

# LONE WOLF

ADVENTURE GAME

## ROOKHAVEN



JOE DEVER AND CUBICLE 7





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# INTRODUCTION

*The ride from Thornfalcon was long, over rough, unsteady ground. The hills of the Northern Durncraggs are rock-strewn and unforgiving, making your journey an uncomfortable and forbidding one. Constant rain has not helped ease your low spirits, as each day has been grayer and wetter than the last.*

*At long last, you have reached the tall hillside overlooking the mountain hamlet of Rookhaven, though you cannot help but be underwhelmed at the sight. The remnants of a low stone wall mark the outer edge of the village itself, while several small farms are huddled around its edges. Each farm yields a meagre harvest, fighting for what little crop it can manage to grow in this shale valley.*

*Your eyes are drawn to a sizeable tower and partially constructed keep which cast a shadow upon the hamlet. While neither look to be defensible, it appears that the noble who oversees this forsaken settlement actually lives in this shell of a tower. Perhaps it may be better cared for on the inside?*

*Heading down the hill, you ride towards the distant hamlet. Each stride your horse makes reminds you of your weariness. Passing a wooden sign swaying in the rain, you are bleakly reminded of how remote this place is. Rookhaven is so far off the beaten path that, were it not for seasonal taxes, no reasonable Sommlending would ever likely come here. Those who do travel to Rookhaven report unkempt roads, fallow fields and an insular, private people who remained ensconced in their homes until their unwelcome visitors are on their way.*

*Rumours have led you to this place, along with a letter you are to deliver to the Basanet of Rookhaven personally. You guide your horse along the remains of Rookhaven's central road, taking it up to the stone wall and its only intact gate. Initially, there was no gate guard, but a lanky man in coarse, rugged clothes moves to greet you.*

*"Hail, traveler," says the man, his moss green eyes dull in the overcast haze, "Unless you mean to be this far from anything civil, I'd say you are lost."*

*Once you make it clear you are here intentionally, the man opens the creaking metal gate and bids you enter. The widespread wings of a black iron raven, worked into the arch above your head, bid you welcome as you pass beneath. Within the town proper, several ravens of the flesh and blood variety perch in the barren trees along either side of your path. They watch your passing with dark, dispassionate eyes.*

*Following you through the gate, the man continues, "My name is Kailen. If I may be so bold, you look as wrung out as a bar rag, stranger." Kailen leads your horse to the edge of town, tying off your mount's reins to a hitching post, "Whatever your business here may be, let me suggest your first stop be the Murder o' Crows, sir."*



Welcome to the Province of Rookhaven, a Gothic corner of Kai's chosen nation where the shadows deepen at night and linger just a little longer during the day. Rookhaven holds secrets that fester within its ancient stone walls and terrors that lurk in the depths of Raven Hall, the province's crumbling keep.

Evil sleeps beneath Rookhaven: an ancient horror that grows more restless with each passing year.

But before we delve deeper into the mystery that is Rookhaven, let us examine the details needed to run adventures and create campaigns within the province. Your task is to bring this place to life for your Players by providing enjoyable scenarios and stimulating new ideas for stories of their own.

To get an idea of just how isolated Rookhaven really is, here it where it is located in the foothills of the Durncrag Mountains in northwestern Sommerlund:



Rookhaven is tucked into a mountain valley in the shadow of the peaks of Mt. Veno and Mt. Durn, the highest peaks of the Durncrag Range. It is northwest of Thornfalcon and is only accessible via a

trade trail in such ill repair that few even know it exists. Thornfalcon has thrived from this fact; its folk rarely mention the hamlet of Rookhaven to travelers, as they pass enroute to Hitchford or the great watchtower at Shadow Pass.

Surrounded by high mountains on three sides, Rookhaven's daylight hours are short and its nights seemingly endless, especially during the winter months. Seasons in Rookhaven tend to be more severe than elsewhere in Sommerlund: summers are unusually dry and winters are exceptionally cold, due to frigid winds that sweep down from the Durncrag. Water comes from a handful of unreliable wells and the soil is only arable in small parts of the region.

How bleak can life be in this shadowed corner of Sommerlund? The hamlet's crest says it all!



## IF THINGS ARE SO BAD, WHY DOES ANYONE LIVE HERE?

Three things keep people in Rookhaven generation after generation. The first reason is something the people of Rookhaven (also called Corries) have in common with the rest of Sommerlund – a noble sense of pride. Much like King Kian and the original Sommlending of the Sommer Isles, Corries face adversity with grim tenacity, be it a Giak invasion or a field so littered with stones and rusted iron that other farmers would abandon it. Corries do not flinch. To leave would be to surrender, and the people of Rookhaven never surrender.

The second reason is their sense of duty. While Rookhaven no longer serves a useful military purpose, the province was founded to guard this part of the Durncrag and to take advantage of the valley's once fertile soil and mineral resources. Even though battles against the Darkspawn have ruined most of the land hereabouts and Rookhaven's mines ceased to yield ore, Corries still harbour a deep-rooted loyalty to the Crown. The fact that Rookhaven has been all but forgotten by the rest of Sommerlund is of no consequence.

Lastly, the people of Rookhaven do not remain entirely of their own free will. Dark forces at play in the province hold its meagre populace captive with subtle silent chains. For nearly a century,





something evil has been manipulating events in Rookhaven to keep the area quiet, its people obedient, and its secrets hidden from the rest of the realm. Rookhaven's isolation is no accident. The reason behind it could arise to threaten all of Sommerlund.

## TONE OF THE CAMPAIGN

Capturing the atmosphere of Rookhaven is an important part of setting stories here. Rookhaven is a struggling community with many hidden secrets and an uncertain future, set against the backdrop of a once-proud province that lives in the shadows of its ruins.

There is hope here and there, small glimmers, but without Heroes to breathe life on those smouldering embers they will be doomed to suffocate beneath the weight of the growing darkness.

As a Narrator for the **Lone Wolf Adventure Game**, you should strive to inject the right atmosphere in all your roleplaying situations. Magnamund is a world of epic adventure, populated by noble heroes and dastardly villains. Rookhaven subverts that idiom so that scenarios set here will provide the Players with myriad roleplaying possibilities.

Rookhaven's darkness is deep so that its Heroes can shine all the brighter.

## WHAT LIES WITHIN

The Rookhaven Sourcebook is a 128 page volume that introduces this remote province, provides Narrators with the information necessary to run a campaign, and contains several adventures set in the region.

There is also supplemental material that will be of interest to Narrators no matter where they wish to set their games, including new rules and character material.

The contents of the Sourcebook are as follows:

### Introduction

- You are reading this now. It includes the initial appearance of Kailan as the Players' guide and a short overview of the book.

### The Province of Rookhaven

- This chapter provides characters and locations for play.
- It includes a small section with Background Traits for Heroes from the Rookhaven Province and advice on how to incorporate locals into the campaign.

### The Rookhaven Campaign – “Before the Dawn”

- This provides the main content in the book, ten scenarios set in and around Rookhaven, divided into three acts. Each act contains three scenarios, with the finale (“Always Darkest”) bringing the campaign to a conclusion.

### Rookhaven Redeemed

- This chapter marks the ending of the *Before the Dawn* campaign, discusses the changes in the province following the defeat of Shryll, and sets up the area as a campaign setting moving forward.
  - You will find more Scenario Seeds here, dedicated to the needs and concerns of Rookhaven after Shryll's hold on the land is broken.

### Appendix

- This last chapter includes new equipment and special items.
- It provides a full Action Chart for Sir Persicar, one of the campaign's most nefarious and powerful villains.
- It presents the *Blood Raven* and *Agent of the Crown* Minor Roles.
- Lastly, it includes a Rookhaven-styled Action Record included for your use.





## CHAPTER ONE

# THE PROVINCE OF ROOKHAVEN

Rookhaven has been around for a long time. The town was founded and settled long before the Battle of the Pass of Moytura in MS 3799, and was intended to serve as a military post of the Baronial Confederation of Toran in much the same way as Tower Kalt and Shadow Pass.

Rookhaven sat along a mountain pass through the Durncrag that led straight into the Darklands. It was not a very wide pass but it was easily traversed contiguous and therefore dangerous. Rookhaven once featured a full keep, one of Sommerlund's tallest watchtowers, the support of a whole family-clan of Bor Dwarves, and enough garrisoned soldiers to repel a minor invasion.

Those soldiers fulfilled their duty on several occasions. With each battle, the fighting grew harder, the cost in Sommlending lives grew greater, and the damage to the land grew more severe. As a consequence of the foul blood of their foes, their tainted weapons and their evil magic, the people of Rookhaven began to believe that their province was blighted by centuries of warfare against the Darklands.

At the end of the War of the Black Muster (MS 3785 – MS 3799) Archlord Vashna led his remaining forces against the armies allied beneath the banner of King Ulnar I, at the Battle of Moytura Pass. The Archlord's tactics, even if seemingly hastily and ill-prepared, had several contingencies. One of these contingencies involved coordinated strikes against all known passes through the Durncrag Mountains by élite forces of his fellow Darklords. None of these strikes were intended to spearhead an invasion, but rather to draw away Sommlending soldiers and supplies from the King's army at Moytura Pass. One of their feints aimed at Starkriven, a pass guarded by Raven Hall and hundreds of brave Sommlending soldiers.

An army of Giaks and Drakkarim poured through the pass in MS 3799, crashing upon them like a wave upon a rocky shore. They were led by a rarity among the forces of the Darklands – a Helghast Warlord named Shryll, bound to the service of Darklord Haakon. Many centuries before, at the end of the Helghast Wars (MS 3520 – MS 3550), Archlord Vashna had created a more powerful breed of Helghast that had been imbued with dark powers by the Nadziranim. These creatures harboured a virulent necromantic disease which killed and transformed their victims into living undead, but even

so they were finally defeated by the Sommlending. Centuries later, during the Black Muster, Vashna created an even more powerful breed of Helghast to eradicate the Sommlending. These fell creatures were both formidable fighters and able to perform Right-handed Magic. They also wielded considerable psychic powers and were given sorcerous weapons forged by the Archlord himself. At least one of those new Helghast was bound to each Darklord and trained to the Black Arts by his own Nadziranim, to lead his own troops into battle using devastating battle-magic. Cunning, cruel and powerful, some of those fearsomely enhanced and trained new Helghast rose to the highest levels of the Darklands military and became known as the Helghast Warlords.

One of the most psychically powerful Helghast Warlords, Shryll carried into the battle of Starkriven a black iron claymore imbued with the powers of Blight and Decay and called Orgadak-Shezug: 'Mancleaver'. The battle was fierce and bitter, and Rookhaven's defenders were hard pressed to contain the dark assault and keep Shryll's forces bottled up in the pass. The defense would surely have failed had fate not intervened.

Vashna's defeat undid many of his works, his power failing as he fell to his doom in the Maakengorge. One such work, Mancleaver, exploded with such force that the Helghast's army was decimated and the mountainsides around them collapsed beneath a massive avalanche. Though the 'victory' cost the lives of most of Rookhaven's soldiers, the battle was over and Starkriven Pass was no more.

Unfortunately for the province, no pass meant no need for a garrison. The damage done to Raven Hall – including its toppled watchtower – was left unrepaired as Rookhaven's importance as a military outpost withered.

For many years after that the battle at Starkriven Pass, Rookhaven managed to sustain itself through mining, mostly iron ore, rubies and schorl tourmalines (also called Nightstones). At first, these resources were valuable enough that settlers came to Rookhaven and a small community grew up around its ruins. Unfortunately, several of the mines had been structurally weakened when Starkriven was destroyed and the few safe mines eventually became exhausted. With no mines left to run, most of the dwarves living in Rookhaven returned home to Bor.





The province tried several times over the following years to improve their lot but every effort seemed doomed to failure. Trying to revive one of the lost mines resulted in a catastrophic cave-in and the loss of many lives. Envoys sent to parlay with Holmgard never returned. Attempts to establish new enterprises foundered and the flow of travel eventually disappeared.

The trade road deteriorated and no one had the money or inclination to restore it. Appeals to Thornfalcon went unheeded whereas the Basanet of Rookhaven is theoretically a vassal of the Fryearl of Thornfalcon. Aside from occasional military patrols and itinerant drifters, no one went to Rookhaven anymore. Never the most welcoming of folk, Corries have become insular, distrustful of and even outright hostile towards strangers. For example:

*After a simple breakfast of lumpbread and pepper gravy, your guide leads you out of the inn and into the quiet streets of Rookhaven. The hour is still early yet, Kai's gaze over the horizon seems paler and dimmer than usual, no doubt the result of the grey clouds above and the fog still clinging to the fields around town.*

*You and Kailen have little company as you walk down lanes of crushed stone and hard-packed earth. Most of the houses*

*around you are tightly shuttered and offer no signs of warmth or welcome. "Best not to take it personal," Kailen murmurs as you pass a small row of market stalls. Though their owners are setting out their wares and preparing for the coming day, none of them will make eye contact with you. The closer you get, the more they turn away.*

*"It has been a hard season," he says as if that explained everything. "Between the sickness this spring and the Dun Masks prowling the road, those folks are mostly here out of habit."*

*Kailen gestures to one of the wide carts, its wooden shelves mostly bare save for some pale fruit and a few crates of silvergrass. Normally hearty enough to boil in a stew, this silvergrass seems thin and brittle to you. The black ribbon this merchant has used to lash them together looks more appealing to eat than the grass itself.*

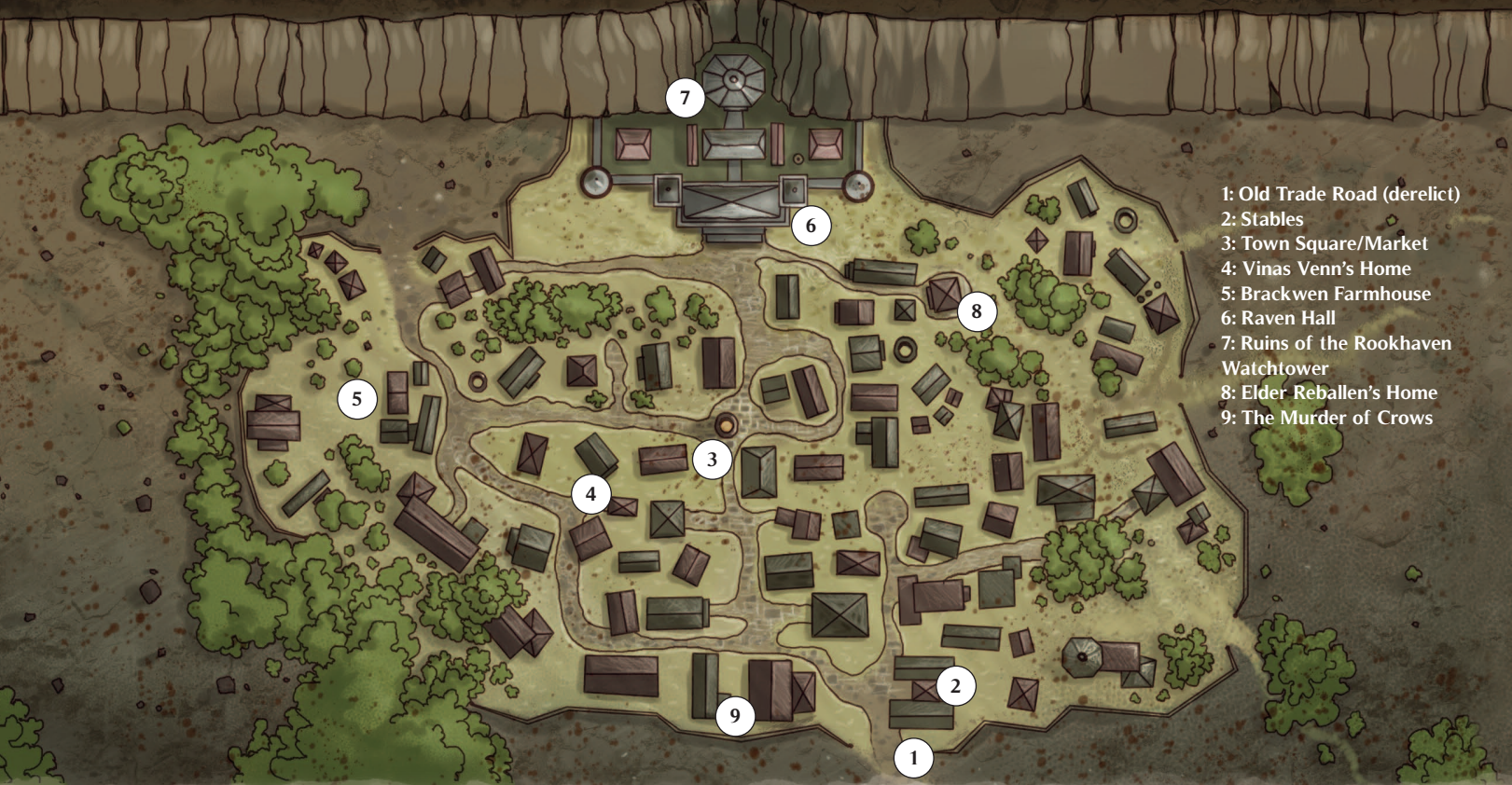
*"They barely have anything to sell and we barely have anything to buy it with."*

*He leads you away from the silent market and strides across an open space in the middle of town. The ground here is actually paved in flagstones as wide as a shield, each one tightly fitted*





## THE VILLAGE OF ROOKHAVEN



- 1: Old Trade Road (derelict)
- 2: Stables
- 3: Town Square/Market
- 4: Vinas Venn's Home
- 5: Brackwen Farmhouse
- 6: Raven Hall
- 7: Ruins of the Rookhaven Watchtower
- 8: Elder Reballen's Home
- 9: The Murder of Crows

to the others. Whomever laid this square had considerable skill, though its edges have fallen into disrepair.

The square surrounds a tall, narrow plinth of dark grey shale. At its peak, just taller than eye-level on you, a cap of beaten copper forms a border surrounding all four sides. Atop the cap, there is nothing. Whatever this plinth was made to display, it now seems as barren as the rest of this place.

"Whatever your business here, stranger, I know you must be eager to take it up with our Lord. The Basanet does not take visitors quickly, though," Kailen smiles apologetically. "In the meantime, let me regale you with a tour of our humble home and a story or two. Does that sound like a reasonable way to pass the time?"

The persistent man does not wait for you to reply. "Lovely! I think you will find there is much more to Rookhaven than meets the eye, my friend." As you walk past the empty town square, Kailen glances around and sighs. "Which, I suppose, would not take very much. Would it?"

From the square, you walk past a row of wide buildings in sorry shape. Their wide doors suggest that they are warehouses but each is tightly shut. You cannot help but notice that while

they all show their considerable age, each building has new iron locks and barred windows. Men stand in the alleys between the warehouses, both watchful and well-armed.

"My good lad," your guide says as he hastens onto a wide street with houses on all sides. "Listen closely and I will tell you the tale of a man, a magpie, and a monster."

## PERSONALITIES OF ROOKHAVEN

An adventure can only be as immersive as the setting presented to Players by you as Narrator. A major component of that presentation comes in your Supporting Cast of characters, giving life to the scenario on both sides of the table.

These following are people in and around Rookhaven – notable people that can appear in scenarios and supporting fiction as you see fit. There are nowhere near enough people provided here to populate a province, even one as small as Rookhaven. Your own work will flesh out that frame and make Rookhaven a living, breathing place in your Player's imaginations.





### KAILEN – SELF-APPOINTED VILLAGE GREETER

*"Good eve there, stranger. If you are here for the market, you are a couple of hours late. If you have come to make a profit, you are here a couple of centuries late."*



**What Players First See:** Kailen is a bright, attentive Corrie with green eyes and Rookhaven's characteristic jet black hair. He's handsome in a worn way and much friendlier than just anyone else in the province. He can come off as annoying, depending on how much travelers value their solitude and privacy.

**What Players Can't See:** Kailen rode out with a merchant group a couple of years ago and when he came back, he was a much different person. The villagers attribute it to Kailen having seen more of Sommerlund than most of them ever will. The truth is that the Kailen never returned at all. The man currently calling himself Kailen is actually an agent of the Crown named Audin. He is here to discover what trouble lies at the heart of Rookhaven and, while he has learned a lot, the true evil has eluded him.

**How to Use This Character:** Once the Players have proven themselves, Kailen reveals his true identity. He can explain the real Kailen's fate (the poor villager was run through by bandits preying upon traffic around Thornfalcon) and he will gladly serve as a source of information and a confidant. Once he reveals his true identity, Kailen may even serve as an ally in combat, should the Players call upon his services.

### LANDAR – PROPRIETOR OF THE MURDER OF CROWS

*"Don't just stand there like sacks of wheat. If yer waitin' for someone ta seat ya, yer in fer a long night o' standin'. I'll give ya a roof, a bed, and some food for coin but yer too far North ta get coddled."*

**What Players See:** Landar is a stern old cuss of a man with more grey than black in his hair and dark eyes that get a little

cloudier every year. The Murder of Crows has been in his family for generations; when he dies, his daughter Hensa will inherit it. Asking Landar about his deceased sons is a quick way to get a bowl of hot soup in the face and a quick boot into the street.

**What Players Can't See:** Landar is pretty much what he seems on the surface, though he has a tragic history that he is not likely to talk about until he has gotten to know the Heroes and is at least two cups into a bottle of Rabensdreka, a black brew only a fool would willingly drink. The Quote to remember with Rabensdreka is this: *"People drink to forget their woes. People drink Rabensdreka to have something worse to regret."*



**How to Use this Character:** Landar's family history is ripe for the actions of heroes. His parents were both killed by tainted grain caused by Barrow Frost, a plant disease due to come again to Rookhaven very soon. His eldest son was taken into the Basanet's service and never seen again. His middle son was found dead in the West Field from a riding accident. And his youngest has left Rookhaven and thrown in with a band of bandits called the Dun Masks.

### PORRA - BARMAID AT THE MURDER OF CROWS

*"I am right sorry, you all. Landar's in a snit tonight; pay him no mind. That said, you all going to order or just take up table space?"*

**What Players See:** Porra is a young woman about 16 years of age. She has thick black hair worn in a messy bun at the nape of her neck. There is a hard set to her mouth and, while she is not unkind, she is not especially friendly. She will never flirt, though anyone who makes an effort to be nice to her will eventually wear through her hard exterior.



**What Players Can't See:** Porra has lived in Rookhaven all of her life. She was orphaned at an early age and has lived under Landar's protection since. She has not been officially adopted and she does honestly does not mind that. No family means no family making rules for her. Porra works for Landar more out of gratitude than because she has nowhere else to go. Though she may not seem it, she is deeply lonely and if anyone takes the time to befriend her, they will have an ally for life.



**How to Use this Character:** Porra provides a good source of gossip once the Players have gained her trust. Even before this, her acerbic wit could come in handy motivating Heroes. An example of this might be her saying, *"I hear the Beskin's plow horse is laid up with a lame leg. Shame there aren't people around who could help them out."*

### HENSA – LAST CHILD OF THE INN

*"Is it true that Kai Lords have a place to live far from here where the sun shines all the time? That seems funny to me. If it's always sunny, how do you know when it's time to sleep?"*

**What Players See:** Hensa is the young daughter of Landar, the proprietor of 'The Murder of Crows'. She is thin and pale, with unruly dark hair and dark eyes that reveal intelligence and suspicion in equal measure. She has boundless energy but always seems to be calm and still when anyone is looking at her. Observant folks might notice she always has a knife hidden somewhere on her person.

**What Players Can't See:** Hensa has lived in Rookhaven all of her life. She has lost almost her entire family; Landar is all she has left. She has seen enough of the world at her father's bar to not be taken in easily and she is sometimes cynical about people's motives. Hensa misses her lost brothers deeply, occasionally fantasizing that they are not really dead but have instead ridden away to be some

nicer place. She has almost convinced herself that someday they will come back to spirit her away as well.



**How to Use this Character:** Hensa is a strong-willed young girl who has not yet had all of her dreams crushed by the grey reality of Rookhaven. She could easily serve as both motivation for the Heroes as an example of who they are fighting for and a reminder of the cost of failure.

### JASYN MALDRUN – BRAVE TO A FAULT

*"Sure, we can do that for you. Our work may not be fancy, but we can mend a belt, stitch a saddle, or garb about anything in good, strong hide. Just show me what you need."*



**What Players See:** Jasyn is barely a teenager but he stands almost as tall as a man. He is strong and hard-working but he is very much a shy boy, especially around the lasses of Rookhaven. He might be good looking but long hair constantly hangs over his face. Jasyn's





hands and clothes are usually covered in dirt or stained with dye. He runs the family tannery, aided by his eighteen year old sister Shal, all under the watchful eye of his mother Lyndrus.

**What Players Can't See:** Jasyn's father, Venn, joined the Dun Mask bandits six months ago, hoping to earn enough so that the family could relocate elsewhere. He returns in secret when he can to provide financial support to his family. The family maintain the pretense that he is still around though some locals are becoming increasingly suspicious – there are only so many times a man can be out hunting or visiting Thornfalcon market. Jasyn does the best he can to make excuses for his father's absences.

**How to Use this Character:** Unfortunately for poor Jasyn, he is not fated to see the end of the campaign. Jasyn is cut down by Sir Persicar at the end of the Campaign's second act. Until then, the closer he gets to the Heroes and the more endearing he seems, the more poignant his loss will feel.

### ISHORA BRACKWEN – FARMHAND AND ADOPTED DAUGHTER

*"I do not mind talking, but getting between me and my chores will get you a belly full of sickle. There's half a field of silvergrass to pull in before nightfall, so say your piece and say it quick."*



**What Players See:** Sommerlund is famous for blonde beauties as fair of face as they are full of grace. Ishora is nothing like them. She has a rough beauty to go with her calloused hands, scarred arms, and strong back. When fever took her parents and nearly killed her as well, the Brackwens took her in and raised Ishora as their own. She works as hard as any two farmhands, partly out of gratitude to her adoptive parents and partly as a constant but friendly rivalry with Thon Brackwen, her half-brother.

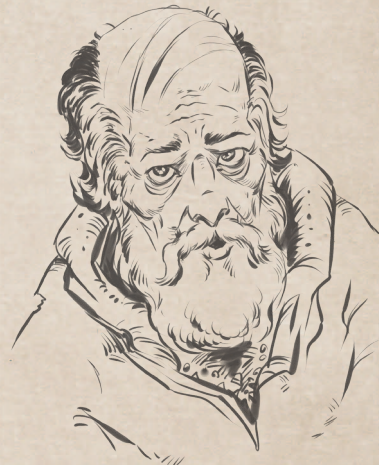
**What Players Can't See:** Ishora survived her brush with Greyshivers, the disease that haunts this province every fifty to sixty years,

because of a special mystical gift: she has the potential to be a Kai Lord but has never had the chance to develop her abilities. Sixth Sense manifests for her sometimes in dreams and farm animals are especially cooperative with her. Beyond that, she shows no outward signs of her Kai legacy.

**How to Use this Character:** Aside from her potential, which other Kai Lords are likely to notice, Ishora is one of the rarevillagers that will actually talk to the Heroes. She can mention problems around the province and serves as an alternate to Kailan as a way to get Heroes invested in Rookhaven's troubles. Her premonitions can be very useful in this way, as she may seek out the Heroes if she has a dream about them or if something threatens her family.

### ELDER REBALLEN – FAITH HEALER AND SAGE COUNCIL

*"Ah, I was wondering when you might come see me. Kailen found you quick enough, but I heard whispers of your approach long before he rode out to greet you."*



**What Players See:** Reballen is a balding, elderly man with a friendly smile and a limping gait. A resident of Rookhaven since the Church of Ishir sent him here to replace Rookhaven's previous priest, Reballen has spent the last forty years serving as this generation's minister in a link of faith and service that has not been broken for more than four devoted centuries. Reballen is a priest, a healer, a confessor, and a counselor of sorts, dedicated to the physical and mental well-being of the people of this province. Though not a native, he is treated as one and the Corries of Rookhaven consider him part of their families. Their devotion to him is as strong as his seems to be in them.

**What Players Can't See:** Reballen's faith is not what it used to be. He has been tormented in his dreams for so many years that he has begun to listen to the voices of doubt and fear that echo though his every sleeping hour. He is a man of peace and healing, but he has



started to gather rumours for the Basanet, passing secrets told to him in confidence to Sir Persicar. In his mind, Reballen thinks he is acting to keep the people of Rookhaven safer. In truth, he has betrayed them all.

**How to Use this Character:** Reballen is a hidden villain, somewhat unwilling but ultimately flawed. He is afraid his replacement will never come and feels abandoned by his order. Paradoxically, he also feels resentful that his replacement, should he or she come, will be young, faithful, and strong – all the things he has lost to this forgotten place. Reballen is still charismatic enough to be friendly and may serve the Heroes as a healer and mentor, but ultimately their confidence in him will be turned against them by the Basanet and his forces.

### VINAS VENN – MERCHANT, FARMER, AND PROFESSIONAL CURMUDGEON

*"I've got nothing for you. If you're lost, the road out o' town is that a-way."*



**What Players See:** If bitterness had a face, it would be Vinas. Wretched, chronically drunk, and unwilling to do more than he must to survive, Vinas Venn represents the worst aspects of Rookhaven. His belief in the values of Sommerlund is gone, his faith in the Crown and the nobility has never existed, and the only reason he even speaks to his neighbors is because no one in Rookhaven can survive alone.

**What Players Can't See:** Vinas represents the people of this province in another way as well. He is bitter because he has never been given a reason to believe anything better about anyone, including himself. Vinas could be convinced of the good in people through examples, but once he believes, he will believe wholeheartedly. This is part of the stubborn nature of people in Rookhaven; they, like Vinas, require proof that anything better than the cold shadows of their lives can really exist.

**How to Use this Character:** Vinas is a litmus test for the Heroes. Their treatment of him is a general indicator of how the rest of Rookhaven's villagers feel about the Heroes themselves. Place Vinas in an unfortunate situation and watch how the Heroes react. If they go out of their way to help him, it will be noticed. If they are rude and ignore his troubles, that will be noticed as well. Use Vinas for who he really is. If Ishora is the tough heart of Rookhaven, Vinas is its badly abused liver.

## LOCATIONS IN ROOKHAVEN

Just as important as notable characters, a great part of any game narrative comes from the setting behind each scene. A battle can be enjoyable to run, but the scene becomes more engaging for Players if it takes place somewhere they know and can envision in their minds while they fight. Well-described locales add depth of experience to the game, with each new place the Heroes encounter becoming somewhere they can explore and get to know.

These locations are, like the characters above, hardly an exhaustive list. As Narrator, feel free to add to these descriptions, change anything to better suit your game, and create new places within the province. These locations are a starting point, a place for you to begin making this campaign setting your own.

### REBALLEN'S HOME

**Appears in:** To Defy The Dark (Scenario 7). May feature earlier.



**Basic Description of Location:** An old but sturdy two story building located almost directly opposite Raven Hall. The ground floor feature a small hallway, with stairs up, Reballen's consulting





room, a small waiting area and a kitchen with wood burning stove and large dining table. Reballen spends most of his free time here.

Upstairs is the sole bedroom, and a small but adequate library where he keeps both his medical journals and his personal records of the work he has done in the village.

**Notable Information:** There are two ways in, the front door into the hall and a backdoor into the kitchen. The library has only basic journals but Reballen is loathe to provide anyone access to them, as the books are difficult to replace. There is enough information present in the library to provide a +1 bonus to attempts to diagnose illness or poisons.

The library itself is at the front of the building, providing a good view of the courtyard. This is advantageous in S7 if the Players wish to get an idea of patrol patterns and other activity.

### HARSIN'S FARM (#7 ON THE MAP)

**Appears in:** Shadows Fall (Scenario 1).

**Basic Description of Location:** This abandoned farm stands between Rookhaven and Starkriven Pass. There is a small farmhouse on the right hand side of the path as you approach from the village, a small fenced paddock, and a small barn and silo on the left.

**Notable Information:** The house is a one-room cabin with a single fireplace and a ladder leading to a sleeping loft. It has one door in the front (west) and one in the back (east). There is a shattered window in the west wall beside the door and a second, intact window along the south wall, both dirty and paned with grimy glass. The fireplace is along the north wall with an iron cook pot suspended from a hook, still filled with cold gruel. The south wall has another small window.

On the main floor, there is a single shattered table with two broken benches, a large chest, and several accoutrements of farm life. The sleeping loft has a low, angled roof and two straw mattresses, each covered with dirty quilts and full of fleas and ticks. Another chest rests against the east wall. However, it holds absolutely nothing of value.

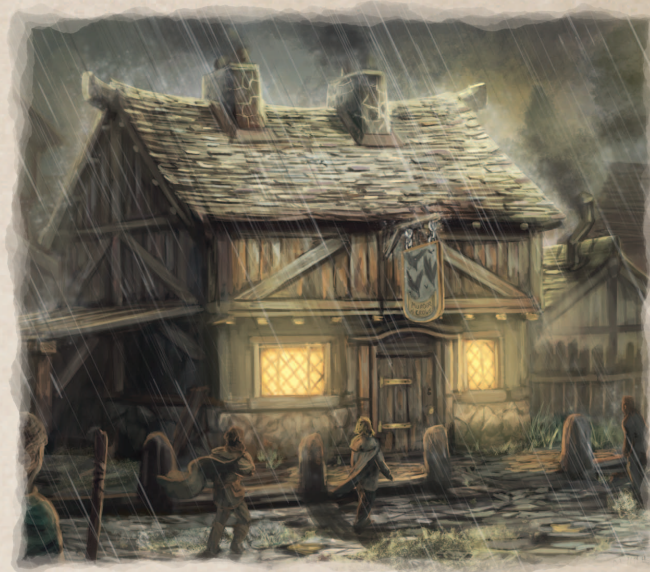
The silo is utterly annihilated, razed to its stone foundation and the skeleton of the building that used to stand here. Some grain still lies on the floor, but it is ruined and was probably of low quality to begin with. A scythe and an axe lie discarded on the ground near the silo's base.

The barn has one large door facing east, with a single small window above it. It has a single stall, now empty save for the bloodstains on the walls. A sorry plow with a rusted blade stands in the tack room. Five hay bales lean against the western wall and straw is

strewn across the floor. Farm implements are racked neatly on pegs on the southern wall, with two open pegs, presumably for the discarded scythe and axe.

### 'THE MURDER OF CROWS' (#9 ON THE MAP)

**Appears in:** Shadows Fall (Scenario 1) and likely several others.



**Basic Description of Location:** From the outside, The Murder of Crows looks like a large house, its weather-beaten siding turned grey by the wind and the rain. Only the sign at the door, swinging on two iron chains, betrays that this is a business and not someone's home. Two diamond-paned windows flank the front door, the heavily-leaded glass just clear enough for light to stream through to the street outside.

There is a bar counter at the right hand side of the main room, graced by six stools and a quartet of trestle tables on the worn wooden floor. Behind the bar is a set of three shelves and a large slate menu board, upon which Landar writes the day's offerings (and crosses them off, too, as they run out).

A trio of rocking chairs face the fieldstone hearth, and a few straight-backed chairs stand against the far wall. There are no windows apart from the two beside the door. A staircase rises to the second floor, rising from the back right hand corner of the room.

The kitchen is clean and spacious, with a work table, an open hearth, a barrel of potable water, and a pantry with a closed door. The pantry is as full as any you'll find in Rookhaven, but still sparse by other standards. Near the hearth, on the opposite side from the water barrel, there is a straw pallet where the barmaid, Porra, sleeps. A set of steps next to the pantry leads down to the wine cellar,





beginning, while a door to the left of the sleeping pallet leads to the proprietor's living space, where Landar and Hensa live.

A back door leads to the meagre herb garden outside on the left, and on the right is a brew house where Landar creates the potables for the bar.

Upstairs, a central corridor links five rooms, all with trusty iron locks on the doors. Each room has a narrow rope bed with a reasonably full straw mattress. There are two hooks attached to the backs of each door, and a chamber pot in the corner. Any heat would come from the bedwarmers, long-handled brass pans in which ashes from the hearth are placed beneath the sheets at night. The bedding is simple but clean, which is true of the entire place.

**Notable Information:** 'The Murder of Crows' has been in Landar's family's possession for generations and he is fiercely proud and protective of his establishment. He takes an exceedingly dim view of any nonsense that might get his chairs or tables broken, and he doesn't suffer fools at all.

He is an honest man making an honest living, but there are no frills in the inn's food, its lodgings, or in the manners of its keepers. This may change somewhat as the Players prove themselves to the owner and the rest of the Corries, but it is not in Landar's way to be "warm and fuzzy", even with those he considers friends.

On occasion, it is rumored that 'The Murder of Crows' hosts games of chance in the cellar. For the Heroes to even get an invitation will require a friendly relationship with the townsfolk. Anything less and no one will speak of the games at all, much less allow the heroes to jump in.

## MALDRUN TANNERY

**Appears in:** Lengthening Shadows (Scenario 2)

**Basic Description of Location:** The tannery is located next to Brackwen farm and is a large barn-like structure, the rafters and racks festooned with animal hides in various stages of preparation. Shelves cover the walls, holding all manner of tools, bottles of dye and other necessary supplies. There is also a small forge for non-tannery work. At the rear of the tannery is a small paddock surrounded by pine trees, within which the Maldruns keep a few farmyard animals.

**Notable Information:** The Maldruns, like many Corries, have had to turn their hand to more than one trade just to survive. The tannery business itself is run by Jasyn Maldrun, aided by his sister Shal and watched by his mother Lyndrus. Venn Maldrun, Lyndrus' husband and owner has left - he joined the Dun Mask bandits half a year ago. Lyndrus is reluctant to help non-residents and will charge twice as much for services to strangers as she does to locals.

## DIFFERENT TYPES OF LOCATIONS

Not all locations are buildings. Some are obstacles and barriers, put in place as a challenge for the Players to overcome. The locale below is a prime example of this sort of location.

### RAVEN HALL'S COURTYARD WALL

**Appears in:** To Defy The Dark (Scenario 7)

**Basic Description of Location:** A thick, two metre high stone wall surrounds the courtyard on three sides (the north side is up against the mountain). There is only one entrance: a wide double door midway along the southern wall. The door made from thick Sommlending oak, once a fair yellow but now blackened with age and reinforced with bands of studded iron.

The door is always guarded by two Blood Ravens, each in a sentry box on either side of the door. Each has a small bell to summon aid, in addition to their arms and armor. Just inside the door, on the west, a guard house holds six additional Ravens. In the event of trouble one of the Ravens will run to the barracks for reinforcements while the others will deal with the problem as they see fit.

The wall itself is well made, constructed out of large blocks of grey stone. Constructed with the help of Bor Dwarves, it has weathered the years well and is still a viable defensive structure. Climbing its smooth surface without the benefit of a rope would be TV 9.

**Notable Information:** Players who spend some time observing the wall in Scenario 7 may spot two possible alternate routes to bypass it. On the east side, the wall has partially collapsed where it meets the cliff face; it was hit by falling debris from the ruined watchtower decades ago and no one has bothered to repair it. The gap is partially shadowed and requires a Perception Roll of TV 7 to spot from a distance.

If the Players wish to scout closer (requiring Stealth TV 6, Camouflage automatic success) they'll find it automatically. A close reconnaissance also reveals that plenty of scattered rubble around the gap, making it noisy to move over. A Stealth Roll TV 8 is needed to cross the gap while not making noise, while Kai Lords with the Discipline of Hunting succeed automatically. If the Players have studied the patrol routes they can time their approach to when the guards are at their furthest point, reducing the Stealth Roll TV to 5.

Thanks to the often harsh weather in Rookhaven, the stonework on a portion of the western wall is beginning to crumble and may be possible to climb. Spotting this from any distance is near impossible, Perception TV 10, so players would have to scout closer to find it.

Unfortunately, scaling this section requires the Players to pass quite close to a nearby farmhouse. While the inhabitants are not particularly observant, their large and noisy dog is likely to smell





them and start barking. Stealth Rolls are set at TV 9, and Camouflage at TV 7. If a player has Animal Kinship and gets close to the dog, they can ask it to be quiet. This allows the Players to approach at Stealth TV6, with Camouflage as an automatic success. When they actually carry out their raid on the Hall, it will be necessary to quiet the dog again. One player is required to perform the task, allowing the rest of the group to pass safely.

Climbing the wall at this point is TV 6. Clever Players may send their best climber up first to lower a rope: all who follow succeed automatically. There is a risk that they may be seen in silhouette at the top of the wall. If they have not managed to deliberately avoid the patrols, perhaps by learning the patrol routes, a patrol will be nearby on a Random Number Roll of 0-4. Whoever reaches the top of the wall will be seen unless they succeed a Stealth Roll at TV 6, Camouflage automatic success. Once the patrol has moved away, the Players may proceed uninhibited.

The ground along the inner wall is soft; Heroes should be able to drop safely from the wall with no significant sound.

## THE WHISPERING WELL

This is a background location, meant to add flavor and descriptive appeal.



**Basic Description of Location:** The Whispering Well is Rookhaven Village's main source of water and provides a common gathering place in the center of the settlement. Unremarkable physically, it is a stone well built in the common fashion, using granite and field stones with a slanted wooden roof on thick Sommlending Oak posts. The well is centuries old and, aside from numerous replacement ropes, Corries take pride in boasting that the well has weathered its years with no need of major repairs or re-digging.

**Notable Information:** The Whispering Well gets its name from the odd quality of its echoes. When people speak into the well, their returning voices are strangely hushed and sibilant. As curious as this is, the whispering echoes are not this well's most interesting feature.

During nights of the full moon, a pale glow can be seen in its depths. This radiance has been attributed to many things during the history of the Whispering Well. The most common story is that a young boy once fell into the well and drowned before he could be rescued. The glow, supposedly, is the ghost of that boy, his spirit trapped in the depths. While these stories rarely agree upon just who the boy was or when he died, but the people of Rookhaven still believe the tales.

The truth behind the glow lies in the well's construction. Despite claims of the well never needing any major repair, it has been almost completely rebuilt several times over the centuries. During one of these repairs, a stone from a ruined shrine to Ishir was used to shore up its wall just above the standing water line. This stone is both the source of its eerie full moon glow and the reason why the well's water has always been clean and clear, no matter how dry the season has been or how corrupt the ground has become.

## ROOKHAVEN BACKGROUNDS

Heroes that hail from Rookhaven are not much like folks from other parts of Sommerlund. They tend to be more independent and are often resentful of outsiders because of the hardships in their own lives. At the same time, Corries are usually proud of their survival and can be fiercely loyal once their allegiance is gained.

The following are special Background Traits that both the Narrator and the players can select when creating characters for their campaigns. These traits are subject to all the normal rules for Traits and, like most Backgrounds, should be taken during initial character creation.

### BACKGROUND TRAITS FOR ROOKHAVEN

**Rookborn:** You are a Corrie first and Sommlending second. Honestly, you may not even consider yourself the latter: what has the Crown ever done for you? You draw strength from your friends, your family, and your fellow provincials because, in the end, what else matters?

**Benefit:** Whenever you are within sight of at least one other citizen of Rookhaven and you are both engaged in the same task, your Target Numbers are all one less than normal. In battle, you can repick one Random Number per combat under such conditions.



You must accept the second number even if it is lower than the first.

**Special:** Only those with this Trait benefit from being Rookborn. Even though the trait requires another character from Rookhaven to be present to have any effect, that second character does not gain any benefit unless they also have the Rookborn trait.

**Harrowed:** Like most people in Rookhaven, you have been plagued by nightmares your whole life. However, you have developed a strong resistance against the horrors that visit you at night. You are not easily frightened or shaken, even by creatures of the Darklands.

**Benefit:** Whenever something terrifying would cost you a WILLPOWER point or require you to make a WILLPOWER test to resist losing control, being paralyzed with fright, or fleeing, you automatically resist. You also suffer half ENDURANCE damage from psychic attacks that inflict it.

## THE VILLAINS OF ROOKHAVEN

In amongst the hardships of Rookhaven, from drought to poisoned soil, the real shadow cast across the land comes from the people who plague its citizens day and night. Below are descriptions for the major villains that prey upon the innocent of Rookhaven.

### SIR PERSICAR – RIGHT HAND OF THE BASANET

*"Of course you are here on official business. I assume you would not be wasting my time otherwise. No, the Basanet will not be able to see you today. He is far too busy. Whatever you have for him, give to me."*

**What Players See:** Sir Persicar Kalsken is outwardly everything a Sommlending Knight of the Realm should be. He is strong, handsome, and he wields his blond-haired, blue eyes good looks like a weapon. Unfortunately, he is also arrogant, bold to the point of callous, and unwilling to cooperate with the Heroes. As he is both noble-born and empowered to act as the Basanet's seneschal, the Heroes must find a way to work with him until they can find other options.

**What Players Can't See:** Sir Persicar is one of the worst kinds of villains – someone who knows how evil he is and does not care. He is a willing part of the Basanet's plans and, while he may not know the truth behind his Master's madness, nothing would likely change if Persicar did know. Sir Persicar is a fourth son of a minor branch of the Kalsken family. He serves in Rookhaven because someone must do so. He knows his fate is to hold up this pointless post as a Knight of the Realm and he resents every moment of it. That hate has coloured everything his life and turned him into a petty,

spiteful autocrat with just enough authority to seize command and just enough steel to enforce it.



**How to Use this Character:** Persicar is a villain the Heroes get to hate freely, with no worries about moral ambiguity or circumstances. He is irredeemable, conniving, and willing to commit murder for the fun of it (and has; you did not really think Landar's son died in an accident, did you?). This is the villain the Narrator can use as viciously and as over-the-top as desired. Persicar is a true blackguard and, while he hides it just enough to keep from drawing official attention, the Heroes will likely see right through his visage.

### MARSHAL GUNN – CORRUPTION WITH A BADGE

*"No one wants you here, especially the law. And since I am the law around this province, I suggest you Greencloaks do what you came here for and leave. or just leave now. That would be even better."*

**What Players See:** Marshal Gunn is a middle aged man with close cropped hair, piercing grey eyes and a neat blond beard, though streaks of grey are beginning to show. He is dressed as a typical Blood Raven Marshal and is very meticulous about his appearance. His horse is always well groomed and his armour is always polished to a shine.

**Notable Information:** Though he has already progressed through the ranks of the Blood Ravens, Marshal Gunn will not be content until he is in full command. Ambitious and keen, Gunn is not afraid to get his hands dirty or let others take the blame for his faults. He is all too aware that he is not getting any younger and in the past few years, he has grown frustrated with his lack of progress in the hierarchy. He is now so desperate that he has begun making impulsive and reckless decisions, primarily aimed to supplant Sir Persicar and cover himself in glory. However, these reckless tactical choices are more likely going to result in someone getting hurt.





**How to Use this Character:** Gunn exists as a foil for the powers of Rookhaven to harass and confound the Heroes. He is a tin-plated despot to be sure but he has the protection of being an official part of the province's legal structure. The Heroes cannot move against him unless they have undeniable proof of his wrongdoing, something he is not about to let them have. There is also the option that Gunn could be used by the Players as an "enemy of my enemy" ally, if the Players were able to gain a modicum of his trust.

### BASANET MYRANAR CORVAN – RIGHTFUL LIEGE OF ROOKHAVEN

*"How did you get in here? Get out at once. Leave, I say. These halls are no place for the likes of you!"*



**What Players See:** At first, the Heroes will see nothing of the Basanet. He is always busy, never has time for an audience, is not feeling well, or any of a hundred other excuses. All his official business is conducted through Sir Persicar and his private guard. As Persicar holds the rank of Seneschal, this is all perfectly legal. It should also be perfectly suspicious.

If the Heroes do manage to find a way inside Raven Hall to see Myranar, they find an angry man with furtive eyes, grey-streaked black hair, and a strong body hunched in what looks like chronic pain. He will not cooperate with the heroes in any way, instead shouting them down regardless of what they attempt to say. Insisting will get Heroes expelled from the fortress, possibly physically.

**What Players Can't See:** One of the biggest secrets in the Rookhaven Campaign is the truth behind Myranar's vicious madness. At first, some of the troubles in the province seem to lead directly to the Basanet's doorstep. However, it later becomes obvious that Myranar is actively preying on his own people for reasons unknown. Eventually, the scenarios you write will lead the Heroes into Raven Hall to confront the Basanet and end his reign of terror. That is when the Heroes will learn what is really happening in the catacombs of the ruined keep.

**How to Use this Character:** Until the final stage of the campaign, Myranar is just a plot device.

### SHRYLL – THE DARK DREAMER

*"Can you hear them, the screams? Those are all the ones you couldn't save. The people you failed. How many have you failed, Hero? Can you count them all? Have you even tried?"*



**What the Players See:** Shryll's appearance depends upon when the Heroes confront it and what has occurred up to that point in the campaign. Shryll is a masterful manipulator and a very powerful psychic; it is capable of reading minds, influencing behavior, and dominating the weak willed. Given time and warning, Shryll could appear as a meek servant, a nameless guard, or a terrified prisoner chained in the keep's dungeons and in desperate need of rescuing. Shryll's true appearance is much more terrifying – a Helghast of considerable power. Still bearing some of the injuries sustained at the Battle of Starkriven Pass, it moves with a limp in any form, including its own. It still bears the broken blade of Mancleave,



still magical enough to serve as a lethal weapon in the Helghast Warlord's hands.

**What the Players Can't See:** Shryll is behind everything in Rookhaven, from its ill fortunes in the past to its current woes. It has used its psychic abilities to influence, corrupt, and dominate every ruler of the province since it crawled its way to the catacombs beneath Raven Hall hundreds of years ago. Dormant for a years, it acted in dreams until finally regaining the strength to wake. Shryll is more than a little insane itself, having suffered terribly from its injuries and from centuries of existing only as a dream spirit, haunting the minds of the Rookhaven people. It has been driven mad by the experience, viewing this dark little corner of Sommerlund as its own shadow kingdom. Shryll craves power, loves anguish, and delights in torturing people both in their dreams and in the waking world.

