of the Guard are below.

If the PCs get way off the track of the investigation and are missing obvious clues, they can use any source that gives them an Adventure Secret. Using this gives them the next step in the investigation. However, using the Adventure Secret takes time, so if they are forced to use it, they arrive at the Tomb of Tomes too late to keep most of the items from being stolen by the grell. Note that if the PCs use an Adventure Secret for another reason than getting back on track in the investigation, this is not the case.

STORMREACH GUARD

CR 2

Mix male and female human fighter 2

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; Senses Listen +3, Spot +3

Languages Common

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

hp 18 (2 HD)

Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee longsword +4 (1d8+2/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +3 (1d8/19-20)

Base Atk +2; Grp +4

Atk Options Power Attack

Abilities Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Power Attack

Skills Climb +5, Jump +5, Swim +3

Possessions light crossbow, 10 bolts, longsword, studded leather armor, light wooden shield, signal whistle, manacles

Adventure Start

Before the adventure begins, the DM should ask the players to reveal their PCs’ cover stories. All of the “serpents” (special operatives) in the Crimson Codex in Stormreach have a cover story to disguise their involvement in Crimson Codex operations. These cover stories could be as simple as the PC posing as an adventurer or explorer, or as intricate as the PCs want to make them. Whatever the cover story, a PC cannot be in a position that gives him or her access to large amounts of money, equipment, influence, or power. For example, a PC could pose as a cook at a tavern, but never as the owner of the tavern.

Give the PCs time to think, helping them out as needed. Have the PCs reveal to you their cover stories, and you can adjust those stories to make sure they are not overly influential. These cover stories may come into play during the course of this or later adventures, so it is important that each PC have a cover story.

Once the players have revealed their cover stories, proceed with the boxed text. Feel free to either summarize or, if you have the time and the inclination, tailor the introduction to fit each PC’s cover story:

It has been a rough few weeks for the Crimson Codex. First it was the disappearance of some lower-ranking operatives and support people in the organization. Then some safehouses were raided. But the news of the disappearance of the highest-ranking member of the Codex on Xen'drik, the human known as Zekeriff Brithlestone, or Zeke, has shaken everyone. Procedures have changed. All forms of normal communication have stopped. Interactions between Crimson Codex members have been ordered to be made only with the utmost care and secrecy.

The morning sun just begins to shine over the horizon of the Thunder Sea to the east when your summons arrives. This time it is a note that simply says, "Fritz-Roy needs you, 20 minutes, Coldwake Pond."

The PCs must hurry to get their equipment together and meet their handler. When they arrive at the Crimson Codex meeting place near Coldwake Pond, Fritz-Roy is nowhere to be found. The PCs can talk about what to do and how to proceed for as long as they like, but Fritz-Roy does not show here. Don't let the PCs take too long in this discussion, or they may not have time to complete the adventure.

When the PCs finally get tired of waiting and leave the area on their way to any destination they may chose, read the following. Select one PC at random to receive the message about to be delivered (see Handout 1):

A man, staggering badly as if still drunk from an all-nighter, weaves from behind some passing fisherman and bumps into you quite violently. He reeks of cheap whiskey and sweat. He mumbles incoherently, but something seems amiss. Indeed, you recognize this sorry soul as Fritz-Roy. Among his garbled words, you hear one word in Common, spoken in a sober and harsh whisper: "Three." Then he mumbles again, tips his bald head at you, and staggers away.

Have the PCs make a DC 10 Spot check, although the person who received the jostling gets a +5 to the check. Anyone succeeding notices that Fritz-Roy jammed a piece of cloth into the backpack, belt pouch, or clothing of the PC. The writing on the cloth is shown in Handout 1. If none of the PCs noticed the cloth, let them wander for a few minutes, and then have the PC notice the cloth among his or her possessions.

Under no circumstances does Fritz-Roy speak to the PCs further. He ignores them if they try to hail him, and if they are persistent he drunkenly threatens to report them to the Stormreach Guard if they don't stop harassing him. If the PCs continue to pursue Fritz-Roy, give them a DC 20 Sense Motive check to realize that he is trying to draw trouble away from the PCs.

Fritz-Roy has learned he is being followed, so he is trying to pass information to the PCs in the most secretive manner possible. He has been pretending to be drinking all night to throw off the suspicion of those who watch him. Thus he wants to put as much space between the PCs and himself as possible, allowing the PCs to complete their upcoming mission without interference from his watchers. After his run-in with the PCs, Fritz-Roy wanders to an empty field outside of Stormreach and pretends to fall into a drunken stupor, satisfied that his pursuers won't bother the PCs.

The note that Fritz-Roy has passed to the PCs seems at first glance to be an incoherent jumble of letters. The whispered clue "three" should be enough for the PCs to think to look at every third letter of the note, which gives the PCs the information they need to move to the next step of their mission: "Cannot talk. Being followed. Find mission at wharf fishmonger stall."

If the PCs cannot decipher this message, their mission is compromised before it can even start. If a large amount of time passes with the PCs being able to figure out the message, allow each PC to make one of the following checks at the appropriate DCs: Decipher Script (DC 15) or Intelligence (DC 20). If their check is successful, give the PCs the clue that the number three and the spaces between the letters of the note are important. If the PCs have any other relevant feat or skill, allow them to use that as well. If the PCs still can't figure it out, they have no business being in the Crimson Codex, but they can use a Player Reward Card or other source that provides them with an Adventure Secret to give them enough hints that they figure it out. If none of this works and the PCs remain clueless, continue with the module in the best way you can. Let them use their skills and knowledge to point them in the right direction after a few minutes of floundering.

A DC 20 Knowledge (local) check reveals that there are two fishmongers operating stalls on the wharves of Stormreach, although their names don't immediately come to mind.

Part 1: Wharf Fishmonger's Stall

In this part, the PCs travel to the docks of Stormreach and attempt to learn what their mission entails. They can meet the Crimson Codex information drop, a fishmonger's assistant named Unghus. They might also get involved with some trouble if they approach the wrong fishmonger's stall.

The Fishmonger's Assistant's Red Apron

The docks of Stormreach are busy with the traffic of travelers who took a sea voyage from Khorvaire, with sailors and teamsters loading and unloading cargo, and with fisherman bringing in the day's haul. The smell of sea air is particularly strong today, as the easterly winds carry a slight sea spray over this part of the city. Although the crowd is thick, you can make out two fishmonger stalls in the distance.

First the PCs must decide which fishmonger's stall they want to visit to learn more about their mission, and then they must be able to spot the proper contact at the correct stall. Dealing with the wrong fishmonger could lead to an unhappy scuffle with some unruly fishermen.

Both of the fishmonger's stalls look completely average and not at all conspicuous. The one on your right, closest to the water and the wharf, is larger, with a dwarf and two humans arranging fish, as well as four fishermen helping unload a new haul. On your left, away from the water, is a smaller stall manned by two humans. A boy sits at the side of this stall, bouncing a ball against a wall and catching it.

First, if any of the PCs have played "Prophecy's Unwitting Servant," they immediately recognize the boy as Maldwick Roe, the lad whom they encountered once, and possibly twice, in that adventure. If the PCs took the time to talk to him then, they may remember that his father, Rannell Roe, is a fisherman. In this case, the lad is waiting at the fishmonger's stall for his father to return with his crew from the bay. It seems the Prophecy has the PCs and this boy entwined in ways that are not yet apparent.

When the PCs pass or approach the left-hand stall where the boy sits, give them a DC 10 Spot check. Any PC making the check notices that the assistant to this fishmonger wears a red apron, which is highly unusual, as red is a fairly expensive dye for such a garment. They also automatically know that Crimson Codex members and operatives often wear red items to identify themselves to other operatives. If the PCs hail this fellow with the Crimson Codex sign (making a "C" shape with a hand and touching a red item they wear), he returns the sign and waves the PCs around the corner of a nearby warehouse, asking the fishmonger if he may take a break.

The young man is a human named Unghus, and he is the opposite of what anyone would consider a likely Crimson Codex operative. He is young and short with dark hair and the shadow of a beard, unintelligent, and almost unintelligible because of a disfigured jaw. Fritz-Roy uses Unghus as a drop-off and pick-up point for information, because despite all his flaws, Unghus has a perfect memory.

If the PCs identify themselves and ask him about Fritz-Roy or a mission, the young man nods and speaks:

The boy flops his head up and down, then screws up his face, as if talking is a terrible effort. "I nell Hitz-Oy nat Lackeel Numpany owing oo raid Codeck n teal umming. [I tell Fritz-Roy that Blackwheel Company going to raid Codex and steal something.]"