**How to Use this Character:** For all its evil and malice, Shryll is also completely demented. It sees Rookhaven as its rightful domain and the people in it as subjects. While it has no love for the Corries, nor really any concept of compassion, it does understand that its playthings are fragile. It visits torments upon the folk of Rookhaven, but never so much that they are all wiped out. In a sick way, it protects the province in the same way that a Doomwolf abides no other predators but itself. This psychosis can even be a force to work into the backstories of your scenarios. If your plot involves dangerous forces attacking the outskirts of Rookhaven, Shryll might actually prompt the Heroes to go deal with the threat in some veiled way. Ultimately the Heroes must confront and destroy Shryll. Until then, there is no reason not to have fun with the Dark Dreamer.

## ADVERSARIAL GROUPS IN THE PROVINCE

Two main forces clash in Rookhaven, both with one another and with the Heroes of your campaign. While life would be better for the people of the province if both groups were gone, their stalemate keeps a tense sort of peace in the area. This dangerous equity of enmity cannot last, one side will someday gain the upper hand. The people of Rookhaven live in constant fear of that happening. In fact, the Heroes may be directly responsible for this shift in the status quo. Whether this shift is for good or ill depends entirely on the actions of the Heroes themselves.

### BLOOD RAVENS – ENFORCERS OF THE FALLEN KNIGHT

While Rookhaven no longer has the tactical importance it once commanded, there are laws governing how much of a military presence a province of Sommerlund is required to maintain. This military force, under the authority of the Basanet, is known as the Blood Ravens. Sir Persicar keeps the Blood Ravens numbers at maximum levels at all times, all the better to keep the province

under the Basanet's control. While most Blood Ravens are drawn from malcontents and violent townsfolk in Rookhaven, the number of guards at Sir Persicar's disposal is considerably higher than the number of villagers he take taken in from the province. No one knows where he gets his personnel, but the Blood Ravens never seem to lack for members, even when they have seen serious combat and incurred great casualties. The Blood Ravens always seem to replenish themselves quickly and easily.



### Leadership of the Blood Ravens

As neither Sir Persicar nor Basanet Corvan can claim a fount of honour by right of their position, they cannot confer knighthood to anyone, even those under their direct domain. Sir Persicar can confer esquire status, often doing so upon Blood Ravens with leadership potential. These squires are called Marshals, though their legal claim to the title is questionable. In Rookhaven, no one dares do so, as questioning a Blood Ravens about anything often ends in violence. Marshals lead small patrols of Blood Ravens, often numbering four to six. Two or three Marshals may appear on the field at the same time, each with four to six Blood Ravens under their command, if a situation is grave enough for that level of armed response. Any groups of Marshals and Blood Ravens larger than this will have Sir Persicar at the lead.

### Rewards of Service

Blood Ravens receive pay for their work for the Basanet of Rookhaven and are provided with gear, training, lodging and board. Their previous families are given nothing for the Blood Ravens' service, as adoption into the Blood Ravens dissolves all familiar ties. Once a Blood Raven joins the Basanet's service, they are no longer considered a serf and any connections with that life are severed. Rumours suggest this severing is not always figurative, but no proof exists of this.





Blood Ravens live in the military compound of Raven Hall and never travel outside its confines unless their duty requires it. Blood Ravens rarely patrol except around the time of tax collection. During tax collection, they ride the borders of Rookhaven heavily, intercepting anyone foolish enough to flee the province without paying. If they do catch any fleeing Corries during this time, the Blood Raven who apprehends the fugitive may keep half of whatever is found on the fugitive corpses.

### Appearance

Blood Ravens are easily recognizable at a distance. As opposed to the bright armour worn by most Sommerlund infantry forces, Blood Ravens wear darkened steel plate, full visor helms, and dark red tabards bearing a raven crest. The official explanation for the tabard's macabre appearance is that it serves as a living memorial for the soldiers that "shed their blood on Rookhaven soil" during the Battle for Starkriven Pass.

(There is a five rank profession for the Blood Ravens presented later in this sourcebook.)

## THE DUN MASKS – BANDITS OF THE WILD PLAINS

Life is hard for bandits and rogues in Sommerlund. Between Border Rangers patrolling the edges of the nation, Knights of the Realm escorting important caravans, and Kai Lords wandering the countryside to keep the peace, Sommerlund's criminal element has become skilled at hit and run tactics through sheer necessity. They stay mobile, go to ground when they must, and they do not congregate in large groups.



The Dun Masks are a notable exception to the latter rule. Made up of members from other bandit gangs and lone highwaymen unable

to survive on their own, the Dun Masks ranks swell and the group is quickly becoming one of the largest criminal organizations in Sommerlund.

The Dun Masks hold multiple hideouts in the Baronial Confederation of Toran, with most around Thornfalcon, Amber Bay, and Barbeach. These appear like normal homes or businesses in all outside respects. The Dun Masks also operate under a very strict code. The Dun Masks only strike targets approved by their leaders and none are permitted to instigate private 'work' on penalty of death. Enough would-be Dun masks have died this way to make the whole organization aware of this rule's effectiveness and inflexibility.

### Leadership of the Dun Masks

Every cell of the Dun Masks has a Boss. That Boss passes messages through a Runner, a trusted member of the Dun masks tasked with keeping the cells in constant, coded communication. Bosses can suggest jobs but understand that nothing gets done until the 'Brothers' give their approval. Few details are known about the Brothers. Most Dun masks believe there are two of them and that they are twins. Some have heard rumours that there are actually three of them and that one rules the other two as a kind of Overboss. No one knows where the Brothers stay and no one trying to follow a Runner has ever survived the attempt.

### Rewards of Service

The Dun Masks ask for a great deal of loyalty and self-control on their part of its members. In return, the group offers numerous safe houses, material resources such as armour and weapons, and armed backup should a job turn unfortunate. More than one Dun Mask has been broken out of a town jail before he can be tried for his crimes.

Dun Masks also gain the immediate benefit of their crimes. The Brothers do not take any cut of their profits and only collect tribute in the form of goods that most groups would have trouble moving or fencing. This leads some among the Dun Masks to believe the Brothers may be nobles or merchants, as they must have some way to benefit from such troublesome loot.

### Appearance

Dun Masks are often distinguishable by their gear, wearing sturdy leather armour and wielding good steel blades. When on a job, they wear long tan coats of linen and suede over their armour. Their most notable feature is eponymous – their brown masks. These leather wraps cover the entire lower part of their faces and do a fair job of making their wearers unrecognizable.

(Unlike the Blood Ravens, there is no special profession for the Dun Masks. The most enticing element of being a bandit is that it takes no training or special skill, just a willingness to prey upon others.)



## CHAPTER TWO

# BEFORE THE DAWN

'Before the Dawn' is a full campaign, ready for you to run for your Players. It consists of ten individual scenarios, each one complete with descriptive locales, new characters, and dangerous situations. While each scenario tells a complete story unto itself and is suitable for one or more sessions of play, the ten individual scenarios link together to tell a larger, far more involved tale. That tale weaves your Players' heroes into the redemption of Rookhaven and the defeat of its greatest evil: Shryll, the Helghast Warlord that lurks beneath the province and haunts its people's dreams. By the end of the ten scenario campaign, your Players will have certainly earned the appellation 'Hero' and become legends in their own right. However, the epic tales of Rookhaven do not end there. Each scenario also provides 'seeds', elements of additional stories based on the adventure. Each seed can each spawn a game session of its own, expanding the playability of these ten scenarios into many more.

"Adventure, you say?"

*Kailen smiles warmly over his mug of ale. "Well, you all did buy me a drink after only a few hours of my hunting for one. so I suppose I owe you a story or two. But honestly, the glorious tales of heroism and bravery in Rookhaven begin and end with the ruins I showed you this afternoon."*

*He takes a deep drink before continuing. "Starkriven Pass was our best and last stand as proud Corries. We held the pass until evil's own defeat at the Maakengorge shattered the mountainsides and brought the cliff walls tumbling down. That was a bright day, all right, though it was bought with plenty of brave men's blood."*

*"Now?" Kailen waves his mug around as if to circle the whole village. "Now we keep our heads down, living in the shadow of that noble past and this less noble present. The riders in red may keep the quiet around here, but there is hardly peace to be found."*

*Finishing his mug, Kailen leans forward, his voice becoming a conspiratorial whisper. "No, my fine Kai-loving friends. If there's any great story of adventure to be had in these parts," his eyes sparkle in the candlelight. "You will have to make one for yourselves."*

The scenarios given here are grouped into three Acts and an epilogue. These scenarios should be run in the order they are presented, as they build upon each other to progress the story. Pay close attention to the 'Fate of the Ravens' sections after each scenario. That passage tells the story behind the scenes after each adventure, describing the state of Rookhaven's affairs while the Heroes are busy doing battle with the province's greatest evils.

## OVERVIEW OF THE 'BEFORE THE DAWN' CAMPAIGN

### ACT ONE – THE SETTING SUN

The first act is brings the Heroes together in Rookhaven and introduces them to the setting. The first three scenarios flesh out the inhabitants of Rookhaven, provide a chance for the Heroes to meet the powers in charge, and to get the Heroes acquainted with the darkness that lurks within Rookhaven.

#### SCENARIO ONE – SHADOWS FALL

- Heroes meet each other and Kailen
- The Heroes are brought other to solve a terrible mystery on a remote farm.
- Begins with a reason to come to Rookhaven; ends with a reason to stay.

#### SCENARIO TWO – SINS OF THE FATHER

- Heroes meet Ishora and the Brackwens.
- The Heroes participate in a battle at the outskirts of the province.
- Scenario ends with the suggestion that far greater dangers lurk upon Rookhaven's outskirts.

#### SCENARIO THREE – LAST LIGHT

- Heroes first meet Persicar on official business.
- The Heroes must perform a task for Persicar as 'a personal favour to the Basanet'. It should be clear refusal will not be taken well.
- When the task is done, evidence is found that the task may have been a trap, though little proof is to be had.





## ACT TWO – SHADOWS GATHER

The Heroes are firmly entrenched now in Rookhaven, whether by order of their superiors or by their own sense of heroism. If anywhere needs saving, it is this place. Act Two raises the stakes, showing the Heroes hints of the evil that haunts this province.

### SCENARIO FOUR – *THE CURSED EARTH*

- Vinas reveals some of his personal life and true character.
- A crop blight called Barrow Frost threatens what little harvest Rookhaven was set to have.
- Heroes should be able to find a way to not only save the crops but cure Barrow Frost. Observant Heroes will note the shards causing the plague rot have been planted in the ground deliberately. It is their first evidence that Rookhaven's troubles are being purposefully inflicted.

### SCENARIO FIVE – *RESTLESS SOULS*

- The Heroes encounter an angry spirit and the animated bones of ancient soldiers from both Sommerlund and the Darklands.
- The spirit is Fray, Landar's middle son, slain by Sir Persicar and mad with rage.
- The adventure ends with the Heroes becoming aware of the truth of Fray's murder but are unable to prove it. Once again, their hands are legally tied until proof is found.

### SCENARIO SIX – *STROKE OF MIDNIGHT*

- Jasyn contacts the Heroes, explaining that his life is in danger. The Heroes have to chase Jasyn across Rookhaven because the boy is on the run.
- The Heroes catch up to the young man, only to see him cut down by Sir Persicar and a dozen Blood Ravens, providing further proof of Persicar's villainy. Before the Heroes can give chase, Kailan arrives and pulls them aside for a 'chat'.

## ACT THREE – THE LONG NIGHT

With Kailan revealed as an Agent of the Crown, the Heroes piece together the truth behind Rookhaven's darkness. The heroes now have a goal – to infiltrate Raven Hall, confront Sir Persicar, and bring Basanet Myranar Corvan to justice.

### SCENARIO SEVEN – *TO DEFY THE DARK*

- The Heroes begin to plan, gathering intelligence and supplies for assaulting Raven Hall. The focus should be on strategy, spying, and stealth.
- Heroes will benefit if they have been careful to cultivate friends and reputation. The more involved they have been with the people of Rookhaven, the more help they can call upon when the time comes.
- The scenario should end with the Heroes getting much-needed sleep.

### SCENARIO EIGHT – *NIGHT TERRORS*

- Set in a dream world created by Shryll, this scenario takes place entirely as the Heroes sleep.
- Shryll, forewarned by precognition of the impending attack, attempts to murder the Heroes in their sleep.
- The Heroes awaken at the end with the name 'Dark Dreamer' as their nemesis but no way to know the Dark Dreamer is not Basanet Myranar Corvan.

### SCENARIO NINE – *THE TWILIGHT SIEGE*

- This scenario comprises the Heroes' attack on Raven Hall.
- The Heroes confront and defeat Sir Persicar in an epic battle!
- As the Heroes find the Basanet, their moment of victory collapses into confusion when he drops to his knees and begs them to save him from the 'Dark Dreamer' in his head.
- The scenario ends one of two ways:
  - If the Heroes believe Myranar, Shryll unleashes his power, collapses the floor, and drags them all to him in the catacombs. This sets up *Always Darkest*.

OR

- The heroes do not believe the Basanet or do not give him the chance to speak. Shryll lets them take Myranar away for justice, knowing the man is too addled to ever reveal the truth. The "Before the Dawn" campaign ends with the Heroes feeling like they were victorious, though the darkness at the heart of Rookhaven still exists.

## EPILOGUE – ALWAYS DARKEST

### SCENARIO TEN – A CRAWL THROUGH THE CATACOMBS TO FIND AND CONFRONT AN ANCIENT HELGAST.

- The Heroes finally learn the truth behind the misfortunes of Rookhaven, battling undead forces kept by Shryll to defend its lair.
- Shryll uses trickery, traps, and mental assault to try and defeat the Heroes, but they are aided by a divine secret that has been buried under Raven Hall for centuries.
- Should the Heroes prevail, Shryll is defeated and evil's hold on Rookhaven is broken forever.





## ACT ONE: THE SETTING SUN

*Svon Harsin guided the donkey to its stall. The beast brayed plaintively as Svon walked away, leaving the beast without anything to eat for the fifth day in a row. The donkey had worked hard that day, helping plow under the withered stalks of what should have been grain. He wished he could reward it somehow.*

*Svon trudged into the house. His wife, Ulsa, was doling out the evening meal of unappetizing potage. He slumped into a gnarled, creaking chair and looked into his bowl, the overcooked gruel even more unappetizing than usual.*

*She's trying to poison me.*

*The thought might have been his, yet it might not have been. It came without invitation, rising in his mind and triggering the flop-sweat feeling of a half-remembered nightmare. He glared cruelly at Ulsa's back as she ladled out food for the children.*

*"The south field is all but barren. Nothing to harvest," he told her.*

*He watched the tired slope of her shoulders. She barely moved, showing no reaction to their plight. Did she not care?*

*He had seen this exact situation before, in a moment of déjà vu that had haunted him for days. His wife was surely trying to kill him, maybe trying to kill them all. He looked at his middle daughter, Wenn, and watched as she played with her spoon, toying with the food and not eating a bite.*

*They're all plotting against me.*

*Ulsa listlessly tossed the wooden ladle onto the nearby counter and took her seat beside Svon. Her own bowl was only half-filled, and she stirred the contents without eating. Svon narrowed his eyes. She isn't eating because she knows she poisoned it.*

*He pushed his bowl aside and rose abruptly. Ulsa looked up at him, surprised, "What is it?"*

*Svon glared daggers at her and stalked back outside the house without answering her. He paced to the empty silo, stopping at the open door. Even his breath echoed in the empty building; tears of anger rose in his eyes as he stared at the ghost of starvation still to come.*

*He was trapped. His family were parasites, living on the sweat of his brow. He would surely starve this winter as they bled him dry. Too many mouths to feed.*

*Passing into the barn, Sven stood quietly, considering the neatly-racked tools on the wall. This farm was his. He had inherited it from his parents. He was the only one with any right to live here, the only one who really worked this land. He should be the only one to profit from it.*

*Your wife is trying to poison you and your children are leeches. Why should you die for them?*

*Slowly, deliberately, he pulled the wood-axe free from its peg and headed back toward the house. With every step through the dying fields, his blood burned hotter.*

*There might not be grain, but he knew where he could find some meat.*







## SHADOW FALL (SCENARIO ONE)

Shadows Fall is the first scenario of Act I. The Kai Initiates are dispatched to the Northwestern corner of Sommerlund to investigate strange goings-on in the remote town of Rookhaven. The Kai Masters have sent them with two missions in mind: on the surface, they are being sent to test the young people of that distant area for possible admission to the Kai Monastery.

At the same time, they are also being charged with investigating the darkness that has crept over the province. Something suspicious is happening; the Kai Masters want to know what lurks in Rookhaven.

### INTRODUCTION

See the first fiction piece at the introduction of the Rookhaven Writer's Guide.

### SCENE ONE: THE MURDER OF CROWS

This scene will introduce the Players to their two-fold mission and allows them to roleplay, introducing their characters to one another.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud to your players:

*The Murder of Crows is the only inn in Rookhaven, but like the streets, it seems half-deserted. As you cross the threshold from the drizzle outside, the proprietor, Landar, furrows his brow at you and barks, "Come in or don't! Don't just stand there lettin' all the weather in!" You and your companions hasten inside and close the door, your boots leaving wet traces on the shabby floorboards.*

*A young woman with dark eyes and a messy knot of black hair at her neck beckons you to one of the trestle tables near the fireplace. As you sit on the benches, she tells you, "We have stew, but the bread is already gone. For drink we've ale, water, some wine from Toran, and some Rabensdreka. What'll it be?" After taking your orders, she leaves you to your own devices.*

*It seems like ages since your group left the Kai Monastery. Long and uncomfortable trips have that effect on the mind. No matter how hard the travel was, your excitement to be trusted at last with a mission outside the monastery walls kept you pressing onward. It should be an easy job, but Kai Herra Swift Bow made it clear that it was important, too. You still have the official letter in your saddlebags that you were sent to deliver.*

*That is just the first part of your duty, though. The secret, unspoken part that Swift Bow entrusted to you was to investigate the rumors of dark happenings in this remote province. Rookhaven has been*

*the site of great misfortune, and word has reached the Monastery about a creeping unease that seems to be overtaking the land. Your second job, and easily your more important one, is to investigate this darkness and, if possible, end it.*

*Right now, though, your goal is only to fill your growling belly and see what kernels of knowledge Kailen might mention. The serving girl brings your food and drink; you take a thoughtful pull from your mug as you settle in to listen to your guide's tale. A little girl, no more than twelve years old, sits down near Kailen, listening to his prattle.*

The Narrator should now pause and allow the Players to roleplay a bit to get to know one another. They may also desire to speak with Landar, Porra or Hensa.

Now, see the second fiction piece in the Rookhaven Writer's Guide.

### A CRY FOR HELP

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Unfortunately, the tale of the magpie and the monster will have to wait. A scrawny, malnourished donkey hobbles into view; clinging to its back is a child, his head and arms caked with blood. He is barely conscious and, by the time you reach him, he is sliding from the donkey's back into the muck.*

Players with *Animal Kinship* can tell that the donkey is nearly dead from starvation, and Healing will only forestall the inevitable. The poor creature is done for. Healing will stabilize the boy, but will not yet revive him. Luckily, Kailen knows who this child is, and the Players can question him; his answers follow:

**Who is this child?** "He's Tor Harsin. His family has a farm all the way out by Starkriven Pass. They usually bring their crops to that stall right there, but they haven't been here in days. I thought they just didn't have enough extra to try to sell."

**What do you know about the family?** "There's his mum and his pop, and his two sisters. Pop grew up here; the farm was his parents' before it was his."

**How long since the family has been seen?** "About three, four days, maybe?"

**Do you know how to reach the farm?** "Just follow the road west from Unkindness Crossing toward the Pass. You can't miss it. It's the only farm out that way."

Kailen will offer to take the boy to Elder Reballen for medical assistance while the Players head out to the farm to find out what happened to the boy.



## SCENE TWO: A CALL TO ACTION

As the Players ride out toward the farm, have them make two Sixth Sense checks at a TV of 12. Upon a success, the Players notice that they are being followed by a pair of riders on dark horses. If the Players visibly react to sensing their followers, the riders take cover and the Players lose sight of them.

### THE HARSIN FARM

As the Players arrive at the Harsin homestead, and it won't take long to realize that something is amiss.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*You race along the road toward the west, your path clearly marked by the young Tor's blood, still fresh in the mud.. Finally, the farm comes into view. A small farmhouse stands to the right side of the path as you approach, with a small fenced paddock directly ahead, and an equally small barn and silo on the left. The entire place is eerily still, and the only sounds you hear are those made by your own party. Nothing moves.*

Players with *Sixth Sense* will be able to tell that they are being watched with at TV 5 roll. Players with the *Tracking* discipline can see that several people, some in boots and some barefoot, have been running back and forth in the dusty yard.

The blood trail from the road clearly leads to the barn. No roll is required.

### THE BARN

The Players will likely begin their investigation where the blood trail starts. If they choose to investigate the house instead, then turn to the relevant section and use the information found there. Svon will not attack the party until they enter the barn.

*The silo is utterly destroyed, down to the stone foundation and the skeleton of the building that used to stand here. Some grain lies scattered on the floor, but it is ruined and was of low quality to begin with. A scythe and an axe lie discarded on the ground near the silo's base. Beside it is the barn, which has one large door facing east, with a small window above it. It has a single stall, now empty, save for the bloodstains on the walls. A sorry plow with a single blade stands in the tack room, and a worn leather harness lies in a heap beside it. Five hay bales are stacked against the western wall, and straw is strewn across the floor. Farm implements are racked neatly on pegs on the southern wall, with a few notably empty spaces where the tools that should have hung there are missing.*

*As you size up the barn, a bone-chilling scream echoes through the barn, from just outside the door. It sounds more animal than human and, before you can react, a wild-eyed man brandishing an axe bursts in, letting out another horrible shriek. His hair is*

*unkempt and gray, and he is spattered with blood. His mouth is smeared with gore, and his clothes are caked with it. He sees you and swing the axe in a menacing arc, howling all the while. What do you do?*

### Svon Harsin

**Combat Skill:** 10

**Endurance:** 16

Svon is obviously ill, both physically and mentally. His body is weak, but madness has afforded him a dangerous strength.. If the Players disarm him, Svon will continue to attack with his hands and teeth. He will not stop until the Players have reduced his Endurance to 0, at which point he is overcome by his illness, his exertions and his injuries. Even attempting to take Svon alive will be too much for him; his body is already dead; he just does not know it yet.



As the Players defeat Svon, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*The man staggers and shrieks again, but this time there is a death rattle behind it. He falls forward, landing face first in the straw. He is dead before he hits the ground.*





As the Players continue their investigation of the barn, they will find that all of the farm animals (a goat and four chickens) have been messily slaughtered and are lying in heaps behind the barn. With no sight of the remainder of the Harsin family, the Players will eventually enter the Harsin home.

## THE HOUSE

The Players will likely want to continue their investigation of the property with a look into the house. If they come to the house first, return to the section subtitled 'The Barn' after this section.

As the Players enter the Harsin house, read or paraphrase the following:

*The house is basically a one-room cabin with a single fireplace and a ladder leading to a sleeping loft. Obvious exits include one door in the front and one in the back, which hangs open on broken hinges. Several small, grimy windows punctuate the west and south walls; notably, the west window is shattered. The fireplace is along the north wall with an iron cook pot suspended from a hook, filled with a cold mixture of grain and meat that smells like a charnel house. The main floor is scattered with debris, including a single shattered table with two broken benches, a large chest, and other ripped and rent household items. A large pool of blood lies, sticky and drying, in front of the hearth.*

The Players will find nothing on the first level other than the blood on the floor and the broken furniture. A successful *Hunting* or *Healing* check (TV7) will tell the Players that the meat in the stewpot is definitely not animal. If/when the Players go up the ladder, read the following:

*The sleeping loft has a low, angled roof and two straw mattresses, covered with dirty quilts and full of fleas and ticks. Another chest rests against the east wall. There is absolutely nothing of value. There is more pooled blood here, seeping from the worn corners of the chest. It appears that you have found the Harsin family. As the Players have likely deduced, the man they encountered in the barn was, in fact, Svon Harson. Svon has lost his mind and has butchered his family.*

## SCENE THREE: THE ROAD BACK

The Players should be encouraged to lay the family to rest with a proper burial before they head back to town or, perhaps, to bring the remains back for proper services. The Players will likely feel profoundly disturbed by what they have just witnessed, and they will likely be eager to tell Kailen and the other townsfolk what has happened.

As the Players return to the Murder of Crows, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*You ride in silence as you leave the farm, no closer to understanding what has happened there. Perhaps this is what Swift Bow meant when he talked about dark happenings. The thought chills you as you continue down the road toward the town.*

A Player with a *Sixth Sense* roll of TV5 will notice that there is movement in the field to your left. Again, a pair of riders on horseback are watching, having followed the Players from Rookhaven to the farm and observed the entire ordeal at the Harsin farm.

## THOSE WHO WATCH

As the players spot the paired riders, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*You see them. There are two riders, dressed in armor of darkened steel plate and full helms with the visors down over their faces. Their armor is covered in red tabards bearing a raven crest. As soon as they see that they've been spotted, they spur their horses faster, racing northeastward away from you.*

If the Players pursue the riders, go to The Blood Ravens. If the Players continue to Rookhaven, go to Back to Rookhaven.

## SCENE FOUR: THE BLOOD RAVENS

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Riding hard, your pursuit of the figures takes you past Rookhaven on the western side then turns sharply north. A large and dark noble house stands there and, as you approach, you realize that it must be Raven Hall, the home of the Basanet.*

Let the Players discuss what to do next amongst themselves, if they are so inclined. They may well be curious as to why they are being followed by the local authorities. If they continue toward Raven Hall, read the following. If they turn back to town, skip to Back to Rookhaven.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Your horses are tired, but they are better quality than the beasts of Rookhaven. Though it is an effort, you are able to catch up with the riders. One of them sees that you are nearly upon them and he reins his horse to a stop.*

*"Turn back!" he orders, his voice harsh. "You do not belong here!"*

If the Players try to talk to the Blood Ravens, they will be rebuffed and continually told to turn back. They want the Players to return: first to Rookhaven, and then to wherever they came from. Any request to see the Basanet and any mention of the Kai Monastery will be greeted with derision and refusal. They will not actually





trade blows with the Players, but they also will not run away. They will argue with the Players for as long as it takes for them to turn around and go back to the village and will not divulge any useful information.

**Who are you?** “We are the legal authorities of this land, and we do not care for strangers. Who are you?”

**We are Kai Lords.** “The Kai Lords I’ve heard of were never so... dirty.”

**We need to see the Basanet.** “The Basanet is not available. Get off the road and go back where you came from.”

**We have a message from the Kai Monastery.** “I don’t care. You can take it with you when you leave.”

**Something has happened at the farm and the Harsin family is dead.** “We saw what you did. The man was clearly mad. Terrible, yes, but not your concern. Be grateful that we don’t arrest you for his murder.”

**What is happening in Rookhaven?** “There is nothing happening here that needs the monastery’s attention. Besides, the Kai turned their back on this place years ago. You should do the same.”

By this point, the Players should realize that they are getting nowhere. The Blood Ravens leave at the earliest opportunity, leaving the Players to return to Rookhaven.

## SCENE FIVE: BACK TO ROOKHAVEN

The Players are probably quite downcast and frustrated right now, especially if they’ve interacted with the Blood Ravens.

As the Players enter the town limits, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*As you re-enter Rookhaven, you are met at the gates once again by Kailen. His countenance is graver than when you first met and, when you tell him of what befell the Harsin family, he grows graver still.*

*“That’s a horrible thing, to be sure. Another horrible thing to add to the list. The timing of your visit is either the worst thing that could have happened or the best thing ever.”*

If the Players chose not to follow the Blood Ravens, but mention to Kailen that they were followed by dark riders, read the following:

*“Those riders were the Blood Ravens. They’re the law around here, doin’ the Basanet’s bidding and keeping things orderly. They were probably wondering what a bunch of strangers were up to.”*

At this point, if they have not already, the Players may wish to seek out the Blood Ravens. If they do, have them get as far as Raven Hall, where the conversation in Scene Four takes place, starting at the double asterisk. When they return from the encounter with the Blood Ravens, they will again encounter Kailen, waiting for their return.

## SCENE SIX: THE END - OR IS IT?

In this scene, Kailen is not convinced he can completely trust the Players, but he is certain that he wants them to stay. As the Players debrief with him, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Kailen looks down for a moment, as if he is considering his options. Finally he looks back up and says, “I told you once before that there is more to Rookhaven than meets the eye, and that includes our troubles. If you want to leave, I surely wouldn’t blame you. If you want to stay, though, I can find a place for yourselves and your horses.”*

*He looks over his shoulder, his eyes watchful, as if he is worried someone is listening to him. “Truth is,” he says, his voice quieter, “we could certainly use some help.”*

Proceed to Scenario Two, *Lengthening Shadows*.

## PATHS AND POSSIBILITIES – SCENARIO ONE – SHADOWS FALL

### DICE ARE ROLLING

During their first night’s stay at the Murder of Crows, the Kai Lords hear a commotion downstairs. Investigation will lead them to an illicit dice game in the wine cellar, run by Porra, the inn’s maid. The Party can join in, or they can report her to Landar or the Blood Ravens – after all, gambling is illegal...isn’t it?

### LAST REQUEST

While preparing the Harsin family for burial, the Kai Lords find a last will written by Ulsa Harsin. She asks for a little wooden statuette of Ishir to be delivered to Hensa, her maternal aunt, at the Murder of Crows. The statuette has minor magical properties, which have been subverted by the monster beneath Raven Hall. Anyone who holds the statuette becomes subject to hallucinations – the holder is truly moonstruck. If the Players somehow cleanse the statuette of its curse, it may result in a minor blessing from Ishir.)

### UNQUIET GRAVE

The Kai Lords attempt to lay the Harsin family to rest in the family cemetery plot, but the previously-interred Harsins don’t appreciate the interruption. Two undead Harsins rise up to confront out the interlopers.





## FATE OF THE RAVENS

At the beginning of the Before the Dawn campaign, the Blood Ravens should appear as a villainous military force. They keep order but it is the peace of the sword, silence bought with fear. They are also an army divided, as Persicar has – on the Basanet's orders – started hiring in mercenaries to build the Blood Ravens' ranks.

Because of their full face helms, no one in the province has yet realized that foreigners and outsiders have joined the garrison at Raven Hall. One of the reasons why the people of Rookhaven submit to Persicar's tyranny is because they have family and friends among the guard, even if they cannot tell which soldiers are related to them by sight. Few farmers or villagers will attack a Blood Raven for fear of harming blood kin, to say nothing of retribution.

Family means a great deal to the Corries. Specifically building the province's garrison by taking people from every family has kept Rookhaven compliant for generations. If the Corries knew that many Blood Ravens are actually foreigners with no ties to the area, that submission would be sorely tested.

In fact, this is exactly what happens behind the scenes over the course of this campaign. Each Paths and Possibilities will include this 'Fate of the Ravens' section describing the growing unrest in Rookhaven and within the ranks of the Blood Ravens themselves.

## SINS OF THE FATHER (SCENARIO TWO)

*Sighin, Ishora placed the pie in the oven. The pastry was too thin, the meat would be too tough, but she'd done the best she could. Corries were used to making do. As a wise man once said to her, "adaptation is the key to survival."*

*The day had been trying already. Thanks to an unpleasant dream, Ishora had risen before dawn. Deciding to make do, yet again, she simply dressed and started on the day's chores. First was to finish the scarecrow for the garden. It might serve to keep the birds away but it would do nothing to rid her waking mind of the sleep-images.*

*This was why Ishora liked to work. If she stayed busy enough, it kept the nightmares away.*

*While Ishora scraped together some feed for the hens, the young woman contemplated her scarred arms where the Greyshivers had left their mark. Her mind began to wander as she counted each scar in turn. Her skin seemed like one of the high granite tors, worn and weathered. The part of her that*

*was weak had gone. What was left defied the elements with an unconventional kind of beauty. She wondered what else she would have to endure as she traced her scars with a fingertip.*

*They were lighter now, smaller and less deep. Would they one day disappear and leave her skin smooth again? She knew of many in Rookhaven had the same marks she did but none of theirs showed signs of healing.*

*Why were hers? What made her special?*

*'Hey Ishora, feeding the chickens can wait! Come look at this!'* Thon's laughter broke her reverie.

*Through a grimy window, the pair watched several strangers trudging through the cloying mud. The early morning mist and drizzle had lifted somewhat, but the sky above was still dismal and the wind was still cold. Two ravens flew overhead, cawing loudly to each other as the travellers pounded on the closed door to a home.*

*'Good luck to 'em,' Thon smirked. 'No one's gonna open their doors to those sods.'*

*Ishora watched the group carefully, trying to figure out what they wanted. One of their steeds was hobbled slightly, walking as if it had lost a shoe. Any animal walking the rough fields of Rookhaven while unshod would quickly go lame.*

*'They need a farrier,' observed Ishora. As if on cue, a sudden hammering rang forth from a neighbouring building. Their luck's changing; today sounds like a forge day at the tannery. I should tell them.'*

*'Ishora, we can't,' said Thon, his voice lowering. 'They're strangers. They're surely being watched. You don't want to go drawin' attention to the Maldrun's with the Ravens, what with Venn... away and all.' 'Look, they're headed this way now anyway. They need our help. Ishora shoved the rusty pail of feed into Thon's stomach, rocking the lad back. 'Besides, once I introduce myself we won't be strangers.' 'Here, you just worry about the chickens. Leave the Ravens and the rest to me.'*

## ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

In this scenario, the Heroes continue learn about Rookhaven and its residents. Despite the locals being somewhat wary initially, the Kai Lords will slowly begin to break the ice and earn the trust of the townsfolk. From the Corries' point of view, anyone prepared to remain in this harsh environment for more than a brief visit deserves some respect. As the adventure begins, the Players discover a kindred spirit in the form of Ishora Brackwen when in need of





aid and eventually become embroiled in a skirmish between some Blood Ravens and Dun Mask bandits.

- **Scene 1** – Unlucky Horseshoe – After one of their horses throws a shoe, the party must search for a suitable farrier.
- **Scene 2** – Forging Friendships – The heroes meet Ishora, who leads the Players to Jasyn Maldrun, a young lad who can shoe the horse.
- **Scene 3** – Bloodied Ravens – As the work finishes, a patrol of Blood Ravens arrive to question Jasyn about his missing father, whom they think is a member of the Dun Masks.
- **Scene 4** – Chasin' Jasyn – Jasyn steals the Players' horse in a panic, fleeing towards the Dun Mask hideout with both the Blood Ravens and the party in pursuit.
- **Scene 5** – "It Seems Our Bird Has Flown" – The heroes become the unlikely rescuers of the Blood Ravens after the Dun Masks attack.

## RUMOURS

As the party has more success dealing with the locals, they may find the Corries more forthcoming. Throughout this adventure and

the remainder of the campaign, whenever a Hero speaks to any of the townsfolk, the Narrator may decide to share a rumour. The Narrator should choose the most appropriate rumour from the boxed text or pick a Random Number and provide the corresponding information.

## SCENE ONE: UNLUCKY HORSESHOE

It suddenly becomes apparent that one of the Player's horses has lost a shoe during their initial arrival and exploration of the area. It is entirely up to the Narrator which one.

You may pick a Random Number to make a fair choice but ideally it is the mount belonging to the Kai who carries the undelivered letter from the monastery. Alternatively, any Player who normally takes the lead would also make a suitable candidate, as this adventure will not make it easy for them to remain with the party and could allow others a chance to shine.

Read or paraphrase the following to the Player of the affected horse and the rest of the party:

## SHARING RUMOURS

If the speaker believes a rumour to be true, it will appear as if they speak the truth even if the rumour is false. Sixth Sense will only reveal outright lies for what they are. Rumours are usable in any Scenario, and Narrators should feel free to replace with their own.

1. Bandits known as The Dun Masks use the old mines as a hideaway. (False, but speaker believes it to be True.)
2. There are ghosts and zombies in the hills near the old mountain pass. I saw a farmer late at night approached by a ghoul; it gave him something then the damn thing just wandered off! (True, speaker unable to tell which farmer encountered the ghoul or what it gave him, though.)
3. There's a dragon living in the ruins of the old watchtower. (A knowing lie. The speaker is having a joke.)
4. The Basanet is actually dead and Sir Persicar is lying about it. (Lie. The speaker deliberately spreads this in the hope that the Basanet will show himself and give the people some answers.)
5. There are sometimes illegal dice games in the wine cellar at the Murder of Crows. (True, but Landar would kill Porra if he knew she was allowing it!)

6. My mother once put her foot through a hole in the ground, darn near broke her ankle. There's holes everywhere, hidden they are. My great-grandfather once said there are hidden labyrinths of tunnels running beneath Rookhaven. (True.)

7. The red-cloaked Blood Raven Knights are in charge of law and order. They hope to be turned into Vordaks by the Basanet when they have proven their worth! (False but speaker believes it to be True, even though they don't really know what a Vordak actually is with any accuracy.)

8. They say there's a pack of Doomwolves roaming close by. I heard them howl last night; chilled me to the bone it did. (True.)

9. The soil here is poor, the crops don't grow as well as they should, and the animals struggle for decent grazing. It's as if the gods have abandoned us. (True, the soil is poor. The speaker doesn't have much faith in Kai or Ishir either.)

10. Maybe it's the thin mountain air up here, but travellers say they are not alone when sleeping. Not long after they arrive, they say something dark joins them in their dreams. (True, but the air is not to blame.)





*The rigours of the stony trail the day before have taken their toll on your horse and it has lost a shoe. You recall seeing a stable next to the Murder of Crows at Rookhaven. It is far away and presumably you will be able to find a blacksmith or farrier who can re-shoe your limping mount before any permanent damage is done.*

*The morning is cold and grey. The earlier mist and drizzle begin to clear, but a hard rain has begun to fall in earnest by the time you reach the stables, turning the trail into a quagmire. Each home you pass, every door and shutter is closed as you approach and the place seems deserted.*

If the heroes knock or otherwise try to attract attention from the inhabitant of one of the houses, allow a pause and then tell them one of the doors opens a few inches before a voice cries out "We're closed!". The door slams quickly; knocking again elicits no further response.

If the Players ask for suggestions at the Murder of Crows, Landar will tell them to try the stables. If they say the stables are closed, he merely shrugs and suggest they try elsewhere in Rookhaven.

The Players may well have to start knocking on doors to find an alternative solution. Allow them to try a few houses and describe various unhelpful results. The first house may have no answer, despite Sixth Sense revealing there are occupants inside.

The second house opens to a rather large farmer's wife who shrieks at them to "go away!" and throws some rotten vegetables at them for emphasis. The third house holds only a very small dog, who barks incessantly.

Eventually the Players will notice an old woman beckoning them from an alleyway. She has three grandchildren with her, all under ten summers. The children jump in and out of the muddy puddles, play fight with sticks, and run around the legs of the heroes whilst the old crone, Myrl, speaks. She asks them what they are doing and offers to help, for a Gold Crown. If they pay, she will first make them promise not to tell anyone she spoke to them. She then them to Brackwen Farm, telling them to ask for Ishora, "She's a funny girl, but has a way with animals all the same".

Do not feel tied to this path for getting the Kai Lords to Brackwen Farm. If they have plans of their own, let the Players pursue their ideas. Guide them to Brackwen Farm, but to do not force them there; let the story naturally get them where you need them to be.

## SCENE TWO: FORGING FRIENDSHIPS

As the Players arrive at Brackwen Farm, read or paraphrase the following text:

*Before you even knock at the door of Brackwen Farm, it opens and a dark haired young woman comes out to greet you. Her arms and face bear the light pockmark scars of a disease that at one time must have ravaged her terribly.*

*She does not seem to let that bother her now. Instead, she greets you warmly in a much friendlier tone than any other 'Corrie' so far. Her tone feels genuine, her crooked smile a little infectious.*

*'Hello, I'm Ishora, Ishora Brackwen,' she says. 'I saw you comin' up the track and saw that your horse has thrown a shoe. The Maldruns,*







*our neighbours, are tanners but by the sounds of things they've got their forge lit and working."*

*She points to a nearby house with a barn and a long outbuilding behind it. The long shack is belching smoke from a steel chimney and firelight glows from within its open windows..*

*"That's lucky for you," Ishora says cheerfully. "Come on, let's get you off the street before the Ravens see you. Just follow me."*

Ishora does her best to engage the Players as they proceed to the tannery. Specifically, she will ask the Kai if they slept well last night. This is no idle chit chat and she will ask again until they answer; she is trying to determine if they have met the Dark Dreamer – an evil figure that often haunts the dreams of the people of Rookhaven - in their sleep yet. She further tells them that they can come and talk to her if they ever have "unpleasant dreams".

Ishora escorts them to the rear of the barn where there is a paddock with a crude fence separating a spirited steel-grey young stallion from a few mares and the other farm animals the Maldruns own. Ishora will point out the steed, commenting that his name is Bolt due to both his colouring and speed. Around here, only Sir Persicar's personal horse is faster.

Read or paraphrase the following text:

*Ishora leads you to the forge area where a bare-chested young lad is totally engrossed in repairing a bent poker. Despite his young age, his hammer stokes are strong and true. In no time at all, the tool is fixed. While he works, two others watch him: a young girl and an older woman. Both bear a striking familial resemblance to the boy.*

*As he quenches the finished poker in a water barrel, he suddenly becomes aware of Ishora's presence and jumps in surprise, quickly snatching up a dirty tunic to cover his naked torso.*

*'Ish-Ishora,' he stammers embarrassed, 'what are you doing here?'*

The lad is Jasyn Maldrun. He has just finished repairing Vinas' bent poker, which he gives to his sister Shal to return. Jasyn will be keen to help the party, though his mother, Lyndrus, will intervene, demanding the Kai pay six Gold Crowns up front to have the horseshoe replaced.

She addresses the Players, *'Times being what they are, Lords, we just cannot be giving up work for free. I hope you can understand our plight.'*

Ishora will point out that good smithing is rather expensive before turning to leave. While she has chores to attend to, she tells the Kai her door is always open.

This leaves the Players to haggle with Jasyn alone if they wish. They can quite easily convince Lyndrus to charge them locals rates (3 Gold Crowns) with a successful Easy Influence (WP) Test (TV 4). If the haggler has the Striking or Commanding Traits, they will be automatically successful.

Alternatively, anyone with the Crafting Skill may try and shoe the horse themselves. Lyndrus will allow this, provided they pay 1 Gold Crown for the raw materials, again up front. She will tell Jasyn to keep an eye on the Kai to make sure they don't break anything. Have them make a Standard Crafting (WP) Test (TV 5), if they are unsuccessful they will have to pay Jasyn the 6 or 3 Gold Crowns for him to do it for them instead. There is only time for one person to attempt to Crafting Test, as Jasyn also has many chores to finish.

Although initially shy, Jasyn will warm to the Kai and attempt to get to know them. He is quite excited to hear about life outside Rookhaven; if the party are particularly friendly, he might share a Rumour with them. In this case the rumour is not random. Instead, Jasyn tells them Rumour 1, revealing that the Dun Mask hideout is at Gyredown Lake. This information is correct.

### SCENE THREE: BLOODIED RAVENS

After completing the re-shoeing, Jasyn places the saddle back onto the horse. Unless the Players specifically took precautions otherwise, assume the letter remains in the saddlebags. As he prepares to tighten the straps, the group can hear commotion at the front door. Shal rushes in, calling for her mother and the Players hear a powerful man's voice giving orders to search everywhere.

While riding on patrol with a group of Blood Ravens, Marshal Gunn was ambushed by Dun Masks. He correctly suspects Jasyn's father to be part of the bandit group, which is why he has come here. Gunn has split his patrol, sending three injured Ravens back to Raven Hall to treat their wounds while he and the remainder search for Renn.

Read or paraphrase the following text:

*Suddenly the door swings wide and a group of Blood Ravens enter, led by an immaculately dressed looking knight with a streak of blood across his breastplate. They begin to search the barn, knocking aside anything in their way.*

*'Marshal Gunn,' begins Jasyn flustered, 'to what do we owe this hon-'*

*'Where is he?' Interrupts Gunn. 'Where's Renn, your father?'*

*'He's, he's out hunting,' blurts Jasyn, fumbling with the straps of your saddle.*





*'I'll bet he is,' retorts Gunn. 'I've just came back from patrolling the Old Trade Road, where we were ambushed by Dun Mask scum.'*

*Marshal Gunn spits in the dirt.*

*'Three good men wounded,' he continues. 'Thing is, one of the Masks was a giant of a man. Seven feet tall he was. Well, that got me thinking: the only man 'round here that size is Renn Maldrun. Such a pity he isn't here right now. Never does seem to be here very often. Then again I'm in no rush, I'll just wait here until he comes back and see what he has to say.'*

*Marshal Gunn draws up an old chair, shoves the hides stacked upon it onto the floor, and sits down with his arms folded. He glares intently at Jasyn, leaving the boy no doubt that he means to wait as long as it takes.*

Marshal Gunn is not interested at all in the Players at this point. If they interfere, Gunn will tell them to "stay out of official business". If they bring up the letter or their own mission, he will tell them he is busy and to "go pester some other Blood Raven". Jasyn will become more and more agitated as time goes on; he knows all too well that his father Renn will not show up. Eventually the youth will turn to look at the Kai, mouth the word "sorry" before mounting up in the blink of an eye and racing out of the tannery.

## SCENE FOUR: CHASIN' JASYN

As soon as Jasyn takes off on the Kai Lord's stolen horse, Marshall Gunn and the Blood Ravens rush to mount their own horses and give chase. Marshall Gunn is furious, howling for Jasyn's blood as he climbs into the saddle.

*"Scum just like your father, boy! You'll both hang at the Crossing by dawn, I swear it!"*

The Players should have plenty of reasons to also join in the chase. If they seem reluctant to follow, point out that Jasyn has stolen the horse that, as Kai, they have been entrusted to care for while away from the monastery. The Order will view their actions as poor if they do not try to get it back.

Further, unless they have kept it on their person, the horse is still carrying the missive that they were given to deliver. Losing that letter cannot be allowed, as it is the official part of their mission. Failure to deliver it will reflect very poorly once they return home. If they ever want to be trusted with a mission again, they cannot afford to fail this one.

Aside from that, Jasyn has become one of their few friends in Rookhaven; the Heroes will likely be concerned for the lad. He might be a horse thief, but he certainly seems to be in a heap of trouble and needs their help. The Players may also want to improve their relations with the Blood Ravens, the local law enforcement. If they can find a way to resolve this situation amicably, Marshal Gunn may be able to help them deliver their letter.

## KAI WITHOUT A HORSE

The main problem is that one of the Kai no longer has a horse. Fortunately, Ishora returns to help. The other Kai should be encouraged to join the chase straight away, detailed in Riding Through Rookhaven. Ishora can tell the other Kai that Bolt will be able to catch them up if they seem to hesitate.

Read or paraphrase the following text to the Kai without a horse:







*Wasting no time, Ishora leads you to the small paddock where Bolt prances back and forth. He seems agitated by all the comings and goings. The scarred young woman grips Bolt's reins in one hand and holds out the other in a gesture of peace. Ishora speaks to the stallion in a soothing tone. The effect is instantaneous – Bolt slows his pace and trots gracefully towards her, bowing his head obediently as she turns to address you.*

*You have seen this done many times before, but only ever at by Kai Lords with a kinship for animals. It strikes you that the gift of Kai that lies within you, the very core of your disciplines, may also be present in this peasant girl. It is doubtful she even realises her true potential.*

*'Come on!' urges Ishora, 'You go or I'll ride Bolt myself!'*

*As you sling your leg over Bolt's barrel-chest, Ishora gasps and hold her forehead in shock.*

*'I've seen this!' She exclaims, offering no other explanation. After a moment of hesitation, she points past the paddock. 'Quick, ride through the trees at the back. Jasyn's headed along the Old Trade Road to Gyredown Lake. You have to save him!'*

Give the Player the option of Riding through the Trees or Riding through Rookhaven.

## RIDING THROUGH THE TREES

Only the Player riding Bolt has the option to take a shortcut through the trees at the back of the tannery paddock. These pines grow quite close together, so describe the branches like grasping hands, clawing and tearing at the Kai's cloak and trying to prevent them from joining their friends.

If the Kai has the Discipline of Tracking, they are able to find a clear enough path to make it through the copse with minimal delay, rejoining the rest of the Kai on the Old Trade Road.

If they do not have Tracking, have them make a Difficult Escape (CS) Enhanced Test based on Animal Kinship (TV 7). If they succeed, they make it to the Old Trade Road. If they fail, they take 5 ENDURANCE POINTS damage and are Unhorsed (as described below). Defence may reduce this damage.

## RIDING THROUGH ROOKHAVEN

The rest of the party will follow the Blood Ravens through the muddy streets of Rookhaven. After riding halfway through town, they reach a serious obstacle. Some peasants are having trouble with a wagon that has skidded sideways and become stuck in the mud. Read or paraphrase the following text:

*Ahead of you, the Blood Ravens charge through the streets, whipping their horses as they do. A low cart carrying timber has*

*become stuck at an awkward angle in the mud and some peasants are trying unsuccessfully to push it out of the way.*

*Marshal Gunn shouts a warning, but doesn't slow his pace and clouts one of the farmers with a bludgeon, knocking the man out of his way. The other Ravens follow their leader, leaving the peasants crowding around the injured man on the ground.*

The street narrows here and the Players only have two options: ride through the crowd of peasants as the Blood Ravens did or jump the wagon. Riding through the peasants will cause no immediate problems, but the Corries will remember their actions and be more reluctant to help the Players in the future.

Conversely, if one of more of the Kai Lords stop to tend to the villager, they will be able to ensure that no permanent harm is done. Healing will help with this, but skilled attention of any sort is enough to make a difference. The villagers will remember this kindness in the future and all the Kai will benefit from the sacrifice of those who stay behind.

If the Players try to jump the wagon, they must make a Tricky Riding (CS) Enhanced Test based on Animal Kinship (TV 6). If the Kai riding Bolt comes this way, the TV becomes Challenging (9) to reflect the lack of saddle and the need to catch up. If they fail, the horse refuses the jump, they are Unhorsed: the rider lands in the mud, losing 1 ENDURANCE point in the process. If they are successful, they proceed to the Old Trade Road.

## UNHORSED

If the result of their test was 0 or 1, the Kai are out of the chase and unable to remount their horse in time. If they failed the test with a higher result, make a Luck Test; if the result is Light, they are able to remount in time to re-join the chase, if Darkness they cannot. Heroes out of the chase are unable to assist in the rest of the Scenario. All is not lost, however, as the peasants with the stuck wagon will ask Kai Lords to help move it out of the mud. The Players can make some friends here if they do so and might even learn a Rumour or two in the process.

## IF ALL THE PLAYERS BECOME UNHORSED AND CANNOT RE-JOIN THE CHASE

In the unlikely event that this happens or if only one or two Kai still remain in the chase, you can decide that there are enough people present now to move the stuck cart quite quickly instead. The grateful Corries will then help the Kai back onto their horses. Unless this was the entire party, you can have them delayed long enough that they miss the first Round of Combat at Gyredown Lake.

## OLD TRADE ROAD

By the time they reach the Old Trade Road, the saddleless Kai riding Bolt will have caught up with their allies, assuming they are





still in the chase. As the group reconvenes, read or paraphrase the following:

*As you gallop along Old Trade Road, you can see the cold waters of Gyredown Lake in the distance. Ahead of you, Jasyn rides as if his life depends on it. He sets a swift but measured pace and you can tell he is a competent rider.*

*The Blood Ravens are coming up fast behind him, their red cloaks streaking out into the wind., their whips cracking sharply against their mounts. Slowly but surely, the Blood Ravens gain on the lad and, as the boy changes course and makes for the lake, it appears that you are being left behind.*

## SCENE FIVE: "IT SEEMS OUR BIRD HAS FLOWN."

The chase ends at Gyredown Lake. Jasyn has ridden to seek his father's help at a nearby Dun Mask hideout. Renn Maldrun is not yet a leader of the Dun Masks, but he is well respected among the bandits and will lead those present in an attack on the Blood Ravens. Seeing so few in the patrol chasing Jasyn, it is too good an opportunity to miss.

*Jasyn heads for the safety of some trees near the shoreline, beyond a patch of marsh. As the Blood Ravens enter the bog behind him, the all-too-familiar sound of bowshot rings through the marsh. A dozen arrows fly through the air, arching down towards the red-cloaked riders.*

*'Ambush!' cries one of the Ravens, but it is the last word he will ever speak. An arrow slams through his throat, up to the feathered nock. The man is dead before he hits the ground. The rider beside him does not receive so much as a scratch, as the arrows meant for him miss by scant inches.*

*Marshal Gunn rears up his horse, shielding himself from the deadly volley. The poor creature cries out in pain as two arrows slam into its chest and a third buries to the fletching in its belly. The dying horse crashes to the ground, trapping its cruel rider's legs beneath it.*

*With a battle-cry, bandits wearing facemasks of brown leather come charging out of the trees to attack. The uninjured Raven dismounts and prepares to face them alone with his mace. One man, almost seven feet tall, leaves the mob to it and instead stoops to collect the dead Raven's spear. Weapon in hand, he looms over Marshall Gunn, its point aimed directly for the Marshall's throat.*

*'Help, for Kai's sake, help me!' Gunn pleads at you, his legs and sword trapped beneath his thrashing mount.*

At this point, the Players might act in any number of ways. Ethically, Marshall Gunn is the legal authority within Rookhaven, despite his many faults. As Kai Lords, their mandate is to uphold the law. Be sure to remind the Players of this as they may be tempted to aid the bandits instead. Further, the Kai Lords still need the cooperation of the Blood Ravens to deliver the letter and help with their investigation.

If the Kai Lords ignore the law and fight on the Dun Masks' side, let them do so. Kai Lords are only human, after all, and their emotions might drive them to attack the cruel Blood Ravens and their trapped leader. It may seem that out here, far away from the village and prying eyes, they will have only their consciences to deal with afterward. But there will be questions to answer if the Marshall disappears in mysterious circumstances so soon after the arrival of the Kai.

Assuming the Kai Lords aid the Blood Ravens, the action continues as follows:

Renn Maldrun will raise his spear, at which point Marshal Gunn faints. With his rival out of action the tanner turns his attention on the Players. If the party do not decide their actions fast enough, have Renn attack one or two of the leading Kai and the Dun Mask bandits attack any remainder. With the bandits attacking, there is no opportunity for the Players to try and rescue the unconscious Gunn from his horse.

It is clear Renn takes no pleasure fighting the Kai. He is a bandit by necessity, stealing to keep his family fed. If he reduces any of the Kai to 0 ENDURANCE, that hero is left unconscious rather than slain.

### RENN MALDRUN

**Combat Skill:** 17

**Endurance:** 28

**Willpower:** 10

**Traits:** Soldier, Veteran

### DUN MASK BANDITS (1 PLUS 1 PER HERO)

**Combat Skill:** 14

**Endurance:** 18.

**Traits:** Soldier, Grouping (Mob)

**Special Rule:** The unharmed Blood Raven Knight will be attacked and slain by the Dun Masks in the first Round of Combat, so any Players fighting them will not take any damage in that Round.

If either Renn or the bandits are reduced to 8 ENDURANCE POINTS or less, the full group will Evade. Any Player chasing after them will be caught in a hail of arrows from additional bandits hidden in the trees, taking 6 ENDURANCE POINTS damage. This should dissuade the Players from following them further, especially



once it becomes clear the path taken by the Dun Masks is trapped to cover their escape.

Renn Maldrun should survive this encounter. If 'slain', he is only badly injured and later recovers.

Be aware that if the Players should appear to kill Renn Maldrun, the Narrator will need to come up with a suitable explanation for Jasyn to seek them out in Scenario 6, The Stroke of Midnight. While he is not present in this scene, he will doubtless hear news of who "killed" his father. It is unlikely that he would want to ask for help from his father's killers!

### WHAT IF THE PLAYERS DON'T ATTACK THE DUN MASKS?

Even if they do not attack the Dun Masks, Renn and the Dun Masks will still attack the Kai Lords. They do not know if the party are working with the Blood Ravens or not and will assume they are. The only person who won't be attacked is Jasyn.

The Dun Mask bandits are each equipped with a Short Sword, Bow, Quiver & 3 Arrows, a leather coat and mask. The first body searched will also have a Potion of Laumspur. Any player searching the battlefield can find a random number of Gold Crowns as well.

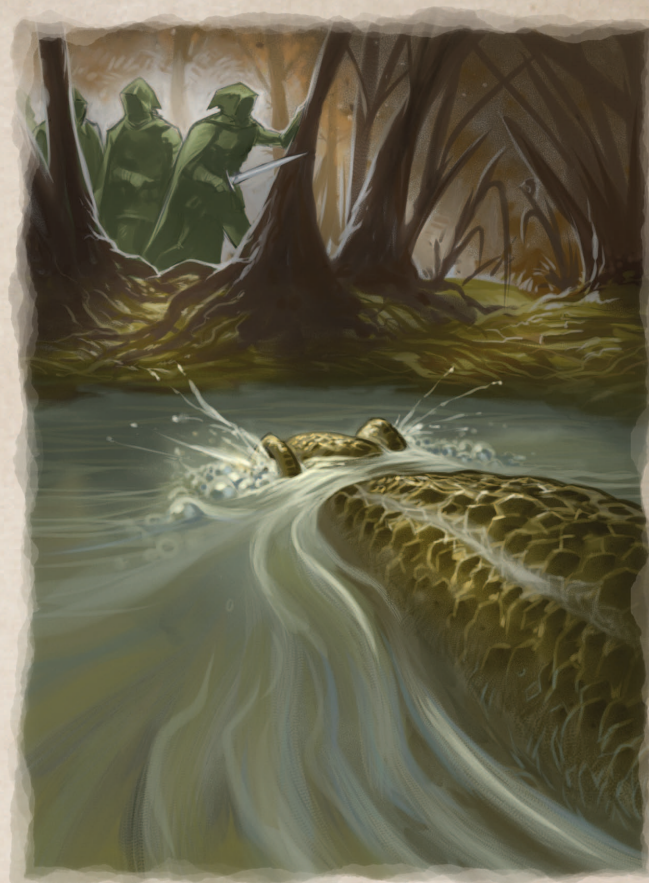
After the fight, Jasyn will reappear and return the stolen horse to the Player he took it from. The letter and any other equipment will still be in the saddlebags. Jasyn is very apologetic and appear to be on the verge of saying more, just as Marshal Gunn begins to regain consciousness. Jasyn runs off into the trees.

### IF THE PLAYERS INSIST ON CHASING THE DUN MASKS

If the party further pursues the Dun Masks, the bandits have a deadly contingency. Through the trees lies a great marsh, which the bandit tracks will appear to lead into. This is a ploy, as the bandits have, in fact, doubled back and scattered. It takes a TV9 Tracking check to determine this ruse.

Make the Players aware that if they wish to continue into the marsh, they will need to leave their horses behind. As the party dismounts, describe the mist returning and have a Player with the Animal Kinship Discipline spot a Red Marshviper slithering away through the reeds. Such a player knows that this creature carries a venom that has no known cure – one bite will kill.

If the Players still insist on following the bandit's trail they will be led towards a deep pool before the tracks disappear. The pool contains an old Storgh, a crocodile-like Agarashi creature with no eyes. It has claimed many lives in the past but the bandits and the other locals know what lurks in this place and give it a wide berth. It will leap out of the pool and snap at the party without warning.



### OLD STORGH

**Combat Skill:** 22

**Endurance:** 32

If the Players should slay the Storgh, they will become heroes in the eyes of the locals, provided they can prove their story. After the fight they should eventually give up searching for the bandits; it is unlikely they will find the camp before darkness falls, mist lies all around, and they will likely have received enough injuries to put them off continuing.

### MARSHAL GUNN

Gunn is the only Blood Raven to survive the Dun Mask attack. After the battle ends, the Players will be able to free him from his trapped horse with little difficulty. When he regains consciousness, he will strenuously deny he fainted, claiming he struck his head on a rock instead. Gunn's legs are badly injured and he will appreciate any healing he is given. The party can use a Potion of Laumspur if they so wish. However, he will only accept the bare minimum of aid before pride gets the better of him. Once Marshall Gunn is back on his feet, he insists on heading back to Raven Hall to give his report about bandits in the area.





Read or paraphrase the following text:

*'It seems our bird has flown,' curses Marshal Gunn referring to Jasyn. 'Good riddance.'*

*He surveys the scene of the ambush, his armoured shoulders heavy at the sight of his dead men. You are unsure whether he is genuinely saddened at the loss or wondering how is going to explain the events to his superiors.*

*'I'll tell Sir Persicar what happened here,' he adds after a weary groan. 'I cannot promise anything but he might be more willing to take a look at this letter you carry after what you have done. First, though,' he asks, his eyes narrowed suspiciously.*

*"Tell me. Just how did you get your horse back?"*

I Regardless of their response, Gunn remain suspicious of the Kai, thinking them to be working with Jasyn and the bandits. He will not be entirely convinced by their story but will begrudgingly accept it. He has no idea where the boy has gone and is in no position to pursue him any further, for the time being at least.

He will not mind them travelling with him back to Rookhaven but he will insist on going to Raven Hall alone. The Kai Lords are told they should wait until the next morning before contacting the Ravens, as this will give Gunn enough time to give his report.

## CONCLUSION

Once clear of the Old Trade Road, Marshal Gunn will take the dead knights and their horses and head back to Raven Hall. He tells the Players he will put in a good word for them with Sir Persicar. While Gunn is telling the truth, he downplays the part the Kai played. By the time his report is finished, he will have left Persicar with the impression that it was Gunn who saved the Kai from the Dun Masks.

Meanwhile, the few Dun Masks at Gyredown Lake relocate their hideout. Until they can find a suitable new location, they stay at various safe houses such as the farms in and around Rookhaven. Jasyn will be considered as a very suitable Runner for the bandits, despite his young age. A patrol of Blood Ravens will be dispatched the next day to Gyredown Lake, but no sign of the Dun Masks will be found other than a few hastily discarded pieces of equipment.

With their own mount returned, the Players will need to return Bolt to the tannery. Sometime after they have done this, Marshal Gunn will take the opportunity to confiscate Bolt. He will make sure he has all the relevant paperwork to do this beforehand. Gunn feels it is the Maldrun's fault he lost his own horse and feels this is adequate compensation. From a practical point of view, the Ravens are able to requisition their mounts from the residents in a similar

way to how they recruit their members. The Maldrun family will clearly not be happy at this turn of events but have little choice but to comply.

As word spreads of their actions, the residents of Rookhaven will become more accommodating to the Players, both by answering questions and offering basic services.

Here ends Sins of the Father. The story continues in Scenario Three – Last Light.

## PATHS AND POSSIBILITIES – SCENARIO TWO – SINS OF THE FATHER

### WILD HORSES

A rare herd of horses has wandered into the region. The Narrator should impress upon the heroes that it will only be a matter of time before some predator will capture and eat them, if they are not captured. If occurring after Scenario 2, the lead stallion would make an ideal replacement for Bolt. Helping the residents of Rookhaven in this way will boost the reputation of the Kai and the locals will be more helpful. Tracking and Animal Kinship Disciplines will be useful to wrangle the animals, while the party may encounter Wolves or Ghouls while tracking the horses.

### THINGS THAT GO BUMP

After Sins of the Father, several Dun Mask bandits pretend to be ghosts to scare away the owner of a remote farmstead, so that they can secure it for their own purposes. The bandits rig up wires and use Casiorn silk sheets, among other ruses, to keep the native Corries from investigating. Before investigating these rumors, the party could acquire Holy Water and other sacred items from Reballen, but only at a hefty donation. Once the bandits find a new safe haven, they move on, unless the party catches them first.

### TREASURE MAP

A bed-ridden widow is tormented by dreams of her late husband, in which he shows her the location of a gold locket she lost decades ago. She cannot show the party the location but can describe the area enough to draw a crude map. The various way-markers on the map are natural dangers to thwart the heroes – potholes, bogs, perhaps even a patch of Gallowbrush—and may even lead the Players into combat with dangerous creatures. In the end, the Heroes find only a deadly trap laid for them by the true master of Rookhaven – one they will need all their strength and cunning to escape.

### FATE OF THE RAVENS

Sins of the Father is the beginning of a turning point for the Blood Ravens and Rookhaven as a whole. After the battle between Renn Maldrun and Marshall Gunn, Dun Mask survivors strip the slain Blood Ravens for their gear. In the process, they discover that one





of the soldiers has the dark skin of a Vassagonian. While Renn has no good way to explain this at first, he vows to keep digging until he learns the truth.

He is unlikely to involve the Heroes, especially if they think they just killed him, but he is not above asking questions through his family members. Something foul is happening in the heart of Rookhaven. Renn Maldrun may be a bandit, but this is still his home.

While this is taking place, several Blood Ravens back at Raven Hall are beginning to chafe at the favours and treatment being given to the foreigners among them. Sir Persicar has made no secret of his appreciation for the 'new' Ravens' willingness to do anything he commands of them. Now, even Marshall Gunn has started taking one or more of the outsiders with him on special missions.

This resentment will continue to grow as time goes on.

## LAST LIGHT (SCENARIO THREE)

*Emerging from the narrow tunnel, the stocky man crawled a short distance in the night air before standing up and brushing clumps of earth from his shoulders, muttering under his breath.*

*"Don't start complaining again, Kulner. You didn't have to come along." The voice of another man echoed from the tunnel entrance as the speaker followed him out into the small copse of trees just outside of the hamlet. The pair waited a moment while the second man lit a lantern and adjusted the shutter, revealing only a thin sliver of light.*

*"Oh, I'm coming Ernan. Don't worry. If we do actually find anything, I want my share." The burly man muttered as they made their way out of the trees to the west, toward the peaks of the Durncraggs. "After all, I'm keeping your little secret for you."*

*"So you keep reminding me, Kulner." Ernan sighed, wishing he had not been so hasty in agreeing to let Kulner come along on his nocturnal visits to the abandoned mines. Kulner had threatened to go both to Raven Hall and the Dun Masks before demanding half of anything they found in the old mine. At the time, Ernan had thought half of something better than nothing.*

*Now he was not so sure.*

*The pair walked in silence, moonlight occasionally breaking through the clouds and bathing the Durncrag foothills in a pallid yellow light. The rocky, thorn covered hills looked*

*true to their name: Broken. Careful to avoid leafy patches of Sleptooth growing all around them, the men moved as quickly as they dared. If rumour was to be believed, the dead stalked the Broken Hills at night. Neither man wanted to test the truth of those rumours.*

*The pair froze in place as a long, baleful howl broke the silence of the hills. They exchanged a worried look before hurrying on toward the first incline of the mountains.*

*Eventually, they came upon the partly concealed entrance to the last mine they had worked. Furtively, they pulled away the broken branches and wooden planking hiding the mouth of the tunnel. Stepping carefully inside the passage, Ernan opened the shutter on his lamp, shedding a cone of light on the path ahead.*

*Walking down the roughly hewn tunnel, they followed the curve of the passage for a dozen or so meters. Both men moved cautiously, careful not to disturb the roosting bats that clung to the uneven ceiling.*

*A few of the creatures flitted about, but most were out feeding in the night sky. The pair went on slowly, easing themselves down the slope. At the bottom, Ernan shook his head, noticing the dark lamps set into the cave wall.*

*"Kulner," said Ernan, turning to the other man. "I thought you lit those lamps last ni?" Suddenly, a dark shake bounded out of the darkness, crashing into Ernan's side and sending him tumbling across the floor!*

*The last thing Kulner heard was a guttural voice shouting "JEG LIZOGAZI!" before he felt a sharp pain across the side of his head. Kulner slumped to the ground; the world turned wet and black and gone.*

## ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The Heroes are approached by Sir Persicar and tasked with finding some missing farmers on behalf of the Basanet. While it is clear that the Heroes are not entirely welcome in the province, they are duty bound as Kai Lords to carry out the request of the provincial ruler. While they complete their task, they once again have to thaw the local's icy attitude to outsiders, though they can make headway with simple acts of kindness.

Things take a surprising turn as the Heroes track down the missing farmers to an abandoned mine near Starkriven Pass, facing an age old enemy of Sommerlund. While their actions earn the gratitude of the isolated hamlet, their triumphant return to Rookhaven is marred by a simple case of mistaken identity. Or is it so simple after all?





- **Scene 1** – An Official Summons: The Heroes meet Sir Persicar for the first time and are given an official task.
- **Scene 2** – Making Tracks: The Heroes head out to the hamlet. The bleak and unhealthy state of the province is once again apparent.
- **Scene 3** – A Stony Reception: Arriving at the hamlet, they question an unfriendly but desperate peasantry.
- **Scene 4** – Picking up the Trail: The Heroes head out in search of the missing men.
- **Scene 5** – Into the Depths: Following the trail to an abandoned mine, the Heroes find the missing men, confronting an age old foe.
- **Scene 6** – An Honest Mistake: Making their way back to Rookhaven, the Heroes are mistakenly ambushed, but on whose orders?

*His words are cordial, though his tone suggests he is less than pleased at being given the task of speaking to you. 'My liege, Sir Persicar, the Basanet's seneschal, requests your assistance on an official matter of high import. He would have you meet with him immediately.'*

*The messenger is young, yet his tone is gruff and, after delivering his request, he turns to leave, waiting impatiently by the door for you to follow.*

Assuming the Heroes follow, the Blood Raven walks briskly through the muddy streets of Rookhaven to the imposing gate of Raven Hall. The Heroes will notice that the villagers give the man a very wide berth and cast suspicious glances in their direction as they follow him.

As the Players approach Raven Hall, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

## SCENE ONE: AN OFFICIAL SUMMONS

Soon after the events of Scenario 2; the Kai are approached by a Blood Raven who either comes to their lodgings or to the Murder of Crows inn if they are staying there.

The Narrator should read or paraphrase the following:

*Over your morning meal, you notice the presence of a man dressed in the uniform of a Blood Raven, one of the Basanet's local militia. His uniform of darkened steel armour and blood red tabard are a contrast to those usually worn by other provincial forces around Sommerlund, as is the fully enclosed helm he wears.*

*He clears his throat before speaking to you, 'Well-met travellers.'*

*"As you near Raven Hall, a mounted knight waits for you outside the gates. By his appearance this must be Sir Persicar, the Basanet's right hand man. The warhorse is clearly the strongest and healthiest animal in the entire province, its jet black coat well-groomed. Astride the mount, upon a well-oiled saddle, is a broad shouldered, blonde man whose ice-blue eyes seem to bore into your soul as he watches you approach.*

*His armour is similar to the messenger that accompanies you, though it is more ornate in decoration. Sheathed at his side is a broadsword, while a large shield is secured to his mount. His hair is secured in a warrior's tail and his beard is short and neat. As you come near, he addresses you, his voice formal and cold:*







*'I am Ser Persicar Kalsken, representative of the ruler of this province, Basanet Myranar Corvan. I assume you have official business here, otherwise you would not waste your time in such a place as this. However, the Basanet would ask of you a personal favour while you are on his lands.' He pauses briefly to cast his eyes over the Kai Lords, a look of barely disguised contempt marring his otherwise handsome face.*

*'The Karlin family has reported a number of their workmen have gone missing from their homestead and are worried someone has made off with them. For the life of me, I cannot imagine why - you'd agree with me if you knew them. Nevertheless, I am duty bound to look into the matter. However, my men are all occupied in patrolling the borders of the province and putting down these Dun Mask bandits that have blighted our lands recently. So, the Basanet and I would request for you to look in on the Karlin family and the others in their hamlet, and see what they are so concerned about. My Marshal here will answer any of your questions.'*

*Without so much as a farewell, Sir Persicar spurs his mount away. The knight quickly disappears into Raven Hall, leaving you standing beside his marshal.*

The Heroes may question the Blood Raven marshal on the task they have been given, though the answers they receive are not particularly informative, nor are they made to feel welcome doing so.

The marshal, Marshal Gunn, may be familiar to the Heroes from a past scenario. He knows very little about what happened, nor has he visited the Karlin hamlet for several years. He was born to the Tomsar family and, as is Blood Raven tradition, has severed all ties with his old family. His parents know he is in service to the Basanet, but beyond that they know nothing of him. The marshal will not speak of his personal life or of his origins.

The questions and answers below are the most common and relevant to the Heroes task, though the Narrator is encouraged to provide appropriate answers to other questions the Heroes may ask.

**When did the men go missing?** *'A few nights ago. One of the villagers came to Rookhaven asking for help yesterday morning.'*

**Who are the missing men? How many people are missing?** *'As far as I know two people are missing, Kulner, a peasant who works for the Karlin family on their farm and Ernan Karlin, a farmer.'*

**Ernan Karlin? Is he the hamlet's leader?** *'Hah! No, he is not. That would be Rogen Karlin and his woman. They are apparently descended from the first family to squat and set up residence there.' (The Marshall's voice will betray some ill-concealed contempt for the Karlin family name.)*

**What do you know of the missing men?** *'Only their names and where they live. They paid their taxes on time so I have had no reason to have anything more to do with them.'*

**Are there any suspects?** *'The Dun Masks, who else? They are responsible for the most of the wrongdoing here..'* (If the Heroes have played through Scenario 2, the Marshall will make some remark about the Dun Masks being more overt and comment on the Heroes' behaviour during that adventure.)

**Why don't the Blood Ravens investigate?** *'We are tasked with patrolling the borders of the province and collecting taxes, not pursuing wayward husbands and farmers that get themselves lost in their own lands.'*

As the Karlin homestead is some distance away, the Heroes may ask the marshal where they can get supplies for their journey. He will mention that a few places in Rookhaven can offer general supplies. He will also mention that the weather is set to take a turn for the worse and will advise the Heroes to obtain some wet weather clothing.

The players may wish to use Sixth Sense to check if the marshal is answering their questions truthfully. He does not lie at any point, but when asked about suspects, his answer is based entirely on supposition. The truth is that there are no suspects. The Blood Ravens and Sir Persicar have no interest in pursuing the matter and could not care less about the missing men.

Once the players indicate they are ready move on to Scene 2.

**(Narrator Note:** The only wet weather clothing available in Rookhaven would come in the form of a brown leather overcoat, available at the tanners for 8 gold crowns each. The Narrator should make a note if the Heroes choose to follow the marshal's advice as it will be relevant in Scenes 3 and 6.)

## SCENE TWO: MAKING TRACKS

The Karlin hamlet is around 10 miles or so from Rookhaven, a walk of around two hours, or around an hour's easy ride. The weather is overcast and the sun is too weak to burn off the low mist that seems to drift slowly across the bleak landscape. A chill north-westerly wind blows from the Cold Coast, driving with it a stinging icy rain later in the afternoon.

The Heroes' route takes them out of Rookhaven, through Unkindness Crossing, then south along a deeply rutted dirt track littered with rocks. As they travel, the Heroes will be able to see the Durncrag in the distance, dark clouds hanging over them as an ominous reminder of what lies just beyond the imposing natural barrier.





As the Heroes travel, they are shadowed by a small group of Blood Ravens sent by Sir Persic to observe them. They will remain out of sight at all times and will stop a mile or so from the hamlet. Only when they head back to Rookhaven will the Blood Ravens make their move.

**Important Note:** The journey to the hamlet is not meant to endanger the Heroes, merely reinforce the isolated nature of the province and impress upon them the bleak nature of the lands. When the Heroes pass through Unkindness Crossing, have the birds make a fuss as they pass through. They caw loudly, screech if approached, and swoop down as if defending their nest. All this demonstrates the fact that nobody can pass through the location without drawing the attention of the birds there - unless they have the appropriate local knowledge or relevant Kai Disciplines and the inclination to use them.



Further, mention the swaying ropes that dangle from the trees at each corner of the crossing. While no one is currently hanging from these old nooses, their purpose should be abundantly clear to the Heroes before they ride away.

As the Heroes travel, mention that even the coarse grasses and heathers that grow here seem to be barely clinging to life and that the wildlife that crosses their path seems particularly lean and half-starved. There is the occasional corpse of spindly looking trees, but like the rest of the vegetation and the farmers here, they struggle to draw nutrients from the soil.

### THE LONE WATCHER

Have anyone in the party with Sixth Sense make a roll after an hour or so, with TN7. Success will give the Hero the feeling they are

being followed though nobody will be seen to be in pursuit, even if the party backtracks or tries to set up an ambush.

As the Heroes pass the halfway mark, a single figure can be seen on the horizon. Due to the position of the sun, no details can be made out other than the fact they are wearing either a long coat or cloak. The figure observes the Heroes for a moment, but if approached they will quickly leave and disappear from view. The watcher is Kailen, shadowing both the Heroes and the Blood Ravens sent to keep tabs on the outsiders. He is skilled enough that neither group will be able to identify him from afar or catch up with him should they pursue. Once spotted, he will return to the village.

### OPTIONAL ENCOUNTERS:

**Dead Cow** – While on the road to the Karlin's hamlet, the sounds of many birds calling can be heard for several minutes before they are able to discern the cause. A cow has died by the side of the road and a flock of scavenging birds are making a meal of its carcass. If the party wants to examine the body, they will have to fight off the carrion crows - no mean feat in itself as the birds are very hungry and will be reluctant to give up their meal. The cow died of starvation and from the effects of the slow poisoning of the land. No injuries can be found and the beast looks malnourished. It is a brutal reminder of how blighted the land has become around Rookhaven.

**Durncrag Wolf Pack** – If the Dead Cow encounter is used, the wolves have been drawn by the smell of the dead animal and see the Heroes as rivals for the carrion. The lack of prey has the wolves desperate for food and more aggressive than normal.. Unless the party immediately vacates the area, the wolves will attack. They stop if the Heroes flee the area, instead devouring the easy meal.

### DURNCRAG WOLVES (NUMBER OF HEROES – 1)

**Combat Skill:** 15

**Endurance:** 16

**Trait:** Grouping (Pack)

**Special Rule:** Durncrag Wolves have good night vision.

## SCENE THREE: A STONY RECEPTION

As the Heroes first view the Karlin hamlet, read or paraphrase the following:

*As you crest a slight rise, you get your first look at the hamlet, though the dilapidated collection of buildings barely qualifies as that. Surrounded by a low wooden wall, itself collapsed in several places, are nine buildings. All but one of them are single story wooden dwellings huddled together like frightened animals in an unforgiving landscape. The ninth, a two story farmhouse, sits in the centre of the hamlet. It has fared no better over the lean years, its windows cracked and walls warped. The Karlin estate has certainly seen better days.*





As the Heroes approach, the Narrator should make it clear that the wooden palisade would make a very poor defensive wall. It seems to be held together by the ivy and bushes that have grown in and around its foundations. The gate lies on the ground by the entrance, as does the once prominently displayed wrought iron sign which is now rusting away in the damp soil. The letters 'Karlin' can barely be made out.



## APPEARANCE AND ATTITUDE: THE FARMERS OF KARLIN

The attitude of the farmers toward the Heroes will be quite cold and suspicious. Their reaction to the Heroes will vary depending on both their appearance and why they say they have come. Their performance towards the people of Rookhaven in earlier scenarios will also make a difference.)

If the Heroes come dressed in the long brown overcoats (as suggested by the Marshall in scene 1) purchased in Rookhaven, any social tests will be made at a TN of 1 higher, due to the similarity in appearance to the Dun Masks.. Similarly, if they tell the villagers they have been sent by Sir Persicar, they will be viewed with great distrust and suffer the same penalty - this penalty will stay in place regardless of any further acts of kindness as the knight's reputation is badly tarnished in this hamlet. If the Heroes are dressed in their own clothing and tell the villagers they are Kai Lords, then they will be viewed with the same suspicion other outsiders are, but can still win over the farmers with acts of kindness and by recovering the missing men. The only person that will initially engage in conversation beyond the search for the missing men is Auld Hek, the oldest resident of the hamlet.

## RECENT EVENTS

Around a month ago, one of the farmers – a Dun Mask sympathiser named Ernan – ventured into the Durncraggs by the old pass, looking to find something of worth in the old abandoned mine network. On his initial foray he found only a few fragments of Nightstone, no larger than grains of wheat. Still he persevered, desperate to find a way to make some money for his family.

Ernan went back a few more times under cover of darkness before being spotted by another sympathizer. This man, Kulner, threatened to tell the Blood Ravens and Dun Masks what he was up to unless he let him come along. Ernan reluctantly agreed and the pair have been returning every few nights to try different mines, looking for anything of value. The two men use the tunnel under the empty house to leave the hamlet unseen, leaving no tracks for the Heroes to find.

Unfortunately, Ernan and Kulner's night time excursions caught the eye of a group of Giaks. The Giaks in question have found their way through the ruins of Starkriven Pass (See that entry for more information), sent by their commanders of Gedtak Sha to scour the Durncraggs for a way through into Sommerlund. The Giaks followed the two men back to their hamlet one night and have been watching their routine for some time. A few nights ago, the Giak leader captured the two men to interrogate them. Unfortunately, neither Ernan nor Kulner speak Giak. Moreover they do not have any information, but the Giak leader does not know this.

The Giak scouts have previously passed close to the hamlet and there is evidence of their passage. Tracks can reveal that on the night the men were taken, they followed at a distance while another group of Giaks waited in the mine to spring the trap.

The majority of the farmers in the hamlet knew nothing of Ernan and Kulner's nocturnal travels, though Auld Hek has an inkling, as the edges of several of the hamlet's communal tools have been worn away more than they would have been in normal usage. In truth they've been used to try and break through rock, rather than digging up fields.

The Heroes will doubtless want to speak to friends and family of the missing men. The following information and rumour can be obtained from questioning, with roleplaying and influence determining how much the Heroes get and how long it takes.

- Until recently Kulner and Ernan rarely spoke, but in the last few weeks they talked often. Ernan's wife will tell the Heroes the discussions always seemed to be tense and Ernan seemed agitated and worried.
- Ernan tried hard to live up to his beloved older brother's reputation, but often fell short. He tried hard, but struggled to provide for his family.





- Kulner's companions will say he recently became more secretive, often disappearing without explanation. He could be a Dun Mask. (The last is False, but the speaker is sure this is a reasonable explanation.)
- The Tomsar family are in service to the Basanet, don't speak to them if you want to avoid trouble. (Mostly False. It is an open secret that one of the Tomsar children went to Raven Hall and is now in service to Sir Persicar, but the family have had no contact from him in years.)
- There must be rats in the empty house, as there have been noises heard coming from inside the place. (True, but the Dun Masks have also been using it as a temporary safe house.)
- The hills around here are haunted and people have been attacked by the walking dead in broad daylight. (True, several months ago one of the Jarson's children made the mistake of venturing close to the hills near the old mountain pass and was chased for miles by a zombie.)
- Wolves took the men. Their howls were heard the night they went missing. (True, Doomwolves came close to the hamlet the night that they disappeared. Note: this rumour won't be mentioned in front of Ernan's family.)
- *This would be an excellent opportunity to provide the Heroes with a Rumour from the list in Scenario Two, Lengthening Shadows.*

Once they have spoken to hamlet residents, the Heroes will no doubt want to try to find any tracks left by the missing men and their abductors. Move on to Scene 4 when they are ready to leave.

## SCENE FOUR: PICKING UP THE TRAIL

Finding the trail will be quite difficult unless the Heroes know how the two men left the hamlet. Unless Auld Hek tells them of the presence of the tunnel or the Heroes search the empty building, they will likely seek physical tracks from the two men leaving the hamlet.

It will take a Tracking (TN 7) or a Perception or Investigate skill check of TN 9 to find tracks of anything besides the farmers and their animals in and around the hamlet. A success picks up the prints of Doomwolves close to the hamlet walls, though they are difficult to distinguish from normal wolves. Doing so requires the same skills as above at a TN of 8. Failure might indicate an incorrect trail or, worse, a trail that leads into grave danger.

If anyone heads further afield (or once the Heroes locate the secret passage and search the woods to the southwest), the difficulty is reduced to TN 6 and the trail can be picked up heading to the mountains to the west. This path will lead the Heroes through the Broken Hills and into the lower reaches of the Durncrag Mountains. (See description of the Broken Hills for details.)



Once they reach the rocky foothills, the trail will become indistinct and confused. The tracks of both the missing men and the Giaks become intermingled here. Have the Heroes make another TN 8 test to follow the trail to the correct mine entrance. Otherwise, they will need to search each of the abandoned mines in order to find the men. If the test is failed, or if the Narrator wants to add some additional details to the Heroes' search, feel free to add one or more of the encounters below:

## DEAD ENDS AND DARK LAIRS

1) The first entrance extends only a few meters into the mountainside, the tunnel having collapsed long ago. Nothing of interest can be found and the mine has been long abandoned.

2) The second mine entrance extends a little further into the mountainside, turning sharply before descending a few meters down an uneven tunnel. Animal remains are scattered on the floor at the end of the tunnel. The packed earth roof of the tunnel is quite high at the end and is now home to a colony of Burrowcrawlers. Anyone nearing their hiding place will be attacked. Unless the Heroes possess Sixth Sense, they will be surprised for the first round of combat.

### BURROWCRAWLER LARVAE (2 PER HERO)

**Combat Skill:** 15

**Endurance:** 6

**Special Rule:** These larvae will not group or evade.

3) The third mine is another dead end, though this time, there is recent activity to investigate. The tunnel drops sharply around 5 meters shortly after the entrance, requiring either the use of a rope, or a CS check with TN6 to avoid falling the full distance. Once down the drop, the Heroes can follow the tunnel the remaining



10 meters before it ends in what appears to be a recent cave-in. Several broken pit props can be seen sticking out of a mound of rocks and earth that block the end of the tunnel.

The only things of interest are a burnt out torch mounted on the wall and a wooden barrel nearby, filled with water. If the Heroes look further into the barrel, they will find it contains a leather coin purse that holds 12 gold crowns as well as half a dozen fist sized lumps of Nightstone.

This mine was discovered by Ernan early in his exploration of the area, but as he began to work the mine he triggered a cave-in and barely escaped with his life. He stored the Nightstone he found along with some of his family's savings here in case it was discovered by the other Dun Masks or the Blood Ravens in the hamlet.

When the Heroes pick up the correct trail(s) and find the mine containing the missing men and their Giak captors, move on to Section 5: Into the Depths.

The Heroes could venture into the mines themselves, or they may think to go back to Rookhaven to ask Sir Persicar for the assistance of his Blood Ravens. Based on their experience in the province so far it is unlikely he or the Basanet will cooperate readily. If it looks like the Heroes are about to turn back, remind them of the harsh conditions and that time is of the essence.

## SCENE FIVE: INTO THE DEPTHS

Finding the most recent tracks, the Heroes can now descend into the abandoned mine. Here they will find both Kulner and Ernan as well as their captors.

During their capture, Ernan suffered a broken leg and Kulner took a nasty gash to the head. The pair are now being interrogated about the province's defences, an interrogation hampered by the fact the Giaks don't speak Sommlending and the two miners have no idea about the troop levels at Raven Hall. It will not be long before the Giak's patience wears out and the two men become a Doomwolf's dinner.

How this encounter plays out depends on how much noise the Heroes make as they work their way through the mine. If they take care and do not trigger any rock falls, they will find the Giaks preoccupied by their captives. Otherwise, the Giak scouts will prepare an ambush for the Heroes.

The tunnels have been roughly hewn in the rock and are quite uneven for the most part. In several areas, the tunnels and chambers are unstable, and either the Heroes or Giaks could cause a cave-in. The following is a description of each area, assuming the Giaks are unaware of the Heroes presence:



**1) Roosting Bats** - A collapsed tunnel serves as the roost of a small colony of Durncrag Bats. A Perception test of TN 7 will spot the bats before they are disturbed. If roused, they will attack for a round before dispersing and fleeing the caverns. Animal Kinship could also help keep them silent and calm.

### DURNCRAG BAT SWARM

**Combat Skill:** 16

**Endurance:** 20

**Trait:** Perfect Night Vision

**2) Slippery Slope** - The tunnel slopes sharply downwards for around 10 meters, with water trickling down the uneven floor and walls. There is evidence of old mine workings along the left-hand wall, with the sharp drop actually being part of a cave-in that occurred many years ago. That cave-in killed the last Corries and Bor dwarves that tried to delve into the abandoned mine.

Passing safely through this tunnel requires a TN 6 COMBAT SKILL test. Failure indicates the Hero falls and slides down the rest of the tunnel, alerting the Giaks in area 6. A result of 0 will cause a major tunnel collapse, with the whole group taking damage equal to a Random Number roll + 2.

**3) Main cavern** - Assuming they have not given away their presence, the Heroes will be able to hear the guttural shouts of Giaks as soon as they enter the main cavern.

This pitch-black cavern has several shallow pits and stalactites that can be used as cover by cautious Heroes, or by waiting Giaks if they have been alerted to their presence. There are also two shallow pools of dark water, one at each end of the cavern. This water is actually infused with oil seeping from fissures in the rock, making





it highly flammable. If set alight, the pool inflicts 5 ENDURANCE each round to anyone caught in them or standing beside them.

This cavern is particularly dangerous to cross without light. However, there are several torches within the chamber, left behind by Kulner and Ernan during their last expedition.

**4) Narrow tunnel** - Connecting the dark, oily pools of water is a small, low tunnel. It requires a TN 7 Perception test to spot and is half full of water. Someone moving slowly and carefully can emerge unnoticed at the other end, potentially surprising the group of Giaks from behind.

**5) Captives of Krong** - The Giak scout leader and his troops have Kulner and Ernan bound hand and foot here and are shouting at them in Giak. Kulner is unconscious and lies off to one side, all but forgotten as the Giaks poke and prod at Ernan's broken leg while barking questions in their hideous tongue.



Ernan pleads with them that he doesn't understand but this does not deter the leader of the Giaks, a brute named Krong. He will keep this up for several rounds then tell one of his scouts to kill Ernan, which they will do without hesitation, unless the Heroes intervene. If they kill Ernan, the Giaks wake Kulner and repeat the interrogation with him.

#### GIAK SCOUT (4)

**Combat Skill:** 12

**Endurance:** 14

**Traits:** Grouping (Mob), Soldier

**Special Rules:** Giaks can see in the dark. They also gain a +2 Bonus to any Resistance Test involving hard physical activity or to resist poison and disease.

#### KRONG, GIAK LEADER

**Combat Skill:** 16

**Endurance:** 18

**Traits:** Grouping (Mob), Soldier

**Special Rules:** Giaks can see in the dark. They also gain a +2 Bonus to any Resistance Test involving hard physical activity or to resist poison and disease. Krong will not Group, preferring to fight alone.

The Giaks are under orders not to return to their masters unless they have valuable information and will not Evade or Surrender. If Krong is slain, he will laugh as he dies, rasping in the Giak tongue:

*'Da dorgarim dez! Rog... Okak... keza... azgad...!'*

Even with their rudimentary knowledge of the Giak tongue, the Kai Lords will know this translates to 'The war parties come! You will all burn!' It is a lie of sorts, as Krong has no idea if an invasion has been sent yet, though the Heroes do not know that.

**6) Let sleeping dogs lie** - Set back from the main cavern is a small area used by the Giaks to rest. Currently, there are two Giaks with their Doomwolf mounts, sleeping. Any noise from areas 1 or 2 will carry to here and wake the resting creatures. Besides some old straw and bones, there is nothing else of interest here.

#### GIAK SCOUT X2

**Combat Skill:** 12

**Endurance:** 14

**Traits:** Grouping (Mob), Invulnerable (normal poison), Soldier

#### DOOMWOLF X 2

**Combat Skill:** 16

**Endurance:** 18

**Traits:** Grouping (Pack), Mount

**7) Deeper underground** - A tunnel leads deeper underground to older mine works. The Heroes could get lost in them for days, but the need to take the injured men for further medical help and notify the Basanet of the Giak presence should prevent them from going off on a dungeon delving expedition.

If they manage to save the men and kill the Giaks, the Heroes will be welcomed back in the hamlet with open arms, earning the eternal gratitude of the Karlin family and the two rescued men themselves. Ernan can even put in a good word with the Dun Masks when he next speaks to his Boss and the Heroes will be treated to as hearty a feast as the farmers can muster.

If the Heroes return only with the bodies of the missing men they will be thanked, but the attitude of the farmers will remain cold and distant for the remainder of their stay in Rookhaven.



When the Heroes are ready to return to Rookhaven, proceed to Scene 6.

## SCENE SIX: CONCLUSION – AN HONEST MISTAKE

On their way back to Rookhaven, the Heroes are ambushed by Blood Ravens. This is an encounter set up by Sir Persicar to try to eliminate the Kai Lords in a completely deniable way. His master, the Basanet, has made it clear that the Kai Lords must leave.

### THE AMBUSH

If the party are dressed in the brown greatcoats available earlier in the scenario, the Blood Ravens are in their regular uniforms. They will attempt to ambush the Heroes, shouting curses at the ‘Dun Mask scum’ as they emerge from cover.

If the Heroes make their identities as Kai Lords known, the Ravens will halt their attack and apologise for the mistaken identity, though they will not offer any aid, saying they have no medical training and do not want to make a bad situation worse. They will leave with little explanation.

If the party are dressed in their normal garb, the Blood Ravens are disguised as Dun Masks, complete with masks and brown overcoats. They will give no warning, using bows to attack from range and in cover. They will try to cause as much damage with their bows before switching to sword and shield and will not yield to the Heroes under any circumstances; Sir Persicar will personally kill them if they return without the bodies of the interfering Kai.

### BLOOD RAVENS (6)

**Combat Skill:** 16

**Endurance:** 18

**Traits:** Grouping (Soldier), Soldier

**Equipment:** Chainmail, sword, shield, bow, 6 arrows

### THE AFTERMATH

If the Heroes survive and examine their attacker’s bodies, they will find good-quality arming clothes beneath the ‘bandit’s’ rough armour – evidence that the men were in disguise. Also, a short distance away, a bundle of Blood Raven uniforms is hidden in the bushes, though finding this requires a TN 9 Perception or Investigate skill check. If confronted with this evidence, Sir Persicar will any knowledge of a trap or conspiracy against the heroes should they confront him. Regardless of the outcome, the surviving Kai Lords will find that their reputation has improved within the Rookhaven citizenry. Whether they fought Dun Masks or Blood Ravens, they have shown a perseverance and strength that Corries respect. This will be remembered and reflected in future interactions.

They have also earned a quick meeting with Kailen, who will take them aside to a booth at the Murder of Crows, buy them all a round of the ‘good’ ale, and say the following in a low, friendly voice:

*“By now, my friends, I am sure it comes as no surprise that there is something truly dark afoot in the land of Ravens, no? I am sure you have questions, more queries than I have answers. You are surely angry as well, or at least you should be. This is not how life should be in Sommerlund, no?”*







*"I could not agree more, but you'll find no legitimate solution to your woes nor ours. There are forces at play here that bow to no crown or code. If you charge off to Raven Hall with your officious letter and your righteous anger, rest assured that even if you are granted audience, many here will suffer for your well-intentioned audacity.*

*"Hear me out. There is a way to complete your goals here **and** save lives. Stay. Bide your time. Keep your eyes open and your weapons sheathed. There will be a time to strike, sure as the sun rising, but now is not that time.*

*"Will you do as I ask? Will you stay and help us? If you do not, I fear all these good folk are lost."*

Kai Lords with Sixth Sense can feel that he is being both honest and sincere. The danger here and it is the sort that cannot be confronted directly, not yet at least. Sixth Sense reveals a dark dread in the air, one that could easily destroy the unwary.

Other skills, like Influence, can be used to ensure Kailan is speaking the truth. His advice really is the best course of action, something you should impress upon the Players before concluding the scenario.

Last Light ends here, as does The Setting Sun, the first arc of the Campaign. Your Player's heroes may now advance to Rank Six, a promotion in prestige and power they have most assuredly earned.

The story continues in Scenario Four – The Cursed Earth!

## ACT TWO: SHADOWS GATHER

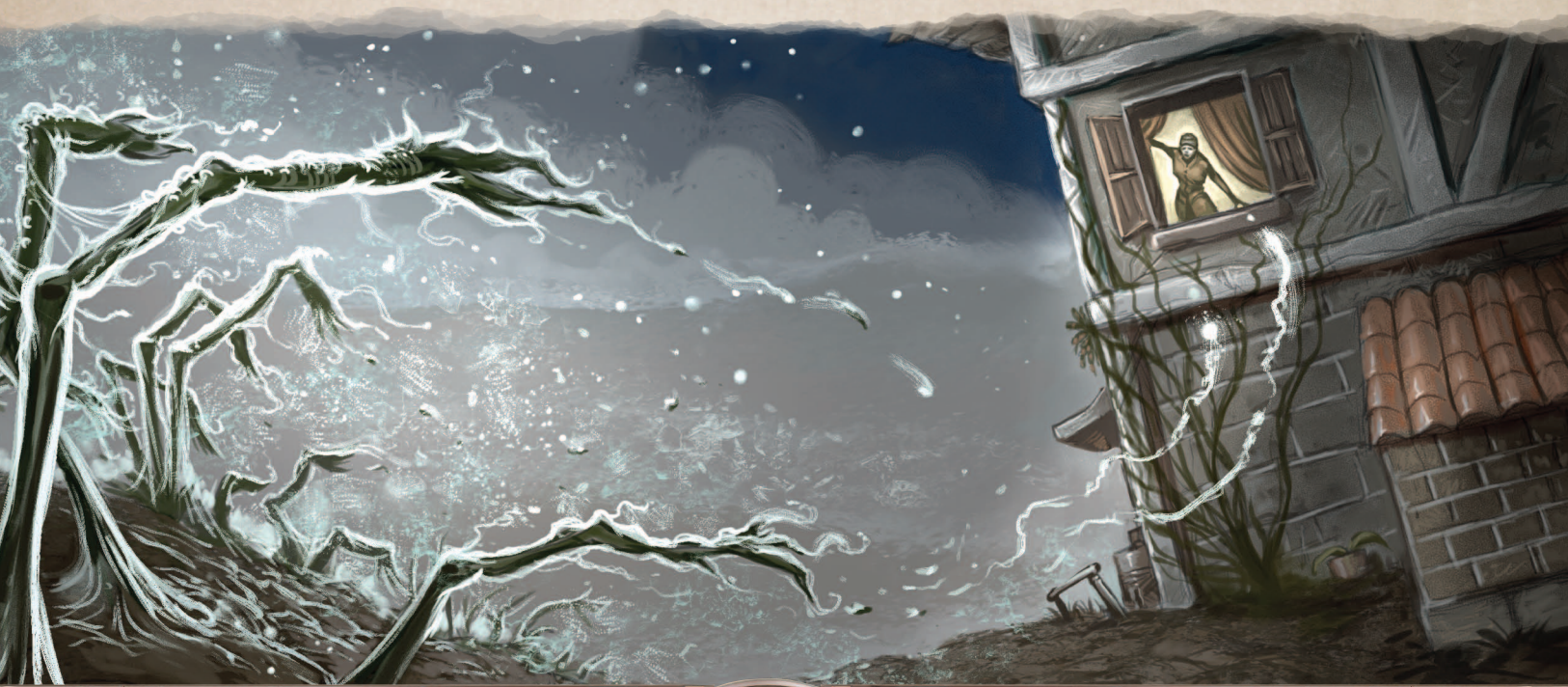
*She wrung her hands in despair as she sat. Tears rolled down her weary face falling to the rough-hewn surface of the wooden table that took up most of her farmhouse kitchen. She stifled another sob as she regarded the small locket whose chain entangled her fingers. Her wedding present.*

*One half of the open locket showed a decent representation of herself, the other of a young looking man, with short, curly fair hair. His eyes seemed to sparkle with humor, even in this miniature charcoal portrait.*

*The artist had done a respectable job of capturing their likenesses, especially considering how tiny the drawings were. She remembered her joy the first time she had seen them. Now, that happiness only deepened her sorrow.*

*Lisa Thorn snapped the locket shut and carefully refastened the chain about her neck. Sadness or not, the necklace and its precious little drawings meant the world to her.*

*It was like this most evenings, especially after sunset. She could practically hear his soft but assured steps, approaching the back door after a hard day's toil in the fields. She could hear his voice, calling her name, telling her that he loved her and asking what was for supper. She could almost feel his arms embrace her. But now, just as always, the illusion would soon vanish like the the dying sunlight.*







*Reality shook Lisa from her reverie. She hurried to the stove and used what little was left in her cupboards to make a meal she knew she would not taste and barely wanted. Several times, she almost stopped cooking, but a quick glance at the baby slumbering nearby pushed her to complete the dinner anyway.*

*By some small miracle, Mika stayed asleep through the whole ordeal. Lisa finished her meal and walked up the narrow stairs, babe in arms, to a room she wished would not be Empty.*

*She entered the bedroom, gazing at her husband's dresser in brief, silent despair. Shaking off the feeling, Lisa laid her child down into the cot beside her bed. She quickly slipped into her night clothes, barely feeling the chill that had crept into the air since sunset.*

*After praying, more a reflex than anything she hoped the unkind gods above might hear, she slid between the bed sheets and prepared to settle down to sleep.*

*Before she could close her eyes, however, Lisa sat bolt upright. No sound awakened her. Rather, it was a smell, one she had been wished would not foul her home again for a long time.*

*She clenched her fists, hoping against hope that the scent was just her imagination. When the stench did not go away, she crossed to her window. If she was right about the smell, she would soon see for herself.*

*Lisa pulled back the drapes and broke into tears again. For the second time this year, her fields outside lay glistening under the starlight of a moonless night. Despite hopes and prayers alike, it was back.*

*The Frost had returned.*

## THE CURSED EARTH (SCENARIO FOUR)

The Cursed Earth is the opening chapter of Act 2. In this chapter, the Kai will discover that the farmers and the lands surrounding Rookhaven have been infected by a blight called Barrow Frost. Barrow Frost renders food inedible, ruins crops, causes severe illness and, in the case of the very young or particularly vulnerable, kills.