The purpose of this encounter is not to mock people with speech impediments, but rather to force the PCs to roleplay a potentially frustrating situation without losing their tempers, in character or out. As tempting as it might be to make this encounter funny, try to stay in character as Unghus, a nice-enough lad who does a good service for the Codex. For further interaction, you may have to improvise based on what the PCs ask Unghus. Remember that he is a lad who cannot make leaps of intuition or logic, but he can relay information with an exacting memory for words and details.

Interestingly, a *comprehend languages* or similar magic does make his speech completely comprehensible. Also, if someone can make a DC 15 Sense Motive or Heal check, they have a better understanding of Unghus' speech because they can either read his body language, or they have an understanding of how his deformed jaw warps his words. Any sort of telepathy also bypasses the communication problem. Unghus is not literate and only speaks Common, so he cannot write.

The following questions and answers are given in standard text rather than Unghus' dialect. Mangle the answers as necessary, but make sure you convey the details accurately:

Did you give Fritz-Roy the information about the Blackwheel Company raiding the Codex?

--*Unghus nods vehemently and says, "Last night. Thirty-seven gulls were flying past when I told him."*

Any questions about the Blackwheel Company or their plans are answered with a shrug.

Who gave you the information about the Blackwheel Company raid?

--*"Red lady. Pointy ears. She tells me things to tell Fritz-Roy. She told me this information yesterday morning."*

Do you know anything else about this red lady with pointy ears? Can you describe her?

--[Give a general description of a female elf of average height and build, then add the following.] *"She carry red stick. Wear red legs. Has black hair and red face. And have tattoo on her neck."*

Can you describe or draw the tattoo?

--[He can and does with perfectly remembered and rendered detail. Afterward, a PC can attempt a DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) or DC 20 Knowledge (local) check to recognize the tattoo as a Least Mark of Shadow, the marks associated with two dragonmark houses: House Phiarlan and House Thuranni.] If the PCs do identify the mark as the Least Mark of Shadows, another DC 10 Knowledge (local) or Gather Information check tells the PCs that House Phiarlan has a large enclave in Stormreach.

If the PCs attempt to talk to Maldwick, he first tells them that he is waiting for his father to come in from the sea. If they ask him how he is doing or pursue further conversation, he tells them that he has been having strange dreams ever since they last encountered him.

"The dreams are scary. In the dreams I can't move, and there are a bunch of ropes floating above me. I'm wearing all red, and I am surrounded by big books. Then the ropes grab me, and I am not wearing red anymore. I am wearing a uniform, like a soldier, but I still can't move. The ropes aren't holding me, I just can't make myself move. Then the books are gone."

This dream is part of the Prophecy, and it may make sense later to observant PCs. It can even be used by the PCs to help convince Sergeant Rohemen-Fudge to call off the Blackwheel Company strike against the Tomb of Tomes.

The Wrong Fishmonger

If the PCs approach the other fishmonger, they may be in for a rough time. The fishmonger whose stall is on the dock side of the street is a dwarf named Daymussen. He is in trouble with a moneylender, a human named Seamus Lassite, a cousin of Varen Lassite, one of the current Coin Lords who rule Stormreach. The lender Seamus has no real connection to his cousin, but he uses the implied connections to intimidate and bribe others. Seamus lent money to Daymussen, and then he sent a tough to collect, and Daymussen paid him 300 gold pieces a week ago. The tough, whose nickname was Pug, fled Stormreach with the payment, and Seamus believes Daymussen had the tough killed to avoid payment. Daymussen refuses to pay again, rightfully claiming the payment was made to Pug a week ago. Seamus has since threatened Daymussen, rightfully claiming payment was never received.

If the PCs approach Daymussen and speak to him cryptically, or even talk about anything other than the purchase of fish, he assumes the PCs have been sent by Seamus to either collect on the loan or destroy his business. This could lead to a battle with some sailors and fishermen Daymussen has employed to protect his business.

The crux of this encounter is that the PCs should try everything in their power to avoid a fight, even if it means running away. It's not that the PCs can't defeat Daymussen's protectors. In fact, they should have little trouble doing so if it comes to that. The problem is that the PCs might be in trouble with the law should a scuffle break out, and trouble with the law means being unable to complete the adventure in time.

Daymussen is expecting trouble, as described above. If the PCs approach him and strike up a conversation about anything other than fish, he is put immediately on his guard. If the PCs are threatening, or even just if the PCs speak in a way that is not directly to some point that makes sense to him, Daymussen gets worried. And if the PCs act in a way that is worrisome to Daymussen, he shouts that the PCs are trying to extort money from him, leading the fishermen and sailors in his employ to attack, doing only nonlethal damage with their fists. They break off the attack if the PCs retreat or make a DC 25 Diplomacy check (or some other comparable check) to convince Daymussen that there has been a mistake.

Creatures: The sailors and fishermen are not the most skilled fighters the PCs have ever seen, but they are tough, capable of doing damage and defending themselves as needed. They only attack if ordered to by their employer Daymussen the dwarven fishmonger.

Daymussen's Toughs (5): mix male and female human expert 4: hp 20, 19, 19, 17, 16; Combat Statistics.

Tactics: The fishermen and sailors attack first with fists and nets, and Daymussen runs away, shouting for someone to fetch the Stormreach Guard. The toughs hope to entangle and then subdue the PCs until the guards arrive. The toughs are not bright, but they know better than to attack warforged with fists. Instead, they try to gang up on and grapple warforged. If they do entangle a PC with a net, they might also try to drag them the thirty feet to the edge of the land, dumping the PC into the water. It is a 10-foot-drop from the land into the water here. PCs then don't have to worry about falling damage, but they do need to make Swim checks to stay afloat. If a PC starts to drown, other people in the area jump in to rescue them before any fatalities occur.

Developments: Ten rounds after a brawl starts, the Stormreach Guards arrive, arresting everyone involved in the brawl. PCs can attempt to talk their way out of trouble with a DC 25 Diplomacy check, by paying the guards a bribe totaling 100 gold pieces, or by running. Stats for the Stormreach Guards are given in the Troubleshooting section. If the PCs are arrested and taken into custody, it takes 8 hours for the PCs to finally be released after everything is straightened out. This makes getting to the Tomb of Tormes in time almost impossible.

Combat Statistics

DAYMUSSEN'S TOUGHS

CR 3

Male and female human expert 4

N medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10

hp 25 (4 HD)

Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee unarmed strike +5 (1d3+2 nonlethal) or

Melee dagger +5 (1d4+2) or

Ranged net +5 ranged touch (entangled)

Base Atk +3; Grp +5

Combat Gear dagger, net

Abilities Str 15, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8

Feats (3) Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus: Profession (sailor)

Skills Balance +8, Climb +8 (+10 with ropes), Jump +8, Knowledge (nature) +5, Profession (sailor) +9,

Swim +8, Use Rope +8

Possessions combat gear

Scaling the Encounter

5th-Level Characters: Use the 5th-level experts below.

6th-Level Characters: Use the 6th-level experts below.

DAYMUSSEN'S TOUGHS CR 4

Male and female human expert 5

N medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10

hp 31 (5 HD)

Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee unarmed strike +5 (1d3+2 nonlethal) or

Melee mw dagger +6 (1d4+2) or

Ranged net +5 ranged touch (entangled)

Base Atk +3; Grp +5

Combat Gear masterwork dagger, net

Abilities Str 14, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8

Feats (3) Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus: Profession (sailor)

Skills Balance +9, Climb +9 (+11 with ropes), Jump +9, Knowledge (nature) +6, Profession (sailor) +10, Swim +9, Use Rope +9

DAYMUSSEN'S TOUGHS CR 5

Male and female human expert 6

N medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10

hp 36 (6 HD)

Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +7

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee unarmed strike +6 (1d3+2 nonlethal) or

Melee mw dagger +7 (1d4+2) or

Ranged net +6 ranged touch (entangled)

Base Atk +4; Grp +6

Combat Gear masterwork dagger, net

Abilities Str 15, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8

Feats (3) Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus: Profession (sailor)

Skills Balance +10, Climb +10 (+12 with ropes), Jump +10, Knowledge (nature) +7, Profession (sailor) +11, Swim +10, Use Rope +10

Part 2: The Dangerous Place Between Shadows

In this part, the PCs must work with a member of House Phiarlan to figure out which of the Crimson Codex's interests the Blackwheel Company is planning to attack, as well as when that attack might take place. Before she parts with her information, however, the Red Lady asks the PCs to perform a service for her.