In this chapter, the Kai learn about the disease through Vinas, as well as Lisa Thorn, a young widower in whom Vinas has a romantic interest. If they have not already done so, they will also encounter Elder Reballen, who is working on a cure for Barrow Frost. He can at the moment, relieve the symptoms, but not actually cure

the disease. If all goes according to plan, the Kai will be able to achieve this.

### THE BLIGHT, BARROW FROST, AND SIXTH SENSE

Barrow Frost has held sway in Rookhaven for as long as it has because there have been no threats to its method of transmission and no one with the lore needed to cure it completely. Because Barrow Frost is an intentional affliction spread by Nadziranim artefacts, no normal farmer's remedies can purge it from the lands. Only the Kai Lords stand a chance of breaking this cycle.

During this adventure, have every Hero with Sixth Sense feel a slight twinge of warning whenever the Blight or Barrow Frost is mentioned. If they are directly exposed to Barrow Frost, as in Scene 2, they will immediately sense it as an unnatural disease. Any Kai Lord with Sixth Sense who wishes to focus their Discipline on the infection will feel that it is a result of dark magic, rather than natural causes, and it will only worsen if it is not cured.

### SCENE ONE: A MISERABLE MORNING

In this scene the Player Characters discover that Vinas has a romantic interest in young widow Lisa Thorn. Her farm is located outside the town (location 4 on the provincial map) and will provide an avenue for the Players to learn about Barrow Frost.

#### VINAS AND THE WIDOW

After another night's rest, the Heroes wake to a misty morning. The damp conditions do nothing to raise the spirits of Rookhaven's inhabitants. Indeed, as the party head for breakfast this morning, they can hear raised voices coming from the street.

One voice is instantly recognizable, that of Vinas Venn, speaking to a woman. From what little can be overheard, Vinas is trying to actually get the woman to lower her voice before she attracts the village constabulary.

The woman is someone the Kai have seen before but taken very little notice of until now. She is fairly tall, with straight, dark hair that has been put into a ponytail. She holds a sleeping baby bundled in a pale blue blanket. As the Heroes approach, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*"Lisa," Vinas says to her in hushed tones. "This is not the right place to speak about such things! Please, let's talk in the inn."*





*You see Vinas do his best to calm the woman. After a tense moment, she looks at him, gives a cursory nod of the head, and then swiftly enters the inn. Vinas casts a glance towards you as he prepares to follow the woman inside. He nods once, but it is unclear if he is indicating that you should follow or that he is just making sure that you are staying put.*

Other residents look at the Kai, perhaps wondering what they will do now. Others pointedly ignore the scene, lowering their heads and hurrying past, attempting to mind their own business. How much attention is paid to the Kai is defined by how they have dealt with Vinas up to now.

If the Kai Lords have had dealings with Vinas before, some townsfolk will sneer and walk away, ignore them totally, or stop and stare to the point where they will feel that undue attention will be drawn towards them.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*You see Vinas do his best to calm the woman. After a tense moment, she looks at him, gives a cursory nod of the head, and then swiftly enters the inn. Vinas casts a glance towards you as he prepares to follow the woman inside. He nods once, but it is unclear if he is indicating that you should follow or that he is just making sure that you are staying put.*

## INSIDE THE INN

Should the Kai enter the inn, they will see Vinas and the woman sitting in a secluded corner. If they watch from a distance, they will see Vinas attempting to hold the woman's hand consolingly. It would seem that Vinas does have a heart after all!

Eventually though, he will shake his head in exasperation and leave the woman looking somewhat disconsolate and miserable. As he passes by, the party will hear him muttering under his breath though it is impossible to make out what he is saying.

## OUTSIDE

Should the party wait outside the inn, Vinas will eventually emerge back into the street, and attempt to just pass them. If anyone attempts to question him, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Vinas growls at you, "Leave her be! This is none of your business."*

Lisa has not emerged back onto the street, so it will be obvious to the Heroes that she is still within the tavern. From Vinas' behaviour, she is likely upset and may well need help, regardless of what the curmudgeonly merchant said.

## APPROACHING LISA

The Heroes will have to enter the inn if they want to talk to the woman. Lisa is in the aforementioned corner, looking quite distraught and anxious. Other patrons, as is usual with Corries, seem to be doing their best to ignore the woman.

If there is a woman in the party, it may be easiest for that Hero to approach Lisa. She looks anxious, so a heavily armored man may spook her further. Alternatively an unarmed, unarmored man may present less of a threat.



Players can initiate conversation in any way they feel is appropriate. A keen pair of eyes will see that although Lisa has a drink, she has no food on the table. From the look of her pale skin and thin frame, a good square meal would not go amiss.

After some time, she relaxes a little. If they ask her for her name, she will tell the Heroes that her name is Lisa Thorn and that she lives on one of the small farmsteads in the district.

(This farmstead is located at Number 4 on the map of the Province of Rookhaven).

As the Players begin to gain Lisa's trust, read or paraphrase the following text:

*Lisa's baby wriggles in its blanket. Lisa herself sighs, glancing up at you through thin, unkempt bangs as she speaks. "It's been hard for me these last few months. My husband fell ill and died of a fever last summer."*

*"I have tried my best to work the farm myself. I lost the help shortly after I lost my husband. I used what savings we had to help pay*





*them, but I needed to keep some money back to pay taxes and pay tribute to the Hall."*

*Despair creases her modest features. "the taxes are so expensive and animal feed does not come cheap. I've even sold off some of the livestock to other farms to make up the coin, but they are not much better off than me."*

*Her broad shoulders slump as she admits, "I'm losing the farm."*

*Tears well in her eyes. "It's the only home I have. My parents are gone too; they died a few years ago. I don't have anything to keep me here, but I can't leave. Besides, where would I go? Thornfalcon? Feh."*

*Unexpectedly, her voice hardens. You can hear some resolve in her tone now, perhaps even defiance. "We Corries do not give up. This is MY home. Sure, it's hard here, almost impossible. But I believe that things can change. After all, without hope? We have nothing."*

*She stops sobbing and shakes her head, both hands clenched on the table. "I won't leave, I can't leave, no matter what is thrown at me. None of us will. Not even the Blight that scars this land!"*

If the Heroes ask about the Blight, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Lisa gives you an odd look. She quirks a brow, and with a soft and slightly exasperated tone she says, "I don't know how you could help, you don't look like farmers to me".*

From this point onwards, Lisa clams up and will not tell the Heroes anything more unless they are extremely persuasive. This is best done as a roleplay encounter and not left up to chance. If necessary, you can assign a WILLPOWER roll (using Influence if the Kai have it) against a Target Number of 5 to convince Lisa to continue her story. Whoever decides to speak to her will have to assure her that they can and will help. At the very least, they may be able to convince Lisa to let them take a look at the farm for themselves.

This will take some gentle persuasion. Too much, and she will simply rise from her seat and sweep out of the inn. Pride may be all she has left but she will be damned before she plays the helpless damsel for anyone, especially not outsiders.

Should the Heroes decide to push her on her relationship with Vinas, she will outright refuse to say anything further and will leave in a foul mood.

If the Kai do not pressure the woman and they approach the situation tactfully, they will learn is the location of Lisa's farm. This information should not be too difficult to get with compassionate and respectful roleplay. She does want help, after all.

What happens next depends on whether the Heroes manage to get Lisa to trust them.

## SUCCESS CONVINCING LISA

If the Kai have been successful with Lisa she will gladly share the location of her farm. However, the Players are still none the wiser about this blight and it may occur to them to ask questions. Vinas can answer these questions; he is still in the street loitering as previously described.

The Heroes may also think to speak with Elder Reballen, as he is known to be a man of medicinal learning and his door is always open, even at this time of night. Vinas will steer the Heroes towards Elder Reballen in any case, but the Players may come up with this path on their own.

## FAILURE TO WIN LISA'S TRUST

If Lisa has left the Heroes in the tavern and they do not know where her farm is, they persuade Vinas to help them. They will find him loitering in the street outside of the Murder of Crows, pacing nervously.

If the Heroes approach him, Vinas will head rapidly to the nearest alleyway and attempt to evade the Kai. If the Kai try and go after him, they need to roll Perception against a Target Number of 7 since he is a tricky customer and good at shaking off pursuit.

If the Heroes catch Vinas Venn, they can discuss Lisa's predicament, his role in it, and the farm itself. See the section below.

## VINAS COOPERATES

Read or paraphrase the following text:

*You manage to finally catch up with Vinas in one of the alleys. He thought he could give you the slip but now you have him cornered and he realizes it. With a sigh, he says gruffly, "All right, enough. Why're you hounding me? Haven't you got anything better to do than hassle an innocent man?!"*

During the upcoming conversation with Vinas, he will tell them about Barrow Frost. It should become apparent that he does have a lot of concern of Lisa, regardless of his brusque and surly manner. Once he is satisfied that the Heroes are not under observation, he starts to speak.

Read or paraphrase the following:

*"Barrow Frost is nasty stuff; it keeps coming back no matter what you do. It makes crops inedible and therefore unsellable. Lisa says it's pointless composting the crops as well, because it poisons the soil. All you can do is dig up the plants and burn them and pray the Frost stays gone."*





He snorts, shaking his head. *"But even that's pointless. It always comes back. As for the illness, that's the same as the Blight. You can treat the sickness but you cannot get rid of the cause"*.

If it is clear that they have picked up on Vinas saying that the symptoms can be treated but not the disease, Vinas will mutter:

*"Look, I've told you what I know and that's that. I'm not a farmer and I'm not a healer either! Speak to Elder Reballen. He lives just across the way from Raven Hall, in the rooms above his shop. Now go away!"*

As far as Vinas is concerned, the conversation is over. He will attempt to get away from the Kai again. If they let him go, they have the option of trying to talk to Lisa again, providing the party can find her. If they move now to try and intercept her, they may find her at the market as noted below.

Have any watchful Heroes make a Perception Test at a TN 5. Success will mean that the Kai will see her in the Market Square, haggling over the price of some vegetables. If she told the Kai Lords that all is fine on her farm, this should seem quite suspicious. If her farm is all right, then why would she not feed herself with those crops?

As they watch, she closes the deal and starts to head out for her farm. The Heroes are now faced with a decision. Do they just follow her on her way back home or do they seek out Elder Reballen? Let them choose which direction they wish to go and then proceed to the appropriate text.

### IF THE HEROES WISH TO APPROACH LISA

This option only works if the Kai Lords have won Lisa's trust or are willing to win it once again. They can hail Lisa and ask her if they

can walk with her. She will look a little surprised by the offer, but not averse to it if she trusts them. If she does not, Influence Tests and good roleplaying will be in order.

If she accepts their company, Lisa will approach one of the Kai and speak in a lowered voice; read or paraphrase the following:

*"I appreciate the offer. You can come with me if you desire, but it isn't particularly dangerous on the path, though I would not mind some company."*

The Kai may now walk with her, although some in Rookhaven may look on with raised eyebrows, and that gossip may spread to unwanted ears in due course. The Heroes can ask questions as they walk with her. If they ask about the farm and in particular, about the Blight, she will pause for a moment and look at them curiously. Read or paraphrase the following:

*"I don't remember telling you about the Blight. I suppose Vinas must have mentioned it to you. He's not a bad man, just a bitter one. It's not my place to talk about his private affairs."*

*She sighs and taking a slight, shuddering breath, she says, "The Blight comes and goes. There's no set cycle to it. It appears out of nowhere. You can go to bed and all is fine, but come the morning? There it is, covering your fields like some foul kind of snow."*

*"When it happens, all you can do is dig up your crops, burn them, and wait for the blight to clear. Sometimes you can replant without it coming back. Other times you lose the whole season. It pays to keep seeds back if you can afford it. Barrow Frost's like a game of chance, with the odds stacked against you."*

*"The only ace card I have is my south field. It's small but it's always fertile, and it never seems to get Barrow Frost no matter how bad the blight gets everywhere else. I'd normally be able to get by just on what I can grow there but..." Lisa looks down into her arms where her baby sleeps peacefully.*

*"It's just not enough."*

**Important Note:** This mention of the south field is critical, as it can guide the Heroes to the cure for Barrow Frost. It is not the only way they can solve the infection, but if the Heroes manage to get Lisa's trust, be sure to reward them with this vital clue.

If the Kai ask her if the Blight is on her land now, she will reply with a quick, sad nod. Read or paraphrase the following:

*"I suppose you can take a look if you want. I don't really see how you can help. With respect, as I've said, you don't look like farmers."*





When the Kai Lords will arrive at her farm, continue to the section marked: The Lay of the Land.

### IF THE HEROES PREFER TO FOLLOW LISA INSTEAD

The Kai can follow her if they wish to do so. If they try to follow, make a Perception Test (TN 5) for Lisa.

If successful, she notices the Heroes behind her and she'll turn to confront them. Read the following to the players if this happens:

*"I warn you, turn back or I'll call for the Militia!"*

The Heroes can either back off or try again to make her change her mind. This requires an Influence Test (TN 7) or solid roleplaying. If the Kai fail, she runs up her path and slams the door in the Kai's faces, locking it loudly. She opens a window and shouts out the following:

*"I've told you for the last time, leave me be! Go and pester someone else! I've nothing to say to you and I don't want your help! We Thorns have survived a long time without you mighty Kai Lords, so thank you for nothing! Now go!"*

If they are successful, she still looks exasperated, but with a resigned shrug of her shoulders, she will open the front door, and gesture the Kai inside. Without further word, she will guide them through her sparsely furnished home towards the back door. Read or paraphrase the following:

*"You won't need me to guide you", she says softly, and then with more than a hint of grim humor adds; "It won't be hard to find, just follow your nose"*

The Heroes can make a Perception Test. On a score of 6 or higher, they will notice a rank odor, as if something is decaying, from about 20 feet away. The smell gets stronger the closer they get, becoming so odious that it turns their stomachs and makes their eyes water.

The investigation can move onto Scene Two: The Lay of the Land.

## SCENE TWO: THE LAY OF THE LAND

The Thorn farm is only a small venture, measuring well under twenty acres. The land is surrounded by a low stone wall, intact but in dire need of repair. A pen nearby houses some relatively healthy looking hens, while a small herd of goats are housed in a ramshackle barn nearby.

It is the ground itself that catches your attention, for it is covered in a thin layer of what looks like snow or harsh frost. Small clouds

of white powder rise up into the air as you walk across the tilled soil. It even sounds like fresh snow as it crunches under your boots.

Acrid and bitter, the smell of this 'snow' is enough to bring tears to your eyes and bile to your lips.

The scent of Barrow Frost is quite nasty but it has no direct effect on the Heroes. This parasitic infection is only dangerous if ingested.



### SEARCHING THE FIELDS

The most logical way to progress is to search Lisa's farm for clues as to the source of the Barrow Frost. There is something unnatural happening, so Kai Lords with Sixth Sense should still to feel some foreboding. Investigation should be their next step. Walking the fields will take an hour or more.

Have the searching Heroes make a Perception Test (TN 6). Heroes with Sixth Sense will make this test automatically. On a score of 7 or above, the Kai will notice that there are six small mounds of earth scattered throughout the field, despite the fact that most of the earth has been tilled. Approaching these mounds will make even Kai Lords who do not have Sixth Sense nervous and nauseous.

These mounds, marking the points of a rune that represents blight or decay, are where fragments of a Nadziranim relic have been buried. These 'mounds' have been laid out deliberately in a pattern that covers the whole of the Thorn family farm (with the exception of the South Field, as noted below).

Any Player Character that has the Sixth Sense skill will notice that their senses are screaming from the moment they approach the closest mound. They can detect that the artefacts are being





protected by evil Right-handed Magic. Those without Kai gifts would avoid them subconsciously, never even realizing they are there. Those with such gifts, including the Heroes themselves, can see the mounds and approach them.

If any of the Kai Lords wish to dig up a mound to see what it contains, move to 'Digging in the Dirt' below.

## DIGGING IN THE DIRT

If a Hero chooses to unearth one of the mysterious mounds, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

*Though being this close to the mound of broken earth is very uncomfortable, you fight through your nausea and dig quickly. The ground resists you, as if unwilling to be moved. Whatever power protecting it is no match for you, however, and you force the dirt aside.*

*Several feet down, you find something both curious and malign. A shard of black iron, edged on one side, has been buried here. An inscription is visible on the metal but it is too obscured by soil and dried blood to be legible. Even as you stare at it, the surface of the metal fragment clouds over with a sudden growth of white – the same 'frost' plaguing the fields around you.*

*A moment later, the pale snow bursts into a wretched cloud of stink and revulsion. The shard is gone, fading away as the frost starts to settle around the hole you've made.*

The Kai Lords can dig up all six of the mounds, each to the same result. Nothing they can do will preserve the shards. The only way to keep one intact is to leave its mound undisturbed. The shards are returning to Shryll, their master, and no magic the Kai Lords possess can prevent that...

...yet. There is a power that can break this foul cycle close at hand. The Kai Lords will discover it as soon as they investigate the South Field. See Southern Comfort for more.

## SOUTHERN COMFORT

*The moment you enter the walled-off area of Lisa's south fields, you feel a quiet sense of peace. This area is restful, free of the ravages of the Blight. Even the stench of Barrow Frost seems powerless here; you can breathe easily within the confines of this small garden.*

The reason for this sanctuary is literally hidden in the garden's walls. Heroes examining the wall can make a Perception or Investigate Test at TN 6. Success will reveal that amongst the rough-hewn stones that make up the wall, there are some that are lighter in color and oddly smooth. In fact, they seem to have been finely shaped by more delicate tools.

A closer examination shows that these are not natural stones at all, but were once part of some sort of larger structure. These are the remains of a dismantled shrine to Ishir, torn down long ago by some of the first slaves to fall victim to Shryll's mental powers. Those slaves assumed that razing the shrine would be enough to disrupt the Goddess' power; they were not entirely correct in that regard.

A Sage or Occult Test (TN 6) will identify these stones as having once been part of a shrine to Ishir, including something that comprised her holy altar. Furthermore, any Kai with Sixth Sense can also get a distinct 'vibration' coming from these stones.



As the Heroes examine the stones, read or Paraphrase the following aloud:

*"As you examine one of these paler stones, you can feel a feeling of warmth and security coming from it. You feel a cool, silver grace within the stones, weak but persistent. It is clear that these are not natural stones, and you can see that there are several more in the walls that surround this garden."*

An Occult skill test at a TN of 7 will tell the Kai that these stones could well neutralize the Barrow Frost completely. Unfortunately, their power has waned and, as they are now, they are too weak to be effective.

A ritual that could be performed to 'recharge' the stones, but none of the Kai Lords know it. That sort of Healing magic is beyond their Discipline of the same name, and none of them have the Rank needed to start studying magic directly.

Allow the Kai Lords to each try an Occult (or WILLPOWER, for Heroes without that skill) Test at a TN of 8. If anyone succeeds,



they will recall that Priests such as Elder Reballen are supposedly well-versed in such rituals. If anyone in Rookhaven might know how to help them, he would.

If none of them succeed at this test, Lisa makes the suggestion. She trusts Elder Reballen and knows him to be an excellent healer. Reballen helped deliver her baby, so she is happy to involve him.

Of course, if the Heroes have not won Lisa's trust, she cannot offer such advice. However, if they present her with their findings, Lisa will automatically trust them from now on; like most Corries, her respect is won best through effort.

No matter what the Heroes decide, the hour is late and even the Elder may be asleep now. There is little more they can do tonight. Unless they insist on pressing on, they should rest and eat a much needed meal. Failure to do so will result in the usual penalties.

When the Heroes are ready to proceed, move on to Scene 3 -Seeking the Cure.

### SCENE THREE: SEEKING THE CURE

As the Heroes arise the next day, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

*Another day dawns. For once, there is a hint of sunshine in the sky, though it is obscured by clouds. There is even a bit of warmth in the air, but this is not really enough to dispel the air of gloom that hangs over this place like a shroud.*

The Heroes can now make their way to Elder Reballen's home. If they are feeling somewhat paranoid, they can check to see if they are being watched or followed.

Let them make Perception Tests if they want. They will not see anyone following them or watching other than constant, oppressive patrols of Blood Ravens walking through town. The Heroes may begin to understand why the citizens of this place always seem to be acting as if they are walking on egg shells.

Eventually they will arrive at the Elder's home. Move on to the scene marked The Apothecary.

#### THE APOTHECARY

As they make their way to Elder Reballen's house, read or paraphrase the following to the Player Characters:

*Before you, a small wooden gate leads to a shale path that rambles through a walled garden up to the front door of Elder Reballen's two story home and apothecary. Though you are quite close to Raven Hall here, you cannot see anybody watching you or this building.*

*A small bell tinkles merrily as you cross the threshold. After a moment, a mostly bald, elderly man greets you with a cheery smile. His eyes sparkle as he appraises you through a pair of spectacles perched on his nose.*

*"Welcome to Reballen's Apothecary! What can I do for you on this fine day?"*

Odds are good that that Heroes will cut the chase and explain their situation. Reballen will appreciate straightforwardness. After explaining their reasons for the visit, Reballen will express honest sympathy for anyone affected by Barrow Frost. What happens next depends entirely on why the Heroes have come to see him.

Read or paraphrase the section below to the Player Characters. Even if the Heroes are here to speak about the stones they found in Lisa's garden, he will regale them with his speech about Barrow Frost first.

*"Barrow Frost is a fungal growth. The snow like substance is in fact the fungal spores, which produce the distinctive odor. It only really affects you if you consume the spores or anything contaminated by them. Cooking or boiling the infected crop does nothing to help."*

*Reballen opens a well worn book, one that looks like he has written it himself. "Barrow Frost's symptoms include stomach cramps, a brief but intense fever, nausea and vomiting. It is very unpleasant but only causes death in rare cases. The very young and the elderly are the most vulnerable, I'm afraid."*



*Elder Reballen stands up and walks over to a cabinet. After retrieving a large pottery jar, he sits down again. "My treatment reduces the effects of any symptoms caused by Barrow Frost and*





*strengthens the patient's resistance to it. I only wish that there was some way to completely eliminate the disease."*

*Adjusting his glasses, Reballen leans forward like a teacher at the lectern, imparting some valuable lesson to you, his students. "Most diseases have cycles, they come and go depending on the season.*

*For instance during the winter you are more likely to catch a cold than in the summer. Barrow Frost is not like most, seeming to recur when the mood suits it. I've not seen anything like it before."*

He pauses here, waiting for the Kai Lords to impart any information that they have accrued during the course of their investigations.

If the Kai assume that this is what killed Lisa's husband and mention it to Reballen, he will say the following:

*"Oh for heaven's sake no! It was not Barrow Frost that killed him! The poor unfortunate fellow had a rare condition. If he ever cut himself, the blood would not clot and he would continue to bleed.*

*He was for the most part, very careful, but it only takes one error. He cut himself with a sickle. Alas, I could not stop the bleeding.*

*"A sad affair, a sad affair indeed."*

If the Heroes ask about Vinas he says:

*"I'm never quite sure what to make of him to be honest. He is a dour fellow but I've watched him with that young lady and seen the way he looks at her. He seems to care about her in some way and is certainly fond of her babe."*

*Reballen looks thoughtful, lost in a memory for a moment. "I not only delivered little Mika, I treated her some time ago for Barrow Frost. Come to think of it, Vinas was the one who alerted me to the fact that the child was not well."*

If the Heroes ask if there is a shrine of any kind in town, he will say the following:

*"Well, they say there was a shrine to Ishir near the middle of the village, not far from the square, a very long time ago. It was dismantled some time ago, though no one is sure why.*

*I've even heard a rumour that the Basanet at the time had the shrine's stones used to pave Rookhaven's roads.*

*"Odd that, no?"*

## STREETS OF SILVER

That rumour is actually true. Basanet Ingas Corvan, in a brief moment of clarity, issued that order and managed to stay coherent long enough to see it done. He knew that if he did so, the residual power of Ishir might provide some small protection from the nameless evil he felt in the land. He paid for his brave deed with his life, forced to throw himself from Raven Hall's highest tower once the Shryll regained mental control over the Basanet.

In the unlikely event that the Heroes knew anything about Reballen's true nature, they would be aware that their questioning will eventually be passed on to the Basanet and his men. It must be stressed that he is genuinely upset about the fact that this disease has claimed lives. He is only doing what he thinks is right for the people of Rookhaven.

During their conversation with Reballen, the Elder mentions several times that he feels that someday soon, someone younger and healthier – emphasis on younger – will be sent to replace him. Perception or Sixth Sense might note his bitterness about this matter.

If, despite all the hints and Sixth Sense guidance, the Heroes have not discovered Lisa's south field garden and the Ishir stones in its walls, Reballen's medicine ends of the scenario for them. He will make enough of his elixir to treat Lisa and baby Mika, with the Heroes acting as couriers. Proceed to the ghoul attack below (detailed under Night Terrors) but after that, the adventure is at an end.

The remainder of this scenario assumes that the Kai Lords have found the stones and seek assistance from Reballen in recharging them.

## BLESSINGS OF THE MOON MOTHER

Once they explain their aims and discovery to the Elder, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

*"Marvelous! That's the missing key to this whole blighted affair... no pun intended. I knew there had to be something supernatural to the Blight. I just knew it!"*

*Reballen practically dances across the room as he pulls forth a new book, one of the largest and oldest on his shelves. Cracking the spine, he flips through dozens of heavily annotated pages before stopping on a drawing of a small stone shrine.*





*"There it is, the House of the White Raven. Once, many years ago, there was a shrine to Ishir here in Rookhaven. Years ago, it was torn down and its stones ground to pebbles and dust. Even this old tome does not record the why, though it does suggest that a few dozen stones were spirited away before they could be destroyed."*

*He claps excitedly and smiles at you. "And now that you have found them, I may finally have a solution to the Barrow Frost once and for all. Rookhaven may finally be free of the Blight. Marvelous!"*

His excitement and enthusiasm are genuine, as he has spent his whole life trying in vain to combat this foul disease. Once he is done celebrating, he will invite the Kai Lords to watch while he brews and blesses a flask of softly glowing oil the colour of scintillating moonstone.

*"This is Mother's Milk, a very rare concoction here, but common in many temples to the Goddess Ishir across Southern Magnamund. I can make more, but this should be enough for tonight's endeavours. Take this and be quick. It will only retain its magic a short time."*

*He hands the flask to you carefully, as if his boyish enthusiasm might cause him to drop it. "Anoint one of the stones you found and bury it in a blighted mound. Even if that strange metal you found is no longer there, the mound may hold the malady. Once you do, bury it and pour a little of this oil on top."*

*Reballen laughs, almost cackling with glee. "I cannot wait to hear what happens!"*

Now that the Heroes have what they need, move onto Scene 4 - Planting the Seeds of Hope.

## SCENE FOUR: PLANTING THE SEEDS OF HOPE

With a solution to the Barrow Frost problem close at hand, the Heroes should notice a change in atmosphere here in Rookhaven. There is, but not the expected one. As the end of the day nears, there is something in the air that does not feel right at all.

Any Kai with Sixth Sense should make a Discipline Test with it (TN 6). If successful, he or she will get the feeling that something dark is coming. While dull and overcast to start, the sky now seems to be heavy with an approaching storm.

The Heroes will notice a strange mist on the streets, which does not seem to rise much higher than waist-height and does not react to the wind at all. Read or paraphrase the following to the player characters:

*The night seems to grown darker slightly earlier than expected. Or perhaps your conversation took longer than you thought. Either*

*way, there's a chill in the air and something just feels wrong. The streets are almost devoid of people. Even the few that usually linger are in a sudden hurry to get indoors.*

*Suddenly, screams rise up from the village square. People rush past you, running to reach any door that will take them in. Those few who regard you shout in panicked voices, "Hide, you green-cloaked fools! The Pale Men are coming!"*

*Shambling figures start emerging from the mist, hands reaching out to claw at the villagers as they flee. Even as you spot them, The Pale Men lurch violently towards a frightened youth and his friend. Terrified as the boys are, they do not stand a chance!*

If the Heroes are worthy of that name, they will move to intervene. Once they get close to their foes, the Heroes will notice the Pale Men's pallid skin, their feral, inhuman eyes, and their talon-like nails.

These creatures are Ghouls, sent by Shryll to stop the Kai Lords. The Helghast has no idea what the Heroes are up to, but he can sense the Mother's Milk they carry and he cannot abide its existence.

### GHOULS (2 PER KAI LORD)

**Combat Skill:** 16

**Endurance:** 20

**Traits:** Brutal (1)

The Ghouls will attack using their talon like nails as weapons. If any of the Kai take 5 or more points of damage in any attack after factoring in Defense, then the Ghoul's diseased touch will infect them. This reduces their COMBAT SKILL by 2 until they receive any form of Healing or a night of bedrest.

Throughout the fight, there is no sign of Sir Persicar and his men. In fact, there are no Blood Ravens within the village of Rookhaven at all, especially suspicious considering they were everywhere just a few hours before. This is just further proof, if there is any needed, that the concept of law and order in Rookhaven are quite specious.

Once the ghouls are dispatched, the Heroes should press on quickly to Lisa's farm with their precious oil. As Reballen warned them, it will not hold its potency for long.

### A FARM BESIEGED

This is the climax of the scenario, a final battle at Lisa's farmstead and the breaking of the Barrow Frost plague that has haunted Rookhaven for generations. If the Players want to have a real and lasting effect in the world, this scene should fulfill that need handily.

As the Heroes approach the Thorn farm, read or paraphrase the following aloud:





*The seemingly premature dusk sends a chill of apprehension down the length of your spine. Even so, all seems calm as you approach the farm. You can see a light coming from a downstairs window and Lisa's shadow can be seen moving across the drapes.*

*Something prompts her to look out the window as you approach. It is hard to see if she is happy to see you or not, but the door opens and she says, 'You are just in time for supper. I do not have much but you are welcome to sh...'*

*Lisa's voice cuts off abruptly, gasping sharply before she screams, 'Behind you!' and slams her door shut!*

A single ghoul, larger and more powerful than the rest, has trailed the Heroes to Lisa's farm. Sent by Shryll through the power of the dire mist that clings to the land, they had no way of detecting it until it manifested behind them. Lisa's scream provides enough warning, however, for none of the Heroes to be surprised when it attacks.

### GHOUL (1)

**Combat Skill:** 20

**Endurance:** 25

**Traits:** Brutal (1), Defense (2)

Once the ghoul is defeated, the party can move on to the Conclusion of the adventure. Both Lisa and her baby are safe, though she is now terrified and will refuse to leave her home or let go of the wood axe she holds until the Heroes complete their task.

### CONCLUSION

As the Heroes move to complete their task, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Removing the stones from the garden wall proves to be an easy task. At your touch, they pull free effortlessly, as if they have just been waiting here for you to claim them. Each one, pale and smooth, seems to radiate warmth and light, not like any stone you have ever seen in your lives.*

*Anointing one with the Mother's Milk causes it to glow brightly, the stone shining like a piece of the Moon itself. The wind around you seems to whisper softly, a faint chorus of distant voices singing in blessed harmony. The music fades as you settle the stone into an open mound. The blighted dirt undulates, as if trying to crawl away from its pale, perfect radiance.*

*You bury the stone quickly, pouring a few drops of magical oil onto the soil as you were instructed. The ground beneath your feet shudders as the last droplet falls. Suddenly, a wave of moonlight bursts past you in all directions. Where the silver glow passes over patches of Barrow Frost, the fungal curse shatters, disappearing*

*instantly. Foul as this infection might be, it is no match for the power of Ishir.*

*One by one, you do the same to all six dire mounds. By the time you are done, Lisa's farm is completely clear of Barrow Frost. Her crops look healthy now, perhaps better than they have ever grown before.*

*You now hold the key to saving Rookhaven's farms, Rookhaven's people, from the Blight.*



There is a great deal of work to do now, of course. More stones must be pulled from Lisa's wall, more Mother's Milk must be brewed, and farmland must be searched and salvaged. The Heroes' efforts have only just begun but, for now, their adventure ends here. In triumph.

The story continues on in Scenario Five – Restless Souls.

## PATHS AND POSSIBILITIES – SCENARIO FOUR – THE CURSED EARTH

### RING OF SHADOWS

The player characters hear rumors that there has been a savage assault on a citizen of Rookhaven, within spitting distance of the Murder of Crows. If the rumors are to be believed, the victim bears wounds that could not have been inflicted by a human being. Upon further investigation, the target was a young man who is, a rare thing, a friend of Vinas! It would appear that robbery was the motive, as he says that a precious ring was stolen. However, the man swears that the attacker was a 'shadow'.





## DOG DAYS OF WINTER

Now that the shrine stones have been planted, Lisa notices animal tracks left behind in what remains of the receding Barrow Frost. Worried, she contacts the Kai Lords. The tracks in the Barrow Frost are those of some four footed beast, maybe a large dog or even wolf. Even as they examine the scene, they hear an ominous growl. Canine creatures with crimson eyes appear from around a small out building; following them leads to what is clearly a lair of some sort.

## NEEDFUL THINGS

Eldar Reballen runs short of a rare ingredient. Being an elderly man, he knows that he is not up to the task of foraging for the item himself. Perhaps the Player Characters can be of aid? He says that the reagent, a type of fungus grows on the bark of a specific tree, should be found in a nearby copse of trees. However, the Fungus is the main food supply of a Sprite-like race of creatures. The player characters should sense them if they have Sixth Sense, and any character with Mindshield will be of use, as the sprites will attack with Mindblast.

## FATE OF THE RAVENS

Things fare poorly for Andus Kerrin and Turlon Aldbrent. With the Barrow Frost thwarted, at least for the time being, Basanet Corvan is more erratic than usual. Though this is because Shryll is furious and tormenting his noble puppet, no one else knows that. All the forces of Raven Hall can do is comply with their liege lord's bizarre requests.

Even Sir Persicar is at a loss to explain the current state of things. Unfortunately for all involved, when Persicar gets confused, he grows spiteful and suspicious. Although Andus and Turlon have been very careful with their investigations, Sir Persicar overhears a conversation between two of the foreign recruits about someone with blonde hair and 'Sommlending stench,' asking questions about where they came from. The insult costs both recruits their lives as Sir Persicar's pride runs deep. Sadly, this fit of pique costs Sir Persicar the ability to question the now-slaughtered recruits. This violent happenstance saves Andus and Turlon for now, but Sir Persicar is now alerted to the fact that someone among the Blood Ravens is inquiring into matters that should not concern them.

Meanwhile, Renn Maldrun has found himself in the middle of a conundrum. The Dun Masks have grown large over the years, turning into a bandit organization with several leaders and multiple cells. This widespread arrangement has come out of necessity, as bandits and rogues do not fare well in Sommerlund. Wandering Knights of the Realm, watchful Border Rangers, and interfering Kai Lords all take a heavy toll on the lawless population.

Sadly for Renn and his plans, this also means that his only supporters are the rest of his small group of Dunn Masks. The leader of his group, Danna Kuln, is not actually a Corrie and has no desire

to draw the Blood Ravens' attention. This conflict of support has left Renn Maldrun paralyzed: he wishes to investigate the matter at Raven Hall but is under direct orders to avoid antagonizing the Blood Ravens.

## RESTLESS SOULS (SCENARIO FIVE)

*Commander Lahkin looked on at the chaos around him. Everything was either on fire, covered in blood, dying, or all three at once. They didn't have a chance, he knew that, but every minute they held the line would be a minute longer for the villagers to evacuate.*

*"Tami! Get those archers back behind the mantlets!"*

*His second, a tall man with dark hair and wild eyes, glanced back to his Commander as he kicked a Giak in the face.*

*"Yes sir, on it sir!"*

*Drakkarim arrows rained upon the regiment. Half a dozen fell instantly. Another barely made it behind the mantlets, with arrows protruding from their armor. One screamed as his colleagues held him down and pulled the black-fletched shaft from his gut.*

*Tami looked back at his Commander again. "They're coming around to the north, sir!"*

*Lahkin surveyed the battlefield again. His entire command was committed. The cavalry group had ridden south to hold back a swarm of Giaks, all six of his foot squads were tied up here. All he had left were a group of archers.*

*"Send a runner to each unit. We're falling back to the village."*

*Holding the enemy here was impossible. There was just too much area to cover once they had been pushed out of the pass. He could at least hold them off in a smaller area for a while longer, and that meant putting his troops in place to defend the village and the only road out of here.*

*The voices of his lieutenants could be heard from every direction. "Fall back! Fall back! No Luka, fall BACK!"*

*Lahkin wiped the blood from his face. The gash on his forehead was damned irritating, dripping into his eyes. Still, no time to deal with it now. He barked commands as his men began to pull back.*





*"Squads one through four, protect the road. Five and six, with me – we're going to hold the western edge of the village. Archers, take up a position between us. Tamt, go take personal charge of the cavalry, I want that road swept clear of anything we miss."*

*Above the din of the battle, a sound came from the west like nothing he had heard before. His men stood, dumbfounded, their swords and spears lowering in astonishment. It was as if the gods themselves had decided they'd had enough of the fighting, and decided to just destroy the world and start over. It only lasted an instant, before the whole corps were completely deafened by the volume. The shockwave knocked him the ground just as the very mountains shattered.*

*Starkriven Pass was caving in, collapsing in a maelstrom of stone and fire!*

*Gigantic rocks flew across the battlefield, shattering trees, siege defences, and men. Lakhin's last thoughts, as a wedge-shaped piece of mountain plunged through his breastplate, was that at least the village should be safe now.*

*Restless Souls is the second scenario of Act II.* More than a thousand years ago (MS 3799), at the end of the War of the Black Muster, a great battle between Sommlending troops and an invading force from the Darklands took place at Starkriven Pass, to the west of Rookhaven. Raven Hall stood as a garrison for hundreds of soldiers, tasked with defending that pass. Intended as a feint to distract the Sommlending forces from a larger battle far to the south, an army of Giaks and Drakkarim sent by Darklord Haakon attacked the pass. While the forces of Rookhaven were victorious, the victory was a Pyrrhic one.

## ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

- **Scene One** – Revenants Rising: Hooks the Heroes into this scenario, whether run as a standalone or as part of the overall Rookhaven campaign.
- **Scene Two** – Inn Incursion: A skeletal army rises, attacking the village.
- **Scene Three** – Catching Calent: The Heroes search for a local girl, Calent, who has gone missing while playing in the West Field. Meanwhile, the skeletal army continues to rise.
- **Scene Four** – Finding Fray: Calent convinces the Heroes that the skeletons are not the only horrors in the West Field – there's also a ghost: the spirit of Fray, Landar's middle son.
- **Scene Five** – Abrogating Apparitions: The Heroes locate the source of the power awakening the skeletal army, and deal with it.
- **Scene Six** – Concluding Concerns: Calent returns home, the current threat ends, and an option is presented for a standalone conclusion.

## INTRODUCTION

Sir Persicar Kalsken, Seneschal of Basanet Myranar Corvan, recently argued with Fray at the West Field. (West field is the present-day name for the battlefield at Starkriven Pass.) The middle son of Landar, proprietor of the Murder of Crows inn – "owes" taxes incurred by his father to the Basanet (Landar, of course, had paid in full, but that certainly wasn't going to stop Sir Persicar from squeezing a little more out of the man if he could.)

When his bullying tactics failed, Persicar simply ran Fray through with his sword. To hid his work, Persicar found a convenient felled tree and left the body impaled by a branch through the sword wound. He broke the leg of Fray's horse for good measure; it all looked like a simple riding accident.

Unbeknown to Sir Persicar, however, Fray died quite close to a buried powerful Vordak gem, the final remains of one of Shryll's lieutenants from the Battle of Starkriven Pass. The psychic backlash from the murder was amplified by the gem causing Fray's spirit to awaken at the site of his murder. As he wanders the ancient battlefield, angry and confused, the waves of his psychic energy have awakened other long-dead spirits.

the skeletal remains of Sommlending, Giak, and Drakkarim alike have begun to dig their way out of the ground. The dead hunger, and soon they will feast...

## SCENE ONE: REVENANTS RISING

This scenario opens with the Heroes being approached for an act of heroism. Their time in Rookhaven has garnered them something of a reputation; e Even if they are not well-liked, a few of the villagers (including Kyreina) have come to see the Heroes as preferable to the Blood Ravens in an emergency. A missing daughter surely qualifies as such.

### THE MISSING GIRL

A local girl, Calent, has been playing in the West Field last at night and did not come home.

The girl is about nine years old and somewhat of a tomboy. She refuses to hang around the house and let her mother teach her needlework and cooking. Instead, she much prefers to explore the area around the village, climbing the most dangerous things she can find, tussling with local boys, and staying out far too late. Her mother, Kyreina, is worried and requests the help of the Heroes. Depending on their actions so far, she may have heard of their exploits and come looking for them herself, or Kailen may make the introduction.

Whichever way the players meet Kyreina, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:





*The woman, Kyreina, appears to be in her early thirties with long honey-blonde hair and green eyes. She looks at you pleadingly.*

*"My little girl Calent was playing up over by the West Field two nights ago, came in talking about ghosts – pah, I says, ain't no such thing. But she insisted. Went and sent her to bed and told her to stop making up stories. Then last night she didn't come home."*

**Calent? That's an unusual name.** *She sighs. "It's Calenta, really, but she hates it. Says it sounds far too girly, so she shortened it. She'll not answer to anything else, so we just go along with it."*

**The West Field?** *"It's over by Starkriven Pass. That's the big rocky area between the mountains to the west. Doesn't look like it's passable to me, but that's what it's always been called. Can't do much with the field, as it's too full of rocks to be worth farming. Some people use it to exercise their horses."*

**Calent's Father?** *"His name is Orwyn. He works for the Basanet... not by choice. We couldn't afford our taxes last year, so he's having to pay back his debt as a guard at the hall – he's usually gone for a week or two at a time. He's not due back for another couple of days."*

The Heroes should hopefully want to begin the search immediately. However, whether they do or not, Kailen (or Hensa, if Kailen is already present) runs up to them almost immediately after they have spoken to Kyreina with an urgent matter.

Something is attacking the Murder of Crows!

## SCENE TWO: INN INSURRECTION

Its position on the southern edge of village made the Murder of Crows a target for the first wandering skeletal Drakkarim to rise from the battlefield. Fray's residual psyche lingers in all the undead, drawing these skeletons here subconsciously. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*You hear shouting and screams as you run towards the Inn. Doors and windows are being pulled shut, and the sounds of frantic hammering can be heard from inside as planks are hastily barricaded across openings. Outside you see figures hammering at the door.*

*At first they appear to be patrons, trying to get to safety, but as you draw closer you notice exposed rotted flesh and bone beneath rusted chain and ruined armour. These must be the things that have everyone panicked!*

There are two groups of skeletal Drakkarim attacking the inn, four to either side of the building. Each group can be fought separately, or the Heroes can split up and deal with them both at once.

### SKELETAL DRAKKARIM (2 GROUPS OF 4)

**Combat Skill:** 14

**Endurance:** 16

**Traits:** Defence (2), Mindless (Cannot Evade or receive bonuses for Grouping)

The Drakkarim, bereft of their original weapons, wield whatever they can find to batter down the inn doors – discarded planks, a stonemason's mallet, a broken lid from a barrel, and the like.







Should the Heroes defeat the skeletal creatures, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Landar's eyes are wide. Stammering, he tells Hensa to get you whatever you like. However, you notice Kyreina looks more worried than ever.*

Though the Kai Lords have earned a celebration, Kyreina will immediately urge the Heroes to look for Calent. With creatures like the skeletons wandering around, the girl's safety is now an even greater concern than before.

SCENE THREE: CATCHING CALENT

Last night, Calent was climbing the rocks near Starkriven Pass when she saw a glowing light in the distance. As she approached it, she realized it was the vaporous form of a ghostly man – a man that looked somehow familiar, though she couldn't quite place his face.

INTO THE FIELD

As the Heroes make their way towards Starkriven Pass, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*As you head west towards the mountains, the terrain gets decidedly rockier. First a scattering of small stones and pebbles, and then larger stones and rocks dot the ground around you. As the mountains loom larger ahead of you, the terrain becomes much more difficult.*

Anyone with the Tracking discipline can tell that these rocks should not be spread this far naturally – it appears as if they were scattered over a large area by an explosion somewhere in the mountains. The wear on them shows that it was not recent.

The west field is full of rocks and stones thrown out by the avalanche during the battle, along with the occasional rusted spearhead, sword, or piece of armor. Any attempt to plow this ground is likely to hit this debris, so the local farmers gave up trying years ago. Now it is mostly used as a public grazing and riding area. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*As you skirt around a large rock, you hear the sound of stones scattering. Looking up, you see a pair of skeletal figures resembling Giaks atop the rock as they leap down on you.*

SKELETAL GIAKS (2)

**Combat Skill:** 14

**Endurance:** 15

**Traits:** Defence (1), Mindless (Cannot Evade or receive bonuses for Grouping)

The skeletal remains of these Giaks are still dressed in the remains of their armour, and wield improvised weapons.

By now the Heroes should be aware that this area is not safe. If the lost girl is out here, she needs rescuing as quickly as possible!

After defeating the skeletal Giaks, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Ahead of you, crouching between a tree and a crumbling boulder is a small girl wearing a worn tunic and a skirt. She fits Kyreina's description of Calent. However, the moment she spots you, she lets out an ear-piercing scream. Eyes wide with panic, she sprints away from you, towards the mountains.*

THE CHASE

Calent leads the Heroes on a merry dance across the moors. In order to better simulate this, this race and rescue is presented as a mini-game.

For this, you will need an 8x8 grid. A checkers or chess board would serve ably, but you can alternatively just draw one on paper. You will also need tokens to represent the Heroes and Calent.

			X				
P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

X – Calent Start

P – Player Start

Each Player places the token for their character on one of the marked squares, while the Narrator then places a token for Calent on the square marked with an X.

Everyone then takes turns at moving one space, beginning with the Narrator (Calent). Calent will not move off of the board, but she will do her best to avoid the Heroes at all cost. When a character lands on the same square as Calent, she has been caught.

Calent may move any direction, including diagonally. The Heroes may only move horizontally or vertically.





However, whenever a Player tries to move, they must pick a random number from the Random Number Table.

**On a result of 0-1,** their character stumbles on a branch, gets tangled in the overgrowth, or trips over a rock – they are unable to move this turn.

**On a result of 2-8,** their character may move normally.

**On a result of 9,** a skeletal arm bursts from the ground beneath them – they are unable to move this turn, and they must fight!

Pick another random number to determine this opponent:

#### 0-4: Skeletal Sommlending Soldier

**Skeletal Sommlending (1)**

**Combat Skill:** 14

**Endurance:** 6

#### 5-7: Skeletal Giak

**Skeletal Giaks (2 Groups of 4)**

**Combat Skill:** 15

**Endurance:** 8

#### 8-9: Skeletal Drakkarim Soldier

**Skeletal Drakkarim (2 Groups of 4)**

**Combat Skill:** 16

**Endurance:** 10

These crumbling skeletal opponents wear a few tattered remains of rusty armor and fight with rusty, broken weapons. Nothing they carry is of any practical use or value.

Heroes in an adjacent square may aid in the combat, but there is not enough time for any others to join in. Conclude the fight before moving to the next Player's turn.

Once a Hero catches Calent by moving into her space, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*"You're... you're not the skeleton things?" The girl collapses into the arms of (the Hero that caught her) in relief.*

*"Mother is mad, isn't she? I came out here to try and find the ghost again, but then these things started crawling out of the ground. They scared me. I wasn't sure what to do! If I ran back to town, they might follow me and hurt people there, so I just tried to keep losing them. But every time I thought I was safe, another would come out of the ground..."*

*Calent looks up from her guilty expression, her tone becoming suddenly urgent. "You need to find the ghost. When I was following*

*him, the skeletons would come to life as he walked by. I'm sure it's him doing this!"*

**Tell us about the ghost.** *"He looks familiar, I don't know why, but I'm sure I've seen him around town. Well, whoever he was before he was a ghost."*

**Your mother will be happy you're safe. She is not mad.** *"You sure? She always yells at me when I'm back late."*

The Heroes may decide to keep her with them while they search for the ghost, or return her to the town. Either choice might put the girl in harm's way, so let the Players make their own decision.

## SCENE FOUR: FINDING FRAY

The Heroes should be aware by this point that the ghost causes the rising dead in the West Field. If, however, they decide to return to the village, have a few skeletons attack each night until they act upon their knowledge. Feel free to drop hints in any way that feels suitable – for example, Heroes with Sixth Sense may feel a force behind the animation of their skeletal opponents.

If all else fails, Kailen asks them directly to investigate the West Field. After hearing Calent's story, he feels that ghost needs to be checked out. Alternately, you might wish to have Ishora, the gifted farm girl, come to the Heroes after receiving a nightmare of a deathless horde attacking the village under a storm of blood-red lightning.