Finding the Red Lady

Assuming the PCs have the knowledge to recognize the dragonmark on the pointy-eared Red Lady as the Least Mark of Shadow, they can quickly figure out that House Phiarlan has a large enclave within Stormreach. If they do not know this, they may have to do some research, gather information, use a Player Reward card that provides them with the next Adventure Secret, or follow a path of their own making.

If the PCs recognize the Least Mark of Shadows from Unghus' description, or if they later learn what the mark is, a DC 10 Knowledge (local) or Gather Information check reveals that a large enclave of House Phiarlan rests within Stormreach. The premiere source of entertainers both on Khorvair and in Stormreach, the House is always open for business. PCs who know the Mark of Shadow and figure out its connection to the enclave of House Phiarlan in Stormreach, you can move immediately to the next encounter.

If the PCs fail to ask the right question of Unghus, fail to recognize the dragonmark he describes, or fail to connect the dragonmark to the enclave, they must find another way to locate the "Red Lady" described by Unghus. This can be done in a variety of ways.

- Use a Player Reward Card or other source that reveals the next Adventure Secret to consult Stormrider's Chapbook and find a bit of the Prophecy that points them to the House Phiarlan enclave.
- Make a Gather Information check in Stormreach to try to locate the Red Lady who Unghus described. Remember to keep track of the time and money spent to do this, and a DC 18 check is needed to find the information. Anyone with the Urban Tracking or Investigate feat gains a +4 bonus to this check, and the time to gather the information is cut in half.
- There may be other good plans the PCs formulate. For example, a PC may be a Master Inquisitive and have a "contact." In cases where the PCs come up with a reasonable plan for finding the pointy-eared Red Lady, use your best judgment in determining the outcome.

What the PCs learn, or fail to learn, about their contact depends on the methods of gaining information and how successful they are at those methods. In the end, they should at least learn that she is associated with House Phiarlan and is often seen at their enclave. Here is further information you can give the PCs about the Red Lady as applicable:

- She is a female elf and a member of House Phiarlan who wears the Least Mark of Shadow.
- Her name is Liel Tialaen d'Phiarlan.
- She teaches the arts of dance, tumbling, and gymnastics at the House Phiarlan enclave. She occasionally gives public performances at The Chapterhouse, a center of entertainment run by House Phiarlan.
- She carries a red quarterstaff and is usually seen in public wearing a red tumbler's outfit along with red makeup.

Entering the Enclave

The House Phiarlan enclave rests on the western side of Stormreach, a group of buildings surrounded by a wall. A representative of House Phiarlan permanently mans a gate leading into the enclave, and the wall is occasionally patrolled by mercenaries in the employ of House Phiarlan and by Stormreach Guards.

When the PCs arrive at the gate, a human named Fejif, a tall and lanky man with dark hair, mans it. The PCs are not barred from entering, although they do have to deal with Fejif. Fejif is a student in the comic arts, and he is only all too happy to practice on the PCs. For example, if the PCs ask to enter the enclave and speak to a dragonmarked female bearing the mark and meeting the description they have, Fejif says, "Before you can pass, I must ask you something." Then he comes out of the gatehouse and does what he can to make the PCs laugh. Unfortunately, he is not very funny. For example, he might say, "Watch this," and then walk into the wall. Then he'll turn and look at the PCs expectantly. If they don't laugh, he'll try

something else, like ask, "Why aren't giants ever impressed by each other? Because they all have big feet. Get it? Big feet?" Feel free to torture the PCs with Fejif for as long as you, or they, can stand it.

After the PCs get past Fejif, either by indulging him (and thus making him very happy) or by just demanding to be let in (and thus hurting his feelings), he calls for a guard to escort them into an office, where they are met by another employee of House Phiarlan. This is a humorless female gnome named Nelly. She asks to whom the PCs wish to speak. If the PCs give an accurate description (dragonmarked female elf, red clothing, red quarterstaff, etc.), Nelly leaves them with the guard and fetches Liel, returning moments later and asking the guard to take the PCs to the commissary, where Liel is waiting for them.

At the commissary, which is a common area in the enclave where people can meet and relax, have a meal, play a game of darts or cards, etc. Sitting at a table and having a hot drink is a female elf fitting the description provided by Unghus. Liel invites them to sit down and politely inquires what the PCs want.

How the PCs phrase their questions and how they treat Liel is the main factor in determining how she reacts. First, this is the situation: Liel is a member of a secret organization within House Phiarlan known as The Serpentine Table. In her position within House Phiarlan and The Serpentine Table, Liel is an information broker. The higher-ups in the Crimson Codex and The Serpentine Table learned of each other's existence, and they soon struck a deal, seeing that the methods and goals of the two organizations often overlapped. In that regard, Liel shares information with Fritz-Roy through Unghus, and Fritz-Roy does the same. Neither of the two knows the names and organizational hierarchies of the other, just that they work for powerful people who want information from the other's groups.

With this in mind, Liel must be handled with a bit of delicacy. Groups that approach her with too much mystery or innuendo may put her on her guard, whereas groups that come on too strong scare her off. The correct tack to take would be to establish their credibility by referencing Unghus, Fritz-Roy, and that they know something about the Blackwheel Company, perhaps striking at the interests of their organization. No Diplomacy check is needed if the PCs use this tactic. If the PCs come on too strong or fail to make their needs clear, it takes a DC 20 Diplomacy check to get Liel to make her offer.

If the PCs can convince Liel to share with them what she knows, read or paraphrase the following:

The red-clad elf nods her head. "Yes. I can help you, but my deal with Fritz-Roy has always been one of equal exchange. And right now it seems I have all the information, with you having all the need for it. But we can certainly arrange an exchange. It just so happens I have need of an armed escort this very evening. If your group will accompany me as I take care of a small matter, I will divulge the extent of my knowledge about your situation."

Assuming it is still the same day where the PCs first got their mission, they must wait until evening to assist Liel in her endeavor. If they worry about the timing, she assures them that their plight can wait until the next day. If the PCs get an idea that they might be able to get the information out of Liel in some other way, her statistics are provided below. If they take liberties and attack her in any way, either psychically or with magic, she defends herself and calls for the guards, three arriving in three rounds after combat starts. Use the stats for Stormreach Guards.

Combat Statistics

LIEL TIALAEN D'PHIARLAN CR 12

Female elf rogue 7/thief-acrobat5

N medium humanoid (elf)

Init +7; Senses Listen +2, Spot +2

Languages Common, Elf

AC 19, touch 17, flat-footed 19; uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge

hp 63 (12 HD)

Immune magical sleep

Fort +4, Ref +16 (improved evasion), Will +3 (+1 vs. poison, +2 vs. enchantment spells and effects)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee quarterstaff + 8/+3 (1d6) or

Melee +1 dagger + 16/+9 (1d4+1) or

Ranged +1 dagger + 16/+9 (1d4+1)

Base Atk +8; Grp +8

Atk Options sneak attack +4d6

Special Actions Acrobat charge, agile fighting

Combat Gear

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):

darkness (1/day)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 24, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 14

SQ Agile fighting, defensive roll (2/day), fast acrobatics, improved evasion, kip up, steady stance, skill mastery, slow fall 30 ft., trapfinding, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge

Feats Dodge, Least Dragonmark, Mobility, Skill Focus: Tumble, Weapon Finesse

Skills Balance +24, Climb +15, Diplomacy +4, Escape Artist +22, Gather Information +6, Hide +22, Jump +12, Move Silently +22, Open Locks +15, Tumble +27

Possessions combat gear plus +1 dagger, bracers of armor +2, gloves of dexterity +4, quarterstaff, masterwork thieves' tools

Acrobatic Charge (Ex) A thief-acrobat can charge over difficult terrain or through allies blocking path.

Agile Fighting (Ex) A thief-acrobat gains a +2 dodge bonus to AC. When fighting defensively or using total defense, the dodge bonus increases to +3. In addition, she takes no AC or attack penalties when kneeling, sitting, or prone.

Fast Acrobatics (Ex) A thief-acrobat ignores the –5 penalty to Balance checks when moving at full speed. She can climb at half her speed as a move action without taking the –5 to the Climb check. She can also Tumble at full speed without taking the –10 penalty.

Kip Up (Ex) A thief-acrobat can stand from prone as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Skill Mastery (Ex) A thief-acrobat has mastered the skills Balance, Climb, Jump and Tumble. She can take 10 on these checks even when under stress.

Steady Stance (Ex) A thief-acrobat is not considered flatfooted when balancing or climbing, and she adds +4 to Balance and Climb checks to remain balancing or climbing after taking damage.

Escort Duty

The PCs must assist the Liel in her mission in order to get the information from her. What Liel has neglected to tell the PCs, and what she refuses to tell them before the job is complete, is that they are getting themselves into the middle of a war between House Phiarlan and House Thuranni, the two wearers of the Mark of Shadow.

In 972 YK, the Shadow Schism took place when the Thuranni family slaughtered one line of House Phiarlan, the Paelion family. The Thuranni family was excoriated for this atrocity, but they used their contacts and influence to create their own house. Since that time, hostilities have taken place between the two houses, mostly confined to a secret war. The war that began on Khorvaire continues on Xen'drik.

Her superiors have tasked Liel with investigating the basement of an abandoned tavern on the outskirts of Stormreach. They've learned that it used to be connected with some secret operations of House Thuranni, and they are hopeful that something can be found in it. Liel smells a trap, but she has been unable to convince her superiors. With that in mind, she asks the PCs to escort and guard her, although she does not reveal anything about what she is doing or why.

Liel requests that the PCs join her outside the gate of the House Phiarlan enclave at sundown. When they meet her there, she tells them that she wants them to make sure she safely gets to and from their destination on the outskirts of the city, and she wants them to ask no questions.

The old tavern is just a 20-minute walk southwest of the city, and it is obviously abandoned. A 10-foot-wide path is still worn into the ground leading up to the front door of the tavern, and the ground within 25 feet of the tavern is still relatively clear. Outside of that, however, tall grass, shrubs, and trees have grown. Arriving at the tavern, Liel tells the PCs to remain outside. She expects to be inside for no more than 30 minutes. She instructs them not to enter unless she summons them, and to walk back to Stormreach on their own if 60 minutes pass and she has not exited the building. Then she enters through the front door, which is barely attached to the hinges and warped enough that a medium creature can squeeze through without opening it. If the PCs try to watch what she is doing, Liel may spot them and warn them. After 15 minutes of searching the tavern, she finds a trap door in the floor and enters an elaborate basement and tunnel complex that keep her underground for another 30 minutes.

In the meantime, the PCs are expected to guard the tavern. Unfortunately for them, Liel was correct in thinking this was a trap, designed to bring House Phiarlan members out into the open, where a House Thuranni assassin can find them. The assassin, however, does not want to kill her marks. Instead, she wants to get a piece of clothing, equipment, or hair from them, to be used later for other nefarious purposes.

Use the tavern tile from Dungeon Tiles Set 1 if possible, or see Map 1 at the end of the adventure. The inn is abandoned, and the windows are boarded over. The roof is 9 feet tall at the edges, sloping up to 15 feet at the center. Walking on the roof requires a DC 15 Balance check. Failure by 5 or more means the person slips and falls to the ground, taking 1d6 points of nonlethal damage.

Foe: The assassin is a scion of House Thuranni named Winsi d'Thuranni. She was transferred to work on Xen'drik after succeeding at some high-profile assassinations on Khorvaire.

Winsi d'Thuranni: female elf rogue5/assassin2: hp 35; Combat Statistics.

Tactics: Winsi has a number of tools at her disposal. First, she can sneak into position through the tall grass surrounding the tavern and study a PC for three rounds, then try to paralyze him with a death attack. Using the *shadow conjuration* ability of her least dragonmark, she can try to distract a PC with a summoned shadow creature to set him up for a death attack. She has a tendency to summon a shadow hell hound (*Monster Manual* 151) and order it to attack. Perhaps most effective tactic of all would be casting *ebon eyes*, which lets her see normally even when standing within her the area of quickened *darkness* ability from her least dragonmark. This could effectively encase a PC in darkness, yet allow her to still see him without being seen. Her *bead of force* can also be used to take a dangerous PC out of the combat.

Keep in mind Winsi is trying to get a piece of equipment or lock of hair from a PC or as many PCs as possible. She is capable of grappling, then making a successful grapple check allows her to cut a lock of hair. She can also simply try to disarm a PC and take a weapon or shield or other item. If she does take an item, use of that item is lost for the remainder of the adventure, but comes back at the end before the next session.

If at any point Winsi feels her life is at risk, she flees with whatever she has taken. Any PC who has had something taken from them receives the "Caught in the Shadow War" story object.

Developments: If the PCs manage to capture Winsi, she only talks if she truly believes the PCs are going to kill her. She doesn't care about being turned over to the Stormreach Guard, because she knows her house can get her released without punishment, although she doesn't tell the PCs that. All she really knows is that she was sent to get the possessions of anyone found snooping around this tavern so that they could be scryed later.

When Liel returns after 45 minutes, she can relate to the PCs the story of the war between the two houses that wear the Mark of Shadow. She admits that she was suspicious about this, which is why she brought the PCs along.

After the PCs have escorted Liel safely back to the House Phiarlan enclave, she tells them what they want to know. She learned about the Blackwheel Company's plan to raid Crimson Codex interests from a member of House Phiarlan who is a member of the Blackwheel Company. She refuses to give her contact's name, but she says that he heard this information from a sergeant who was involved in the planning of the operation. All she knows about this Blackwheel soldier, Sergeant Rohemen-Fudge, is that he told her contact that a very secret and potentially valuable holding of Ohnal Caldyn's group had been discovered, and Blackwheel intelligence was preparing to strike. Sergeant Rohemen-Fudge, she was told, is not the most flawless of humans. He has a reputation as a drunkard, much to the dismay of his superiors in Blackwheel Company. Despite being reprimanded on several occasions, he is still known to fail in his fight against his own demons.

Combat Statistics

WINSI D' THURANNI

CR 7

Female elf rogue 5/assassin2

NE medium humanoid (elf)

Init +4; Senses Listen +2, Spot +12

Languages Common, Draconic, Elf, Gnome

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 18; uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge

hp 35 (7 HD)

Immune magical sleep

Fort +1, Ref +11 (evasion), Will +1 (+1 vs. poison, +2 vs. enchantment spells and effects)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mw dagger +5 (1d4/19-20) or

Ranged mw dagger +9 (1d4/19-20)

Base Atk +4; Grp +4

Atk Options death attack, sneak attack +4d6

Combat Gear *potion of fly*, *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2), *bead of force*

Assassin Spells Known (CL 2nd):

1st (2/day)—distract assailant (DC 13), ebon eyes, true strike

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

shadow conjuration (DC 16) (1/day)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):

darkness [quicken] (2/day)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 14

Feats Least Dragonmark, Lesser Dragonmark, Quicken Dragonmark

Skills Balance +14, Disable Device +10, Disguise +11, Gather Information +11, Hide +14, Move

Silently +14, Open Lock +12, Search +14, Spot +12, Tumble +14

Possessions combat gear plus 4 masterwork daggers, +1 *studded leather armor*

Scaling the Encounter

5th-Level Characters: Use the 8th-level version of Winsi below.

6th-Level Characters: Use the 9th-level version of Winsi below.

WINSI D' THURANNI

CR 8

Female elf rogue 5/assassin3

NE medium humanoid (elf)

Init +4; Senses Listen +2, Spot +13

Languages Common, Draconic, Elf, Gnome

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 19; uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge

hp 39 (8 HD)

Immune magical sleep

Fort +3, Ref +12 (evasion), Will +3 (+1 vs. poison, +2 vs. enchantment spells and effects)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mw dagger +6 (1d4/19-20) or

Ranged mw dagger +10 (1d4/19-20)

Base Atk +5; Grp +5

Atk Options death attack, sneak attack +5d6

Combat Gear *potion of fly*, *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2), *bead of force*

Assassin Spells Known (CL 3rd):

2nd (1/day)—ice knife (+11 ranged) (DC 14), swift invisibility

1st (3/day)—distract assailant (DC 13), ebon eyes, true strike

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

shadow conjuration (DC 16) (1/day)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):

darkness [quicken] (2/day)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 14

Feats Least Dragonmark, Lesser Dragonmark, Quicken Dragonmark

Skills Balance +15, Disable Device +10, Disguise +11, Gather Information +11, Hide +15, Move

Silently +15, Open Lock +13, Search +14, Spot +13, Tumble +15

Possessions combat gear plus 4 masterwork daggers, +1 *studded leather armor*, *cloak of protection* +1, *ring of protection* +1