Fray's spirit is only visible at night, but during that time the glow his ghost gives off can be seen from quite a distance. This means he should not be too hard to locate for anyone in the area of the West Field. If Heroes come back during the day, they will only find more skeletons wandering about (use any of the stats from Scene Two).

While searching the area at night, proceed with the following text:

*An unnaturally cold wind blows through the West Field this evening. Other than a soft, mournful howling, everything is quiet. Not a single living creature appears to be active out here.*

*In the distance you can make out a tiny glowing light, possibly a lamp – or more hopefully your quarry. As you proceed towards it, the ground suddenly erupts in front of you! Skeletal hands grasp the earth, slowly pulling the rest of their bodies out of their shallow graves.*

#### SKELETAL DRAKKARIM (6)

**Combat Skill:** 14

**Endurance:** 16

**Traits:** Mindless (Cannot Evade or receive bonuses for Grouping)





These skeletal Drakkarim were part of a Kondulaga (archery) regiment. As their equipment has long since rotted away, they wield the rusted remains of their swords (essentially daggers now).

Once the battle is over, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*With your opponents returned to the grave, you return your gaze to the glow in the distance. As you continue making your way towards it, it grows larger – until you can eventually make out a humanoid form. The cold wind grows stronger and colder as you approach, biting into your flesh. You have to squint and cover your eyes just to see without difficulty.*

*The ghost appears to be a man wearing the clothes of a serf. His hair is short, but you are unable to tell any further details due to his spectral nature. He appears angry. His fists are clenched and his face is stretched in a grimace of rage. His feet stamp soundlessly at the ground beneath him as he strides across the West Field.*

Anyone with Sixth Sense, or who makes an Occult test at TV7, can tell that the spirit is angry, but not dangerous. Its fury is all turned inward, at least for now.

Standing this close to the spirit will inflict one point of ENDURANCE damage every ten seconds from the biting cold until conversation begins. As Fray begins to speak, the chill returns to more tolerable levels and the ENDURANCE damage ceases.

As he is approached, the ghost turns and speaks aloud:

*‘Who are you? What do you want with me? Where is Persicar?’*

**Who are you?** *“Fray. My father Landar runs the inn in town.”*

**What are you doing out here?** *“I’m looking for Persicar! How dare he. How DARE he! I swear when I find him I’ll tear his insides out through his mouth!”*

**How dare he what?** *“Er.. I don’t remember. But I know he did something to me, and I’ve got to find him!”*

**Are you aware that.. er... you’re dead?** *“Don’t be absurd. Do you take me for some kind of fool?”*

He continues to rage until pressed further about what happened. If the Heroes attempt to break off the conversation, he angrily tries to grab one of them by the lapels to shout at them, but looks on in dismay as his hand goes straight through. This will shock Fray into remembering what happened.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*“It was awful. I think we were... yes, we were arguing. He insisted we owed taxes that we’d already paid. Every year he tries the same thing and my father ends up paying him what little savings we managed to make that year.*

*The apparition’s voice is like a whispering wind on a moonless night, haunting but audible. “This time... this time I stood up to him. Told him we were not going to pay. I told him I was going to ride to Holmgard myself to fetch someone to settle the matter. The bastard thinks he owns this province but he is nothing but a... He stepped closer, grabbed my shirt. Then ... then... I...”*

*Fray’s face falls, and the look of anger turns to one of terror.*

*“Then he took his sword... and... ran me through.”*

*Crestfallen, he sinks to his knees and begins to cry ghostly tears.*

*“It’s all my fault, isn’t it? I’m why these things are waking up. There’s something in the ground where I was killed. I don’t know what it is, but it’s doing all of this, somehow, because of me. I could hear it, I can hear it still.*

*“The earth held a cold, dead heart... and I started it beating again.”*

## SCENE FIVE: ABROGATING APPARITIONS

There are two main ways to deal with the skeletal menace and put them back to rest – either forcibly, or by giving Fray his peace by locating and destroying the Vordak gem. The spirit of Fray will urge them to do the latter, as the gem ties him to this world and continues his suffering.

To be fair, the former may be beyond the capabilities of the Heroes, but that may not necessarily prevent them from trying.

### OPTION ONE: THE GEM

Locating the gem is relatively easy – Fray is happy to lead them to the site of his murder. Unfortunately, its power has attracted a few of its former servants, as well. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Fray leads you across the West Field to an area surrounded by large rocks. His spectral glow lights the area up enough for you to notice blood spatters on the ground. Though he died long ago, the presence of Fray’s spirit has the fallen blood flowing again, wet and red.*

*“It was here. This is... this is where he did it. Please, find what lies in the earth and destroy it. It’s the only thing holding me here. Then I can have peace.”*





*Before you can look to dig the earth here, the scraping sound of rusty metal alerts you to another presence in the area – a group of hunched skeletal figures approach, their dangerously intact weapons raised with obvious intent.*

There will be one opponent per Player.

### **SKELETAL GIAK MARAUDERS (2 GROUPS OF 4)**

**Combat Skill:** 16

**Endurance:** 16

**Traits:** Defence (2), Mindless (Cannot Evade or receive bonuses for Grouping)

The skeletal Giaks are each wearing rusted chain mail and wield swords. These swords belonged to the Drakkarim that led them here through Starkriven Pass, just to die on Sommlending soil. Between the two, they carry a few gold crowns – pick a number from the random number table to determine how many in total.

After defeating the skeletal Giaks, it takes only a few minutes to excavate the gem. Fray can feel the exact spot and guides the Heroes to the correct location. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*After only a minute or two, your digging finds an eerily-glowing scarlet stone – some kind of gem. The glow matches that of the one given off by Fray's ghostly form.*

Anyone familiar with Vordak gems will be able to identify it immediately. Assuming the Heroes have never faced a Vordak, all

them to identify the gem with a Sage or Occult Test (TN 7). Once retrieved, it is a fairly easy task to shatter it between two metallic objects. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*As the gem shatters, you hear a sigh of relief. Fray whispers "Thank you..." and his body fades from sight, a peaceful smile on his face. The chill wind dies along with him.*

### **OPTION TWO: THE ARMY**

If the Heroes insist on destroying the entire risen army of the dead, there are around one hundred each of Skeletal Giaks, Skeletal Drakkarim, and Skeletal Sommlending Soldiers – use the stats given in The Chase in Scene Two. The skeletons are slow enough that the Heroes can deal with a small number at a time – pick three random numbers from the random number table to determine how many of each are present. Pick another random number to determine how many groups are encountered each given night, and track the total number destroyed – once 300 skeletons are destroyed, no more rise.

On the plus side, the undead Sommlending Soldiers will attack their mortal enemies, the Giaks and Drakkarim, before turning on the Heroes. Even so, they are outnumbered two-to-one, and it is doubtful the Heroes can defeat such overwhelming odds. Should they attempt to send for help in this task, the risen dead will continue to attack the village every night in greater numbers – almost certainly dooming the villagers before that help can return. This will also leave the problem of Fray. Because this option does nothing to bring him peace or send him on, he continues to unintentionally bringunlife to any corpse in the vicinity. In this case,







the Narrator may use this as a hook to bring the Heroes back at a later date.

### OPTION THREE: THE SPIRIT

Fray wants an end to his torment, but not at the cost of his eternal spirit. Whether or not it is true, he fully believes that there is somewhere better to go to if he is released, but that if this form is slain he will suffer for all eternity. He will fight to defend himself. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Fray's ghost looks at you as you draw weapons. "Wait! What are you doing? You don't mean to... no, not like this! You need to destroy whatever it is that's holding me here, not ME!"*

*"Please, no, I won't let you!"*

He pleads with the Heroes to back down before entering combat.

### GHOST OF FRAY

**Combat Skill:** 18

**Endurance:** 22

**Traits:** Spectral (In his incorporeal form, Fray takes half damage from non-magical weapons. He takes full damage from magical weapons, spells, and abilities such as Mindblast.)

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*As your weapons pierce Fray's ghostly form for the final time, he lets out an ear-curdling shriek. His body shatters into numerous smoky particles which slowly fade from sight.*

*With his second death, the chill wind cutting across the West Field howls one last time and goes still.*

## SCENE SIX: CONCLUDING CONCERNS

As the Heroes return to Rookhaven with Calent, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*With the skeletal army back at rest, the village returns to normal – or at least as normal as things get in Rookhaven.*

*Kyreina is ecstatic to see her daughter, and thanks you warmly. She promises that her husband Orwyn will thank you himself once he returns home in a few days. She only wishes she had something of value left to give you as a reward.*

The Heroes will also likely want to inform Landar of the real reason for his son's death. He will be furious and want to confront Sir Persicar himself, though reason holds his rage back. Reminding him of the fact he'll likely end up dead himself and that he still has Hensa to take care of will be enough, as long as the Heroes promise

to bring Persicar to justice themselves. In any case, the adventure ends here, hopefully with a rescued child and a soul laid to rest.

The Heroes' story continues in Scenario Six: *The Stroke of Midnight*.

## PATHS AND POSSIBILITIES – SCENARIO FIVE – RESTLESS SOULS

### ORWYN'S DISAPPEARANCE

Kyreina's husband Orwyn, father of Calent, is working off the family debt by serving as a guard to the Basanet. Unfortunately, he does not return home as expected. When Kyreina goes to find out what has happened, she is told that Orwyn left Raven Hall yesterday to go home. Is he the victim of a Blood Raven attack or did something more sinister happen to him at the Hall?

### CALL OF THE WILD

Fray's presence in the West Field has done more than stir up the bones of the ancient soldiers - dead animals also rise. Some of them even remember their former owners, loyally returning home. Suddenly, farmers are dealing with undead livestock and long-lost family pets, happily scratching their bony little paws on front doors.

### LAHKIN'S LAST STAND

Commander Lahkin's last intent was to ensure the safety of the village during the battle over a thousand years ago. Now awakened from his slumber, his will to carry out this task is enough to prevent him from returning to death even after the Vordak Gem is destroyed. His undead form returns to do whatever good it still can for the people of Rookhaven. Needless to say, few Corries may look upon an undead creature with positive light, regardless of its intentions.

### FATE OF THE RAVENS

Ravens are being sent all over the province, often on strange missions ('Ride to the Pass and make sure it is still there' and 'Take this wooden post to the Lackmyer farm and leave it in their barn'). These are completely nonsense tasks, born from Myranar Corvan's tortured mind. Though Shryll has grown bored and is no longer actively harrowing him, Myranar's paranoia and insanity fuel his behavior now.

Myranar's odd orders have another effect, one not even the Basanet consciously realizes. Sending out so many patrols and missions greatly increases the chances that the Kai Lords in Rookhaven will come into conflict with the Blood Ravens. While Myranar does not wish either side any harm, he subconsciously hopes that enough open hostility will bring the attention of the Crown, the Kai Monastery, or both.

Renn Maldrun's life has been no less manic, though for different reasons. During a heated argument about his unauthorized investigation into the Blood Raven foreigners, Renn's temper and





loyalty to his homeland proved greater than his dedication to the Dun Masks. He threatened to leave the bandit group to continue searching on his own.

This ended in Dannas Kuln drawing a blade on the big man, only to have that same blade turned upon him. With the leader of his bandit cell slain, Renn Maldrun has taken on the role of group leader. The Rookhaven Dun Masks are his friends and countrymen. Despite what is happening in Raven Hall, he cannot bring himself to abandon them.

## STROKE OF MIDNIGHT

### (SCENARIO SIX)

*It should have been a quiet night in Rookhaven.*

*The mist had risen almost impossibly fast, churning around Jasyn Maldrun's legs as he fled across the grass and out of the village as fast as his feet could carry him.*

*There was no time left. No time.*

*His heart raced faster than the thundering hoofbeats pursuing him. In the open, he would have had no chance to outrun the riders. And he had seen with his own eyes what happened to those who got caught.*

*Hopefully Tocker, good old reliable Tocker, would be able to pass his message onto the Kai that were in Rookhaven. Hopefully Tocker would already be waiting at Starkriven Pass.*

*The sound of a horse snapped Jasyn to attention. He skidded into the undergrowth as an armored figure hammered past astride a fast moving steed. The mist provided a welcome shield for the lad as he crouched in the dark, trembling.*

*That was close.*

*With a quick glimpse toward Unkindness Crossing, he turned westward. His flight was not measured in mere minutes or hours. It was measured in the blood that pumped through his veins and kept him going despite the strain. Every muscle ached, every nerve tingled, and the cold of the night sapped his strength at every turn.*

*He kept running. How long he held out did not matter, so long as he got where he needed to be.*

*Jasyn's panic only intensified as he crested the first of the hills, knowing that the riders were still hot on his heels. The*

*Kai would surely be able to find him. Surely they would save him from whatever fate reached out of the darkness to claim him.*

*With a backward glance he thought he spied the cloaked shapes of the Kai as the fog cleared slightly. He wanted to call out, to trust in the strangers to protect him. A lifetime of fear held his tongue in check.*

*Trust is a lie, a losing throw of the dice. No one will save you unless you can save yourself.*

*Jasyn stopped only long enough to catch his failing breath. Within moments, he was off again, clutching the precious parcel under his shirt and running through the mist as if the Darklords themselves were upon his heels.*

*Stroke of Midnight is the Act II finale. It features the NPC Jasyn from the scenario Lengthening Shadows. Pursued by Sir Persicar and the Blood Ravens, Jasyn is in deep trouble and desperately needs help. Before the Kai can intervene and chase the lad, they are swallowed by the ground of Rookhaven itself, tumbling into a long forgotten labyrinth buried beneath Rookhaven. The Kai must explore the tunnels, find a way out, and find Jasyn before the Blood Ravens slay him.*

## SCENE ONE: LETTER OF PERIL

In this scene, the Players receive a letter from Jasyn, warning that his life is in danger.

Scene One ends with the Kai starting to pursue Jasyn, only to tumble headlong into a darkened tunnel, leaving them no way out except to press on.

## AN URGENT MISSIVE

The Players have just left the Murder of Crows, the night hangs around them like an ominous shadowy cloak and trails of thin mist have just begun to rise. They are approached by a sandy haired youth with troubled grey eyes, he presses a letter into their hands and mumbles something quietly.

As the scenario opens, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*As you leave the Murder of Crows with your bellies full of tonight's repast, a shallow mist has begun to rise against the cloak of night. Considering an early night, you make your way towards your lodgings. As you do, a breathless young man jogs up to you. He pushes a simple scroll into your hands and turns to leave, saying.*

*"Help him, you gotta help Jasyn! He's in danger."*

*He starts to run...*





The Kai can let him go or reign him in. If they choose to attempt to stop him, he reluctantly halts a few feet away. His face belies terror and frustration as he balls his fists; but calm voices (and the Influence skill) can relax him into cooperation. The boy, Tocker, brusquely answers questions from the Heroes.

**How do you know Jasyn?** *"We're good friends, but we don't let on all that much. Met him when we got taken in to the Elder's for pox healin' together a few years ago."*

**What's in the letter?** *"I don't know. He just asked me to give it to you."*

**You said danger. What kind of danger?** *"He's got himself mixed up in something. Something bad. He wouldn't say what, but I saw him being chased by some men on horseback. So I ran and grabbed the letter he left for you."*

Tocker does not know much more. In the dark he did not get a good look at the men in question. If pressed, he might guess that they might be Blood Ravens, but he provides no further information.

Tocker will want to leave as soon as possible, not wanting to get into the same kind of mess as Jasyn. Once the Heroes have finished questioning him, he leaves quickly. This leaves the Kai with just the letter and a few more inches of mist. As they open the letter, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*You unfurl the scroll. It is hastily written, in the scrawl of a hurried hand. It states that Jasyn has uncovered something terrible in Rookhaven, something involving the Blood Ravens, and now he's*

*being hunted. On the back there is a quickly sketched map and an indication that Jasyn was heading west. Starkriven Pass is marked with an X, along with a note that simply says – "Meet here as soon as possible!"*

The letter provides enough information for the Kai to set off after the boy. It is important to impart to the Heroes just how dark and oppressive Rookhaven feels at the moment. The mist rises ever higher and there is a chill in the air that cools the very blood.

## OUT INTO THE WILDS

The Players should now be leaving Rookhaven and pick up Jasyn's trail. Wily boy that he is, Jasyn has left them some breadcrumbs to follow. As a rule of thumb, any reasonable idea the Players come up with should work. No skill test required to find Jasyn's trail; he wants the Kai Lords to find him.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*You leave Rookhaven, heading the south. The darkness continues to grow and the clouds obscure your view of Ishir in the heavens above. The mist curls around the skeleton of Unkindness Crossing, now barely visible to the south. Jasyn's trail winds out towards the west, heading into the undulating hillside. Quickly, you track the lad's direction and head on after him.*

The Players are hot on the heels of Jasyn and though they do not know it yet, the villain of the piece, Sir Persicar is not far off either. The Players will not encounter him until right near the end of the scenario, but they will encounter their next threat as they get close to the hills.







## HOWLING MAD!

As the Players reach the first of the hills to the west of Rookhaven, a chilling echoes through the night. A pack of Doomwolves is upon them! Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Eyes darting around, you barely catch sight of a lupine figure as it approaches from over a distant hillside. A chorus of chilling howls pierces the night and, through the mist, the creatures's eyes burn red with intelligence and malice. One by one, a pack of wolf-like beasts lopes toward you, fangs glistening wet and bared.*

Sir Persicar is not without allies and the Doomwolves are hungry. They move to block the Heroes and prevent them from chasing Jasyn. There should be at least one Doomwolf per Hero. If you want to spice things up and ensure the Heroes are delayed by this encounter, increase the number of wolves.

Should the Heroes fight the Doomwolves rather than avoid them, use the following stats:

### DOOMWOLVES (1 PER HERO)

**Combat Skill:** 16

**Endurance:** 16

**Traits:** Grouping (Pack)

**Special Rules:** These Doomwolves will not group. Instead they spread out to engage every Hero if they can. If there are more Doomwolves than Heroes, the extras will group up on the strongest-looking (highest CS and END combined) Kai Lord.

If the Heroes attempt to elude the pack, the Doomwolves give chase and the ground will cave in, leading to Scene 2: Deeper and Down.

**If the Heroes defeat the Doomwolves read or paraphrase the following text aloud:**

As the last Doomwolf falls to your might, you hear a sound like thunder in the earth. The ground trembles beneath your feet and gives way! You are pitched into the darkness below, mist flowing into the sudden chasm like ghostly water along with the corpses of your foes. You try to regain some kind of footing but fail as you are swept down into the depths...

OR

**If the Heroes try to run after Jasyn and ignore the Doomwolves, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:**

You try to give chase, leaving the Doomwolves in favour of saving Jasyn. The beasts snap and bite at your heels as you race past. A few moments later, the ground beneath you heaves, crumbling inward as the land gives way into darkness! You try and regain

your footing but are only thrown deeper down. As they fall, the Doomwolves' howls punctuate the crash of falling dirt and stone...

The fall below leaves the Heroes undamaged (no ENDURANCE loss), but will serve to delay them in their pursuit of Jasyn. Proceed on to Scene 2.

## SCENE TWO: DEEPER AND DOWN

Deep beneath Rookhaven, dangerous subterranean passageways thread beneath the ground. In this scene, the Heroes explore the first part of these tunnels and find entry to a structure that has lain undisturbed for centuries. The tunnels are now home to Stoneworms and Lapillibores, creatures that have been driven mad and had their bodies warped by the terrible corruption that seeps into Rookhaven's soil.

### TRAPPED?

The way up is completely sealed and the Heroes cannot climb back, no matter how hard they try. The Heroes should also be mindful that Jasyn was being chased and they will have to move quickly if they want to catch up with the lad.

As the Heroes emerge from the cave-in, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*You dust yourselves off and look upward: the way back is lost to you beneath a mound of stone and soil. As you peer around in the gloom, your eyes adjust to a dim glow being shed by dozens of small, luminous mushrooms. They may not be the best light source, but they glow just enough for you to make out a single passage that leads on ahead.*

If a Hero makes a skill roll on Survival or Sage at a Target Number of 7 they can find out these mushrooms are commonly known as Mooncaps. Kai Lords with Hunting will know this automatically. These little fungi can provide basic light and will allow rudimentary visibility. Enterprising Heroes might attempt to take some of the mushrooms with them. If packed into a jar or other container, Mooncaps will shed light for around an hour before fading. The Heroes would be better off with a lantern, but these will do in a pinch.

If a Hero makes a skill roll on Survival or Sage at a Target Number of 7 they can find out these mushrooms are commonly known as mooncaps. Kai Lords with Hunting will know this automatically.

### TUNNELS AND TRIBULATIONS

Lacking other options, the Heroes can follow the tunnel deeper underground. It is a serpentine series of passages, littered with dead ends and cave-ins. Occasionally thin streams of pale rock dust slide out of the ceiling. Any Hero with the skill of Survival can





make a test to navigate the passages with more success. Doing so against a Target Number of 8 will allow them to make it to the next room without any problems. In this case, move along to Worm Food!

On a failure, the Heroes enter a corridor with an unstable roof. This natural trap can be detected by a Kai with Sixth Sense or by making the appropriate test to spot the trap – usually a Perception or WILLPOWER test (TN 8).

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*With a nearly imperceptible shift in the earth and stone overhead, a minor cave-in brings several large rocks down on your heads!*

Each Hero should roll an Acrobatics test or, if they do not have that skill, a COMBAT SKILL test against a Target Number 7 to avoid it. Success results in a loss of 1 ENDURANCE, while failure inflicts a Random Number in ENDURANCE instead. Wearing a Helmet reduces this loss by 1, but Defence does not otherwise help.

### WORM FOOD!

The twisting passages open out into a longer tunnel with signs of recent subterranean activity. There are pock-marked holes everywhere and a low thrumming echoes through the earth.

The Heroes do not need to make a skill test to determine what made those holes, as a new one breaches right before their eyes, disgorging an overly mutated Stoneworm.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

*You eventually reach a long chamber with cracked walls riddled by hundreds of broken holes. The air here is an odd, cloying mix of disgorged earth and something acrid you cannot quite identify. As you move on down the tunnel, the wall bursts open and a ghastly gurgling noise follows with it. A massive worm rises out of the hole, caustic spittle dripping from its grinding maw!*

Stoneworms are deadly at the best of times and this one has been driven mad and mutated by the evil seeping into Rookhaven. In addition to its barbed teeth, it has gained the ability to spew corrosive acid at its enemies and in a tunnel, this is a dangerous proposition.

### MUTATED STONEWORM

**Combat Skill:** 16

**Endurance:** 30

**Traits:** Burrow (can freely Evade), Defence (3), Brutal (1), Ranged Attack (acid spit).

**Special Rules:** This creature has an acid spit that ignores Defence, but can only be used at range. Any Kai Lord struck with this ranged acid attack must make a Luck Test. Failure destroys one carried item in this order – Shield, Armour (worn on the body), Helmet.

Stoneworms are deadly at the best of times and this one has been driven mad and even more mutated by the evil seeping into Rookhaven. In addition to its barbed teeth, it has gained the ability to spew corrosive acid at its enemies and in a tunnel, this is a dangerous proposition.

If the battle goes badly for the Heroes, they can attempt to Evade back the way they came and use a tunnel branch to escape the







Stoneworm. This automatically forces them to endure the falling rocks trap listed above. If the Heroes survive that cave-in, they will find a different breach to the Chamber of the Dead in Scene 3.

If they slay the creature, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*With a final decisive blow, you end the life of this terrible creature. It expires with a wet hiss, finally laying still. The wall where it emerged has not caved in like all of the others in this chamber.*

*Through that hole, you can see a gleam of light. It seems to be coming from a torch flickering in the distance. The Stoneworm collapses in on itself, dissolved by its own acids. After a few seconds, it has melted away enough for you to squeeze past it into the lit passage beyond.*

### SCENE THREE: AMONGST THE BONES OF THE DEAD

Leaving the tunnels, the Heroes enter a catacomb. On the final leg of their return journey to the surface, they find a ransacked room of fallen heroes. If they disturb the bones of the dead, the Heroes will learn that there is a price to pay. Knowledge of their own history will be crucial for the Kai Lords to escape, lest this tomb become their own.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Leaving the tunnels behind, you enter a small stone chamber. A single torch burns with a mystical light against the west wall. It casts long shadows across the floor, illuminating the room beyond. Scattered bones lie upon the ground and scratch marks litter the flagstones.*

*Two paths out lie to the north and the south. The north is marked by a door, slightly ajar, while the south is just an arch leading to a dark room beyond.*

Progress through the Chamber of the Dead has no set path and the Heroes may not discover all of its secrets if they rush from one area to the next. Allow the Players to explore this area as they see fit, but be sure to emphasize the urgency of finding Jasy.

The corridors that connect the rooms are all similar, so they have been left undescribed unless they happen to contain an interesting feature or trap.

#### 1 - HISTORY ANNEX

This room was once part of a larger chamber, now fallen into disrepair and damaged apart from a few old bookshelves. It led to a deeper part of the complex which is now cut off, but could be

reopened for further adventures in Rookhaven once the Kai have completed their mission. A rusted dagger lies here along with a coin purse that contains 3 Gold Crowns, minted long ago.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*As you pass through the arch you realize that the way ahead is blocked, it would take weeks to clear all the fallen stone and debris from this room. A room that once looked to have functioned as a library annex to a bigger complex, you are about to leave when you spy a rusted dagger and a small coin purse made out of faded leather tucked away on a book shelf.*

The Players can search this room all they like, they will find the items described and a two intact tomes that have survived their time down here – *An Abridged History of Sommerlund* by R. Penwayrden and a white leather-bound hymnal titled *Arias of Ishir: Songs of the Moon Goddess*.

The Sommerlund book contains the clue to the door puzzle in room 5: MS 3445 (the date of King Kian's death). There is nothing else of value here.

#### 2 - ANTE CHAMBER

The Ante Chamber is sparsely lit, dusty and musty with the weight of years. It has 3 doors that lead off to the north, west and east. All the doors share the same design save for the western door, emblazoned with a familiar symbol to the Kai – the sun!

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*The north door leads down a short corridor, the room beyond is lit with a few small torches that glimmer on the walls. Long shadows dance in time with the flickering light. The chamber's ceiling is supported by four pillars, decorated with faded carvings upon the stonework – they depict some of the early history of Sommerlund.*

*Three additional doors lead from this room: one to the north, one to the east and a sun-emblazoned stone door to the west.*

There is nothing else remarkable about this room, the carvings are faded over time and provide no useful information. If the Players investigate the carvings, they may note that one of the few readable inscriptions is a crown above the number 3445.

#### 3 - ROOM OF GHOULS

This room contains a pack of feral ghouls. They have been using hidden passages in and out of the area for some time now; the Heroes are not likely to discover these unless they return after their mission is complete.





Heroes that possess the Perception skill might detect the pack by sound, with a Target Number 6 test; the undead beasts are being fairly loud as they gnaw on bones. Heroes with Sixth Sense may well be able to preempt the danger as well; while they may not be able to identify the source of the danger, Sixth Sense will alert them to the impending harm.

Heroes with Sixth Sense may well be able to preempt the danger as well. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud if they are unaware of the ghouls:

*The sparse chamber room beyond the north corridor reveals a grisly sight. Several ghouls crouch around a corpse, gnawing fiercely upon the remnants of a recent meal. They turn to look at you, feral eyes gleaming bright. A bloody grin spreads across their jaws as torn flesh falls from their jagged teeth.*

If the Heroes are aware of the ghouls and decide to be stealthy in their approach, they can use the shadows of the room to slip past the ghouls into the chamber beyond to the east. Heroes require Stealth (CS if they do not have the skill) tests with a Target Number of 7 to get past the ghouls without alerting them.

They can enter chamber 4. However, they run the risk of alerting the ghouls if they make too much noise in this chamber and they will need to sneak back past the ghouls again when they need to return to chamber 2.

### FERAL GHOULS (3)

**Combat Skill:** 16

**Endurance:** 20

**Traits:** Brutal (2)

**Special Rule:** These Ghouls will not group, attacking alone so they do not need to share.

The ghouls have no treasure, but the chewed bodies of the dead here have 10 Gold Crowns between them if thoroughly searched.

### 4 - BONES OF THE DEAD

This chamber contains the bones of the dead; the ghouls have not dared enter this tomb for fear of disturbing the four heroes that are interred here. They are aware that the dark magic that permeates Rookhaven has corrupted them into something more powerful than they are. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Beyond the room of ghouls lies an ancient tomb. Within lies the skeletal remains of four long dead Sommlending heroes, their small crypts ravaged by the relentless march of time and their names long since lost to the ages. One of the figures, clad in the rusted armor of a Sommlending Knight, holds a large battle hammer between bony fingers as he lies upon a bier of sandy colored stone.*

The Heroes can examine the hammer and if they do so they will see it bears the mark of the sun.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*The hammer in the skeleton's hand is beautifully crafted. As a brutal work of art, it is certainly something to look upon. The double head of the weapon is made of Bronin, jacketed down the middle with a wide steel band bearing a golden sun crest with rays that stretch towards both ends. One head is wide and blunt, while the other tapers to a sharp spike.*

The Sunhammer is a masterfully-made weapon, but there is nothing magical about it. It is a war maul, a new type of two-handed weapon described elsewhere in this supplement. While it would make a marvelous weapon for one of the Heroes, they will have to earn it.

If the Heroes do take the hammer, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*As you grasp the hammer, the skeletal hand yanks suddenly and pulls it free from your hands! With a surge of unearthly speed, the corpse that once lay still now stands before you, as do his comrades. Their empty eyes billow with grey mist and dark fire.*

*These ancient heroes have risen into cursed unlife, ready to do battle once more!*

### UNDEAD HEROES (4)

**Combat Skill:** 20

**Endurance:** 15

**Willpower:** 5

**Traits:** Defence (2), Immune to Mindblast, Soldier, Veteran

**Special Rules:** Each Undead Hero will pick a single opponent to fight. They will not group unless they outnumber the Kai Lords.

If the Heroes have not dealt with the ghouls from room 3, they will hear the clash of combat. Have the ghouls show up after a few combat rounds, eager to feast upon living flesh.

Once the last skeletal hero falls, the Heroes are free to take the hammer, as seen in the following text. As the Heroes stand victorious, read or paraphrase the following:

*The last skeletal hero falls to clatter at the ground beneath your feet, that huge hammer still in its grasp. Its skull turns to look directly at you, eyes burning with black fire that slowly becomes a pair of pale white flames.*

*With the last of its strength, the ancient champion lifts its weapon, holding the hammer aloft toward you. "Thissss... take thissss..." it whispers in a low, sepulchral voice.*





*"It should shine in Ssssalor's light, not ssssleep in the cold dark. Pleasssse."*

*Then the warrior collapses, the light in its eyes fading away forever. "Whatever we possesseed is yoursss, payment for our ssssouls. Blesssss you..."*

With the passing of the last knight, these corrupted heroes can now rest in peace.

These old crypts are a good place to drop an item you might want the Heroes to have or to replace a piece of broken equipment (such as items lost to the Stoneworm). While graverobbing may normally be a questionable act, this tomb feels at peace. Having been given permission by the fallen hero, there should be no moral dilemma in taking what the Heroes need.

## 5 - DOOR OF THE SUN

This room contains the Heroes' goal: a way out of these catacombs. The room is dominated by a huge sun-embazoned door with a strange clockwork puzzle attached. Solving the puzzle requires the Heroes to set the mechanism to the right date: f King Kian I's death in MS 3445. Clues to this can be found in a book in room 1 and on the columns of room 2.

As the Heroes enter, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*This well lit chamber has weathered the test of time. A huge bronze-coloured door stands on the western wall, marked clearly with the bold blaze of the sun above it. In the heart of the sun is an image of a king laying on a funerary dais.*

*Directly under the sun is a complex looking mechanism that appears to be some kind of annum clock, set with symbols for morning, noon, night and the current year. There are also several dials that look as though they might turn. The clock-like device is attached to the door, keeping it both shut and locked.*

*The walls are adorned with frescos and paintings of Sommerlund. Many legendary heroes are painted upon them including several images of King Kian I. The paint and inlay work look as though they were done only yesterday. Powerful magic must still linger here.*

To escape this chamber, the Heroes must change the dials so the clock matches the year that King Kian I died. Time of day is irrelevant, though the Heroes will not know that.

A Tinkering skill test with a Target Number of 8 or a Sage skill test with a Target Number of 7 should help the Heroes to determine not only the function of the device, but the correct settings if they have missed a clue.

There's also an optional way to get the door open: the Kai Discipline Mind Over Matter. The Hero must make an Extended Test, with three tests to overcome at Target Numbers of 7, 8, and 9 respectfully. Each one must be successfully beaten before the next can be tried. The Heroes have three tries for each step of the extended test. If any step is failed three times, the lock jams and they must use the puzzle to open it.

Once they get the mechanism correctly set then read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*The great door opens and a wall of dirt comes pouring into the chamber with you. Past the now open path beyond, you smell fresh air and see cold moonlight beyond. You have found a way out of these forgotten tunnels at last!*

*Outside, you can hear the gallop of horses. The ceiling above you shakes, raining dust as the hoof beats get louder. Whatever's happening out there, it is happening right on top of you!*

The Heroes should immediately proceed to Scene 4 – Starkriven Pass

## 6 - SHRINE OF THE MOON

The shrine here is a simple one. There is not much in the small room, save for a statue of Ishir and a small bowl of silvery looking water.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*You feel the peace of this chamber, small and pleasant, tucked away in this underground place. A statue of Ishir stands before a bowl of silvery water that glows like liquid moonlight. Writing beneath the statue proclaims, "Anoint your brow and find peace."*

This is a simple shrine to the Moon Goddess Ishir, and can provide healing for each Hero that dips their hands into the Font of Ishir.

The font heals any such Hero 4 ENDURANCE in a gleam of silver light. This healing can only happen once per hero. Any water taken from the font loses its radiance and healing magic immediately.

## SCENE FOUR: STARKRIVEN PASS

In this scene, the Heroes emerge from the dungeon just in time to witness Sir Persicar ride down Jasyn. They are too late to stop the boy's death, but his death will not be without meaning.

Ideally, the Heroes should let Persicar get away and refrain from confronting him before they have the means to put a stop to his plans once and for all. Combat should be seen as an absolute last resort.





## CUT DOWN IN HIS PRIME

With the boy exhausted, Persicar has finally caught up to Jasyn with a dozen Blood Ravens in his wake. They waste no time bringing the lad to heel. As the Heroes watch, the horseman strikes the boy down with a dark looking sword, a terrible blade known as Midnight.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Acts of vile power and infamy are typically the purvey of the Darklords. But still, there are brutal acts of men so corrupted by darkness that they enter the history books as true villains.*

*You witness one such act now under Ishir's gaze, as Sir Persicar rides down Jasyn, a dark blade in hand, sweeping violently downward from his horse. The boy pitches forwards, blood fountaining into the night. Jasyn's death-scream is cut short as Persicar's steed tramples his body into the dirt.*

*Sir Persicar, his horse still standing on the boy's fallen form and he speaks to his men. "Our mission is complete. Let us inform the master that this wretch will trouble us no more!"*

Wheeling his horse about, he rides off into the mist. His Blood Ravens swiftly follow, leaving you behind. Silence now reigns over Starkriven Pass, a cold rain starting to fall.

The Heroes may want to try and catch up to Sir Persicar and make him pay for this murder. Try as they might, there is no way to catch the man now. He is mounted and the Heroes are not. He will outdistance them no matter how quickly they run. It may not seem

fair, but they will have the chance to bring Persicar to justice. That time is not just now. Not yet. If the Heroes are wise, they let him ride off and see to Jasyn instead. Unfortunately, the boy is already.

No amount of Healing Discipline, Laumspur, or other methods will revive Jasyn. It is a bitter blow, especially for anyone who befriended the boy, and one the Heroes should use to galvanise their quest to finish Persicar and his ilk once and for all.

As the tragedy of Jasyn's death settles in, move to the Conclusion.

## CONCLUSION

As the scenario ends, Kailen decides that the Heroes are truly trustworthy and pulls them aside for a chat. While he could not do anything to save the boy, he can ensure that the Heroes can avenge Jasyn's death. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Before you can give chase, a single figure emerges from the shadows of the pass. He is instantly recognizable – Kailen, the self-appointed village greeter. Approaching you, he looks down to Jasyn's corpse and shakes his head.*

*"Sad this is, but you made the right choice not going after that blackguard."*

*"I need to tell you something, let us get away from here and into somewhere a little better secured."*

*As he speaks, Kailen kneels down, searching Jasyn's body as if looking for something specific. He pulls forth a short, narrow tube of leather with a hook and grommet clasp on one end.*







*"This is what Jasyn risked his life for, friends. He was bringing it to me. I thought out here we would be far enough from Raven Hall that we'd be safe. I was wrong... tragically so."*

*Tucking the letter tube into his vestment, he gestures for you all to follow and then then starts off toward the north, slipping into the shadows as naturally as if he had been born in them.*

The Heroes may not trust Kailen at this point and he would not blame them if they did not, considering what just happened to Jasyn. If they do not follow him, he will leave them alone for now and try to contact them again later.

In such case, the scenario ends with the Heroes on their way back to town, travelling alone.

If the Kai Lords trust Kailen enough to follow him, read on:

*The town greeter, devoid of smiles and jokes now, leads you to an abandoned farm not far from the shadows of Rookhaven's northern mountains. Small but well-fortified, this dusty old acreage has a stone wall and seems far better kept inside than it appears to be from without.*

*After lighting a small fire, Kailen settles into a worn wooden chair and begins. "Let me start by coming clean. My name is not Kailen and I am not who I have appeared to be. My real name is Audin. Forgive me the deception but it has all been necessary."*

*Before speaking again, he hands you a small golden token. It has the seal of Holmgard on one side and an image of a hooded man on the other.*

The Kai Lords will recognize this as a mark of identification used by Agents of the Crown, skilled spies and scouts who often spend years undercover in the service of Sommerlund. Sixth Sense will reveal that Kailen is speaking the truth and comes by that badge honestly.

*"Kailen was a member of this community, a real person once. He was slain by bandits and I took his place so I could infiltrate this place. The Crown is concerned there is a true evil here, something worse than corrupt nobles. I think we all know that concern is justified, no?"*

*"I am hoping that you Kai can help me do something about it. What say you?"*

Kailen (Audin) is hoping that the Kai will say yes. If they do, they gain a valuable ally and a source of information on Rookhaven. If they refuse, he will be slightly put out but understand their suspicion. He will just have to work a little harder to gain their trust.

## "WHAT ABOUT THAT THING YOU FOUND ON JASYN'S BODY?"

Regarding the scroll tube he took from Jasyn, all Audin will say is that it may contain a way to save all of Rookhaven. He cannot tell them more because he needs to examine it first. He solemnly swears that whatever he learns, he will tell them immediately.

The scroll is a map of Raven Hall, information vital to planning an attack against Persicar and the Basanet. Without this map, any assault would be doomed to failure.

In any case, the adventure ends here. This concludes Act II of the *Before the Dawn* campaign and your Players may now advance their Kai Lords to Rank 7!

The rest of the story plays out in Act III and begins with *To Defy the Dark*.

## PATHS AND POSSIBILITIES – SCENARIO SIX – STROKE OF MIDNIGHT

### GHOULS AND GIAKS

From within the catacombs beneath Rookhaven, a group of Giaks has concocted a plan to launch a series of assaults on the settlement. These Giaks have already killed several members of both the Dun Masks and the Blood Ravens, so the Heroes might find out about the vile creatures from either source. While investigating the tunnels further, the Kai become surrounded as Giak and Ghouls swarm out of the dark and attack!

### EXTENDED SURVEY

The Catacombs above have several larger and more complex areas to explore; the Kai are charged with opening the passages and delving deeper into the Catacombs of the Dead to stop any further Ghoul attacks. Lore discovered while unearthing a collapsed tunnel suggests that a lost treasure lies somewhere further in the complex – something from the days of the very first Kai Lords!

### MURDER HE WROTE

A paid killer has come to Rookhaven, it's not yet known who his target is. It could be one of the Kai or it could be someone the Kai know and have formed a bond with during their adventures in the settlement. The assassin will strike soon and it's up to the Player Characters to stop him before he completes his task.





## FATE OF THE RAVENS

Andus Kerrin and Turlon Aldbrent, the leaders of the dissidents among the Blood Ravens, make a daring choice to search the Marshalls' quarters for information. Though nearly caught several times, they uncover enough evidence to definitively prove that the foreign mercenaries among them are being paid a higher wage and are being trained for some important military action apart from the rest of the guard.

Incensed by this news, they return to the others with the evidence. Andus argues that the Blood Ravens should all be told of what they discovered, but Turlon talks him down from revealing everything immediately. Sir Persicar has been acting suspiciously and Turlon does not want to start a war inside Raven Hall that they cannot win.

Together, they manipulate duty rosters to get all the Blood Ravens loyal to them on patrol shifts away from Persicar and the others. Once in the field, the patrol groups converge on an abandoned farm south of Starkriven Pass.

While this is going on, Renn Maldrun has consolidated his hold on the Dun Masks in Rookhaven. This has proven easier than he feared, as most of the Corrie bandits only embraced a criminal lifestyle to help support their families. The idea that foreign soldiers could be responsible for their hardships is all the reason they need to come on board with Renn.

From this point onward, the Heroes will have no further trouble from Dun Masks in Rookhaven.

## ACT THREE: THE LONG NIGHT

*'It will be worth it,' Marshall Gunn thought. 'It will all be worth it.'*

*Gunn told himself this repeatedly over the last hour, as he forced himself to smile and laugh and converse with these base peasants. They sat at his table, ate his meat, guzzled his best wine as if it were cheap ale. There was no decorum among them, not even the Marshalls. The notion that this lowborn scum could be considered his equals was... offensive.*

*Gunn didn't know where Persicar - Sir Persicar, he reminded himself hurriedly - had recruited these people. Many of the Blood Ravens were from the village, as they were supposed to be, but others had come from elsewhere, arriving a few at a time and reporting directly to Raven Hall. Questions as to their origin were sternly discouraged.*

*'When I prove my worth,' Gunn mused, 'Sir Persicar will take me into his confidence. He shall govern, and I will be his loyal right hand.'*

*He loathed the idea of accepting all these uncouth outsiders, but even these dregs had their uses.*

*He rose, tapping a fingernail against his wine glass; the ringing notes subdued the raucous conversation. "Gentlemen," he said, almost choking on the irony of the term, "Let us get to the matter at hand. I have a task that requires your... special qualities."*

*There were murmurs of approval at this praise, though none thought to ask 'What special qualities?' That suited Gunn, as a lack of curiosity was one such quality. Aggression was another. Even amongst the Blood Ravens, these outsiders had a reputation for unnecessary violence. They were also expendable, a fact that cheered Gunn no end.*

*"We live well in Rookhaven, and deservedly so, given our solemn duty protecting the villagers from all that threatens their peaceful lives."*

*There was a snicker from the far end of the table, but Gunn ignored it. "Yet recently there has been a fly in our ointment. Several flies in fact, and they are green."*

*One of the diners lifted his piggy, foreign face from the steak pie he was devouring. "Greenfly?" he questioned in a spray of crumbs and gravy.*

*Gunn forced himself to smile at the hefty barbarian. "I refer to the Kai Lords. Perhaps it would be better if they...were not here. And as they seem unwilling to leave, more permanent solutions may be needed."*

*There was a stir around the table. "You mean. kill them?" one of the diners asked, shocked. Gunn made a mental note of the speaker, in case it became necessary to remove weak links later.*

*At the far end of table, another of the new recruits spoke up. That was Tollin, a cutter from the Wildlands. Persicar had assigned him to Gunn as a personal aide. "Kai wear green," Tollin said wryly, cleaning under his fingernails with a dagger, "but I reckon they bleed red, same as anyone else."*

*For once, Gunn's smile was genuine. Maybe these men were the right sort after all.*



## TO DEFY THE DARK

### (SCENARIO SEVEN)

This is the first scenario of The Long Night, the third campaign arc for Before the Dawn. It is the seventh scenario overall and builds on the relationships and momentum of the previous six. Before you run this adventure, Players should have a good understanding of the province of Rookhaven, its people, and at least a few of its secrets. Chief among these secrets is Kailen's real identity as an Agent of the Crown. They should know that Rookhaven is possessed of some supernatural evil, which has corrupted the land and could threaten the security of all Sommerlund.

By this point, the Players have fought Giaks, bandits, Blood Ravens, and undead rising from the mass grave of the Battle of Starkriven Pass. They have encountered poisonous curses, found forgotten temples, and been witness to murder most foul. The Heroes have become an integral part Rookhaven and now, before they move on to become the province's salvation, you as Narrator need to be sure the Players are ready for the hard choices and epic battles to come. Unlike most scenarios in this campaign, To Defy the Dark only has two 'scenes'. Scene One comprises a lengthy, free-form preparation, while Scene Two is a combat encounter that will occupy the Heroes until the end of the scenario.

### ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

This scenario involves the Kai Lords' preparations to attack Raven Hall. Through discussion with villagers and direct observation, the Players can gather the information needed to infiltrate the fortress. This scenario involves a great deal of roleplaying, critical thinking, and interaction. Think of To Defy the Dark as the calm before an oncoming storm.

Once the Heroes have prepared, they receive a warning from one of their allies. A group of Blood Ravens plan to kill them, even as an entirely separate group of Blood Ravens intend to defend them. Emboldened all the Heroes have done for the province, a small contingent of Sir Persicar's tyrannical forces to break away in revolt! Unfortunately, while those freedom fighters intercept their former comrades-in-arms, the Heroes are exposed to a sneak attack by an elite team of Persicar's finest. The Kai must now fend for themselves, with their survival and the future of Rookhaven in the balance.

### SCENE ONE: MAKING PLANS

Having witnessed Jasyn's murder, the Players have motivation to investigate Raven Hall, confront Persicar, and finally meet Basanet Corvan – the presumed mastermind behind all of Rookhaven's woes. While previous attempts have been blocked, the time has come to take direct action.

This scene opens in the Heroes' safe house: this will most likely be their rooms at the Murder of Crows or a small building in the village itself, provided by a grateful Vinas Venn. However, following the events of The Stroke of Midnight, there is another option – Stonngarten Manor.

### STONNGARTEN MANOR

If the Heroes wished to stay in the old farm house Kailen took them to after Jasyn's death, they were welcome to do so. Kailen, whose real name is Audin, has been fortifying Stonngarten Manor for many months. He has repaired its walls in secret, stocked the cellar with supplies, and shored up the building in hidden ways. In addition, Stonngarten Manor sits upon a flat plain some distance from Raven Hall, with its rear walls facing a mountainside; any enemy coming from Raven Hall could be seen approaching long before they arrive. Stonngarten might well be the strongest holdfast in Rookhaven short of Raven Hall itself.

If the Heroes are willing to help Rookhaven in its time of need, Audin will give them Stonngarten Manor with no regrets.

Stonngarten can serve as a safehouse and home for the Heroes long after this Campaign finishes. Feel free to allow your Players to retain it as a home base for as long as they feel like keeping it. If they survive the events of The Long Night, they have certainly earned it.

Regardless of where the Heroes go as a safe-house, they need to discuss what is happening in Rookhaven. Kailen will accompany them, and can explain any aspect of his mission he wasn't able to before. He will also suggest, if none of the Players do, the possibility of assaulting the Hall.

Read or paraphrase the following:

*Once the door is closed and the nearby windows are shuttered, Kailen turns to the lot of you. His voice is heavy with concern and his eyes are lidded, lost in thought.*

*"An ill wind blows, friends; I do not think it will pass until it reaps its due in blood."*

*Crossing over to you, he sits down and unrolls a map of Rookhaven Province on the table. "If Sir Persicar had seen you when he struck poor Jasyn down, he surely would have turned his dark-be-damned*





*blade on you as well. That has bought us time that we can ill-afford to waste."*

*Kailen, or Audin, or whatever his real name is, points to the large keep overlooking the village of Rookhaven to the north. "Our true enemy is here. The Basanet. has pulled all his forces back to Raven Hall. The streets are unpatrolled, the fields are empty. Whatever he is planning, he will not likely be long at it. And now, he sits behind waves of pawns and one powerful black knight."*

*Resting his hand on the map, Kailen looks up at you, concern etched across his weary features. "This means our window to act is a short one. The Basanet cannot be given time to complete his plans and..."*

*He draws a short boot knife and stabs the hills between Rookhaven and Thornfalcon. "...the Dun Masks are sure to attack in force as soon as they learn the Blood Ravens have gone to ground."*

*"We are pinned on a precipice of decision, Lords of the Kai. Danger closes in on every side." Kailen sits back, arms crossed, ready to listen to anything you have to say. "What do we do now?"*

Some Players may be ready to attack immediately. Kailen will actively discourage such a path, calling to that Kai doctrine favours wisdom and forethought. This will be an excellent opportunity for role playing as the Players discuss different courses of action.

Eventually they should decide to gather some information on their target before acting. This provides an excellent opportunity for role playing as the Players discuss different courses of action.

There are two primary methods to gather intelligence: direct observation or asking questions.