WINSI D' THURANNI

CR 9

Female elf rogue 5/assassin4

NE medium humanoid (elf)

Init +4; Senses Listen +2, Spot +14

Languages Common, Draconic, Elf, Gnome

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 20; uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge

hp 44 (9 HD)

Immune magical sleep

Fort +3, Ref +13 (evasion), Will +3 (+2 vs. poison, +2 vs. enchantment spells and effects)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mw dagger +7/+2 (1d4/19-20) or

Ranged mw dagger +10/+5 (1d4/19-20)

Base Atk +6; Grp +5

Atk Options death attack, sneak attack +5d6

Combat Gear *potion of fly*, *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2), *bead of force*

Assassin Spells Known (CL 4th):

2nd (2/day)—cat's grace, ice knife (+14 ranged) (DC 14), swift invisibility

1st (4/day)—distract assailant (DC 13), ebon eyes, jump, true strike

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

shadow conjuration (DC 16) (1/day)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):

darkness [quicken] (2/day)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 14

Feats Least Dragonmark, Lesser Dragonmark, Quick Draw, Quicken Dragonmark

Skills Balance +16, Disable Device +10, Disguise +11, Gather Information +11, Hide +16, Move

Silently +16, Open Lock +14, Search +14, Spot +14, Tumble +16

Possessions combat gear plus 4 masterwork daggers, +2 *studded leather armor*, *cloak of protection* +1, *ring of protection* +1

Part 3: Blackwheels Within Wheels

Armed with a name of a Blackwheel Company sergeant, Sergeant Rohemen-Fudge, and the fact that he may be disposed to partaking of drink in too much abundance, the PCs can go in search of him. In the meantime, however, they learn from an old friend that there may be more to this intrigue than meets the eye.

A Revelation of Betrayal

The PCs may think of a variety of ways to locate Sergeant Rohemen-Fudge. Whatever those methods might be, someone approaches the PCs before they can find him. Alter the text below to match the circumstances of the meeting.

As you move through the streets of Stormreach on your quest, a halfling steps from between two buildings and hails you. [If the PCs have encountered Pfilo the Filch in any of the previous adventures, they recognize him immediately.] "Greetings, friends." The halfling makes a "C" with his right hand and adjusts a red bandana around his neck. "We must speak of the current situation we find ourselves in." The halfling steps back into the shadows and beckons you to follow.

When you are safely out of hearing distance of anyone in the street, Pfilo draw close and speaks in a whisper. "The current troubles our group faces comes from many opposing forces, but mostly it comes from our own lack of focus on what is important. Ohnal Caldyn continues to think solely of the politics of Khorvaire in his single-minded attempt to restore that land to unification under the name of Galifar. If you haven't noticed, we are far from Khorvaire. The Prophecy speaks of many things, many more than just the bickering nations so far from us. We are being assaulted on all sides, and it is time we strike forth on our own path. Many of us who have followed Ohnal in the past still think highly of him, and we pledge to work with him as far as our paths converge. But now is a time for action, not ineffective pondering at the stars."

Give the PCs a chance to respond. Pfilo does not give any specifics on who is involved in this splintering of the faction, but he continues to point out that things are falling apart on Xen'drik for the faction, and something needs to change before the faction is destroyed on this continent. When the cases have been argued, he continues:

"To show that we are not just flapping our gums, I believe I have information that may be of value in your current investigations. To be honest, I only know that you have an interest in the Blackwheel Company for some reason, but there is something you need to see. Come with me."

Assuming the PCs agree to follow Pfilo, he takes them to an abandoned building on the western side of the city. He strikes a torch as he enters the completely dark and silent building. Read or paraphrase the following.

The small building where the halfling has led you is completely empty save for a dwarven body on the floor. Pfilo points and speaks. "She was one of us. She was investigating a lead that the Blackwheel Company might have had something to do with the disappearance of Zeke Brithlestone. The last anyone spoke to her was three days ago. She was found about three hours ago just outside the city. One of our contacts within the Stormreach Guard recognized her as one of us, and she was turned over to us for investigation."

The PCs are free to investigate the body. If the PCs played *Forbidden Knowledge*, they recognize the dwarf as Farridge Stonelock, a relatively new member of the Crimson Codex who called them to their mission during that adventure.

Consult the following points to see what can be learned with different skills and feats:

Search check (PCs with Investigate feat get +10 to the check)

- DC15 – The body has long, thin bruises and a burn mark.
- DC20 – The body is covered in traces of a powdery substance.
- DC25 – A torn piece of paper has been tucked into the right boot.

Heal check

- DC10 – She was killed by strangulation. She has constriction marks on other parts of her body too.
- DC15 – Whatever strangled her was rope-like but had barbs, like long thorns, on it as well. There is also a burn mark on her back.
- DC20 – In addition to the strangulation, it looks like some sort of venom was introduced into the body through the puncture wounds caused by the thorns.
- DC30 – The venom causes paralysis.

Craft (alchemy)

- DC20 – The venom in the wounds on the body causes paralysis.

Knowledge (arcana)

- DC16 – The burn mark on her back (if seen) is one consistent with a discharge of intense electrical energy, like the spell *shocking grasp*.
- DC26 – The burn wound is the result of a weapon known as a *lightning lance*. The weapon is a charged item, like a wand, that can shoot electricity bolts.

Knowledge (dungeoneering) or [Knowledge (planes) for a Gatekeeper]

- DC15 – If someone points out the wounds, this check reveals that wounds like this are consistent with an attack from a creature called a grell. In common Underdark parlance, grell are known as "The Eaters."
- DC20 – Grell can both constrict and paralyze victims.
- DC25 – More powerful grell can cast arcane spells.

Knowledge (local: Xen'drik)

- DC18 – The only place nearby where the Xen'drik hyacinth grows wild is to the northwest of Stormreach.

Knowledge (nature)

- DC18 – The powdery substance on body is the pollen of the Xen'drik hyacinth.

The PCs may also decide to take another tact, such as casting *speak with dead*. They can do this with no problems, as Farridge Stonelock is more than happy to tell the PCs what she knows. If the PCs are not capable of performing this activity themselves, they can use a Gather Information or Knowledge (local) check of DC 15 to find an available cleric who can cast the spell for them. The only cleric they can find on such short notice is Zuu, a changeling cleric of the traveler who is only 5th level. He casts the spell for 500gp, but a DC 20 Diplomacy check can reduce this to 400gp.

The torn piece of paper stuffed into the Farridge Stonelock's boot was placed there by the dragon who brought her body back from the site of the grell attack. The paper is a page torn from a previous year's edition of *Stormrider's Chapbook*. This text of the page is shown as Handout 2. The riddle should clue in

the PCs that the Blackwheel Company is being duped, and this can be used to convince Sergeant Rohemen-Fudge to call off the attack.

If any of the PCs earned the Story Object called "A Deal with Unknown Forces" from the adventure *Forbidden Knowledge*, Pfilo offers them something extra. If the PCs learn that the poison is paralytic in nature, Pfilo gives each character with that Story Object a *potion of remove paralysis*. If they do not learn about the paralysis, he gives each character with that story object a *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Also, if the PCs mention to Pfilo about their need to find Sergeant Rohemen-Fudge, he can save them the trouble of finding him by mentioning that he knows a person by such a name often drinks his nights (and sometimes his days) away at a dive called Giant's End. Otherwise, the PCs must use other methods to find the sergeant.

Sergeant Rohemen-Fudge on the Town

If the PCs make a successful Gather Information check or use other methods to find the current location of Sergeant Rohemen-Fudge, they learn that his favorite spot to "relax" while on leave is a dive called Giant's End. Giant's End is a ramshackle building propped against the ruins of an old stone building from the era of the giants. The place looks like a stiff wind could blow the building down.

Inside, scruffy-looking individuals huddle around small tables and drink who-knows-what out of dirty earthenware mugs. Everyone glares at the PCs when they enter. The PCs won't have to look hard to find Sergeant Rohemen-Fudge. Read or paraphrase the following:

The tavern known as Giant's End is little more than a wooden lean-to resting against the ruins of ancient giant structure. The floor is packed earth, the furnishings little more than planks nailed haphazardly together, and the patrons don't look any more respectable. Most fall silent and stare at you when you enter, but one doesn't seem to note your presence at all. The tall human with a close-cropped haircut takes a deep gulp of something from his mug and says in a voice much too loud, "And I think this life is nothing more than a fearsome pendulum, swinging mercilessly back and forth between fear and responsibility. We lie beneath it and wait for it to cut us asunder." Next to him sits a gnome, looking worried. Both wear some sort of uniform.

The pair sitting at what passes for a bar is Sergeant Augustine Rohemen-Fudge and Private Narl Nox. The sergeant is taking part in his nightly ritual: getting drunk and spouting drunkard's philosophy. The private is assigned to the "public relations" section of Blackwheel Company, and he has been assigned to keep an eye on the sergeant to make sure he doesn't do anything to embarrass the Blackwheel Company or get himself arrested.

The goals of the PCs should be two-fold at this point: find out to the exact location of the Blackwheel Company's strike against the Codex, and convince the sergeant to call off the Blackwheel's strike in light of the evidence the PCs might have that the grell are plotting to attack both factions.

The sergeant is more than willing to engage anyone in conversation; in fact, it is hard to get him to stop talking. He especially wants to espouse his current philosophical beliefs and his perceived cosmic understanding of the peculiarities of this life. As long as a PC is willing to sit down with him, share a drink, and trade one or two pseudo-philosophical musings, he can be tricked very easily into revealing the exact location of where the Blackwheel Company plans to strike (the Tomb of Tomes), as well as say that some other force has agreed to provide a distraction.

However, before they can get that information out of him, the PCs must find a way to remove from the conversation Private Narl Nox. It is his duty to keep the sergeant from revealing any secrets. Whenever it seems the sergeant is about to do that, the private chimes in and interrupts. The easiest way to remove the private is through force or other coercion. He can be easily grappled and held quietly. As long as violence is nonlethal and kept within the confines of the Giant's End, and no property is damaged, no guards are summoned.

The drink that a PC must share with Sergeant Rohemen-Fudge in order to gain his trust is a wicked form of rot-gut. Drinking a glass requires a DC 15 Fort save. Failure results in 1d4 points Wisdom damage, with no secondary effects.

While getting the sergeant to spill his guts is easy, convincing him to call off the attack is harder. This requires presenting him with some sort of evidence. Telling him about and interpreting Maldwick Roe's dream or showing him the page found in the boot of the dead dwarf suffices, but the PCs must still make a DC 15 Diplomacy check. This convinces him to call off the attack. Another DC 15 Diplomacy check can convince him to order the Blackwheel strike team to attack the grell instead of the Codex.

PCs may come up with other plans to get the sergeant to cooperate. Allow plans to work based on the sense of the plan and the skills of the PCs. The only plan that won't work is open violence. This just brings the Stormreach guard. The sergeant is not directly involved in the strike; he only helped plan it, so taking him out does not stop anything.

SERGEANT AUGUSTINE ROHEMEN-FUDGE**CR 5**

Male human fighter 5

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Listen -2, Spot -2

Languages Common

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10

hp 40 (5 HD)

Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2 (currently +0)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +1 *longsword* +10 (1d8+7/19–20) or

Ranged mwk composite longbow +9 (1d8+2/×3) or

Ranged mwk composite longbow +7/+7 (1d8+2/×3) or

Base Atk +5; Grp +8

Atk Options Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot

Abilities Str 16, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12 (currently 6), Cha 10

Feats Point Blank Shot^B, Precise Shot^B, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (longbow), Weapon Focus (longsword)^B, Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Skills Climb +11, Intimidate +8, Jump +11

Possessions +1 *longsword*, masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str bonus) with 20 arrows**PRIVATE NARL NOX****CR 2**

Male gnome rogue 2

NG small humanoid (gnome)

Init +3; Senses Listen +1, Spot -1

Languages Common, Gnome

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12

hp 16 (2 HD)

Fort +3, Ref +6 (evasion), Will -1 (+2 vs. illusions)

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee mw shortsword +2 (1d4/19–20)

Base Atk +1; Grp -3

Atk Options sneak attack +1d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1th):

speak with animals (1/day)

dancing lights, ghost sound, prestidigitation (1/day)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 10

SQ low-light vision, trapfinding

Feats Persuasive

Skills Bluff +7, Decipher Script +5, Diplomacy +9, Disable Device +8, Hide +8, Intimidate +9, Search +5, Sense Motive +4

Possessions masterwork shortsword, leather armor

Part 4: Protecting the Tomb

The PCs arrive at the Tomb of Tomes. They may either arrive in time to fortify the area and prepare before the attack, or they may arrive too late to save many of the treasures of the Tomb of Tomes, but can still attack the grell.

Finding the Tomb of Tomes

If the PCs have learned the exact location of the Tomb of Tomes from Sergeant Rohemen-Fudge, they can find it quite easily. It is located in a cave beneath a small hill northwest of Stormreach. In this case, go directly to the section entitled The Battle at the Tomb below.

If the PCs failed to learn the exact location, but learned the general area of the hideout through other clues, particularly the clues on the body of Farridge Stonelock, they have some work ahead of them in finding the Tomb of Tomes. First, they can find a large field of wild hyacinths, and a DC 20 Search check or DC 15 Survival check (with the Track feat) finds the exact location where the body of Farridge Stonelock fell.

At this location, a DC 25 Survival check with the Track feat, or a DC 20 Search check of someone with the Investigate feat reveals that a dwarf fell here. However, there are no other tracks around the body except for a single set of dwarf tracks that ended at this spot, coming from the hills and mountains to the north. Following the dwarf tracks is relatively simple (DC 10), and eventually the tracks converge and are lost within tracks of many people leading up to a small hill. The tracks are then obvious for anyone, and this obvious trail leads into a cave that houses the Tomb of Tomes.

Going directly to the Tomb of Tomes for those who know the location takes 2 hours. Those who have to go to the hyacinth field and then following tracks and trails take 4 hours to reach the Tomb of Tomes. Since the original attack takes place at 3 hours, those who need to follow the tracks arrive after the original attack.

The Battle at the Tomb

A 10-foot-wide passage leads from the hillside down into the depths of a cave. The tunnel leads down for 150 feet then opens into a large chamber. The stone here has been partially worked, creating a single huge chamber with a smooth floor and relatively smooth walls. The chamber is full of stacks of books, desks covered with scrolls, non-magical artifacts from ancient giant civilizations, and countless other items retrieved by the Codex from Xen'drik.

If the PCs arrive before the grell attack, they have approximately 30 minutes to prepare. There are currently 13 Crimson Codex "tomes" (experts on arcane writings) working in the location, but none of them are combatants. The guards that were supposed to arrive several hours ago never showed. There is not enough time to evacuate everything, but the Codex tomes can be told about the attack so they can flee. Then the PCs can prepare for the grell attack.

If the PCs arrive after the grell attack, all of the tomes are dead, and some of the most valuable of the writings and artifacts have been taken, although there are still three normal grell in the Tomb of Tomes, carrying away more artifacts.

If the PCs were able to talk Sergeant Rohemen-Fudge into having the Blackwheel strike team attack the grell instead of the Codex, the PCs only face the grell philosopher appropriate to their level. If the PCs failed to gain the Blackwheel Company's help, they face the grell philosopher and one additional grell.

Foes: Vhreelax, a grell philosopher, is one of the many leaders of the large grell colony that resides near the Tomb of Tomes. He and the other leaders of the grell colony, along with the dark elf who is their liaison to Virulence, have been growing larger and more powerful in preparation for whatever plans Virulence is making. This attack is the first step in that plan. The grell philosopher enters through a tunnel in the north of the chamber, dug almost completely through by a beholder's disintegration ray over the last few days. The other grell, if involved in the attack, comes down the entry tunnel.

Vhreelax, Grell Philosopher: male grell wizard5; hp 48; Combat Statistics.

Grell (1): hp 32; Combat Statistics. (Only present if Blackwheel Company fails to help.)

or

Grell (3): hp 32; Combat Statistics.

Tactics: The grell are only interested at this point in getting all the objects collected in the Tomb of Tomes. They do everything in their power to eliminate the PCs or anything else preventing them from taking the goods. If the PCs flee, the grell do not chase the first time. If the PCs come back within 3 hours, the grell are still there. If the PCs come back a second time and attack, the grell do pursue.