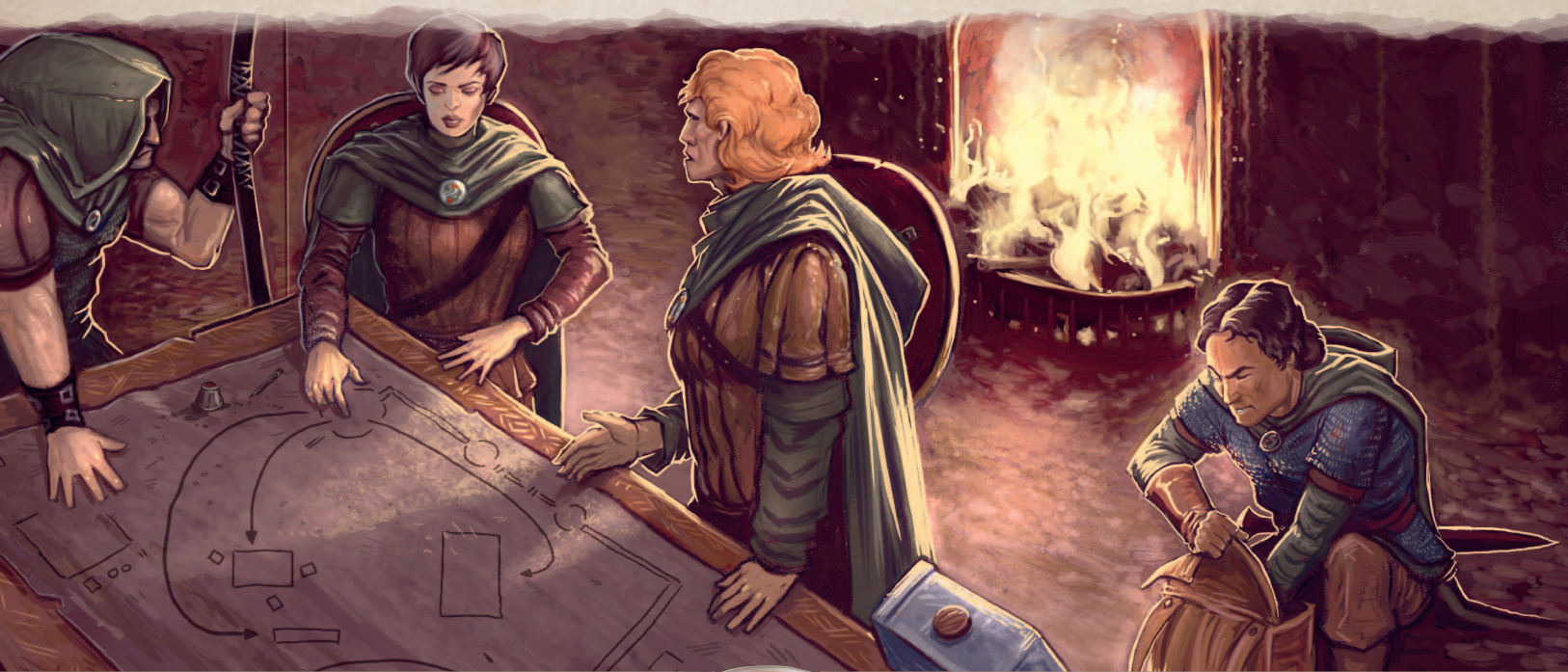
## GATHERING INFORMATION: DIRECT OBSERVATION

Direct Observation favours those who have a good Stealth skill and/or the Camouflage Discipline. The heroes must find good hiding spots to observe the area.

Raven Hall itself is a one story building originally built for administrative purposes and formal events. While it used to have a much taller section of towers and a two story keep behind it, all of that collapsed when the explosion destroyed Starkriven Pass. Over long, isolated years, Raven Hall is still mostly unused – the windows shuttered, the two reinforced front doors sealed with a closed portcullis in front of each.

Observers will note that not only is entry to the hall very difficult, it is also unnecessary. The Hall itself has nothing of value. To carry out their assault, the Players will need to access the buildings in the compound behind it.

A three meter high stone wall surrounds the compound on three sides, with the north side against the mountain. Constructed with the help of Dwarves of Bor, this has weathered the years well and is still a viable defensive structure. Climbing its smooth surface without the benefit of a rope is TN 9. There are two obvious entrances through the wall, both gatehouses built into the wall on either side of the Hall. Players who carefully examine the wall may spot two possible alternate access routes.





### Observing The East

The east side of the wall has partially collapsed where it meets the cliff face, where it was hit by falling debris from the ruined watchtower decades ago. The gap is partially shadowed even at midday, thanks to the terrain, and requires a Perception Test of TN 7 to spot from a distance.

If the Players wish to scout closer (requiring Stealth TN 6, or an automatic success for those with Camouflage), they will find this gap automatically. Closer reconnaissance also reveals that there is plenty of debris around the gap. While this debris will give plenty of cover in their final approach, it may be noisy to cross.

### Observing The West

Thanks to erosion, the stonework on part of the western wall has crumbled, making it possible to climb. Spotting this from any distance is nearly impossible (Perception TN 10) so players will have to scout closer to find it. Unfortunately this means passing close to a nearby farmhouse. While the inhabitants are inobservant, their large and noisy dog is likely to smell any interlopers and will start barking.

Stealth Rolls for this scouting trip are TN 9, and Camouflage TN 7. If a player has Animal Kinship and approaches the dog, they can ask it to be quiet, allowing the Players to pass unnoticed.

When they actually carry out their raid on the Hall, it will be necessary to deal the dog again. Again, a Player with Animal Kinship can do that, allowing the rest of the group to pass safely. There are, of course, other ways to silence the animal, but Discipline use is likely the kindest.

### Observing The Front

Those who wish to observe from the front have three choices. There is an alleyway directly opposite the Hall, the roof tops of the nearest homes, and the library in Reballen's home with its wide balcony.

**The Alley:** The alleyway is narrow and dark. Unless they do anything foolish (such as entering it in full view of the hall), Players can easily remain hidden from the guards. For every hour they spend there, however, there is a chance (0-3 on the Random Number Table at day, 0 on the table at night) that a civilian might attempt to pass through the alley. Hiding in such a confined space requires a Stealth Test at TN 9.

Any civilian's natural reaction will be to raise the alarm, though they can be convinced to be quiet with an Influence Test at TN 8. If the Players have a good reputation in the village, they gain a +1 Bonus on this Test. If they have repeatedly risked their lives and worked hard to help, that Bonus increases to +3.

Unfortunately, there is not much to be seen from the alleyway. Perception tests, irrespective of how well the Player rolls, show little sign of weakness in the security. The Players will note that the Gatehouses are kept closed to everyone except Blood Ravens and occasional, heavily-guarded supply deliveries.

**The Rooftops:** A Might Test of TN7 is needed to scale the rooftops, along with a Stealth Test at TN 6 to avoid being seen. The Stealth Test becomes TN 11 if anyone tries it within view of the guards. From that vantage point, it is possible to see most of Raven Hall's courtyard. Players on the rooftop must test Stealth (TN 6) each hour to avoid being either spotted by the guards.



Alerted guards raise the alarm immediately. Unless they get down quickly the Players will have to make their escape across the rooftops, as the summoned Blood Ravens will surround the building to cut off any escape route.

From the roof, players will be able to get a good look at the general layout of the compound, note the progress of guards around the courtyard, and learn the regular patrol routes. This provides a +1 Bonus when attempting to avoid detection when they infiltrate the Hall later. If the players use a Writing Box or Mapmakers' Pack to make a map and record the patrol routes, this Bonus increases to +2.

**Reballen's Balcony:** Unless they have reason to suspect his loyalties, the Players may approach Reballen for help. As one of the few villagers to regularly visit the Hall, he knows the general layout of the compound and the location of Basanet Corvan's personal chambers. If the Players decide to approach Reballen first, and the Narrator wants them to talk to other villagers or observe from elsewhere, he can be unavailable, attending a medical emergency when they call. Any information they fail to get from other sources can later be supplied when they finally do see Reballen.





Though he has lapsed in many ways, Reballen still tries to maintain confidentiality and will not talk without persuasion. An Influence Test at TN 7 is necessary to convince him to provide information. This can be reduced to TN 6 if the Players claim that they wish to help either the village or the Basanet himself. Good role playing may lead to an automatic success.

If the Players let it be known they are planning any form of aggression against the Basanet, the TN increases to 10. Reballen is a pacifist who finds violence repugnant. Even if they do get the information they seek, Reballen will try to dissuade them from any such action. If they argue the point, he will eventually mutter that 'We all must do what we think is right'. Whilst apparently conceding the point to the Players, he is in fact justifying his silent decision to inform Sir Persicar of their plans.

Reballen's home is also useful in that it is close enough to the Hall to make a good observation post. For this, they will either need Reballen's permission or use his domicile while he is absent. As with questioning him, an Influence Test of TN 7 is needed. Again, this can be modified by the Players' attitude. Players may wish to conceal their motivation for gaining access to the house and use some excuse. It is known in Rookhaven that Reballen has a small library of medical texts with a window overlooking the compound. He will grant access to the Kai if he believes they have legitimate reason, as some texts are both valuable and fragile, but he can be convinced with a Medical or Sage Test of TN 6.

From the balcony, Players will be able to observe the daily routine of the Blood Ravens. They will need about three hours to gain information on troop numbers and patrol schedules. As above, this can give a +1 Bonus to attempts to avoid patrols later (+2 if they record their observations).

## THE RIDDLE OF RAVEN HALL'S BARRACKS

If the Heroes scout from Elder Reballen's balcony, they may be able to see into Raven Hall's courtyard well enough to catch sight of the barracks. If they do, they will see that Raven Hall's garrison is much larger than it should be. Judging from patrols and wall guards, the province should only have about a hundred active soldiers. What the Heroes can see from Reballen's balcony (and only from this balcony), Raven Hall is keeping at least three hundred troops behind its walls. There are facilities for at least two hundred more, making the ruined keep capable of housing a small army. But why? What purpose could the Basanet have for a military force like that?

Reballen will leave Players be for the most part, but will occasionally check up on them. If there is more than one Player present, one can question him whilst another observes, but care should be taken. If Reballen becomes aware of their plans, he will ask them to leave. Reballen is not above trying to summon assistance if they refuse. This close to the Hall, the guards would certainly hear a shout for help. Needless to say, whatever he thinks of the Kai, Reballen will reveal what he knows to Sir Persicar once the Heroes have left. He truly believes that to be the right course of action.

## GATHERING INFORMATION: ASKING QUESTIONS

Asking the villagers for information can bring some success, but only if the Players have been notably helpful throughout Rookhaven. If they have not, any such attempt is doomed to failure, as the Corries' distrust of outsiders will cause them to clam up at even the most reasonable requests. Furthermore, most Corries have a family member in the Ravens. All Corries are extremely reluctant to do anything that might imperil a relative, even one forced to cut ties with them.

Even the old standby of buying rounds of drinks at the inn is a dead end. Unless the Players have gained the citizens's trust, no one will answer publicly, for fear of being seen to help. Should someone answer the Kai's questions, someone else will inform the Ravens of this 'disloyalty'. The helpful villager would have goods confiscated, with a small amount given as a reward to the informer. With poverty and starvation running rampant in the village, this is more than enough motivation to betray a friend.

Should the Players approach villagers privately, they may prove more cooperative. As mentioned earlier, the villagers will not normally assist outsiders, even against the Blood Ravens, unless the Players have gained a modicum of respect. If they have, they will still need to succeed at a TN 9 Influence test. A Bonus of +1 applies if they have been helpful around Rookhaven, +2 if they have assisted the villager or his immediate family directly, or +3 if the assistance involved saving that person's life or livelihood. These Bonuses do not stack; use only the highest applicable Bonus.

What the Players can learn depends upon who they ask. As Raven Hall is closed to the public, most villagers have little to tell. Those who live opposite the Hall do know what time the guards change and when the farmers deliver supplies.

Asking the farmers who supply food to the Hall is a safer bet. If a farmer can be convinced to talk, he can reveal the following information:

- The gatehouses contains three Blood Ravens at all times. They have large double doors, a portcullis, and an alarm bell to summon reinforcements.



- When the farmer arrives, two Blood Ravens check his cart (this is not so much vigilance on their part as an opportunity to see if there is any food worth stealing before it's taken further).
- At least one Blood Raven remains in the gatehouse to ring the alarm bell if needed.
- The best quality supplies go to the Basanet's Wing, a large building where Corvan and Persicar live. They are delivered to the kitchen door, near the north-east corner.
- The remaining supplies go to the large barracks on the east, where most of the Blood Ravens live. There must be quite a few of them, judging by the amount of food needed.
- There are regular patrols around the grounds, but the farmer does not know any details.

If the Narrator wishes, all this information can be delivered in a single interview. Alternatively, the Players may need to speak to several people to get all the answers. Once they have learnt all they can, they should return to their safe house and discuss their findings. This time, Kailen insists on using Stonngarten if they are not doing so already; staying within Rookhaven proper simply leaves them too exposed.

Kailen is present to advise and answer any questions, but he will not make decisions for the Heroes. Make sure everyone has the opportunity to have their say.

## SCENE TWO: A SUDDEN WARNING

Once the Players have come up with a plan that satisfies them, read or paraphrase the following:

*You spend several hours discussing your plan, debating strengths and weaknesses, points of entry and escape plans. Your plan of attack is as ready as you can make it and you are confident it will give you as good a chance of success as you are liable to get.*

*Only one thing remains to decide. Strike tonight, or wait until another day? It's now early evening and you have been busy working out all the details. You're feeling a little drained and will need at least a good meal and a couple of hours of sleep to be rested for the coming conflict.*

Let the Players make their decision. Then read:

*Your ears perk up, catching the far-off sound of galloping hoofbeats. Whoever is riding seems to be heading straight towards you at great speed. Considering the rough ground and fading light, they are taking a considerable risk.*

A Perception Test at TN 6 will reveal only that one set of hoof beats can be heard. Players with Sixth Sense will detect agitation and fear, but no aggression.



If the Players investigate, read the following:

*The horse and rider arrive just as you open the door. It is Ishora Brackwen, with bright eyes and flushed cheeks, on a chestnut coloured mare. The horse trembles with exertion, its flanks streaked with sweat. The horse has clearly been pushed to the limit.*

*As you step outside, Ishora leaps down from her saddle and rushes towards you. "Quickly!" she gasps. "They are coming!"*

OR

If the Players wait indoors, read the following:

*You hear the horse pull to a halt outside. Moments later, footsteps approach the door at speed. Someone pounds on the door, shouting your names. You recognize Ishora Brackwen's voice, breathless and agitated. Kailen swings open the door and the breathless woman half-collapses into the safe-house.*

Once inside the safe house, Ishora gulps down a mug of water handed to her by Kailen. She is out of breath from her ride but recovers very quickly. Once she can speak again, read the following:

*Ishora takes a long drink, which seems to steady her. "Do you remember Marshall Gunn? You met him at the Maldrun's Tannery, and saved him from the Dun Masks." she says. "He's one of Persicar's cronies, on the lookout for ways to impress his master. Tonight he means to do that; he's leading a group of Blood Ravens out here to kill you all!"*

The Players may have questions. If they do not ask, Ishora volunteers the answers.





**How many Blood Ravens are there?** *"At least a dozen, possibly more. Apart from Gunn, there's at least one other Marshall."*

**Does Persicar know anything about this?** *"I think not. Gunn seems to be acting on his own, such as it is."*

**What is the plan?** *"To avoid attracting suspicion they're going to leave Raven Hall in small groups at different times. If anyone asks, they'll say they are just going on patrol. They intend to meet up at Unkindness Crossing. When they're all there, they'll regroup and advance here. Simple as that."*

**Why would he try to kill us? We saved his life!** *"Don't expect gratitude from a man like Gunn. He's bitter and twisted inside. The fact that he's in your debt just makes him resent you more. And he'll do anything to get if he thinks it'll advance his position."*

Kailen will agree with this, adding:

*"You should hear how he's been talking about it at the Crow. He was the hero of the hour. He fought the Dun Masks singlehandedly and saved the 'Kai children'. You know, I rather think he's beginning to believe it himself."*

**How do you know all this?** This is an important question. If the Players don't ask it, Kailen will. Be sure to paraphrase the following if the Kai Lords have already figured out Ishora has latent gifts of her own.

*Ishora looks hesitant. Her brow furrows. "I was...I..." she starts, before trailing off. After a few moments of introspection she says thoughtfully "I had just washed up after cleaning out the goat shed. I'd gone through to the kitchen, it was full of the smell of baking bread...I'd sat down, I think I dozed off... and then... Oh no! Oh no, I must have dreamed the whole thing!"*

*"Oh, how embarrassing, to disturb you all over nothing more than a bad dream! Whatever must you think of me?"*

*Kailen clucks his tongue. "I wouldn't be so swift to ignore your dreams, my girl. Remember Old Mother Trevan? You dreamed of the fire before it started. That's how your step brother got there and dragged her out in time. And when young Cormac went missing, you saw him in the cave, broken leg and all? Saved his life, you did."*

*He turns to you. "She's got Kai's own sight, this one. You'd be wise to heed her warning."*

If the Players have previously mentioned to Ishora that she has Kai potential, she will ask if these dreams could be a result of that. If not, she will ask how her dreams could be coming true. Now would

be a good time for the Players to let her know. Either way, she will be shocked at the revelation. Read the following:

*"You've given me a lot to think about" Ishora says softly.*

*"Aye, and a lot to talk about too." Kailen adds. "But that can wait. Gunn and his men will be on their way. They need to be stopped."*

Allow the Players to ask any further questions if they need to, but they move swiftly. If none of them think of it, Ishora suggests they head to Unkindness Crossing: if they are fast, they can get there before all the Blood Ravens do, and can deal with them in smaller groups.

## FOR FREEDOM!

As the Players arrive, several groups of Blood Ravens have already arrived at the Crossing, but all is not as the Heroes expected it to be. The groups have converged, yes, but they locked in battle against one another! Read the following to your players:

*The scene at Unkindness Crossing is one of battle and bloodshed. Dozens of crimson-cloaked soldiers are scattered across the crossroads, fighting each other in a vicious chaos of clashing steel! There seem to be two sides, one led by several Marshalls in full plate and the other headed up by a soldier with his helmet off, his face concealed by a brown leather hood and a red mask. Even at this distance, his sheer size makes him easy to identify: Renn Maldrun, Jasyn's father and one of the Dun Mask bandits.*

*"Don't give an inch!" you hear him roar to the Blood Ravens fighting beside him. "Fight for your homes!"*

*He pivots away from an attack from a barrel-chested Marshall with a battle axe, forcing the man's stroke to slam down into the ground beside him. Renn stomps down on the axe haft, snapping it off, and drives his spear through the Marshall's breastplate. "Fight for your families!"*

*Several Blood Ravens pour in on either side of him, blades bared and desperate for battle. They slam together, fighting for all their worth. It is impossible to tell sides now. Unkindness Crossing is a sea of swords and scarlet.*

*Above the din, you hear Renn's voice one last time. "Fight for Rookhaven!"*

As the Players approach the melee, several Blood Ravens will spot them. There will be lots of shouting of things like "They're here!" and "Get them!", but it will take a moment for those Blood Ravens to fight their way free of the battle they are in to come attack the Heroes.





Normally, this would be the perfect opportunity for the Heroes to seize the initiative, but there is a complication they will have to deal with first – Marshall Gunn.

### UNDER THE GUNN

*A small group of armoured riders emerge from a nearby copse of trees. Just as you have been watching the battle unfold, so have they. Unfortunately for you, these horsemen are also wearing the livery of the Blood Ravens. The rider in front is holds a long-barreled weapon aimed directly toward you – a Bor Musket.*

*Sitting atop Bolt, the horse he confiscated from the Maldrun family, Marshall Gunn lifts his visor with his free hand and spits on the ground. “What do you reckon, lads? Wait for the others to slaughter those traitors first? Or just claim all the glory ourselves?”*

*The Blood Raven beside him flourishes his drawn sword. “We don’t need anyone else. Let’s kill the lot of them; we can take their green cloaks to Persicar as a gift.”*

*“They’re Kai Lords,” another soldier points out nervously. “I’ve heard they know how to fight.”*

*Gunn casually backhands the speaker. “Better than us? I think not. Cod up, men! Let’s kill them!”*

The Players may attempt to talk Gunn out of his scheme. Doing so is extremely difficult, and they only have one chance. Have the player making the attempt to describe his approach. Mentioning that the Blood Ravens are supposed to uphold the law, or that both they and the Kai are working to protect Sommerlund might help, as not all of Gunn’s men are as committed to murder as he is, and he is a coward at heart. Good old-fashioned intimidation might also work. Mentioning the fact that the Kai saved his life will do no good, he denies the comment vigorously and attacks the speaker himself.

An Influence Test at TN 11 will convince Gunn to back down. He will seethe, but he and his forces will withdraw, heading straight back to Raven Hall. Any other approach will fail, causing Gunn to order his men to attack. Mentioning the fact that the Kai saved his life will do no good, he denies the comment vigorously and attacks the speaker himself. See Fighting Gunn and the Blood Ravens for tactics.

Should the combat fall too easily in the Players’ favour, stragglers from the battle at Unkindness Crossing may reinforce Gunn’s forces. If the Players are faring badly, these soldiers could be loyal to ‘Renn the Red’ and fight on the Heroes’ side if you wish.

The goal is to make this battle one to remember, an epic conflict setting the stage for things to come.

### FIGHTING GUNN AND THE BLOOD RAVENS

Marshall Gunn has hand-picked his troops for tonight’s activities. They are some of Persicar’s best students, battle-savvy with a vicious streak. Still, none of them are particularly disciplined. In combat, they simply attack whoever is nearest unless ordered otherwise by Gunn himself.

Gunn’s forces consist of one group of three, his two aides, and himself.

### BLOOD RAVENS (3, FIGHT AS A GROUP)

**Combat Skill:** 26

**Endurance:** 26

**Trait:** Soldier, Grouping (Soldier)

### OLNOR KRASK, BLOOD RAVEN SERGEANT

**Combat Skill:** 18

**Endurance:** 20

**Trait:** Soldier, Grouping (Soldier)

### TOLLIN ARDORAN, BLOOD RAVEN SERGEANT

**Combat Skill:** 17

**Endurance:** 21

**Trait:** Soldier, Grouping (Soldier)

### MARSHALL GUNN, BLOOD RAVEN COMMANDER

**Combat Skill:** 22

**Endurance:** 28

**Willpower:** 5

**Trait:** Soldier, Veteran (5, +1), Ranged Attack (Bor Musket)

**Special Rule:** The ENDURANCE damage caused by Gunn’s ranged attack is doubled and ignores half of the target’s Defence.

Before the combat begins, Gunn fires his Bor Musket. This happens as combat opens, but does not count as a surprise attack. Once the shot is resolved, he tosses the weapon aside and draws a mace before riding into melee.

Gunn’s troops close to melee in the first round, riding in on horseback before leaping down to fight on foot. They are competent infantry combatants, but Sir Persicar has withheld mounted combat lessons intentionally to keep himself as the Basanet’s most capable servant.

Unless Heroes have the Night Owl Trait, apply a -4 penalty to their CS; this penalty applies to their opponents as well. Two of the Blood Ravens in each group are carrying torches. The penalty can be ignored within five metres of the torch, and is reduced to -2CS within a further ten metres. Most notably, this penalty will apply to Gunn’s Bor Musket shot unless his target is carrying a light source. Considering the damage that weapon can do, this may be a small blessing as well.





## THE BETTER PART OF VALOUR

The Kai may decide to avoid a direct fight for as long as possible or approach the battle of Unkindness Crossing stealthily. As Players create their own plans, the Narrator should deal with this on a case by case basis. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Sniping From Concealment.** Players with ranged weapons can attack from the cover of the trees. The thickness of branches and undergrowth make aiming difficult, apply a -1 penalty to the attack roll, in addition to penalties from poor lighting. A Player with Camouflage can automatically avoid being seen; otherwise a TN 5 Stealth Test is needed.
  - Marshall Gunn and the Blood Ravens will only attempt a counter attack if they see their assailant. Otherwise they will try to protect themselves as best they can, making a tactical withdrawal.
- **Animal Kinship.** Players with Animal Kinship could attempt to get the rooks and ravens to help them. A Discipline Test of TN6 gets the birds to suddenly flock around the enemy in a swirling cacophonous mass. Though this will not penetrate the Blood Ravens armour, it will startle and frighten them badly.
  - Roll on the Random Number table for the group of three Blood Ravens (Marshall Gunn and his aides are made of sterner stuff). On a 0 there is no effect, 1-5 the group is rattled (reduce CS by 2), 6-8 one member panics and runs away, while on a 9 two run away (reduce CS and EP by 4 for each runaway)
- **Mind Over Matter.** Psychically loosening a foe's saddle fastenings is not easy (TN 9) and requires so much effort it costs 2WP and takes a minute of uninterrupted concentration. The affected rider must secure the saddle, assuming he notices the subterfuge, before they can ride safely.
  - If not, the next time the rider attempts to move their horse, they simply fall off. Pick a number from the Random Number Table; deduct that many Endurance.
  - If the move is sudden (they are startled by one of the events suggested above, for example, or spur their horse into a gallop) they will be thrown violently. Add together two Random Numbers and deduct the result from their Endurance instead.

## VICTORY

Once Gunn and his followers are defeated, the Heroes can turn their attention to the larger battle. 'Renn the Red', as they will hear several soldiers loyal to him call out, has broken the front line of the corrupt Blood Ravens and that faction is falling away in a rout.

Read or paraphrase the following:

*Unkindness Crossing has earned its name this night. Deserters ride into the night, hell-bent to escape the battle behind them. Broken bodies litter the crossroads, blood staining its dark earth as the*

*bravest of the black-winged scavengers in the nearby trees flutter down to begin a morbid feast.*



*The soldiers still standing have rallied to Renn, several of them throwing down their swords in surrender. He is wasting no time with harsh justice, instead charging past them all to commandeer a horse. Slinging up into the saddle, he hoists his scarlet-stained spear and nods to you in silent greeting. Then, to the surviving Blood Ravens on either side of the battle, he shouts aloud.*

*"I care not who you served before this moment. I ride to the village, where the Bloody Basanet is sure to exact his revenge for what transpired here. If you've a shred of loyalty to me, to this land, or to those defenseless souls what raised you from babes, ride with me!"*

*Every man capable of standing, caught by Renn's battle cry, rallies to his spear. As one, they rise up and fall in behind him – a tatterdemalion army willing to ride towards almost certain death in the defense of their homes.*

*"Ravens of Blood," Ren shouts from head of this battered legion. "Earn your wings this night!"*

From here, move to the Conclusion.

## CONCLUSION

The Heroes will likely be eager to join Renn and fight for the safety of Rookhaven Village, but Kailen's common sense will prevail long enough for him to make an earnest plea.

*"People we know and care for will die tonight in the village. Even Renn's rebel army...and no, I did NOT see that coming... won't be able to prevent that."*





*Kailen tugs desperately at your cloak, trying to get you to follow him. "We buy them the best chance they can have by sticking to your plan. If Raven Hall unleashes its full might on the village, everyone is doomed. You can stop that."*

*"It will take time for Persicar to learn what happened here and more time past that to gather his forces. You need rest, you need food, and you need both as soon as possible..."*

The Player's first stop is their safe-house. Ishora will be outside when they arrive, washing the sweat from her borrowed horse by lamplight. Let the Players tend their wounds, then read the following.

*For more than an hour, you talk about the night's events while you prepare. Ishora listens attentively as you describe your confrontation with the Blood Ravens. You discuss your strategy for attacking Raven Hall, and agree that, though the plan is sound, you are in no state to carry it out now.*

*Your eyes burn, your muscles ache, and you can feel the tightness in the throat that comes from stifling yawns. It has been a long, painful night.*

*Ishora has many questions about whether she truly has the potential to wield the power of the Kai. You do your best to answer, but it takes great effort to stave off sleep. As important as her gifts might be, there are larger matters at hand right now.*

*Eventually Kailen comes to your rescue, putting his hand on Ishora's shoulder and suggesting she let you get some rest. With some reluctance she agrees. He promises to stand guard, waking you if anything seems out of place. Ishora says that it is far too dangerous for her ride alone now.*

*She will stay and keep vigil along with Kailen... Audin... whoever. You are getting so tired it has become difficult to even think straight. Time to meditate. Time to sleep.*

For the Heroes, this adventure ends here. The story continues in the eighth scenario, *Night Terrors*, set directly after this part.

## PATHS AND POSSIBILITIES – SCENARIO SEVEN – TO DEFY THE DARK

### TO HUNT A HUNTER

A massive wild boar has been attacking the outlying farms, slaying livestock and devouring already scant food stockpiles. Now it grows bolder, and a farmer has been badly injured. The Players must hunt down the creature and kill it. The resulting meat may come in useful in improving morale in the village too.

### SPILLED MILK

A thunderstorm hits Rookhaven. Panicked cattle break out of their pens and scatter throughout the area. The Players can track them and return them to the village, though predators of both the four- and two-legged kind aim to prey on the cows. Further complications arise when the cattle are returned. Two farmers bicker over who owns a particularly healthy cow. Neither has proof of ownership, but both are insistent. The Players must determine ownership or otherwise settle the matter fairly.

### THE LITTLE THINGS

One minor way for the Players to increase their acceptance in Rookhaven is to help out in all the various tasks that need doing. This is an opportunity to employ some of the lesser-used skills. Helping to repair farm equipment requires Crafting, whilst more intricate mechanisms—a broken lock, for example—can be fixed with Tinkering. Influence could defuse bad feelings between neighbours. A Kai Lord with Vocation could help out nearly anywhere, such as a butcher or baker. Most farm tasks would benefit from Might. The Players may receive some small payment from these tasks, but stand to gain more in goodwill.

### FATE OF THE RAVENS

In the lead-up to the grand melee at the heart of this scenario, several things occurred between the rebel Blood Ravens and Renn Maldrun's Dun Masks. Renn, looking to find a new hideout for his people, takes them into the abandoned farms south of Starkriven Pass.

There, they came face to face with several squads of Blood Ravens just as frightened and isolated as they are. Tensions ran high, steel was drawn, and both groups poised to attack each other at any moment. Their leaders attempted to intervene, but only succeeded in shouting at each other for several minutes while their respective forces clamoured for battle.

As these 'talks' continue in vain, a Vassagonian spy tasked by Persicar with watching Andus and Turlon, pushed hostilities over the edge. Drawing a dagger, he hurled it from the shadows at Renn.

Turlon Aldbrent caught sight of the assassin just as he hurls the blade. Lurching forward, Turlon shoved Renn out of the way, taking the poisoned dagger in his side. Renn could only watch as this man, once his enemy, dies in his arms. As a mark of respect, Renn replaced his leather mask with Turlon's red scarf.

This act, as well as the ensuing moment of slaughtering the Vassagonian in vengeance, bonds both the Dun Masks and the Rebel Ravens into a single force with a common goal – Free Rookhaven!





## NIGHT TERRORS

### (SCENARIO EIGHT)

*Although the riders slowed their mounts, their hearts and minds still raced.*

*Nostrils flared with each greedy gulp of air taken by man and beast alike. The air draped silent around them, punctuated only with the occasional cough from the men or whinny from the horses. Some dismounted and checked their tack. Some stayed in the saddle, eyes searching, ever watchful, while they rested.*

*She appeared swiftly and soundlessly, exactly as she had vanished to scout ahead.*

*Whilst her fellow soldiers respected her skill; her sex and her green cloak set her apart. If any had doubt of her belonging in their company, it had been discarded many miles behind them.*

*"They flee. Quickly, without care to hide." She reported to the knight, his grey eyes fixed on her.*

*She dismounted, handing the reins to a squire, and approached. Her mount was not native to these parts and the other horses were wary of it. The squire swallowed uneasily, struck fast due partly to duty and partly from his boyish affection for her.*

*"They travel fast, without form but straight of line. Yet." She trailed off, looking back over her shoulder, her eyes narrowed.*

*"Yet?" The knight echoed, frowning his creased brow. "Yet they have given the village ahead a wide berth. A very wide berth." She finished.*

*The knight returned her puzzled look. A long moment passed between them with nothing said. "Show me," he spoke at last, pulling himself back into his saddle. The others followed suit.*

*She took the reins back from the squire, a half formed "M'Lady" teetering on his lips, made quiet by a polite smile and a pat on his shoulder. He shuffled over to his horse, his cheeks matching the reddish hue of his breeches. When all were mounted, they set off, riding slower and more cautiously than before.*

*The group proceeded for a few miles before cresting a ridge. A small farming village sprawled across the landscape before them, untouched by those that they pursued. Within a few moments, they caught sight of a well-worn dirt road, wagon ruts lining it like dry rivers through the desert.*

*"Rookhaven," said the young squire as they paused to read the name of the village. A hand painted sign affixed underneath it failed to be missed.*

*"Nothing happens here," read the Kai, allowing herself a small, rare chuckle. "Sounds positively provincial. No wonder our quarry has no interest in it."*

*The Knight turned to the Kai Lady, pausing before he gave the signal to head into the village.*

*"At least we can rest here and get some much needed rest."*

*Night Terrors is the middle scenario for Act III. Unlike the other scenarios in this campaign, no time elapses between To Defy the Dark and this adventure. It literally picks up right where the previous adventure ends.*

## ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

After the midnight ambush at Unkindness Crossing, the Players retire for the night. They have swirling dreams of the past few days, each one a madcap menagerie of colours, sounds, and a myriad of faces. The Players "wake up", albeit unusually late. Astute Players might notice small differences with this 'reality' as they are, in truth, still asleep.

If they don't, the Narrator should slowly increase the differences until they notice something is amiss. Players don't have to guess that they are still dreaming; just realize that something isn't quite right. Once the Players realise something is different, they start to experience a radical shift in reality.

As reality shifts, objects move of their own accord. Windows and doors lead to the incorrect area of a building. Furniture and inanimate objects may attack the Players. The ground shudders beneath them and gravity itself reverses. While these encounters should unnerve and disconcert the Players, the encounters should rarely include combat, outside of the final encounter with Shryll.

At long last, the Players will discover that they are in some sort of maze, filled with warped and mutated creatures. These include a small group of bodiless mind creatures: the remains of those people that Shryll had slain, either inadvertently or deliberately.

These fragments may impart knowledge or hinder the Heroes, depending on how they are treated.

The Players will quickly work their way through the rest of the small maze, ultimately facing tougher creatures, all bent on their destruction. All the while, the Dark Dreamer (Shryll's psyche) remains in the background, subtly taunting the Players. Once the





Players have dispatched the creatures, the Dark Dreamer 'escapes' and the Players will awaken, harrowed but unharmed.

## SCENE ONE: SLUMBER

Prior to this scenario, the Players have spent the day planning their assault on Raven Hall and have returned from their encounter with the Blood Ravens at Unkindness Crossing. Accompanying NPCs (presumably including Ishora and Kailen) will depend on where they are staying, either somewhere in Rookhaven or in Stonngarten Manor.

Exhausted after their battle with Marshall Gunn and his minions, the Heroes reluctantly agreed to rest for a few hours before assault. Time is of the essence, but sleep has to come first.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Having checked your equipment and are satisfied that all is ready as can be, you finally settle down for the night. Offering a breath of prayer to Ishir and Kai, you drift into the embrace of slumber. Swirling colours spin and wheel about your head, a myriad of drifting shades, greeting your mind as you feel yourself falling asleep.*

*The colours spin faster and faster, becoming more vibrant. They spin around your dream with dazzling speed, splitting apart and splicing together into ribbons and tendrils. The tendrils snake back and forth, slowly coalescing into solid forms.*

*Strangely, you are aware that you are asleep, but you cannot wake yourself. The images around you take on the visage of fallen foes. They begin to charge at you, weapons drawn!*

*With a start, you bolt upright in bed. Adjusting your eyes to the waking world, the sun is high in the sky. It seems that you have overslept.*

## SCENE TWO: SO FAR SO GOOD

The Players should be given the impression that they have had a strange group dream, perhaps one guided by some malevolent force. However, they are not awake just yet. Shryll still holds them in his Mindscape and has only just begun to toy with them.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*A little shaken from the dream, you begin to hastily gather your things. How could you have overslept like this? The Battle for Rookhaven could already be over!*

*All the while, the smells coming from the kitchen whirl around the dwelling, enticing you to come sit and eat. Kailen shuffles around*

*the table, piling food onto serving platters. From the fireplace, the scent of fresh Jala is as inviting as it is strong.*

The Players should start to notice small differences with everyday things. Pick two Players and swap something with each of them, such as swapped weaponry or clothing.

Allow the Players to theorize on intruders during the night and search for clues. If at any time they look for Ishora, she is not in the dwelling and Kailen claims not to know where she is.

If the Players do not directly ask questions or actively search, that lead to the discovery of the little ways that 'reality' has changed, have Kailen interact with them.

Read the following text aloud:

*"You lot must've had a funny turn this morning, deciding to play children's games."*

The remaining Players should make an observation check. If they pass, they notice a clothing swap. This swap should be as ill-fitting as possible, such as clothes having jumped individuals.

*You follow Kailen's bemused smile to your clothes and realise that two of you are actually wearing the other's garments.*

Let the Players draw their own conclusions on how this happened. If the Players surmise aloud that they might still be dreaming, or if the Players try and leave the shelter/building, proceed immediately to Scene Four. Otherwise, reality just keeps getting stranger; go to Scene Three.

## SCENE THREE: UPSIDE DOWN AND BACK TO FRONT

As time continues, little shifts in the world start getting bigger.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Your stomach makes the decision for you: breakfast this morning is utterly delicious, and just a bit more couldn't hurt. As you reach for the earthen water jug, you brush it with your forearm, knocking it over. It falls from the table and shatters.*

*Kailen reaches to collect the broken pieces and soak up the spilt water with a nearby rag, when he stops in mid-action, mouth open, staring at the mess.*

*The puddles of water spread across the floor, beads of water forming on their surfaces, and begin to drip upwards towards the ceiling.*





If Players succeed make Perception Tests (TN 6), read some of the following:

- *While you observe the water drips making their way to the ceiling, you start to look around the room. To your amazement, you spot two small grey field mice gnaw upon a single piece of corn while standing upside down on the ceiling above the fireplace.*
- *As you look around, daylight streams in through a window across the room; however, a second window nearby shows it to be past sunset.*
- *The cooking fire has changed colour to bright blue. Although it still cracks and hisses, the flame itself produces no heat.*
- *You hear the sound of a child singing under the kitchen table. When you pull the tablecloth aside to see who might be there, the song stops and a dozen ravens burst outward, flying up to perch in the rafters. There is no child to be found.*

If any of the Players tries moving from one room to another, they will randomly teleport to a different door frame within the building. If any of the Players tries to leave the building by an exit door or window, they must make a WILLPOWER Test (TN 8) to be able to step through the opening. If they do manage to leave the building, skip to Scene Four. If the Players stop looking around or seem to loll about, have the furniture start moving around and, if necessary, attack the Players. By this time, the Players should be well aware that something is wrong. (See below for furniture stats)

*Without warning, the breakfast table starts to move! Bucking off the dishes atop its back, it begins to stalk around the room like*

*some kind of fierce beast. Likewise, the chairs that you are sitting upon come to life, pouncing you viciously!*

### ANIMATE TABLE

**Combat Skill:** 12

**Endurance:** 15

### ANIMATE CHAIRS (5)

**Combat Skill:** 12

**Endurance:** 6

These 'creatures' have no special rules. They just attack blindly, assaulting the nearest Kai Lord until they are shattered. This is not intended to be a difficult fight, just a surprising one. Once the battle is over, or at the DM's discretion, this scene ends with a massive upheaval of the floor, tearing itself open to produce a hole the size of a longboat. Gravity reverses, leaving the Players falling upwards.

## SCENE FOUR: THE MINDSCAPE

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Your stomach churns as your feet lift off from the floor and you float in mid-air for what feels like an eternity. Without warning, you find yourself crashing upwards into the ceiling. The ground, now above you, tears itself open, exposing a long rift through which light can be seen. The building starts to buckle and twist, collapsing in upon itself.*

If for any reason the Heroes managed to get outside of the building, reality shifts to put them right back alongside their fellow Heroes.







With the house apparently about to collapse inward and crush them all, the Kai Lords should make their escape into the rift and into the mindscape proper. This will require climbing the walls or otherwise reaching the floor that is now the ceiling. No tests are needed for this; just trying to escape will ensure the Heroes succeed.

Once they make it through the rift, the Players will encounter the true shape of their captivity – Shryll's Mindscape.

## AREA ONE

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Pulling yourselves up and through the rift, you find yourselves in a long round corridor. Illuminated by a hidden green and pink pulsing light, the walls appear to be constructed of a soft sponge-like material. There are no doors or windows along the sides of the corridor.*

If the Players try to cut their way through the walls of the corridor, blood drips from the gouges, but the 'wounds' seal as fast as they are made. While dripping down the walls, the blood swiftly turns into hundreds of tiny spiders and crawls away. Feel free to get as disturbing with this imagery as you like. Nothing else of note happens here.

## AREA TWO

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*The corridor turns sharply to the left, its spongy texture squishing underfoot. The pulsing green and pink lights flash intermittently.*

Once the Players pass the halfway point of this section of corridor, gravity shifts again, 45 degrees downward towards the wall, and then to the left. This will have the Players crash into the wall and then tumble left into area 3. This will cause minor damage (1 ENDURANCE, Defence will not apply) and leave them disoriented for their first combat in the mindscape.

*As you reach the middle of this second corridor, it buckles to the right underneath you, forcing you to tumble headlong into the fleshy wall ahead. As you pull yourself to your feet, this new section of corridor writhes hard to the left and you find yourselves thrown from your feet again! This is all that happens in this area.*

## AREA THREE

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Stumbling to your feet, you brace yourself for the area to keep shifting. After waiting a few moments, you are satisfied that the world has stopped shifting under your feet. The corridor turns sharply back on itself to the left and circles around out of sight.*

At the end of the circular corridor, the Players face their first combat. The monster will be a variation of a Burrowcrawler.

*As you round the slow corner, you find yourself tripping over debris. In front of you is a very large pile of rocks and dirt, seemingly from nowhere. Beyond the pile, you can see a small tunnel into the fleshy wall. The corridor itself stops behind the debris pile, making this tunnel your only path.*

At the end of the circular corridor, the Players face their first combat. The monster will be a variation of a Burrowcrawler.

The Burrowcrawler will attack almost immediately, springing out from under the pile of debris. It will target the nearest Player and fight until destroyed.

## NIGHTMARE BURROWCRAWLER

**Combat Skill:** 20

**Endurance:** 20

**Special Rule:** This Burrowcrawler possesses a very minor form of Mindblast. In the second round, the Burrowcrawler will "sing" in a high pitched voice. The words of the song will be indecipherable, but all Kai Lords without Mindshield will need to pass a Willpower Test to avoid becoming confused until the end of the battle. Confused Heroes suffer a -2 to CS.

## AREA FOUR

This small round passage leads from the first large area to the next. The passage will shut closed behind them, vanishing once they emerge from it. The walls here are identical to Area 1.

## AREA FIVE

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*You emerge from the small passage, only to have it close shut behind you. Searching quickly, it becomes apparent that you cannot go back the way you came. Looking around at the area, this appears to be a large double-T shaped area made of a white, calcified material riddled with spikes. Clusters of these spikes litter the entire area. The light in this corridor is a steady dim radiance, like sunlight through milk glass.*

The material of this corridor is bone, and the clusters will explode if disturbed in any way. Any Player with Sixth Sense will know to avoid them, feeling the deadly threat they represent. All Heroes must make a TN 8 Acrobatics Test to get through this corridor without contacting any spikes. If someone touches one or more, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*The cluster begins to hum and flash, rapidly reaching a crescendo before exploding. You are thrown, caught in a sudden storm of flying shards.*





Any Hero failing the Acrobatics Test will suffer a Random Number in ENDURANCE damage.

## AREA SIX

In this area, the Players will find a creature similar to a Bone Golem. All these bone encounters are a reflection of the many years Shryll spent trapped underground, surrounded by corpses and barren stone. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*You venture into one of the larger corridors, finding more of the spike clusters throughout it. There is a large cluster in the centre of the area, one that trembles as you come near. The central cluster houses a glistening white gem, round and glittering in the eerie light.*

If the Heroes search for traps, there will be none found. If anyone attempts to take the gem, it will awaken the Bone Golem. If they search for traps, there will be none found. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*As your hand encircles the gem, two definite cracks emanate from the sides of the large cluster. The spikes all seem to shift position, but none of them have started to glow or hum.*

Allow the Players one action before reading the next text.

*Suddenly, the cluster erupts, sending fragments on all directions. You are lifted off your feet and thrown back a bit, peppered with slivers of the cluster.*

This explosion is not as violent as with the smaller clusters and deals no damage. However:

*From the debris, a large humanoid figure arises. Made of the same material as the spike clusters, the creature has long shards protruding from its head, forming a crown of spikes. In each of its hands, it carries a large hammer made of bones and calcified flesh. It will attack the Players, starting with whoever is closest. Players will not need to be mindful of the clusters in here during the battle, as the golem just smashes through them as it fights.*

## BONE GOLEM

**Combat Skill:** 20

**Endurance:** 25

**Special Rule:** If the Players defeat the Bone Golem, it detonates just like a spike cluster as noted above. This damage affects any Kai Lord engaged with the Golem when it falls.

## AREA SEVEN

Three spectres/apparitions haunt this area; they are fragments of the souls of warriors long since defeated by Shryll. Two are male Sommlending Knights, while the third is a female Kai. They are nearly 1200 years old and have nearly faded into non-sentience. These spectres will try to make contact with the Players, especially if the heroes have defeated the Bone Golem in Area 6. If the Players listen and converse with the spectres, they may gain critical information about the Dark Dreamer. If the Players attack or flee from the apparitions, they miss out.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*You venture into one of the larger branches of the area. This seems to be much darker than the rest of this strange place. While there are a few clusters of spikes in this area, they are rarer than in previous areas. In the centre of the room, three soft green clusters*







*are arranged into a half circle. Instead of spikes, these seem to coil around a stony sphere. As you approach the clusters, they begin to hum softly, almost happily.*

If the Players approach the clusters without hostility, the spectres will appear to the Players. If the Players do not attack the clusters, the spectres will appear and indicate to the party that they wish to speak. If the Players attack the green clusters, the spectres will not appear unless the Players have defeated the Bone Golem.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*As they hum, the three clusters shimmer and fade away from sight. Looking around suspiciously, watching for them to reappear, you feel a calm wave wash over yourselves.*

The Players then recover a minor amount of ENDURANCE (four points).

*The clusters vanish from sight; in their place, three translucent apparitions shimmer into view – two men and a woman. They are garbed in Sommerlund fashions from many centuries past. They look wary, weary, and sore, as if having been involved in battle recently.*

*The older of the men approaches silently. A tall sullen Sommlending, he reaches out his hand in gesture of goodwill. As he approaches, you see the finer details of his clothing become clearer. He is garbed in the surcoat and trimmings of a Sommlending Knight, but not of current style.*

If the Players attack, the apparitions will simply disappear.

If any of the Players wish to try, they can greet the knight and shake his ephemeral hand. Once they do, the three apparitions will relax. They will answer any questions that they can.

*You extend your hand, unsure of what will happen. The Knight clasps his suddenly tangible hand in yours, relief visible on his still ethereal face. A rich, deep, voice manifests itself in your minds.*

*“Greetings to thee, brethren of Valorous Kai and Blessed Ishir. We have awaited thy arrival for what hath seemed an eternal cycle of ever-consuming darkness and fleeting light. I am Sir Harvil Thon of The Southlund Marches. This is my squire, Bren Thols, son of my wife’s brother.”*

*The two apparitions bow low and make way for their female companion to come forward. As she glides closer to you, you notice she is garbed in a very familiar uniform. The cloak with its badges and clasp, though of much older design, are unmistakably that of a Kai Savant. The young lady bows to you, her eyes hard*

*yet sincere. Her soft, lilting voice pours like a cool morning breeze through your thoughts.*

*“Fellow Kai, for far too long have my eyes been denied the visage of mine own kind. I am Gentle Strike. I am a student of Sun Eagle, or rather... I was. I can sense how long we have languished here. Centuries have passed, I am sure of it.”*

*She lowers her gaze. A single tear rolls down her gossamer cheek and falls toward the ground. Bren steps forward and catches the tear before it lands, cradling it in his ghostly hands. He looks up at you and you hear his raspy thin voice in your mind;*

*“Please forgive Gentle Strike and Sir Harvil. We have not spoken with anyone for far too long. So many years have left us stretched thin. We have much to tell and little time in which to do so. The Dark Dreamer has taken his toll on us and those that have gone before us.”*

The spectres only have enough energy to answer a few questions before fading away.

**What is this place? / Where are we?** Gentle Strike will answer. *“You are in Rookhaven but not in Rookhaven as you know it. You are in the mind of The Dark Dreamer. He is a powerful being. This is a place of his design. Made to test, to torment... and to kill.”*

**How did you get here?** Sir Harvil will answer. *“We were part of a pursuing force, routing the Darkspawn back over the Durncrag. We elected to stay overnight in this village to gather our strength and numbers. That is when the Dark Dreamer ensnared us.”*

**How do we defeat The Dark Dreamer?** Sir Harvil will answer. *“In here, The Dark Dreamer may well be invincible. However, the more of his phantasms you slay, the better your chances are to overcome him and free yourself from this prison.”*

**Is there an exit to this Mind prison?** Bren will answer. *“Once you overcome The Dark Dreamer’s hold on you, you will be free to leave. I am afraid there is no other way, other than him releasing you. He controls this place entirely.”*

**What will happen to you when we leave?** Gentle Strike will answer. *“Whenever The Dark Dreamer brings some poor soul here to torment, we watch helplessly. He tires of the game quickly and, once he does, they are sent back to their own body.” “We have remained hidden, silent. We have been waiting for someone like you, someone blessed by Kai as I was once. We felt compelled to assist you. When you leave, we will remain.”*

**What will happen to you when we defeat The Dark Dreamer?** Gentle Strike will answer. *“That we do not know.”*





**What will happen to this place when we defeat The Dark Dreamer?** Gentle Strike will answer. *"That we also do not know."*

**Who is The Dark Dreamer?** Gentle Strike will answer. *"We do not know. He is a powerful and vile creature. He taunts us and the people of Rookhaven for his own amusement."*

When the Players have asked enough questions, read the following:

*Sir Harvil holds up his hand to fend off more questions, "Forgive us, but we are drained and must rest. We will try to aid you again later." Bren holds out his hand and gives you Gentle Strike's fallen tear, now frozen as a single drop. "Take this. I do not know what good it will do, but it feels special." With that, they fade from view.*

If the Heroes return to here, the spectres will not reappear. They have returned to their clusters, which will shimmer with a faint green light until the Heroes leave again.

When the Kai Lords leave the Mindscape, the Tear of Gentle Strike crosses into the waking world with them as a tangible item. It is theirs to keep, provided they can survive long enough to escape the Dark Dreamer's prison.

## TEAR OF GENTLE STRIKE

*This small crystalline teardrop is drawn from the essence of a slain Kai Femskurd (the proper term for a female Kai Lord) named Gentle Strike. Willingly shed, this droplet of spiritual energy glows softly when worn by a Kai Lord and feels warm to the touch.*

Any Kai Lord wearing this teardrop against his or her skin will feel Gentle Strike's calming presence even during the worst of travails. It adds +1 to all Willpower Tests made to resist stress, fear, or pain. It also imparts a +1 bonus to any use of the Influence skill.

## AREA EIGHT

This small round passage leads from the second large area to the rest of the Mindscape. This passage will close behind them, once they emerge. The walls are made from material identical to Area 1. The entry will only become visible after dealing with the golem and/or the spectres in areas 6 & 7.

## AREA NINE

In this area, the Players will find the Dark Dreamers' horde – the creatures within will eventually appear from areas 10 if the Heroes

are not particularly quiet. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*You emerge from the narrow passage into another large long area, this passage seemingly made from smooth black obsidian. There is nothing in this corridor, not even signs of passage. The strange hall leads away in opposite directions.*

*To your right, the area curves back on itself to the left and disappears out of sight. To your left, the passage continues away from you, eventually turning sharply again. There is a small open room close by, though your view within is unclear. Sounds echo loudly here. Even standing still, you can hear your own breath like distant thunder.*

If the Heroes are not taking measures to be quiet, they must make a Luck Test (the Players may choose who among them takes the test). Failure means that the Heroes will be heard as they enter this area. Any noise that the Players generate will attract the horde from area 10 first. If they are quiet, they may search the smaller open room before they are heard.

*"In this small room, you find something different from the rest of this labyrinth – a small show of opulence. You see what looks like a large table, a dark leather chair, and a wooden chest, all sitting upon a rug that covers most of the floor. Nearby, a fireplace blazes without shedding heat or smoke of any kind.*

*The walls are covered with trophies, each one a mounted human head. More than thirty of these grisly things are on display and each one seems to stare at you, their eyes following as you move.*

The heads are not actual heads, as nothing here is real. They are just reminders of Shryll's more notable kills over the years.

## AREA TEN

In this small portion of corridor, Shryll's nightmare horde lurks here. There are two Roctopi and several large Steamspiders, one for each Kai Lord. If the players enter this area first, the horde will attack immediately.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*"This section leads away from the main area continuing before turning sharply to the left. As you round the corner, a group of creatures spot you and advance quickly. The main mass of them are large spiders, covered in short mottled hair. Behind them, you see two large multi legged creatures, both with piercing yellow eyes and slimy tentacles."*

If any Hero has any Animal skills, read this:



*The tentacle creatures fall in behind the spiders, almost herding them like shepherds. The tentacle-covered beasts never break eye contact with you. They are mad with violence and mean to attack you with the spiders before crushing you themselves.*

After three rounds of combat, read the following:

*Suddenly, the wall behind these creatures crashes inward, sending chunks of black rock flying in every direction. You dive to the ground, narrowly avoiding the flying debris. The dust from the collapse parts with a rush of air and a gurgling howl, revealing a huge worm with a gaping maw of razor sharp teeth!*

If the players defeat the horde here, they will find nothing of value. The Stoneworm will keep pursuing towards them if they do not defeat it, attacking whatever gets in its way.

### NIGHTMARE ROCTOPUS (2)

**Combat Skill:** 15

**Endurance:** 25

**Traits:** Aegis, Reach

These creatures will usually target the closest Player. Their tentacles allow them to engage foes from Close Range without moving.

### NIGHTMARE STEAMSPIDERS (1 PER HERO)

**Combat Skill:** 16

**Endurance:** 10

**Traits:** Brutal 1, Grouping (mob), Iron Will (Mindblast only), Swift

The Steamspiders skin will rapidly change colour and size. These changes offer no combat advantages, but they may well be strange enough to throw the Players off.

### NIGHTMARE STONEWORM

**Combat Skill:** 20

**Endurance:** 30

**Traits:** Defence (3)

The Stoneworm has a ring of eyes, around its outer maw, all of them human in appearance but with different coloured irises.. It will shriek as it closes with the Players, its voice a maddening cacophony of screams.

### AREA ELEVEN

This is the final area of the Mindscape, a final trap in which Shryll can torment them personally. He appears to them here, flooding their minds with pain, purely for the joy of hurting them. He believes he has them captive, but he is unaware that the Heroes have already been given the key to their freedom – the Tear of Gentle Strike.

*This corridor ends in a wall of black stone. A dull red glow seeps through hundreds of cracks in its surface, pulsing as if magma were flowing just beyond the barrier, eager to burst free and drown you all in hateful fire.*

*A dark figure manifests in front of you, appearing as a mass of shadows suddenly given shape. From deep beneath a hood of*







*black feathers, crimson eyes burn bright. Rising into the air, the figure spirals once and hovers directly above you, stretching out its impossibly long arms in a mockery of an embrace.*

*The moment it does so, you feel a crushing pressure all around you and a sharp, stabbing pain in your mind. This the Dark Dreamer, come round at last, and it seems determined to end both this nightmare and your lives!*

Begin combat as if the Kai Lords could actually fight the Dark Dreamer. Assume it goes first every round. On its turn, the Dark Dreamer ravages the Heroes' minds, inflicting 4 ENDURANCE to each of them. Heroes with Mindshield only suffer 2 END in damage.

Nothing the Heroes do at this point can damage The Dark Dreamer; their attacks and techniques have no effect whatsoever. After a few rounds of combat or if at least one of the Heroes are about to run out of Endurance, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*Mid-battle, the whole area shudders as a great wave of psychic energy passes through. In the centre of the chamber, a circle of blazing stars appears. A brightly illuminated woman steps forth, radiance streaming from her opalescent skin as if she were made of light itself. Though you cannot see who it is, the lady is clothed in brilliant silver armour and bears a sword forged from moonlight. She takes to the air, engaging the Dark Dreamer; the Dreamer hisses and the relentless pain through your mind abates.*

**If the Heroes have the Tear of Gentle Strike**, the woman battles the Dark Dreamer for a few moments before:

*The female warrior, her face hidden behind a visor of silver,, shouts, "Throw the Tear! Throw it at the Dark Dreamer!"*

If the Players do as the mysterious woman says, proceed straight to the Conclusion.

**If the Heroes do not have the Tear of Gentle Strike**, the woman will have to battle the Dark Dreamer for a little longer before gaining the upper hand.

*The female warrior, her face hidden behind a visor of silver, pins the Dark Dreamer against the wall of his own mental prison. With a sudden thrust of her blade, she impales him to the obsidian barrier. Your shadowy tormentor screams in agony, thrashing as her sword strikes true. Beneath the Dark Dreamer, the wall of black stone shatters open, revealing a jagged doorway into the Void.*

*"Go through! I cannot hold him back much longer!"*

Again, if the Players do as the mysterious woman says, proceed straight to the Conclusion.

## CONCLUSION

Once the Players defeat or otherwise escape the Dark Dreamer and its horde, the Mindscape melts away and the Players will actually wake up. Nothing taken from the dream crosses into the real world with the exception of the Tear of Gentle Strike (even if it was 'consumed' by getting hurled at the Dark Dreamer).

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*A rumble grows under your feet and the ground proceeds to shake, rising in power. The black obsidian wall begins to splinter. Tiny cracks riddle the walls and floor, running like a spider's web throughout. The shaking violently increases, and you struggle to remain on your feet. Pieces of black debris rain about you. The cracks in the walls and floors have now become huge gaping holes.*

*You feel yourself rise, hovering in mid-air as the room begins to spin. Every wall erupts into shards of black rock. The assault on your senses overwhelms your senses and you pass into unconsciousness once more.*

*You awaken with a rush. Leaping from your beds, you grab instinctively for your weapons. Blinking blearily, your pulse pounding with adrenaline, you see that you are back in your safe house. Kailen is here and as is ready for combat as you are, wide eyed and muscles coiled tight.*

*With a deep breath, you relax enough to lower your weapons and make your way into the common area of the safe house. At the table sits Ishora, still unconscious and thoroughly exhausted. Kailen wipes the perspiration from her sweaty brow. Her eyes dart back and forth beneath her closed eyelids, before snapping to full wakefulness.*

*Ishora sits bolt upright, "The Dark Dreamer? Did we destroy him?" Settling herself and sitting up, she answers her own question.*

*"No. We defeated him, but he still lives. He is weaker for it, though, and he is reeling. For the first time, he is unsure of himself."*

This concludes *Night Terrors*, the eighth scenario of the campaign. The rest of the story plays out in Act III, Scenario III - *The Twilight Siege*.

## PATHS AND POSSIBILITIES – SCENARIO EIGHT – NIGHT TERRORS

### GRAVE MATTERS

Overhearing a rumour at The Murder of Crows, the Party learns of a gravestone that glows in full moonlight, surrounded by a bush with bright scarlet flowers. If they investigate, they'll find that the





grave stone glows faintly, even if not a full moon, and that the writing on the grave stone is all but faded. An archaic Kai Savant badge, made of Bronin, is set into the grave stone. If the Party meets Gentle Strike in Scenario 8, the Heroes realise that the grave is hers. If they return and re-inscribe her name, they'll hear a faint "thank you" on the wind.

## TAKING STOCK

Unbeknownst to most, The Murder of Crows has a backup supply of food stock, hidden in a rundown farmstead just outside of Rookhaven. Someone had been dispatched to retrieve some crates and a couple of kegs but has not returned. Have they been attacked, kidnapped, or are they just having a party by themselves? Possibilities include: Giaks have discovered the food stock and have raided it, a feud between a farmer and The Murder of Crows has escalated into theft of the food stock by the farmer (especially in light of the Barrow Frost), or perhaps something more nefarious.

## FOOLS RUSH IN

Bandits and raiders, other than the Dun Masks, have been reported in the area. Not wanting to involve the Blood Ravens, Landar approaches the Party to help the village. This may mean standing guard or even ferrying food and supplies to several families across the province. This might raise the ire of the Blood Ravens, especially if they act near Raven Hall. Actual appearance of bandits or raiders are at the discretion of the Narrator.

## FATE OF THE RAVENS

During the time the Heroes spend in Shryll's nightmare trap, Renn Maldrun and the rebel Blood Ravens have been fighting for their lives. Moving quickly towards Rookhaven Village, they have run afoul of two separate groups of soldiers sent from Raven Hall. These units were meant to reinforce Marshall Gunn but, upon seeing the rebels under the command of an obvious 'bandit', they attacked.

These battles have taken their toll on the rebels but each group has also provided them a few converts, including a handful of foreigners willing to fight for the locals rather than serve Sir Persicar. While national pride makes accepting these converts difficult, Renn knows well enough that refusing help is a poor idea now that he faces the might of Raven Hall.

Renn, now firmly labelled as 'Renn the Red' by his soldiers, knows he is outmanned and outclassed by the forces under Persicar's command. His only advantage is his knowledge of the area. Most of what Persicar has left are foreign mercenaries, with little familiarity with the village and its surroundings.

This slim advantage holds Renn's only hope – to dig in and pray for the Kai Lords' success!

## THE TWILIGHT SIEGE (SCENARIO NINE)

*Chef Honzo stood in the larder, staring at the empty spaces where the manor's stock used to be. It was gone, quickly devoured by the ruffians the Basanet chose for guards. The kitchen staff—what was left of them, anyway—was scared. Honzo couldn't blame them, either. The Blood Ravens were a testy bunch, especially Persicar. They came and went as they pleased, mistreated anyone who crossed their paths, and made demands that were often impossible to meet.*

*Things had only gotten worse in the past few days. There was whispered talk among the guards of an open rebellion, started by some of their own number. Worrisome as that thought was, Honzo was silently grateful that if it was true, traitorous Ravens meant fewer mouths to feed.*

*Given the lack of good supplies these days, even simple meals were an ordeal to cobble together. When Honzo did manage to create a meal worthy of a nobleman's table, it was invariably deemed sub-standard and given to the Ravens instead.*

*Honzo had only been on Raven Hall's staff for two months. To serve a nobleman, even in a village as dismal as Rookhaven, was an honor. Or so he had thought. His dreams of culinary fame, fortune, and respect had been shattered when he heard the stories about Talman, his unfortunate predecessor. Talman, a Rookhaven native, had loyally served the Basanet for seven years. One evening, after preparing dinner, he was accused by Persicar of trying to poison Basanet Corvan. Within the hour, he was dragged to Raven Hall's jail, never to be seen again.*

*One could not just up and depart the service of the Basanet. In fact, Honzo had not been allowed to leave Raven Hall since his arrival. He was constantly watched as he cooked Corvan's meals, which only made him more nervous. The Blood Ravens assigned to the kitchen took up unnecessary space in the small room, helped themselves to precious ingredients, and abused his staff at the slightest provocation. It was a daily struggle to bury the never-ending fear he felt.*

*The Basanet's meals were very particular. He demanded meat, meat, and more meat, preferably bloody and rare. Even a quick sear was frowned upon by Sir Persicar, who scowled at the food and threatened Honzo whenever he made a personal inspection. "The Basanet will not like this," he would say. "It is far too well-done for his tastes. Like as not, we'll need another chef by week's end." Up until now, the threats seemed to be empty, but Honzo knew it was only a matter of time. Persicar had been in a particularly foul mood as of late, even beating one of the*





*serving girls into unconsciousness the previous day. Already understaffed, Honzo did his best to keep up with the Blood Ravens' demands for food. He sent one of his errand boys into town with a list of supplies, but the child returned sullen and empty-handed.*

*"Honzo!" a voice called out, and the chef started in fear. It was one of the Blood Ravens, calling for service from the kitchen. He sighed and rubbed his temples, his hand shaking. With each passing day, poor Talman's fate seemed more and more welcome.*

*"Coming, my lord," Honzo said, his voice wavering slightly as he ran toward the demanding voice.*

*If there truly was a rebellion, he prayed it would hurry.*

*The Twilight Siege* is the Act III finale. Following their reconnaissance of Raven Hall, and their perilous nightmare the evening prior, the Players infiltrate the keep and bring an end to the evil in Rookhaven. However, Sir Persicar and the Basanet (through Shryll) knows the players are liable to attack Raven Hall. Time is of the essence.

## SCENE ONE: OVER, UNDER, OR THROUGH

In this scene, the players prepare to advance on Raven Hall. Though tired from a night of restless (and possibly deadly) slumber, the Players awaken in the wee hours of morning, well before daylight. Kailen and Ishora are there, having watched over them as they slept. While Ishora prepares a meager breakfast of porridge, hard cheese, and soured milk, Kailen helps the Kai ready themselves for their impending assault.

Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*"I know you are weary, but there is little time left to us," Kailen tells you. "Raven Hall must be taken and the Basanet brought to justice. I am going with you, for I cannot allow you to face Sir Persicar and the Blood Ravens by yourselves. Ishora is to return to Rookhaven and prepare for the worst, should...." Kailen trails off, unwilling to consider any further.*

*Ishora clucks her tongue, placing several chunks of cheese on a nearby table. "Kailen's a bit old-fashioned," she mutters. "He doesn't believe a woman should risk her life in battle."*

*Kailen returns his attention to you. "Eat quickly. The sun rises soon, and our hope of surprising the defenders of Raven Hall are best if we act in the shadows."*

The sun has yet to rise over the dark village of Rookhaven, and a heavy fog hangs in the air as the Players leave the safe house. All is eerily quiet. Much of the lead-up to the assault depends a great deal on the Players' plan, which they should have determined in *To Defy the Darkness*, the first scenario in Act III of *Before the Dawn*. Given the hour, they have little trouble making their way to Raven Hall.

## METHOD OR MADNESS?

Infiltrating Raven Hall can be accomplished in a number of ways, as previously defined, but it really comes down to two general options: attempt to gain access stealthily in order to maintain the element of surprise or make a frontal assault on Raven Hall's gate. Given the apparent foolishness of the second option, Raven Hall's guards—including Sir Persicar—are expecting the players to make a quiet entrance. As such, a frontal assault is not necessarily a bad





## WHAT DOES SIR PERSICAR KNOW?

Depending on the actions the Players have taken, the defenders of Raven Hall likely expect an attack from the Kai. Sir Persicar, if warned ahead of time by Shryll, is going to be ready for a fight, though it may take him time to fully organize his defenses. In addition, none of the villains are certain when the assault is to occur or from which quarter the Players are liable to strike. Of course, it is possible that the Players might have told someone about their plans, such as Reballen, which may swing the pendulum in Sir Persicar's favor.

Sir Persicar does not expect the players to make a frontal attack on Raven Hall. In his opinion, such an attempt would be suicide, and he is arrogant enough to assume that he and the Blood Ravens would easily defeat the Kai in such a battle. Given this, he has told his men that an attack is imminent, and he expects them to be doubly vigilant upon pain of death. He has also reduced the number of visible guards at Raven Hall in the hope

of drawing the Players in, then surrounding them with reserve forces. The Basanet's chambers, nonetheless, are guarded by Persicar's best men, who have been ordered to attack any interlopers on sight.

As part of Persicar's plan, Blood Ravens who notice the Players are to wait until the Kai have entered Raven Hall before ringing the alarm bell. Once the alarm sounds, the Blood Ravens have been ordered to emerge from their barracks and cut off any avenue of escape the Players might take. This scheme, based upon Persicar's own arrogant assumptions, might work into the Players' favor should they play their proverbial cards right. Barricading the Blood Ravens in their barracks would delay or effectively cut off the majority of Raven Hall's guards. Doing so would require the utmost stealth for, if the alarm is raised, the odds of the Kai making it to the Basanet are going to be very slim indeed.

idea, though it would immediately bring the entirety of the Blood Ravens running to man Raven Hall's walls.

The general locations, dispositions, and reactions of Raven Hall's defenders are instead considered and described here. As the Narrator, you must take into account the Players' preparations and determine how Sir Persicar and the Blood Ravens react to their attack.

### THE RAVEN HALL COMPOUND

Raven Hall is detailed here, including notes about every building within the compound's walls. Most of the buildings are either sparsely inhabited or entirely unoccupied, as noted in their descriptions. Please refer to the map on page 115 to reference the locations of these structures.

#### The Gatehouses

Two gatehouses lead through the wall on either side of the compound. Each is equipped with a large double door and portcullis that can be locked in place to deter intruders. Three guards on duty in each gatehouse at any one time, and each gatehouse is equipped with an alarm bell.

#### Raven Hall

Raven Hall itself is a large, single-story building designed to host formal events, as well as visiting dignitaries. It has seen little use over the past century, and most of the windows are shuttered. The two front doors are reinforced by thick, iron-bound double doors and secured with locking portcullises. These portcullises are never

raised for any reason, and anyone wishing to enter the compound on official business is expected to use one of the two gatehouses.

#### Smokehouse

A small shack, the smokehouse is used to preserve meat—typically anything that the Basanet or his servants kill on their hunts. Though the Basanet hasn't been seen hunting in nearly fifteen years, the Blood Ravens often return from their patrols with wild game or poached livestock.

#### Guest Cottage

This lonely cottage has always been reserved for visiting relatives or dignitaries. It currently stands empty, its moldering furniture covered in dusty white sheets. One or two of the cottage's windows have been broken, and several crows have constructed nests inside.

#### Jail

The Raven Hall jail is a small stone building capable of holding up to eight prisoners. The Blood Ravens have been known to ignore captives, leaving them for days or weeks at a time. Inevitably, these captives wind up dead, and the entirety of the jail smells of rot and human misery. It is also where captives are interrogated and tortured, and a number of cruel implements can be found scattered about inside.

#### Servants' Wing

In years long past, when Raven Hall was at its peak, the Servants' Wing was occupied by all manner of employees and their families. It is currently empty and in horrible disrepair, and signs of a long-





doused fire can be found along its northern end. The Blood Ravens largely ignore the Servants' Wing and there are rumors that it is haunted.

### **Guest Wing**

Like the Servants' Wing, the Guest Wing of Raven Hall sits idle and empty. While in better shape than the Servants' Wing, the Guest Wing is still unsuitable for habitation.

### **The Basanet's Wing**

The Basanet's Wing was originally constructed to see to all of the Basanet's needs. While Raven Hall is designed for hosting formal occasions, the Basanet's Wing acts as Corvan's personal residence. See the Basanet's Wing section opposite for a detailed interior description.

### **Barracks**

Raven Hall's east wing has been given over entirely to the Blood Ravens. It now acts as a housing all of the Blood Ravens and a handful of servants, most of them abused and under constant threat from the unpredictable and blood-thirsty mercenaries. It is said that only those servants who earn the ire of Sir Persicar are sent to work in the barracks, though, in truth, he is far less selective than that. The number of Blood Ravens who occupy the barracks is not specified here, for there should be as many as the Narrator needs at any given time. The building itself is capable of housing up to fifty guards under regular circumstances, or twice that many in cramped conditions.

### **Blacksmith**

Raven Hall's original blacksmith was put to death for a minor transgression that Sir Persicar likely doesn't remember. One of the Blood Ravens, a lad who served as a blacksmith's apprentice, has been assigned to see to shoeing the horses and making repairs to arms and armor.

### **Stable**

The Blood Ravens keep their horses in the compound's stable. Though regularly cleaned by the estate's servants and stable hands, the number of animals kept here far exceeds the stable's intended occupancy. The horses and mules inside the stable are ill-tempered at best and sickly at worst. If given the opportunity to escape, those horses capable of running gladly do so.

### **Training Field**

An open field lies in the northeastern quadrant of the Raven Hall compound. The Blood Ravens use it to train and perform their drills. The grass here has been trampled and only a few patches of green testify to the intensity of the Blood Ravens' exercises.

### **Guard Towers**

Two guard towers stand on either end of the Raven Hall compound. Each is staffed by four guards, and are equipped with an alarm bell.

## **THE BASANET'S WING**

The personal living quarters of Basanet Corvan are situated in the Basanet's Wing. Outside of the barracks, the Basanet's Wing sees the most use of nearly all the structures in the Raven Hall compound. While it has been a long time since the Basanet has done any sort of governing from his seat in the hall, the servants that remain on staff continue to see to his every need within its dark and dismal walls. Entry into the Basanet's Wing can be made from three distinct points. The front doors, which are the most obvious, provide ingress for the Blood Ravens and many of the servants. Two other doors—the cook's door, which leads to the kitchen, and the steward's door, which leads to the steward's offices—are primarily used by servants, but can be easily accessed by anyone aware of them.

From outside, the Basanet's Wing is dark, its windows shuttered, and its front doors solidly closed. Four Blood Ravens stand guard on the front doorstep at all times, while two more patrol the building's perimeter. More guards can be found within and as many as twenty guards, four marshals, and Sir Persicar himself make their living arrangements in the wing's western half. The rooms within the Basanet's Wing are detailed here.

### **Foyer**

The wing's foyer is where guests typically await their audience with the Basanet. Comfortable chairs and divans artfully decorate the room, and paintings of Rookhaven's past Basanets hang from the walls. The floor, covered in a worn black carpet, shows signs of passage, and scores of muddy boot prints lead from the entrance to the western door. Two Blood Ravens stand at attention near a pair of double doors that lead into the Basanet's Hall.

### **Guard Room**

The guard room is a simple area where guards can refresh themselves and deliver their reports. Two Blood Ravens are stationed here at all times.

### **Coat Room**

Given the dearth of visitors in recent years, the racks within the coat room are mostly empty. There is a chance that one or more servants can be found here. If the alarm bell has been sounded, these servants are attempting to hide.

### **Armory**

Armor and weapons are stored here, all for use by the Blood Ravens. Available weapons include axes, war hammers, maces, long swords, and half a dozen crossbows.

### **Servant's Storage**

Cleaning equipment and other incidentals are stored here by the Basanet's servants. Other than brooms, mops, soap, and wooden buckets, there is very little of interest to Kai lords.





### **Basanet's Hall**

The Basanet's Hall is part audience chamber and part dining area. Largely unused, it is currently stacked with tables, bench seats, and other supplies. The Basanet's Hall is further detailed later in Scene Two: Good Night, Bad Knight.

### **Servants' Quarters**

These rooms are where the current servants of the wing sleep. Two servants are assigned to each room, along with their families (if present). The rooms contain beds, small writing desks, and all manner of personal items.

### **Chamberlain's Quarters**

Raven Hall's chamberlain used to reside here, but the room has been unoccupied for quite some time. The old chamberlain vanished after he fell afoul of the Basanet, and a replacement has yet to be appointed. The bed, mattress, and other furnishings have been upset, and what few belongings remain are scattered across the floor. Particularly observant players might notice a long-darkened bloodstain on the carpet. A search of the floor (TV 8) reveals a crumpled map of the Basanet's Wing, including the names of servants and which rooms they were once assigned to occupy. Though the information is outdated, the map itself may be useful to the Players as they navigate the wing.

### **Chef's Quarters**

The current chef, Honzo, resides here. Honzo is a thin, nervous man who has only recently come on staff. If the alarm bell has been sounded, Honzo can be found hiding in his quarters with the door barred from inside. Otherwise, he spends his time in the kitchen.

### **Steward's Quarters**

Tym, the steward of Raven Hall, spends most of his time in his chambers, only emerging when summoned by the Blood Ravens or, rarely, Basanet Corvan. He delegates the majority of his duties to a pair of scribes, preferring to remain half-drunk as he hopes to avoid his responsibilities. Regardless of whether the alarm bell has been sounded or not, Tym can be found in his quarters along with several empty bottles taken from the Basanet's cellar.

### **Servant's Dining Room**

This room is where the servants eat their meals and quietly gossip with one another. If the alarm bell has sounded, the servants attempt to retreat to their rooms. Those that don't remain here after barring the doors with tables and chairs.

### **Steward's Offices**

Steward Tym's office has been neatly organized by Sligh and Fisk, his two scribes. Sligh and Fisk can often be found here passing time and looking busy, even though they have very little in the way to do. If the alarm bell has sounded, the two young men hide beneath their desks, trying to be as silent as they can.

### **Kitchen**

The wing's kitchen is a large room filled with all manner of cooking paraphernalia. The scent of food—baking bread and simmering stew—is a welcome olfactory diversion for anyone entering. If the alarm bell has sounded, the kitchen is unoccupied, as Chef Honzo retreats to his quarters and the kitchen help barricade themselves in the servant's dining room. Outside of cooking implements and a few cleavers and carving knives, there is little of interest to be found here.

### **Larder/Pantry**

The larder/pantry is filled with hanging sausages, barrels of salted meat, dried fruits, bags of flour, and other cooking staples. A stairwell in the northwest corner of the room leads down into the wing's cellar.

### **Guards' Quarters**

These quarters are cramped and roughly organized. Rooms occupied by the guards can house up to four Blood Ravens each. These quarters are cramped and roughly organized. If the alarm bell has sounded, no Blood Ravens are present. Otherwise, there is a chance that one or more Blood Ravens are taking their rest within each room.

### **Sir Persicar's Quarters**

Sir Persicar resides in this locked room, though he is not present regardless of whether the alarm bell has sounded or not. The chamber is neat and tidy, and contains Persicar's personal effects—fine clothing, a small coffer filled with gold crowns, and several letters written in cryptic shorthand. If deciphered (TV 9), the letters are revealed to be notes detailing the crimes of the Basanet. Persicar, being the conniver that he is, has prepared these just in case he ever needs to plead before the Crown in answer for what has happened in this province. There is no mention of Persicar's name in these letters.

### **Marshals' Quarters**

The four Blood Raven marshals dwell within these two rooms. Even if the alarm bells have not been rung, both rooms are empty, save for personal effects, as the marshals accompany Sir Persicar in the Basanet's Hall.

### **Trophy Room**

Trophies sacred to Rookhaven's rulers from years past are displayed within this museum-like room—Giak blades, suits of armor, paintings, leather-bound tomes, and other objets d'art line the walls. The room is musty and there are few signs that anyone has been here recently. Even the oil lamps are bereft of fuel, as no one visits and the servants are forbidden to enter. The Basanet used to come here to tell stories of Rookhaven's history to honored visitors and to show off the fabulous treasures that hearken back to the village's lost years of glory. As it stands, he has not visited the trophy room in several months and dust lies thick over Rookhaven's heirlooms.





### Basanet's Study

This room serves as Basanet Corvan's study. Much of the village's business was done here, and town records dating back three-hundred years line the shelves. A heavy wooden desk dominates the eastern portion of the room, complete with a comfortable-looking chair. A second chair, of slightly lesser craftsmanship, sits unused in the center of the room.

### Basanet's Parlor

The Basanet's parlor is a well-stocked sitting room where guests are to be entertained by the Basanet himself. It is further detailed in Scene Two: *Good Night, Bad Knight*.

### Basanet's Chambers

Basanet Corvan's personal bedchambers are situated here and are examined further in Scene Three: *A Cry for Help*.

## SCENE TWO: GOOD NIGHT, BAD KNIGHT

At some point during the Player's attack on Raven Hall, the heroes will encounter Sir Persicar. Persicar has monitored the engagement since it began, and he chooses to confront the Kai on his own terms. The most convenient place for this encounter is in the Basanet's Hall, but if another opportunity presents itself dramatic, the Narrator should feel free to make adjustments. Assuming the Heroes encounter Persicar in the Basanet's Hall, the knight is accompanied by three Blood Raven marshals and two additional Blood Raven guards. Persicar has no intention of fighting fair and he has contingency plans in place to ensure his victory should things get out of hand.

### THE BASANET'S HALL

Having made their way past Raven Hall's defenders, the Players eventually find themselves in the Basanet's Hall. As the Heroes arrive, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*This long, broad room appears to be an audience chamber or feast hall, dingy from years of disuse. Tables and bench seats are stacked three high against the east and west walls, and fraying tapestries, faded with the years, hang amongst cobwebs and unlit lamps.*

*A large throne carved with ravens and the familiar crest of Rookhaven stands centered against the north wall, flanked by two black oak doors bound in iron. Sitting upon the throne is the familiar form of Sir Persicar, clad in full battle mail. Three Blood Raven marshals and two Blood Raven guards stand to either side of the throne, weapons at the ready.*

*Persicar stands up and gives a bow. "Hello, my lords," he says, his mocking voice echoing throughout the hall. "It is past time we dispensed with the pleasantries, don't you think?"*

*With that, Sir Persicar draws his sword. Its black blade seems to absorb the shadows around him as a shiver runs down your spines. "As the Basanet is currently indisposed—and shall be so indefinitely—I have been appointed to ensure you no longer trouble the good people of Rookhaven... or their liege."*

*With that, Persicar and his guards begin to advance towards you, weapons at the ready.*



Sir Persicar has no intention of parleying with the Players, though he engages in a quick, insulting banter with them as he and his men intercept the Kai. In doing so, he hopes to catch the Players off guard until he is within striking distance—that is, if the Players allow him to approach at all. He wants this to appear to be a battle to the death, and Sir Persicar is not to be deterred by any threats or conciliations the Players might have to offer him.

Persicar's plan is simple enough. He intends to slaughter the players, but he is also possessed of a hidden ace up his sleeve. Should that the combat swing in favor of the Kai, Persicar shouts out a command and disengages from the melee. As he does so, ten additional Blood Raven guards rush into the room from the northwest and northeast doorways. Using these guards as cover, Persicar slips through the northwest door, into the Basanet's Parlor.

Should Sir Persicar be slain before he can escape, any remaining marshals and guards immediately surrender. Though loyal to him, their devotion was inspired out of fear. Dying for a slain tyrant does not sit well with them. The Kai should honor any surrender appropriately, and as long as they do so, the guards will not attempt any foul play. Should they find the Kai to be more ruthless than their rank would warrant, the Blood Ravens continue to resist and seek a means of escape.





## THE BASANET'S PARLOR

Should Sir Persicar successfully retreat into the Basanet's Parlor, he proceeds to bar the door and extinguish every lamp within the room. This, combined with the shuttered windows and heavy curtains, plunging the parlor into complete darkness. With Midnight in hand, Persicar is unhindered by the lack of illumination. He waits in a corner of the room for the Kai to enter, striking from the shadows as soon as they do.

This is Persicar's last stand, but if outmatched and his death is certain, he attempts to surrender. It is up to the Players whether or not Persicar should live and face trial or face the justice of their blades.

## SCENE THREE: A CRY FOR HELP

With Persicar captured or slain, the Players can proceed into the Basanet's Chambers. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*The Basanet's bed chamber reeks of sweat and sickness. All manner of trash and detritus is scattered across the floor, and the large, unmade bed is covered in stained silk sheets. The windows are shuttered and the heavy drapes drawn, doing little to alleviate the stench of the sour air that makes your eyes water and your gorges rise.*

*A hunched man wearing tattered black robes turns to face you as you enter the room, his eyes wide with fear. His black hair is greasy and streaked with grey, and his face is contorted in pain. Though his body is strong and well-built, it is wracked with agony. Here stands the Basanet, Myranar Corvan.*

*The Basanet takes a furtive step back, then falls to his knees before you. Raising his claw-like hands in a gesture of abject surrender, he hisses to you. "Please! My lords! You must help me!" He suddenly screams in pain and clutches his head, collapsing to the floor. "The dreamer! He is in my head! He has always been in my head! You must save me!"*

Corvan is obviously in a great deal of pain. He continues to rant about the "dreamer," begging the Kai for help. If taken from the room, the Basanet does nothing to resist.

## A PIVOTAL DECISION

At this point, the Players must decide upon the truth of the Basanet's ranting. Though he believes every word he speaks, the Players may be skeptical of his ravings. If any of the Kai questions his tale, or suggests aloud that he might be telling the truth, skip directly to Scene Five: *Into Shadow*. Even if the Players communicate silently, their minds are open to the dark presence that has haunted Corvan for many years. Unfortunately, this darkness will also rob the Heroes of their most valuable tool in determining if Myranar

Corvan speaks the truth – Sixth Sense. This close to Shryll, that psychic gift is completely useless. Any Kai Lord trying to use Sixth Sense here will suffer 4 ENDURANCE points from the vicious evil flooding his or her mind. Mindshield will reduce this to 2 points. Whatever decision the Heroes make, it must be a judgement call based solely on their instincts.

Should the Players cast aside Corvan's pleas and determine to take him away to pay for his evil deeds, proceed onward to Scene Four: *Justice Be Done*. If they do believe him, then go to Scene Five: *Into Shadow*.

## SCENE FOUR: JUSTICE BE DONE

If the Kai do not believe Myranar Corvan's ranting, they are able to escort him back to Rookhaven so that he can be properly punished for his crimes. As they emerge from the compound with the Basanet in tow, villagers begin to emerge from their homes, forming a crowd. Some stand silently, not knowing what to believe. Others whisper to one another, pointing at the Basanet and uttering his name.

As far as the Players know, they are victorious. Shryll—or what remains of it—continues to hide, waiting for its next chance to strike at the people of Rookhaven. The villagers go on with their largely miserable lives, and aside from the lifting of the blight, little within the village seems to change for the better. It seems whatever curse has been placed on Rookhaven continues to fester within its heart.

Though Corvan is obviously mad and continues to repeat his addled story about the "dreamer" in his head, he is taken back to the city of Toran and tried by the Legalim in the High Court. The Players will be asked to act as witnesses to his foul deeds. Following the trial, Corvan is found guilty on all counts; the Basanet is subsequently stripped of his title and hanged for his crimes.

## SCENE FIVE: INTO SHADOW

Should the Players show any sign of giving the Basanet's ravings credence, Shryll does not give them a chance to escape. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

*As you discuss the Basanet's crazed gibbering, your conversation is interrupted by a wicked cackling. Myranar Corvan's eyes, previously wide with fright, have narrowed into dark, inky slits, and his jaw works mechanically as he laughs.*

*"Whelps!" Corvan shouts at you. His voice is different—deeper, resonant, and frightening. "You had but one chance to live, yet you choose death! You seek the truth? Let us see how you fare when faced with it at long last..."*





*Acrid smoke billows from the corners of Corvan's mouth. "The Dark Dreamer summons you!"*

*With that, the Basanet screams, this time in his own voice. His shrieks deafen you, so consumed are they with pain. An intense heat emanates from his body as his skin blackens and flakes away. Foul smoke pours from Corvan's mouth, ears, and eyes as he lets forth a final, pitiable cry.*

*With an explosive flash, the Basanet bursts apart, shaking the chamber and sending you all flying. The floor shudders and gives way, and you are drawn downward into a nightmare pit as dark as hell itself. You fall, your senses fading, leaving only the echo of Corvan's cries in your ringing ears.*

This marks the end of *The Twilight Siege* and the beginning of the epilogue, *Always Darkest*.

## APPENDIX: VILLAINS OF THE PIECE

Because the battles in this scenario depend entirely on how the Heroes choose to assault (or infiltrate) Raven Hall, the number of opponents faced can vary greatly. Statistics for the various foes the Kai Lords might have to contend with are given here. Select as many enemies in whatever groupings you wish to ensure memorable battles, taking cues from the text in this adventure.

It is your choice how fair you make these fights. If the Heroes have chosen carelessly or recklessly they may need to learn to be more careful in future!

### BLOOD RAVEN TRAINEE

**Combat Skill:** 15      **Endurance:** 15

**Trait:** Soldier, Grouping (Soldier)

### BLOOD RAVEN GUARDSMAN

**Combat Skill:** 16      **Endurance:** 17

**Trait:** Soldier, Grouping (Soldier)

### BLOOD RAVEN SERGEANT

**Combat Skill:** 17      **Endurance:** 20

**Trait:** Soldier, Grouping (Soldier)

### BLOOD RAVEN MARSHALL

**Combat Skill:** 18      **Endurance:** 21

**Trait:** Soldier, Grouping (Soldier)

### BLOOD RAVEN ELITE

**Combat Skill:** 19      **Endurance:** 23

**Willpower:** 5

**Trait:** Soldier, Veteran (5, +1)

### REGARDING PERSICAR

Sir Persicar is a powerful enemy and his fight with the Kai Lords deserves to be memorable. While you as Narrator can simply use his basic statistic line as given below, you may wish to consider using his full character sheet on page 125. As his abilities require explanation, this sourcebook also provides a summary of the Sommlending Knight of the Realm, one of several new classes available for play in the Heroes of Magnamund supplement. Sir Persicar's sword, Midnight, is also given its own page in the Rookhaven Sourcebook. It is a Legacy







weapon, a special kind of item that grows in power as its wielder does. If you do not wish to use its full abilities in this scenario, note Sir Persicar's special rules regarding Midnight below.

### SIR PERSICAR (FALLEN KNIGHT)

**Combat Skill:** 20 (25/26) **Endurance:** 25

**Willpower:** 13

**Trait:** Defence (7), Soldier, Veteran (5, +1), Immune to Mindblast, Night Vision

**Special Rules:** When wielding Midnight, his magical sword, add +5 to his COMBAT SKILL and an addition +1 to his COMBAT SKILL against human opponents at night.

## PATHS AND POSSIBILITIES – SCENARIO NINE – THE TWILIGHT SIEGE

### NOTHING FOR DINNER

The Kai lords encounter an errand boy from Raven Hall named Yael. He was just sent to procure supplies for the Basanet's kitchen. He could find nothing on the chef's list, and even the flour he could find was crawling with weevils and unfit for consumption. Yael fears that if he returns to Raven Hall empty-handed, that the Blood Ravens will beat him for his failure. If he does not return, however, his family is liable to be punished in his stead.

### MISSING PERSONS

Kailen approaches the Kai lords and tells them that a woman called Mishel wishes to speak with them. Should they meet with the poor woman, they discover that her husband, Brinn, was taken to Raven Hall by the Blood Ravens for the crime of looking directly at Sir Persicar. Mishel rightly fears for Brinn's life, so she begs the Kai to find and rescue him. (This scenario seed might best be used as a secondary quest while the Heroes infiltrate Raven Hall during The Twilight Siege.)

### RELIC OF THE DWARVES OF BOR

Ishora mentions to the Kai that a crazy old hermit named Calvin is rumored to live near the remains of Starkriven Pass. Calvin rarely comes to Rookhaven, but on his last trip into village he raved about finding a precious relic forged by the Bor Dwarves who had allied with Rookhaven against the armies of the Darklands. Ishora doesn't know what Calvin had found, but she surmises that it might be a useful tool for the Kai when they make their attack on Raven Hall. Perhaps Calvin could be convinced to part ways with his find.

### FATE OF THE RAVENS

While the Heroes fight their way through Raven Hall, Renn the Red and the Rebel Ravens are certainly not idle. The only reason there are not more soldiers in Raven Hall is that Sir Persicar has already dispatched several groups to 'secure the village'. The fallen knight has no issue with his forces ensuring compliance through fire and steel.

Renn Maldrun and his forces are the only thing in the way of this thinly-veiled assault. They have divided into multiple small bands and concealed themselves throughout the village. Using their knowledge of the area, they manage to successfully hide from the incoming Blood Ravens.

What follows is a long and bloody series of quick strikes and ambushes, with Renn's relatively small band of rebels taking much larger, better armed groups by surprise and disappearing again before reinforcements arrive. While the cost in lives is severe, Renn's tactics keep the village from being burned and keep the villagers from being massacred. Of the brave bandits and soldiers that stood with Renn at Unkindness Crossing, less than a third of them survive to see the sunrise.

## EPILOGUE – ALWAYS DARKEST (SCENARIO TEN)

*"We found his body, sir. Persicar is dead."*

*Renn Maldrun nodded quietly, still staring down into the ragged pit that was once the Basanet's chambers. The chasm bore straight down into the earth, dropping so far that the darkness below swallowed it any amount of light.*

*"The Kai did not fail us," he said grimly. "They dealt with that bastard and then came here for Corvan himself."*

*"Yes," the man beside Renn shifted nervously. "But this did not end the way any of us thought it might. "The Basanet is still alive. We have him in irons, but he's not..."*

*Renn stepped back away from the crumbling rift, watching as pieces of the room's stone floor broke free and tumbled down into the shadows. No one could have survived that fall, but he was just not ready to accept that Rookhaven's heroes were lost. Until he had bodies to bury, the Kai Lords were alive.*

*"It does not matter what he is or is not. Keep him chained but alive until we can put him on a coach to Toran. Sir Persicar is dead and the Basanet is unfit to rule. Until another lord is appointed to us, we are lawless."*

*His eyes carried the weight of what that meant for everyone in the province. "No one lays a hand on the Basanet. I'll not give the Crown any excuse to march in here and condemn us for high murder."*

*"Of course, I'll tell the men," The man beside Renn stared down into the hole and shuddered. "Are the Kai dead?"*





*Renn turned and walked sternly away from the sundered room. "No, I refuse to believe that. You are young yet, Thon, so you've not seen Kai Lords. Kai Skurdin, they call themselves. I have seen the Kai Lords in combat. The things they can do?"*

*He glanced back toward the terribly deep, terribly dark pit.*

*"The things they can survive I will not believe them dead until I hold their bodies in my arms. Until then, we do them the honour of assuming they are alive."*

*Thon nodded, his dented helmet slipping down over his eyes again. Renn chuckled softly and tightened its straps for him so it would fit better. "You're a good lad for joining the fight with us. If you choose to stay on with the guard, whoever ends up leading this rabble would be lucky to have you."*

*The young man looked up at Renn.*

*"Actually, sir? A couple of the men have been in the forge, resizing some Marshall's armour to fit you. They want you to take the post."*

*"Me?" Renn blinked. The last two days had been a red blur of revenge and revolution. He had not stopped to think past justice for his son and freedom for Rookhaven. With both achieved, Renn had no idea what to do next.*

*So be it. "All right, lad. I suppose I can do that, at least until a new noble comes and we're all hanged."*

*It was a bad joke to be sure, but in Rookhaven? Sometimes gallows humour is all there is.*

Nine scenarios, many hours of play. Heroes have risen, villains have fallen. Innocents have been slain. The guilty have been punished. A corrupt knight and his merciless soldiers lie dead, their insane lord has been confronted and exposed. It has been a long, hard road, but the path is nearly over. The true evil behind all the woes of Rookhaven can be confronted at long last.

## ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Always Darkest is the final scenario in the Before the Dawn campaign. It details the Heroes' fall into the catacombs beneath Raven Hall and their search through the darkness for both a way out and way to end the nightmare that has plagued Rookhaven for centuries. Finally coming face to face with the monster behind all of this land's woes, the Heroes will have a chance to destroy Shryll once and for all. The path to this final confrontation will not be an easy one. Restless dead, psychic manifestations, and dark magic stand between the Heroes and victory. And, even should they find

the Helghast, Shryll might prove to be too much for the Heroes to handle, given his immense power and limitless fury.

The final battle takes place in a mockery of a throne room, built inside what was once the grandest crypt of House Corvan. The Heroes must contend with Shryll's defenders and its animated blade Manceaver before they can reach the Helghast and destroy the fiend at long last.

- **Scene One** – Fallen – The Heroes awaken to find they have fallen deep into the desecrated earth beneath Raven Hall. Knowing there is something malevolent down here with them, their path is clear. They cannot climb back out and many of their provisions have been destroyed. They must deal with Shryll and find a way out or this place will become their tomb.
- **Scene Two** – The Path of Thorns – The majority of this scenario is spent exploring the catacombs beneath Raven Hall. These corridors have arched ceilings and connect to a large central cavern, creating a small necropolis. One of the Heroes discovers that their lineage traces back to the origins of this place; Corvan blood flows in their veins.
- **Scene Three** – World on Fire – This discovery and the magic surrounding it drives Shryll into a frenzy. Unleashing one of its most fearsome powers, the Helghast collapses most of the necropolis' roof and shatters the floor. Blood-red fire rushes up through the broken stone, threatening to roast the Heroes alive! The only way to escape is to brave the darkness of the catacomb's grand mausoleum, the only stable building amid the shifting, searing chaos.
- **Scene Four** – Ice – The Heroes enter the Raven's Gate Mausoleum, eventually reaching the central crypt. Shryll is here, awaiting their arrival. This scene likely ends in a final, epic battle for the fate of Rookhaven.
- **Conclusion** – Black Bird's Requiem – With Shryll finally destroyed, the divine power that has kept the Helghast's malice in check can finally be free as well. A swarm of ravens flood into the chamber, surround the Heroes, and transport them to the surface.

## SCENE ONE: FALLEN

*The floor shudders and gives way, and you fall downward into a nightmare pit as dark as hell itself...*

This moment picks up right where the last scenario ended, with the Heroes falling to their doom. Give the Players no indication that they will be all right until they awaken at the bottom of the shaft.

*...plummeting through the shadows as the stone flagstones of the Basanet's chamber plunge down around you. You feel yourselves battered and broken even as the darkness claims you, bones shuddering as you land on angled rock, slide helplessly, and fall into*





*a second shaft boring deep into the corrupted, unforgiving earth. You fall for what feels like forever, your body reeling from impact after painful impact with the sides of the jagged shaft. Your world becomes blood and stone, pain and vertigo, until everything ends with a sudden, crushing shock!*

The Heroes have actually survived their fall, even if they do not immediately know this. Their continued existence is thanks to two things – the slope of the shaft breaking their fall several times and the ancient magic that once protected the catacombs wherein they now lie. Let the Players sweat a bit before continuing. You have a few Random Numbers to pick anyway, so do so in total silence, shaking your head and looking grim. It will make them all the more relieved when you continue with the next section.

Pick a Random Number for each Kai Lord and divide it in half, rounding up. 0 counts as 0, rounding up to 1. This will result in a number between 1 and 5. Now add the following bonuses if any apply.

- +3 if the Kai Lord has Healing as a Discipline. (This is a mixed blessing; see below.)
- +1 per point of Kai's Favour the Kai Lord possesses.
- +1 if the Kai Lord has a Defense Score above 3.
- +1 if the Kai Lord has the Acrobatics Skill.
- +1 if the Kai Lord has the Diehard Trait.
- +1 if the Kai Lord has the Vigilant Trait.

This total becomes each Kai Lord's their current ENDURANCE score. They may have survived, but they are badly injured. They are about to learn the extent of those injuries firsthand.

*You slowly return to consciousness, a faint rasping sound drawing you back from the depths of your pained slumber. The noise comes from you, echoing forth each time you try to breathe. Dried blood clings to your lips and clogs in your throat. Every breath feels labored and though you have not yet tried to move, the ache in your limbs and back guarantee that when you do, it will be an exercise in agony.*

The Heroes can move without taking further damage, though they will not enjoy the pain involved in doing so. Their ribs are at least bruised, with a few of them actually cracked or broken. If the Kai Lords feel lucky to be alive, they have correctly divined their good fortune.

Unfortunately for them, their luck is limited to their survival. Read or paraphrase the following:

*You rise to your feet in a small chamber, three of its four walls cracked but clearly once smooth, worked stone. The ceiling is just a rock-strewn hole that angles up into total darkness.*

*The only light here is coming from a single magical torch set into one of the intact walls. Its black wrought iron is shaped like a perching raven. Its upraised wings curl together, edge-feathers spread to contain the faint radiance of a pale flame.*

*A second scone, identical to the first, is on the ground ten feet away along the same wall. It is crushed, its wings bent flat by the weight of the stone piled on top of it. In the space between both sconces, the wall has been split asunder, revealing a narrow passage out of the room. The tunnel looks remarkably unstable, but it may be the only way out.*







The working raven scone cannot be removed from the wall without ruining its magic. Any Kai Lord with the Occult skill or a Willpower of 17+ will know this without need of a Test. The fire within its curled wings provides no heat, but its light once produced a healing effect that bolstered all within its confines. That power is now spent, the last of it having helped the Kai Lords survive their fall.

If any Hero tries climbing the walls to get back out their way they came, allow them the attempt though the effort is doomed to failure. The passage leading back up to Raven Hall is simply too broken and unstable. The best any Kai can do is to climb about thirty feet up before the possibility of fatal collapse becomes obvious to them.

**If a Kai Lord insists on climbing even after their Player is informed that the tunnel will collapse around them, that character will be crushed to death under several tons of falling stone. This cave-in also completely blocks the ceiling, giving the surviving Kai Lords no option but to take the tunnel onward.**

Give the Kai Lords a little time to get their bearings before pressing on. They should take stock of themselves, their fellow Kai, and their possessions. When they do, use the following guidelines determine how dire their situation has become.

## HEALTH

The Kai Lords have a current Endurance score equal to the Random Number plus bonuses you generated earlier. If any Kai with Healing attempts to use that discipline here, they discover that they simply cannot. Its power has been completely expended just keeping them alive. They cannot even use their Healing ability on others; it is just as exhausted as they are.

Companion animals, if any, are alive but only have 1 ENDURANCE. This number is increased to 3 END if the Kai they are bonded to has the Healing Discipline.