Combat Statistics

VHREELAX, GRELL PHILOSOPHER

CR 6

Male grell wizard 5

NE medium aberration

Init +5; Senses blindsight 60 ft.; Listen +9, Spot +9

Languages Common, Daelkyr, Grell, Undercommon

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

hp 48 (10 HD)

Immune electricity, paralyzation, sightless

Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +9

Speed 5 ft. (1 square), fly 30 ft. (6 squares)
 Melee 10 tentacles +7 (1d4+2) plus paralyzation and
 Melee bite +2 (1d6+1)
 Ranged *lightning lance* +6 ranged touch (3d6 electricity)
 Space 5 ft./5 ft.; Reach 10 ft. with tentacle
 Base Atk +5; Grp +17
 Atk Options constrict 1d6+2, expert grappler, improved grab, paralysis, spells
 Combat Gear *lightning lance* (5 charges)
 Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 5th):
 3rd—empowered ray of enfeeblement (+6 ranged touch), suggestion (DC 16)
 2nd—mirror image (1d4+1 images), scare (DC 15), Tasha’s hideous laughter (DC 15)
 1st—charm person (DC 14), magic missile, ray of enfeeblement (+6 ranged touch), shield
 0—daze, prestidigitation, resistance, touch of fatigue

Abilities Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 10
 Feats Combat Casting, Empower Spell^B, Flyby Attack, Grell Alchemy, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll^B
 Skills Concentration +11 (+15 casting defensively), Hide +11, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +9, Move Silently +11, Spot +9
 Possessions combat gear

Constrict (Ex) On a successful grapple check, the grell philosopher deals 1d6+2 points of damage.
 Expert Grappler (Ex) A grell that chooses to grapple with one tentacle and remain ungrappled itself takes a –10 penalty in its grapple check instead of the normal –20 penalty. Grell have a +10 racial bonus on grapple checks.
 Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a grell must hit an opponent of its size or smaller with a tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.
 Paralysis (Ex) Any creature hit by a grell’s tentacle must make a DC 9 Fort save or be paralyzed for 2d4 rounds. The save is Constitution-based and includes a –4 racial penalty. Creatures struck by multiple tentacles do not have to make multiple saves. Instead, the DC increases by 1 for every successful tentacle attack that hit in the same round.
 Blindsight (Ex) A grell is blind but maneuvers as well as a sighted creature by using scent and vibration to ascertain its surroundings within 60 feet. The grell does not need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice creatures within range of its blindsight.
 Flight (Ex) A grell’s body is buoyant. The creature continually produces an effect like a *fly* spell, which it can use to move at a speed of 30 feet with perfect maneuverability. This also grants the grell a permanent personal *feather fall*.
 Sightless (Ex) A grell is immune to gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions, and other attack forms that rely on sight.
 Skills (Ex) A grell gains a +2 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks.

GRELL

CR 3

NE medium aberration
 Init +2; Senses blindsight 60 ft.; Listen +4, Spot +4
 Languages Grell

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14
 hp 32 (5 HD)
 Immune electricity, paralyzation, sightless
 Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +4

Speed 5 ft. (1 square), fly 30 ft. (6 squares)
 Melee 10 tentacles +5 (1d4+1) plus paralyzation and
 Melee bite +0 (1d6)

Space 5 ft.; Reach 10 ft. with tentacle

Base Atk +3; Grp +14

Atk Options constrict 1d6+1, expert grappler, improved grab, paralysis

Abilities Str 12, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9

Feats Flyby Attack, Weapon Finesse

Skills Hide +8, Listen +4, Move Silently +8, Spot +4

Constrict (Ex) On a successful grapple check, the grell deals 1d6+1 points of damage.

Expert Grappler (Ex) A grell that chooses to grapple with one tentacle and remain ungrappled itself takes a –10 penalty in its grapple check instead of the normal –20 penalty. Grell have a +10 racial bonus on grapple checks.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a grell must hit an opponent of its size or smaller with a tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Paralysis (Ex) Any creature hit by the grell's tentacle must make a DC 10 Fort save or be paralyzed for 2d4 rounds. The save is Constitution-based and includes a –4 racial penalty. Creatures struck by multiple tentacles do not have to make multiple saves. Instead, the DC increases by 1 for every successful tentacle attack that hit in the same round.

Blindsight (Ex) A grell is blind but maneuvers as well as a sighted creature by using scent and vibration to ascertain its surroundings within 60 feet. The grell does not need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice creatures within range of its blindsight.

Flight (Ex) A grell's body is buoyant. The creature continually produces an effect like a *fly* spell, which it can use to move at a speed of 30 feet with perfect maneuverability. This also grants the grell a permanent personal *feather fall*.

Sightless (Ex) A grell is immune to gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions, and other attack forms that rely on sight.

Skills (Ex) A grell gains a +2 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks.

Scaling the Encounter

5th-Level Characters: Use the CR 7 version of Vhreelax below. Add one grell to the three if the PCs are late.

6th-Level Characters: Use the CR 8 version of Vhreelax below. Add two grell to the three if the PCs are late.

VHREELAX, GRELL PHILOSOPHER

CR 7

Male grell wizard 6

NE medium aberration

Init +5; Senses blindsight 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +9

Languages Common, Daelkyr, Grell, Undercommon

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

hp 52 (11 HD)

Immune electricity, paralyzation, sightless

Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +10

Speed 5 ft. (1 square), fly 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee 10 tentacles +8 (1d4+2) plus paralyzation and

Melee bite +3 (1d6+1)

Ranged *lightning lance* +7 ranged touch (3d6 electricity)

Space 5 ft./5 ft.; Reach 10 ft. with tentacle

Base Atk +6; Grp +18

Atk Options constrict 1d6+2, expert grappler, improved grab, paralysis, spells

Combat Gear *lightning lance* (5 charges)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 6th):

3rd—empowered magic missile, empowered ray of enfeeblement (+7 ranged touch), suggestion (DC 17)

2nd—invisibility, mirror image (1d4+2 images), scare (DC 15), Tasha's hideous laughter (DC 16)

1st—charm person (DC 15), magic missile, ray of enfeeblement (+7 ranged touch), shield
0—daze, prestidigitation, resistance, touch of fatigue

Abilities Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 10

Feats Combat Casting, Empower Spell^B, Flyby Attack, Grell Alchemy, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll^B, Spell Focus (enchantment)

Skills Concentration +12 (+16 casting defensively), Hide +11, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +8, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +10, Move Silently +11, Spot +9

Possessions combat gear plus

Constrict (Ex) On a successful grapple check, the grell philosopher deals 1d6+2 points of damage.

Expert Grappler (Ex) A grell that chooses to grapple with one tentacle and remain ungrappled itself takes a –10 penalty in its grapple check instead of the normal –20 penalty. Grell have a +10 racial bonus on grapple checks.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a grell must hit an opponent of its size or smaller with a tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Paralysis (Ex) Any creature hit by a grell's tentacle must make a DC 9 Fort save or be paralyzed for 2d4 rounds. The save is Constitution-based and includes a –4 racial penalty. Creatures struck by multiple tentacles do not have to make multiple saves. Instead, the DC increases by 1 for every successful tentacle attack that hit in the same round.

Blindsight (Ex) A grell is blind but maneuvers as well as a sighted creature by using scent and vibration to ascertain its surroundings within 60 feet. The grell does not need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice creatures within range of its blindsight.

Flight (Ex) A grell's body is buoyant. The creature continually produces an effect like a *fly* spell, which it can use to move at a speed of 30 feet with perfect maneuverability. This also grants the grell a permanent personal *feather fall*.

Sightless (Ex) A grell is immune to gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions, and other attack forms that rely on sight.

Skills (Ex) A grell gains a +2 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks.

VHREELAX, GRELL PHILOSOPHER

CR 8

Male grell wizard 7

NE medium aberration

Init +5; Senses blindsight 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +9

Languages Common, Daelkyr, Grell, Undercommon

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

hp 56 (12 HD)

Immune electricity, paralyzation, sightless

Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +10

Speed 5 ft. (1 square), fly 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee 10 tentacles +8 (1d4+2) plus paralyzation and

Melee bite +3 (1d6+1)

Ranged *lightning lance* +7 ranged touch (3d6 electricity)

Space 5 ft.; Reach 10 ft. with tentacle

Base Atk +6; Grp +18

Atk Options constrict 1d6+2, expert grappler, improved grab, paralysis, spells

Combat Gear *lightning lance* (5 charges)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 7th):

4th—confusion (DC 18)

3rd—empowered magic missile, empowered ray of enfeeblement (+7 ranged touch), suggestion (DC 17)

2nd—invisibility, mirror image (1d4+2 images), scare (DC 15), Tasha's hideous laughter (DC 16)

1st—charm person (DC 15), comprehend languages, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement (+7 ranged touch), shield

0—daze, prestidigitation, resistance, touch of fatigue

Abilities Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 10

Feats Combat Casting, Empower Spell^B, Flyby Attack, Grell Alchemy, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll^B, Spell Focus (enchantment)

Skills Concentration +13 (+17 casting defensively), Hide +11, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +10, Move Silently +11, Spot +9

Possessions combat gear plus

Constrict (Ex) On a successful grapple check, the grell philosopher deals 1d6+2 points of damage.

Expert Grapppler (Ex) A grell that chooses to grapple with one tentacle and remain ungrappled itself takes a –10 penalty in its grapple check instead of the normal –20 penalty. Grell have a +10 racial bonus on grapple checks.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a grell must hit an opponent of its size or smaller with a tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Paralysis (Ex) Any creature hit by a grell's tentacle must make a DC 9 Fort save or be paralyzed for 2d4 rounds. The save is Constitution-based and includes a –4 racial penalty. Creatures struck by multiple tentacles do not have to make multiple saves. Instead, the DC increases by 1 for every successful tentacle attack that hit in the same round.

Blindsight (Ex) A grell is blind but maneuvers as well as a sighted creature by using scent and vibration to ascertain its surroundings within 60 feet. The grell does not need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice creatures within range of its blindsight.

Flight (Ex) A grell's body is buoyant. The creature continually produces an effect like a *fly* spell, which it can use to move at a speed of 30 feet with perfect maneuverability. This also grants the grell a permanent personal *feather fall*.

Sightless (Ex) A grell is immune to gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions, and other attack forms that rely on sight.

Skills (Ex) A grell gains a +2 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks.

Ending the Adventure

If the PCs are able to drive off the grell from taking any of the Codex holdings, Fritz-Roy meets them a few days later. He thanks them profusely and tells them that losing the Tomb of Tomes might have been the final nail of the Codex's activities in Xen'drik. He says that he is aware of internal divisions within the Codex, but that these will have to be addressed later, after other outside threats are dealt with. No clues in the disappearance of Zeke Brithlestone have surfaced yet, and he believes that a powerful assistant of Ohnal Caldyn is being dispatched to Xen'drik to help get the Codex back on solid ground. He asks the PCs to remain vigilant but keep a low profile until he contacts them again.

If the PCs drive off the grell after they have taken just some of the Codex holdings, Fritz-Roy meets them a few days later. He thanks them profusely and tells them that losing the Tomb of Tomes might have been the final nail of the Codex's activities in Xen'drik. Although several members of the Codex were killed in the attack and some valuable manuscripts and artifacts were lost, many important items were saved. He says that he is aware of internal divisions within the Codex, but that these will have to be addressed later, after other outside threats are dealt with. No clues in the disappearance of Zeke Brithlestone have surfaced yet, and he believes that a powerful assistant of Ohnal Caldyn is being dispatched to Xen'drik to help get the Codex back on solid ground. He asks the PCs to remain vigilant but keep a low profile until he contacts them again.

If the PCs fail to stop the grell from taking over the Tomb of Tomes completely, Fritz-Roy meets with any surviving PCs a few days later. He thanks them for their efforts, but admits that losing the Tomb of Tomes might be the final nail of the Codex's activities in Xen'drik. He says that he is aware of internal divisions within the Codex, but that these will have to be addressed later, after other outside threats are dealt with. No clues in the disappearance of Zeke Brithlestone have surfaced yet, and he believes that a powerful assistant of Ohnal Caldyn is being dispatched to Xen'drik to help get the Codex back on solid ground. He asks the PCs to remain vigilant but keep a low profile until he contacts them again.

Event Treasure

If the PCs defeat the grell, they each can take 500gp worth of scrolls into their next adventure. The scrolls must be taken from the DMG, and since they are consumable items, the cost is 5 times DMG cost (campaign cost). If the PCs save the Blackwheel Company from getting attacked by the grell, they can each choose one +1 weapon or armor as well as event treasure.

Adventure Questions

1. How did the PCs deal with the encrypted note from Fritz-Roy?
 - a. They failed to solve it.
 - b. They solved it only with hints.
 - c. They solved it without hints, but it took a while.
 - d. They solved it very quickly.
2. Which best describes the PCs' interaction with the fishmongers?
 - a. The PCs found their contact quickly and never talked to the wrong fishmonger.
 - b. The PCs talked to the wrong fishmonger but avoided a fight.
 - c. The PCs talked to the wrong fishmonger and ended in a brawl.
 - d. The PCs never made it to this point.
3. How did the PCs do when the House Thuranni assassin attacked?
 - a. They were soundly defeated.
 - b. They survived, but multiple PCs lost items when she escaped.
 - c. A single PC lost an item or a piece of hair when she escaped.
 - d. They completely thwarted the assassin.
4. How was the PCs handling of the investigation of the dwarf's corpse?
 - a. The investigation yielded all the information available.
 - b. The investigation was mostly successful.
 - c. The investigation yielded almost no information.
 - d. The investigation was a total failure. The PCs learned nothing.
5. How did the PCs handle the encounter with Sergeant Rohemen-Fudge?
 - a. They convinced him to tell them about the location and he worked with the PCs.
 - b. He told them about the location but refused to call off the attack.
 - c. He told them nothing.
 - d. It got ugly and the guards were called.
6. How did the PCs fare at the Tomb of Tomes?
 - a. They defeated the grell before they could take the Tomb of Tomes.
 - b. They defeated the grell after the grell had already attacked and taken some items.
 - c. The PCs were defeated by the grell, who still have possession of the tomes and scrolls.
7. Rate the group's roleplaying.
 - a. Excellent.
 - b. Good.
 - c. Mediocre.
 - d. Poor. No roleplaying at all.

Story Objects

Object ID: EXCC13

Object Name: Caught in the Shadow War

Object Description: House Thuranni has one of your possessions or a piece of your body. This could mean trouble in the future. Even now you feel as though you are being watched.

Object ID: EXCC14

Object Name: Access to the Tomb of Tomes

Object Description: You have rescued all or most of the materials in the Tomb of Tomes. This information could prove valuable later. You have access to the Archivist class from *Heroes of Horror* without needing to use an expansion slot. Also, you can access two spells instead of one the next time you use an expansion slot to unlock a spell.

New Rules

Distract Assailant

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]

Level: Assassin 1, sorcerer/wizard 1

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 swift action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 round

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

A creature affected by this spell is flat-footed until the beginning of its next turn.

Ebon Eyes

Transmutation

Level: Assassin 1, cleric 1, sorcerer/wizard 1

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 10 minutes/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The subject of this spell gains the ability to see normally in natural and magical darkness, although it does not otherwise improve the subject's ability to see in natural dark or shadowy conditions. The subject ignores the miss chance due to lack of illumination other than total darkness. While the spell is in effect, a jet-black film covers the subject's eyes, a visual effect that gives the spell its name.

Ice Knife

Conjuration (Creation) [Cold]

Level: Assassin 2, sorcerer/wizard 2

Components: S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Effect: One icy missile

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fortitude partial or Reflex half; see text

Spell Resistance: Yes

You must succeed on a normal ranged attack to hit (with a +2 bonus on the attack roll for every two caster levels). If it hits, an ice knife deals 2d8 points of cold damage and 2 points of Dexterity damage (a successful Fortitude save negates the Dexterity damage). Creatures that have immunity to cold also take no Dexterity damage.

A knife that misses creates a shower of ice crystals in a 10-foot-radius burst (see Missing with a Thrown Weapon, PH 158, to determine where the shard hits). The icy burst deals 1d8 points of cold damage to all creatures within the area (Reflex half).

Swift Invisibility

Illusion (Glamer)

Level: Assassin 2, bard 1

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 swift action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 round

This spell functions like *invisibility* (PH 245), except as noted above.

Handout 1

[This note is a written in red ink on a piece of white cloth.]

**KRCGEAISNQNNXPORMTNSTVIASPLOAKANBPOEWYIMDNVQG
HNFEROCSLPTLNNOSDWFGEHJDCXFMNIBVNCZDIOMREIGES
HRSJTIKYOPLNAWASETDRWBFHDVAJNRMAFFJFXDIYGSTFHRD
MWAONLNBGGDVESORVCSMOTPLAANLIBL**

Handout 2

[This is the text from a page torn from a book.]

The eaters eat. They must devour, but even eaters think.

Meals can taste all the better when the eaten eat each other first.

Red and black meals. Red and black, chessboard pieces need not war.

A game with three sides. Two friends or two foes?

Red and black can choke the eaters.

Locations of eternal rest are no place for meals.

Map 1 – The Abandoned Tavern



Map 2 – The Tomb of Tomes