**Important:** It is possible, though highly unlikely, that a Kai Lord might now have more ENDURANCE points than they possessed when the prior scenario ended. Consider this a result of the Raven Scone's power healing them first because they were so much closer to death than anyone else.

## POSSESSIONS

The fall was not kind on the Kai Lords' belongings. Their items are scattered around the chamber, having been flung from pouches and backpacks. Some items were lost, a few unrecoverable. If the Heroes are lucky, they have retained their most important items. If Fate proves to be cruel, they may have lost everything.

Midnight, the sword of Sir Persicar, automatically survives the fall as does the Sunhammer from the scenario Stroke of Midnight.

One by one, have each Player go through their items, starting with the things in their Backpack. The backpack itself is torn and battered but still serviceable. Each item inside, except for Meals and Rope, requires a Luck Test. On a failure, the item is smashed, shattered, or otherwise damaged beyond recovery. That item gets marked off the Kai Lord's Action Record.

Next comes weapons. Weapons are harder than normal items and must fail two Luck Tests in a row to be broken. If one of the tests fails, the item is damaged, resulting in a -1 to COMBAT SKILL when using it. If both tests are failed, the weapon is destroyed and is marked off the Kai Lord's Action Record.

Lastly, test armour. All armour is built to withstand punishment; accordingly, armour items get three Luck Tests. One test can be failed without penalty. A second failure reduces the armour's Defense bonus by 1 (if the item only has a Defence score of 1 to begin with, the item does not lose Defense, but the Kai Lord wearing it loses a WILLPOWER point from deep bruising and pain). Only three failed tests will ruin the item, forcing the Kai Lord to mark it off their Action Chart.

Once the Heroes are ready to proceed, they can gather their things and head through the narrow passage into the catacombs of House Corvan. The going is not easy and moving through the rift in the wall will require an Acrobatics or Escape Skill Test at a Target Value of 7.

Failure at this roll will make the passage more frightening to traverse. Rocks will fall from the walls, the stacks of barely stable earth on either side of the passage will tremble, and the Players will have every reason to believe they are about to be buried alive by a sudden cave-in of their own making.

Once the Kai Lords get to the end of the Crumbling Rift, begin Scene Two – *The Path of Thorns*.

## SCENE TWO: THE PATH OF THORNS

*Emerging from the rift, you have entered the remains of an underground crypt, a series of hallways and small family shrines. There are wide stone plaques in the walls and sintricate scrollwork s along the walls between the plaques, with intersecting lines that resemble roses and thorn vines. Those plaques that are still legible bear the names of nobles long gone. These plaques mark the graves of Corvan nobles and the as far back as the Fall of Vashna... and beyond.*

*The ceiling is vaulted, buttressed every twenty feet or so with bands of old Sommlending Oak. Despite the crumbling stone above them or how they have sagged from the weight atop them, none of these beams seems to have cracked or failed.*





*Beneath them, the worn tile floor is covered in the dust of ages, worn stone tiles bearing the weight of long years spent untouched since the lords of House Corvan barred all passage into their ancestors' tombs.*

The Kai Lords now stand in the crumbling history of the Corvan family, taking steps through the final resting place of the Lords and Ladies of Rookhaven. As (most likely) members of nobility themselves, they should treat this place with a certain amount of respect. Acting with reverence and respect here will, in fact, result in a reward for the Players later in the scenario. If the Players seem well-meaning, you can offer suggestions for how they should act in a place like this, but let their choices be their own.

Along many of the hallways, the map shows small open 'rooms' one square wide. These are broken wall tombs, their plaques shattered outward and their contents empty. Perceptive Heroes might discover upon investigation that have been burst open by their former occupants.

The map for this area includes several possible 'encounters'. None must occur in any specific order, as there is no one right path through the catacombs. The only encounter that must occur is number 7, *The Knight Eclipsed*. This sentinel, inadvertently raised by the dark power emanating from Shryll, patrols the Path of Thorns at a never-ending plod. The number 7 on the map indicates where he *could* be; bring him into contact with the Heroes whenever you feel it would be most dramatic.

As foreshadowing for this event, you can read the following if the Heroes ever think to look for footprints or passage in the dust.

*The floor here has been disturbed by what looks to be dozens of sets of tracks. A closer look reveals every footprint to be identical. This is not the passage of several figures, but rather just one person coming by this way many, many times...*

This scene ends when the Heroes use the key they gain from the Knight Eclipsed encounter and open one of the Raven Gates leading to the inner necropolis. The act of opening this gate releases a divine power that drives Shryll even deeper into madness. What happens next is defined in Scene Three – *World on Fire*.

## 1 – THE GRIEVING ROOM

*The remains of wooden benches, some in moldering pieces, cover the floor here. Once a chamber for reflection and mourning, the shadows in this dark room seems almost oppressive. Though it has been long abandoned, some echo of sorrow still remains.*

There is no true threat here, but any Kai Lord with Sixth Sense that enters this room must make a Resistance Test using their WILLPOWER or be overcome with guilt, grief, and crippling

sadness. Those who fail will have to be pulled from the room physically, as they collapse and will not be able to rise again without help. Once affected Heroes are out of the room, the sorrow quickly fades. Within a few minutes, it will only be a memory and the Kai Lord will suffer no lingering effects.

## 2 – SIGNS OF LIFE

*This large room is well-lit, as two of its raven-shaped torches are still intact. Their pale light flickers as you move, casting dancing shadows across a large central pillar made of smooth stone. Likely a gathering hall for feasts or other services, this room has not been used in centuries and its furnishings have succumbed to time.*

*Unused does not, however, mean untraveled. There are several wet tracks around the room, muddying the dust before heading off through a wide crack in one of the walls.*

This room has no surprises lurking in it, but the tracks belong to a curious Haraz – a large amphibious lizard. The Haraz lives with a few others in a pool south of this room. They attempt to investigate sounds in this room but, if they are alerted, they will be ready to ambush the Kai Lords should the Heroes intrude in their cavern home.



## 3 – STILLED WATERS

*The narrow gap in the wall was difficult to squeeze through, but at least the stone felt stable as you made your way to this small cavern. There is no source of light save for your own, but that is enough to see a deep, shadowy pool on the far side of the cave. Waves ripple across its surface, sure signs that something is moving within.*

This cave is home to a small family of Haraz, pony sized amphibious reptiles that originate from Maakenmire and that can





cross even marshy terrain on their widely-splayed feet. The pool is much deeper than it appears and connects to a body of water far below Rookhaven. Through several natural locks and tunnels, this waterway even taps into the freshwater deeps of several of Sommerlund's lakes.

Though they hunt elsewhere, these Haraz lair here in safety. As such, they are not naturally aggressive. Kai Lords approaching peacefully will not be immediately attacked. Any hostility or drawn weapons will be considered an act of aggression, and the adult Haraz will attack while their spawn dive into the subterranean depths below.

### HARAZ (4 ADULTS)

**Combat Skill:** 14

**Endurance:** 15

**Traits:** Grouping (Mob)

**Special Rule:** These Haraz will split into mated pairs, forming two groups of two as soon as combat starts. They will not form groups larger than that.

If any Haraz is slain, the others will try to Evade to the pool and swim away after their spawn.

## 4 – THE SHRINE OF KYRJA

*This room has a pair of pointed side chambers with mosaics on the walls depicting massive, feathered wings surrounding the chamber. Six intact raven sconces illuminate the room brightly, their white flames making the feathers of the wings flutter as if alive.*

*A single pillar at one end of the room has been worked to resemble a tall woman with long black hair, pale skin, and ornate armour. She stands like a sentinel at attention, her emerald eyes gazing down at you from within the shadows of her deep, stony cowl. Her eyes are real gemstones and her armour has been inlaid with engraved plates of burnished silver.*

*Just being near the pillar feels comforting, as if those wings along the wall are both shield and shelter, keeping you safe for as long as you stay here.*

This room is a place of safety, a shrine to the Demi-goddess Kyrja (pronounced 'keer-yah'). Kyrja is a servant of Ishir and a guardian of the dead. Her animal, obviously, is the raven and she stood watch over House Corvan for centuries as their divine matron. Indeed, as her largest family of followers, the decline of the Corvan family meant Kyrja's own presence in the Material World of Aon faded with them. Kai Lords with Sage or Occult might (TV 8 Test) know of her and recognize her by the symbols here.

This shrine is one of her last remaining sites of worship and one of the only places on Magnamund where she can be invoked. A small

part of Kyrja has been sleeping here for a long time, forced into dormancy by Shryll's presence. Now, she simply waits for a child of the Ravens to arrive.

One of the Kai Lords carries Corvan blood from somewhere back in his or her lineage. For the best effect in this scene, the Player should have no idea about this until you are ready to reveal it. Until then, just let the Players know that the following effects are in place:

- Every Kai Lord regains one WILLPOWER.
- If anyone is suffering from any disease or poison, it is cured after spending five minutes in this shrine. As the disease or poison fades, the raven torches all dim a bit as they expend some of their magic to affect this cure. (This will NOT cure the disease from Area 5 below.)

Once you are ready to reveal that one of the Kai Lords (your choice) is a descendant of the Corvan line, read or paraphrase the following:

*A soft breeze billows through the shrine, making the torch sconces waver and the winged walls seem to move as if they were beating. The green gemstone eyes of the statue-pillar flicker brightly, magnifying the silvery torchlight into a verdant beam, shining down on one of your number.*

To the chosen Kai Lord:

*The light surrounds you, blazing but not painful. You feel transfixed, unable to move yet sensing no danger. You are paralyzed by the emerald beam, your body held in safety as a presence feels your mind. You feel measured, examined. You are weighed in judgement and found...*

Pause here. Let the Player worry, just for a moment. Failure only occurs if the Kai Lord was a willing participant in grave robbing at Area 5. If that occurs, the lights fail and nothing else happens here.

*...worthy. You are one of the blood, the line of Corvan, though long removed. It has been centuries since anyone of the family line with a worthy spirit has been here, yet here you stand. You are welcome here, you and your companions – Children of the Sun, beloved of the Moon.*

*As the beams of light fade and you feel yourself freed to move again, you are given a momentary vision of a secret compartment in the pillar. What rests within it once served those who defended this place and this family in the name of Kyrja, the Raven Demi-Goddess. There is a darkness here, an evil that must be purged. May the Raven's gift serve you well.*

Kyrja's spirit provides a parting gift for all the Kai Lords as well. As the statue's eyes fade and their green light dims, everyone within



the shrine is healed to half their original ENDURANCE score or regains 3 ENDURANCE, whichever results in a greater value. Once, this place could have restored the Heroes completely but that was long ago, when the lower Goddess was openly revered. Now, this small gift of healing is all she can offer.

The compartment in the pillar can only be seen or opened by the chosen Kai Lord. Within, wrapped in a black linen tabard, is Harbinger.

## HARBINGER – THE RAVEN’S WING

This divine weapon is a shadow of its former self; even diminished, it retains great power. A six foot quarterstaff of dark grey-stained ash wood, it is decorated with sweeping black wings that cover nearly two feet of the staff at each end. These wings are inlaid with nightstone, making the wings shimmer even in the dimmest light.

As a Quarterstaff, it adds +2 to its wielder’s COMBAT SKILL and its weapon qualities are Defensive 1, Impact 1, and Heavy.

Harbinger’s greatest property is its ability to transform at the wielder’s command. As a quick action, the wielder can touch an arrow to the staff’s center grip. Both ends of the staff then spread their ‘feathers’ and become linked a ‘string’ of shadows. Harbinger then curves, becoming a wickedly accurate bow.

As a Bow, it adds +2 to its wielder’s COMBAT SKILL; its weapon qualities are Piercing 1, Ranged, and Two Hands.

Until the Demi-goddess recovers, a process that could take months or years depending on the actions of the Heroes after this adventure, this shrine can do nothing else for them but keep them safe. No fell creature, not even the Knight Eclipsed, can enter this room. If the Kai Lords need to camp, this is their safest option within the Path of Thorns.

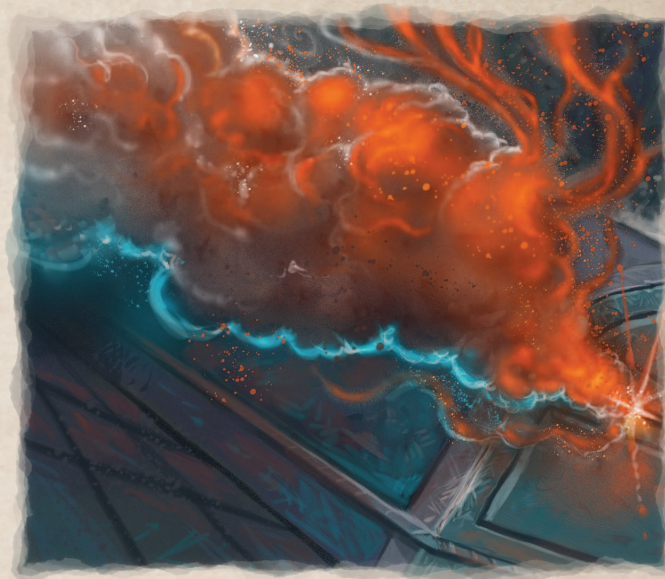
## 5 – PEACEFUL REST

*Though many of the crypt plaques along this hall have been shattered and their contents taken, this grave and its stone seem perfectly intact. There is no sign of age on the plaque and no dust has settled into its lettering.*

*‘Seola Corvan – A Beloved Daughter, Taken Too Soon’*

*The name and inscription are followed by a small symbol of a scepter and circlet, an old noble tradition that marks the presence of a family heirloom – potentially very valuable – within.*

*Powerful magic once protected this grave. These enchantments have faded, lingering just enough to prevent Shryll’s corruption from defiling the body of the woman within. Her flesh, with the diminishing of the magic has now started to rot in a most horrific fashion. Shryll’s presence has caused this vile decay.*



*The Helghast was unable to turn Seola Corvan into an undead servitor, though its dark aura has twisted her body into a terrible weapon for anyone foolhardy enough to open her crypt. Should the Kai Lords wish to engage in a dishonorable act of grave robbing, they trigger diseased trap they unleash upon themselves.*

*As the lid protecting this noblewoman’s tomb comes away, a hissing cloud of rancid yellow vapour pours forth, flooding this part of the burial hall with an acrid, cloying stench!*

Every Kai Lord present must make a Resistance Test against a wasting disease that has no known cure. It is similar to the Red Cough, but more virulent and resistant to curing.

## SEOLA’S SORROW

**Method of Infection:** Contact, Inhalation

**Difficulty Rating:** 8

**Known Cures:** Unknown, -2 penalty on all Medicine Skill curative attempts.

If infected by Seola’s Sorrow, Heroes suffer a penalty of -1 to your COMBAT SKILL. Every time they fail your resistance test to Red Cough, they suffer another -1 penalty; this is cumulative up to





a maximum of -5 after five days. This penalty persists until the disease is cured.

**Special:** If the penalty from Red Cough reaches -5, the victim permanently loses 1 point of COMBAT SKILL due to irreversible lung damage.

After all this, the only 'prize' the Kai Lords might obtain for their disturbing the rest of this long-dead lady is a wooden box containing parchment scrolls that once contained House Corvan ballads and poems. They are long past saving, but an antique collector might pay 5 Gold Crowns for the box.

## 6 – RAVEN GATE

*This large iron gate is in excellent repair considering its age. A few spots of rust can be seen along its spindles and posts, but otherwise, its black metal is as clean and strong as the day it was forged. A two door gate locked in the center, the construction is wrought to resemble the leafless tree crest of Rookhaven Province.*

*Past the Raven Gate's limbs and bars, you can see very little. The chamber beyond is massive, its ceiling high enough to vanish into the darkness above. You dimly hear what sounds like moving water, but you cannot see its source at this distance.*

The Raven Gates cannot be opened mechanically or with most forms of magic. They cannot be picked, as their key is magical and their lock's tumblers will not even move unless they are in contact with it. This key is around the neck of the sole remaining guardian of the Path of Thorns, a Guard-Knight whose name has been lost for so long even he no longer remembers it.

## 7 – KNIGHT ECLIPSED

This encounter can be run at any time while the Heroes are in the Path of Thorns. Just keep in mind that the Players cannot advance through the scenario until they defeat or negotiate with the Knight Eclipsed. They need the key that opens the Raven Gates, so provide this encounter whenever you are ready to have them proceed.

*A shape emerges from the shadows beyond. A man in plate armour, wearing a cloak of tattered black cloth, is approaching you. Hunched as he walks, he takes one slow, inexorable step after another.*

This is the Knight Eclipsed, an undead exceptionally raised by the power of the Demi-goddess Kyrja to keep watch over these tombs against Shryll. Though animated unnaturally, the Knight Eclipsed is not evil and will not feel like a threat to powers like Sixth Sense unless the Heroes give him a reason to be. The Knight Eclipsed can even be parlayed with, especially if one of the Kai Lords has been identified as a member of House Corvan and is visibly carrying Harbinger.

Unfortunately, if met with hostility or if any of the Kai Lords opened the sealed grave at Area 5, the Knight Eclipsed cannot be reasoned with and will fight to his second death without mercy or quarter!

## THE KNIGHT ECLIPSED

**Combat Skill:** 20

**Endurance:** 20

**Willpower:** 10

**Traits:** Soldier, Veteran (+2, 10), Defence 4

**Special Rules:** Though the Knight Eclipsed is unarmed, he suffers no penalty to his COMBAT SKILL because of his gauntlets. They allow him to fight as if he was armed.

The Knight knows little, having almost no memory and tasked with patrolling these silent halls for centuries. He does know that his purpose is to defeat Shryll and safeguard these halls. If the Kai Lords defeat him (or convince him to let them destroy the Helghast for him), the Knight Eclipsed will kneel to honor the Heroes, give them the Corvid Key, and finally be released from his service.

*The kneeling knight pulls forth a key on a chain around his gorget. With one tug, the chain snaps and he offers the key in a withered palm.*

*"This," comes the deathless knight's whisper of a voice, "will open the Raven Gate and permit you entry to the Grand Mausoleum. The blight that haunts us both lies festering within. Take the key, open the gate, and end its malice once and for all."*

*Dust begins to billow out of the knight's armour, pouring from every joint and crack. "Fare well in the battle ahead. Be brave, Kai... be victorious."*

*As the last of the dust trickles free, the man's armour collapses in pieces to the floor. There is nothing within. Whatever held this knight together has faded and, with it, his burden of defending this place has passed to you.*

Any Kai Lord with Sixth Sense can feel that in this instance, taking possession of the Knight Eclipsed's armour and gauntlets would not be a crime. They have taken up his obligation to stop Shryll, and in so doing, they have earned his possessions if they wish to claim them. The Knight Eclipsed's armour is badly damaged, but his breastplate, helmet, and gauntlets have survived the battle. These offer the following benefits:

- **Knight's Helmet:** This Special Item adds +1 to Defence and does not have the Heavy quality. This means that it does not impair Order of Battle.
- **Knight's Breastplate:** This Special Item is worn on the body, adds +4 to Defense, and has the Heavy 3 quality, subtracting 3 from the wearer's Order of Battle.



- **Knight's Gauntlets:** This Special Item is worn on the hands. It adds +1 to COMBAT SKILL, +1 to Defence, negates the -4 CS penalty associated with entering battle unarmed, and counts as a magical weapon.

Scene Two ends as the Heroes use the Corvid Key to open one of the Raven Gates. The moment they do so, move immediately to the next Scene. There is no pause, time to rest, or chance to take any actions. What happens next comes as soon as the key is turned and the gates unlock.

### SCENE THREE: WORLD ON FIRE

Once it starts, this scene is brief, frantic, and appears far more dangerous than it actually is. It starts exactly as written below. Get your Players into the action of the scene, right into the heart of all the flames and chaos, and then set them loose to run like all of Helgedad were chasing them!

*The silver key settles in your grasp as you turn it, unlocking the Raven Gate effortlessly. The old iron of the gate's doors shudders as they slowly creak open, swinging open wide until they clang to a stop against the grey stone.*

*The moment they open, an sudden roar bellows ahead of you – a peal of angry thunder from the heart of the chamber beyond. An inhuman voice fills the darkness, shouting words in a black tongue so vile your ears ache to hear them. You stagger against the invisible onslaught, helpless in the face of its terrible wrath.*

*A massive wave of force crashes into you from behind, slamming you forward into the chamber. Before you stands a vast room with a domed ceiling, angular pools of brackish water, and a towering crypt at the center of it all. Fires erupt in all directions, bright like unleashed hatred and crimson like showers of blood. Water boils as flames race across the pools and the stone floor of the chamber's walkways shatters at its passing. Between the cracks, molten rock billows up from below.*

*The way back is cut off and in every direction, the inferno rages. There may be a way forward, but only if you hurry. Run! Run, or you will surely burn!*

Feel free to get descriptive here. The ceiling collapses, flaming rocks fall from the ceiling, the reflecting pools are boiling over, and the stone walkways overflow with blood-lava.

The first direction they try to run, stop them with a collapse of stone. When they turn, have a flowing river of magma cut them off. When they try to retreat away from that, let them just barely slip past a sudden pit in the walkway and narrowly avoid falling into one of the boiling pools.

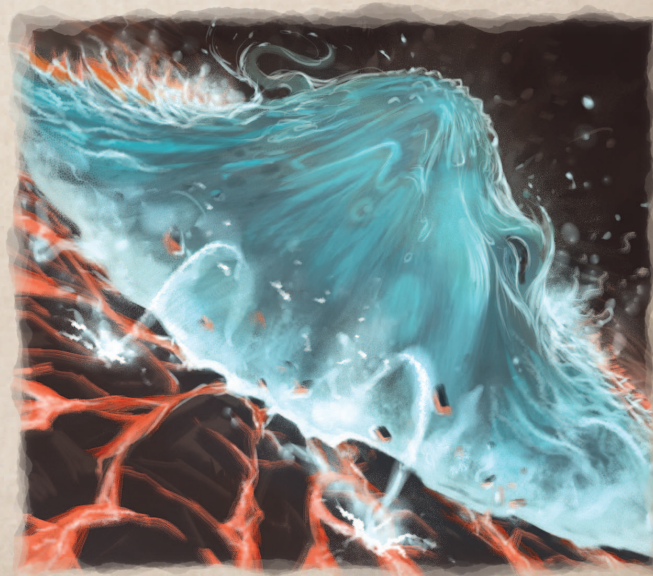
The goal of these dangers is to drive the Kai Lords to the Grand Mausoleum, not to kill them. They should feel like they are at risk of annihilation at any moment but manage to escape death at the last possible moment each time. The first direction they try to run, stop them with a collapse of stone. When they turn, have a flowing river of magma cut them off. When they try to retreat away from that, let them *just barely* slip past a sudden pit in the walkway and narrowly avoid falling into one of the boiling pools.

Appropriate tests include:

- **Falling Rocks (TV 6):** Success means dodging out of the way by mere inches. Failure means getting grazed by the blazing stones for 1 ENDURANCE.
- **Shattering Walkway (TV 7):** Success keeps the Kai Lord on what remains of the path. Failure throws the Kai Lord off-balance and they collapse painfully, losing 1 ENDURANCE.
- **Flowing Lava (TV 8):** Success allows for a leap over the swift-moving stream of blood-red lava. Failure means a dangerously close call that costs the Kai Lord an ENDURANCE point and his or her boots. Any further failures cost 2 ENDURANCE as said Kai is now barefoot.

Test the Kai as often as you wish to keep the suspense and threat of this scene going. Three Tests for each character should be enough, though you might wish to press for more if the Players seem to be enjoying the danger. Keep in mind that the Kai Lords began this adventure very injured and even with the benefit of the Shrine of Kyrja, they are likely still low on ENDURANCE. This part of the scene should frighten and possibly injure them – **not** kill them.

However, before the scene can end, the Heroes must face one serious, potentially lethal danger – the Harazutaagon.







When you are ready for the Heroes to pass into the Grand Mausoleum, begin their encounter with the Harazutaagon by reading or paraphrasing the following:

*Fleeing the crash of stones behind you, you and your companions rush past a rising tide of scarlet lava. The searing heat of the molten blood is intense, blistering you even as you dash past. You are now in the shadow of the Grand Mausoleum, the building at the heart of this cataclysm. Though you are momentarily in darkness, there is no relief from the heat.*

*Beside you, just a few feet away, the boiling water of one of the chamber's reflecting pools begins to surge. Rippling waves part as a tendril of rotting flesh lashes out, snaring one of you around the waist!*

The Harazutaagon is a massive creature, born from one of the Haraz from the small pond in the Path of Thorns that became trapped within a tiny fissure in the rocks beneath the catacombs. Over time, the strange magic in this chamber swelled the creature to gargantuan size. Shryll's corruption slew it, eventually transforming it into the undead monstrosity that it is now.

*The source of the tendril rises up out of the pool a moment later, snarling as it starts to draw its fetid tongue back into its fang-rimmed jaws. Reptilian and monstrous, the creature is half-boiled and surrounded in a cloud of its own reeking steam. Its flesh is splitting open, spilling out bile and rot everywhere it moves.*

## HARAZUTAAGON

**Combat Skill:** 19

**Endurance:** 30

**Traits:** Brutal 1, Immune to Mindblast

**Special Rules:** Each round, the Harazutaagon can choose one opponent within Close Range to lash with its constricting tongue. This free attack hits automatically and penalizes its victim with -4 COMBAT SKILL while bound. The victim, as well as anyone in melee with the Harazutaagon, can choose to attack the tongue as if they were fighting the creature itself. The tongue cannot inflict damage in return but if it suffers 5 or more points of ENDURANCE from any one exchange, it is severed. If severed, this attack cannot be used again.

The Harazutaagon will not Evade combat and fights until it is destroyed. Any Hero not bound by the beast's tongue can Evade, though the only path open to them is into the Grand Mausoleum. If they flee this direction, the Harazutaagon will not pursue. Though mostly mindless, it fears the Mausoleum and will not approach it under any circumstances.

Defeating the Harazutaagon will free the Kai Lords to press onward. The end of their adventure and the climax of this entire

campaign awaits them in the Grand Mausoleum. Proceed to Scene Four – Ice – when you and your Players are ready.

## SCENE FOUR: ICE

With death searing at your heels, you rush the only direction you can. You barrel through the open door of the mausoleum just as an avalanche of blazing stone crashes down behind you. Stairs shatter and the door is slammed shut, forced closed by the rocky pyre that drove you in here.

*Inside, the mausoleum is a massive, spacious structure. Stairwells run up the pale stone walls, leading to catwalks that circle above you in a semblance of a second story. Above all that, the roof rests upon the raised edge of the upper walls, perched and shaped like the tombstone lid of an immense sarcophagus. Gazing up, you see dozens of works of art – the entire ceiling is masterfully painted from corner to curve to corner again. You cannot make out the images themselves. Not only is the interior of the mausoleum lit by only a few dim braziers, their yellow light unable to pierce most of its shadows, but this place is covered from floor to ceiling in glittering, crystalline frost. Your breath crystallizes before you as the shock of intense cold reaches your sweat-soaked skin.*

The Kai Lords have gone from burning hot to freezing cold in a split second, which forces them to make Resistance checks against the extreme temperature shift. Traits like Enduring apply, making Heroes with these gifts more likely to avoid adverse effects.

Those that do not succeed the Resistance check are left shivering and helpless for the first round of Wave One below. Have the Kai Lords take this test, describing the numb shock and paralysis if they fail, and then read the following aloud:

***“We meet at last... in the flesh, at least.”***

*The words seem to come from everywhere and nowhere, reverberating off the walls and thundering inside your minds. It is as dark as a moonless night and thick with malice. You recognize it instantly from your nightmares – the voice of the Dark Dreamer.*

***“Your kind have been coming here for centuries, whelps. None have ever gotten this close to me and for that accomplishment, I must congratulate you.”***

*Shapes swirl within the chamber, lurching figures rising from behind stone benches and ice-covered tables. Every furnishing in the grand room seems to have been the hiding place of a wizened, wretched corpse. Each one stands, their bodies still clad in the rags of burial clothes. Some carry weapons, while others have nothing but the bony talons of their fleshless hands.*





*“But I have no time for pleasantries. If you are here, the gates of ravening iron must finally be open. Please enjoy the hospitality of my friends here. They are not so noble now, true, but I am sure they will make a royal feast of you.”*

*The undead nobles, the legion dead of so many Corvan nobility, let loose a bone-chilling wail. They charge!*

Kai Lords with Sixth Sense will be able to determine that the voice is coming from the far side of the room, where an almost invisible figure is sitting on a rime-shrouded throne. This information does them little good now, but it will help the Heroes locate Shryll after this first wave of attacks. These attacks are not just a way for Shryll to torment the Kai Lords. It is also attempting to break free of the ice that has imprisoned it down here for hundreds of years. Shryll cannot escape this chamber until it manages to free itself, so the longer it can delay the Heroes, the better.

### WAVE ONE – GENERATIONS LOST

This wave of attacks starts with a swarm of lesser undead, followed by a pair of knights for each Kai Lord, and lastly a champion of House Corvan for each one. They attack in this order, shambling in slow enough that the Heroes can deal with each set before the next arrives.

#### NOBLE UNDEAD (4 PER KAI LORD)

**Combat Skill:** 12

**Endurance:** 12

**Traits:** Immune to Mindblast

**Special Rule:** These undead are mindless and will not group.

#### UNDEAD KNIGHTS (2 PER KAI LORD)

**Combat Skill:** 15

**Endurance:** 15

**Traits:** Immune to Mindblast

**Special Rule:** These undead are mindless and will not group.

#### UNDEAD CHAMPION (1 PER KAI LORD)

**Combat Skill:** 18

**Endurance:** 18

**Traits:** Immune to Mindblast

**Special Rule:** Each Champion fixates on a specific Kai Lord. It will not attack anyone else, even if engaged with others, until that target is defeated.

Once the Kai Lords fight their way through this undead horde, they can advance towards the throne. Finding Shryll is a daunting task, as the Helghast is well concealed within a thick layer of ice and dust. Spotting the fiend requires a Perception Test with a TV of 9. Sixth Sense automatically finds Shryll, but finding the Helghast and reaching it are two very different matters.

Give the Players a second to catch their breath after the undead battle and then proceed:

*“Impressive work. You do your wretched order proud, surely, but I am Shryll – a warlord of Helgedad – I have tasted the blood of heroes many times your stature.”*

*The voice is an angry roar, betraying the speaker’s surprise at your survival despite his words. The room trembles now, as if an earthquake is threatening to shatter this place just as the elements tore apart the catacombs outside.*

*“Farewell, worms. I will enjoy watching you die.”*

The air fills with dozens of metal shards – dark and razor-edged. They fly together, forming a cloud of blackened steel as they swirl forward, keening with an unholy shriek as they threaten to engulf you.

### WAVE TWO – FRAGMENTS OF THE PAST

Clever Heroes might recognize that these shards are identical to the ones dug up out of the ground during the Cursed Earth scenario. These fragments, pieces of Shryll’s shattered sword, are possessed of a malicious intelligence of their own. Fiercely protective of their Helghast ‘owner’, they will fight to defend the fiend even now.

#### BLADESWARM

**Combat Skill:** 19

**Endurance:** 40

**Traits:** Immune to Mindblast, Immune to Techniques

The shards that make up the Bladeswarm were invulnerable during Cursed Earth but they can be destroyed here because they are so close to Manceaver, the source of their power. If the Bladeswarm is defeated here, the shards (and consequently the threat of Barrow Frost in the future) are gone forever.

This defeat weakens Manceaver considerably, though it still retains enough power to defend Shryll as described in the next wave.

*“You truly are a credit to your fool god. Of all the Kai Lords and spawn of this miserable Summer Land I have killed before, I will savour your deaths most of all!”*

*There is a cracking sound as a layer of ice over the throne against the back wall of the chamber starts to split. Within, a gaunt figure begins to move, its hollow eyes dimly glowing with each surge of motion. This is the source of the voice, of all the woes of Rookhaven.*

*This is Shryll, Helghast warlord in service to the Darklords of Helgedad, and it is breaking free!*





Allow the Kai Lords to react in any way they wish. It is likely they will rush to attack, correctly assuming that they will have an easier time defeating Shryll if they strike before it breaks free of its icy tomb. That said, the Players may have other plans. Give them a few seconds to decide on their course of action and then continue below.

*As you charge forward, a black sword rises up into the air, trailing frost and shadows as it flies. The weapon is made of the same dark metal at the storm of shards you just fought your way through. Extending only an arm's length past its quillons, the sword's blade ends in a jagged break. Even shattered, it seems to exude power.*

**"Mancleaver, strike them down!"**

## WAVE THREE – RAGING RELIC

### MANCLEAVER (ORGADAK-SHEZUG)

**Combat Skill:** 20

**Endurance:** 20

**Traits:** Defence 4, Brutal 1, Immune to Techniques, Bodyguard

**Special Rules:** Mancleaver is a sentient weapon and, as such, can be affected by Mindblast. It can heal damage it takes by injuring living creatures. Each time Mancleaver inflicts ENDURANCE damage against a living target in an exchange, it heals 1 ENDURANCE point. This cannot take it past its maximum score of 20.

**Bodyguard:** While Mancleaver is still free to fight, Shryll is immune to attack.

As combat opens, Mancleaver unleashes a psychic wave of fury and fear against the Heroes. Every Kai Lord without Mindshield loses 4 points of WILLPOWER and suffers a -2 penalty to COMBAT SKILL until Shryll either frees itself or is destroyed. Mindshield blocks this effect completely.

After the psychic wave, Mancleaver battles normally. Keep track of how long this fight lasts. If the Kai Lords detected Shryll earlier through Sixth Sense or by spotting him with Perception **and** made an effort to reach him quickly, they have five rounds until the Helghast breaks free.

If the Heroes did not spot Shryll early and only discovered his hiding place when he started to shatter the ice holding him immobile, they only have three rounds before he is free and the real battle begins.

If Mancleaver is defeated before this, its remaining blade explodes in a blast of dark magic and iron wrath. All that remains is its grey leather-wrapped grip still attached to a foot long shard of black iron. This remnant, while vicious and crude, retains enough of a base enchantment to count as a magical weapon. If Shryll absorbs its power, this barely enchanted remnant is also left behind for use.

## SLAYING SHRYLL WHILE IT IS STILL TRAPPED IN ICE

Normally, slaying helpless prisoners is something the Kai Order frowns upon. In this case, the risks of allowing the Helghast to escape if it gets free greatly outweigh the dishonour inherent in cutting down a defenseless foe. The Kai Elrhin back at the Monastery will completely understand if the Heroes strike down Shryll while the creature is still imprisoned. A single attack against the still-imprisoned creature will slay it.

If the Heroes fight through Mancleaver's defense of Shryll fast enough to reach the Helghast, dispatching the fiend without a fight is both acceptable and good tactics. If they cannot or choose not to do so, they are in for one last, truly epic fight. However, if you want to make sure this battle happens, have Shryll break free just before Mancleaver is destroyed by interrupting the battle as soon as the sword drops below 7 ENDURANCEs long as you are providing a memorable adventure where everyone is contributing and having fun, you can do no wrong.

## FINAL FIGHT – SHRYLL, WARLORD OF HELGEDAD

Assuming the Kai Lords do not defeat Mancleaver before Shryll escapes his frozen confinement, read or paraphrase the following.

*With a baleful howl, the wizened figure on the throne bursts free of its frigid prison. Shards of ice lash out, blasting you back off your feet. Thrown to the ground, you can only gaze up in horror as the gaunt creature rises to its nearly fleshless feet and reaches one grey hand into the air.*

*Mancleaver keens in reply, soaring back into Shryll's grasp. The moment the blade and its master are reunited, Mancleaver screams like twisted metal and detonates. Its dark energies flood into Shryll as what little remains of the ancient weapon clatters to the ground. The Helghast's eyes blaze with renewed power and unchecked madness. "Now, Kai curs, I will show you what it means to face a true Lord of Darkness!"*

### SHRYLL, HELGHAST WARLORD

**Combat Skill:** 25

**Endurance:** 25

**Willpower:** 15

**Traits:** Aegis, Soldier

**Special Rules:** Shryll possesses the Mindblast and Sixth Sense Disciplines.





It cannot lose ENDURANCE to non-magical weapons.

It may create a Bluefire replica of Mancleaver at will, using this weapon freely in melee combat or throwing it as a ranged attack.

As a quick action for 1 WILLPOWER point, it can surround its Bluefire sword with blazing sapphire energy, doubling any ENDURANCE loss it causes for one full round.

**Skills:** Influence, Might

These abilities reflect Shryll in his newly-freed, weakened state. If allowed to escape, the Helghast Warlord will quickly recover its strength, become far more powerful. Unless the Kai Lords want Shryll haunting them and striking at them in the future, they must slay it here and now!

As a Helghast, Shryll is immune to everything but magical weapons and spells. This severely limits what the Kai Lords can accomplish in combat. Unless you have provided other weapons for the Heroes during this campaign, they only have a few ways to harm Shryll directly – Midnight, Harbinger, the Knight Eclipsed's Gauntlets, the remaining piece of Mancleaver (which now qualifies as a Dagger), and one other weapon that might be in their possession.

## THE SUN RISES

If any Kai Lord wields the Sunhammer, inform them that they have just spent a point of Kai Favour. If they have no Favour left, reduce their current Willpower to 1. In either case, read the following aloud:

*You feel the power of Kai flow through you, igniting your hands with golden fire. The Sunhammer trembles in your grasp, its solar crest erupting with the same blazing light. Ice melts in every direction, surrounding you and your companions in a sudden blast of steam.*

*Shryll staggers back, raising both hands to ward off the blinding brilliance of your Kai-blessed hammer.*

*Strike. Strike now! Send this wretched creature back to Naar!*

The Sunhammer's statistics do not change from what they were, but it now possesses the ability to harm undead as if it were a magical weapon. It can also be commanded to 'shine forth' at will, shedding light (but not heat) as a lantern. Let this final battle play out for good or ill. Both sides are trapped here until one group wins. There is no possibility for Evasion and neither the Kai Lords nor Shryll are likely to offer surrender or mercy.

One way or another, the *Before the Dawn* campaign ends here.

## CONCLUSION – BLACK BIRD'S REQUIEM

*Shryll collapses to the floor of the mausoleum, surrounded by the scattered bones of past generations of House Corvan – a family that this foul creature will plague no longer. Broken, the Helghast gazes up at you as the lights in its sunken eyes fade away forever.*

*"At least... I die... knowing we will share the same... tomb."*

*A blast of freezing air scatters Shryll's body into ashes as you hear a deep, terrible CRACK erupts from the ceiling above you...As you instinctively dive for cover from the falling rock above you, the cries of ravens fills the air. Small shapes hurtle out of every shadow around you. They circle the room, first a few and then a flock, blackbird feathers becoming a whirlwind. Falling debris is turned aside, caving in the chamber outside this sheltering storm.*







*The feathers surge closer, swirling around you now like an ebon blur. One moment you are standing amid the crumbling ruins of a mausoleum about to crush you to death, and the next...*

*...you find yourself standing in the courtyard outside Raven Hall. The air is clean and clear, with starlight streaming down from the heavens. You stand surrounded by confused guards dressed in the now-familiar livery of the Blood Ravens. One of them, a man you know as Renn Maldrun, 'Renn the Red', raises his weapon and shouts aloud.*

*"The Kai are alive!"*

*All around you, swords are drawn and raised in like salute. A hundred men cheer your names. They cheer for their freedom. They cheer for your victory. Past them, the first hints of sunrise crest above the battlements. A new day dawns.*

*Your struggle against the evil at the heart of Rookhaven has brought victory and peace. But your adventures are only just beginning...*

*Here ends *Always Darkest* and, with it, the 'Before the Dawn' campaign.*

*The story continues anywhere you wish to go from here.*

## SCENARIO MAPS

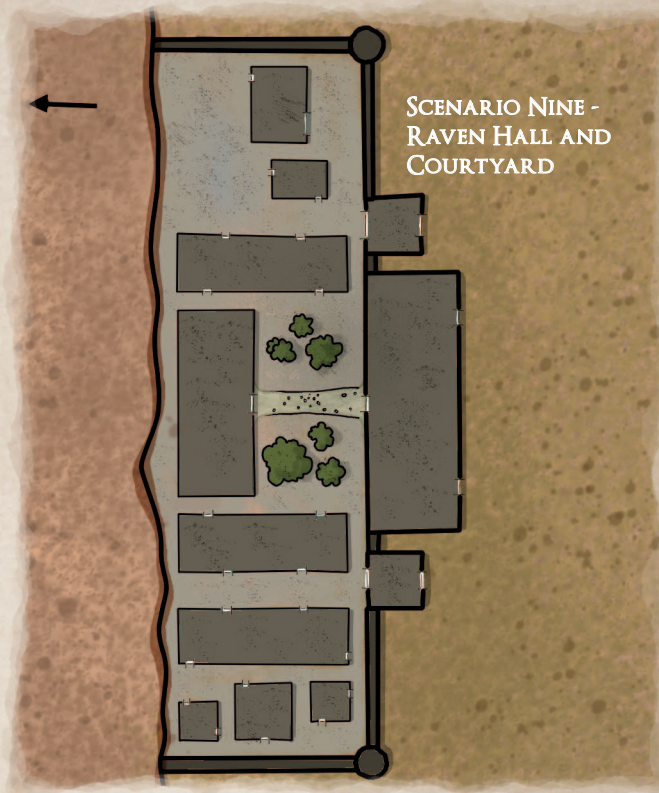
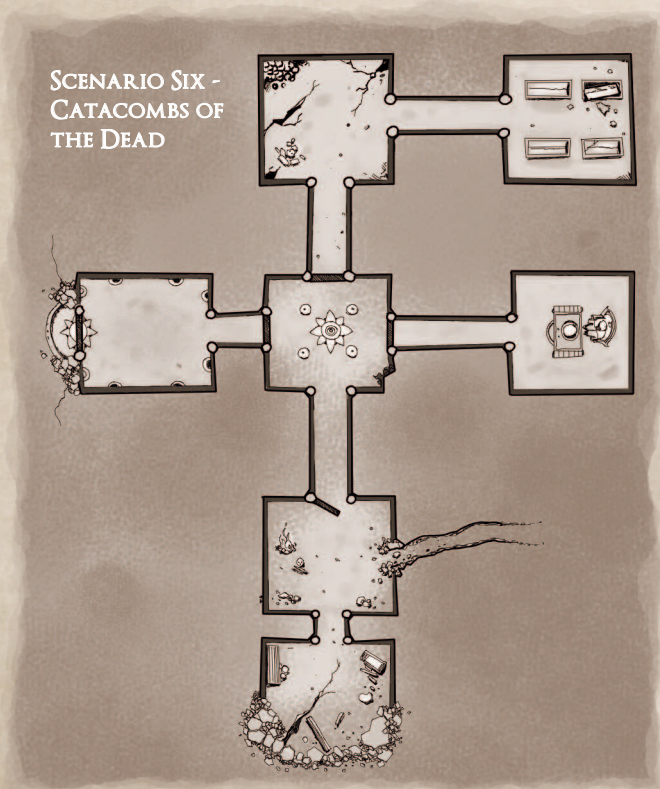
SCENARIO THREE - KARLIN



SCENARIO THREE - UNKINDNESS CROSSING





SCENARIO THREE -  
NIGHTSTONE MINESCENARIO NINE -  
RAVEN HALL AND  
COURTYARDSCENARIO SIX -  
CATACOMBS OF  
THE DEADSCENARIO TEN -  
PATH OF THORNS



## CHAPTER THREE

# ROOKHAVEN REDEEMED

Of course, Heroes being who they are, it is doubtful that the story ends here for you and your Players. This section discusses where you can take your campaign after the final events of Before the Dawn.

### TELLING THEIR OWN TALES

One of the first and best rules of Narrating a good game is to let your Players guide the story themselves. During play, keep track of what your Players are interested in doing, based on the questions they ask and the actions their Heroes take. Some groups want to find glory in battle and will seek out evil like well-armed bloodhounds. Others will enjoy diplomacy and roleplaying above all else and will spend happy hours just talking to your characters and getting to know the politics and rumours of the land. Some groups enjoy exploration while still others seek out history and lore. All you have to do to provide a satisfying time for your Players is identify what they like and provide more of the same. To keep things interesting, weave in other elements of the world. This keeps the game from getting stagnant and exposes your Players to the grand truth of Magnamund – the truth that nothing in the world is ever just one thing.

Villains can have redeeming qualities. Treasure can be both priceless and a plague on anyone who claims it. Even the greatest heroes have flaws and magic combines great power with terrible danger. It can be entertaining for battle-hungry Players to take part in a game where a treaty and an hour of polite conversation wins a war when no force of arms could prevail.

### OLD PATHS, NEW POSSIBILITIES

Rookhaven has been fundamentally changed by the actions of the Heroes. It will face new challenge throughout the weeks and months to come, which will provide a great backdrop to bring to life through adventures based on the major elements of this brave new province.

### SCENARIO SEEDS - THE TRADE MUST FLOW

With Shryll's influence gone and the Dun Masks no longer a threat in the area, the trade road is safe for travel again. This fact will not become immediately apparent to Sommerlund's merchants but after a while, wagons will start to visit Rookhaven again. This is a major boon for the province but it comes with numerous new issues to deal with.

### IT TAKES A VILLAGE

With trade having been strangled for so long, Rookhaven is not entirely equipped to handle the stress of commerce on a large scale again. Many Corries will step up to meet these challenges, however, and therein lies a serious problem – market control. Vinas Venn is a logical choice to lead Rookhaven's merchants but he will not go uncontested. Without a firm hand and watchful eyes, newfound business could turn bloody indeed.

### TOLLING OF THE BELLS

New trade moves along the only good road to Rookhaven. With the Dun Masks moving on to safer corners of Sommerlund, the route becomes a ripe target for other bandits to start poaching. The first group to do so with any success is a group of rogues called the Bell Family. These highwaymen, all fiercely loyal kin, are numerous enough to manage stealing from caravans and wily enough to avoid normal guards and authorities. If the Heroes do not track the Bells down and deal with them, Rookhaven's new prosperity might wither before it has even had a chance to grow.

### BUYER'S MARKET

Unfortunately for the people of Rookhaven, they initially have to do a great deal more importing than exporting. This is mostly due to their fallow soil and lack of real trade goods. Silvergrass and Rabensdreka will sell, but neither are exactly popular items. To stimulate the province's economy, the Crown intends to send a consignment of livestock, seed starters, and crafting goods as a show of good will. Such items, valuable as they are, will surely attract attention and need guarding during their transport across Sommerlund. Who better to do so than the Heroes that liberated Rookhaven in the first place?

### A FIELD MOST FALLOW

The people of Rookhaven are nothing if not industrious. Now that they can plant crops again without fear of poisoned soil, the farms of the region will start to grow again. Abandoned properties will see new owners move in and lands that have not seen a plow in generations will start to be worked once more. But Rookhaven's history is dark and dangerous, as are the many terrible things still buried beneath it. When a farmer family breaks through the ground into a warren of ravenous ghouls, only the Heroes will be able to prevent the terrible feast of flesh to come.





## SCENARIO SEEDS – THE DARKNESS WITHIN

For generations, the Helghast Shryll tormented the people of Rookhaven in their dreams and in their waking lives. This abuse has left its mark on the Corries physically and socially, but it has also has an effect on them mentally. Now that Shryll is gone, Rookhaven can heal from its predations but the road to recover is going to be a long one. These adventure seeds involve those mental wounds and the scars they have left behind.

### SEEING RED

While the Heroes were still getting to know the people of Rookhaven, Shryll started implanting thoughts of violence and hatred in the minds of several of Rookhaven's most unstable citizens. The Helghast may be gone, but those nightmares remain. When the Heroes get ambushed in the streets of Rookhaven Village by a few of these deranged madmen, the hunt will be on to find the rest of these 'Sun Eaters' before any more attacks can occur.

### DARK OF THE MOON

The nightmares that Shryll inflicted on the people of Rookhaven were not always torments of fear and helplessness. While the Helghast was surely insane, it was prone to moments of lucidity and during those fleeting nights, it would share dark lore with those minds susceptible to corruption and conversion. These dreamers joined together, becoming cultists of Naar, meeting in secret to perform unspeakable rites venerating the God of Darkness. Now that Shryll is dead, their chief concern is vengeance against the Heroes that destroyed their mentor.

### REFLECTIONS OF DEATH

Madness and murder go hand-in-hand in Rookhaven, thanks to the nightmare plague that these people endured. One of the villagers has long since succumbed to his night terrors and become a hidden killer. The first the Heroes will learn of 'The Mirror Man' is when someone of their acquaintance in Rookhaven is found murdered, surrounded by pieces of a broken mirror. Though fighting the Mirror Man is not likely to be a challenge, tracking and catching him before he (or perhaps she) strikes again should make for a tense investigation.

### A MIND IS A TERRIBLE THING

Shryll's vile legacy is not all bad, as this scenario can reveal. Its mental assaults have hardened the willpower of many of Rookhaven's citizens and even drawn out dormant gifts in others. When rumours of a ghost haunting one of the province's smaller farms catches the Heroes' attention, they discover that the 'spirit' is actually a child with a powerful gift for Mind Over Matter. The Heroes can bring the girl to the Kai Monastery for training, assuming they can survive the maelstrom surrounding her.

## SCENARIO SEEDS – DARKNESS ABHORS A VACUUM

The villains that plagued Rookhaven are gone. Shryll, Sir Persicar, Marshal Gunn and the rest have all been defeated, thanks to the strength and bravery of your Players and their Heroes. The future may be bright, thanks in no small part to the fact that Rookhaven is finally free to have a future at all. While the days to come may not be easy, the people of Rookhaven will work hard and stay on their guard, just as they have for generations. That vigilance will serve them well. These adventure suggestions involve the enemies that remain around Rookhaven and those that will come now that Shryll's dark hold on the land has been broken.

### UNINVITED GUESTS

The Dun Crows are gone and, after the thrashing that Renn the Red's new Blood Ravens gave them on the way out, they will not be back for a long time. This leaves a lot of territory open for people like the Bells, villains brave or desperate enough to move into Rookhaven and set up illicit shop. Though Renn and the guards will fight them the best they can, a little Heroic help would surely be appreciated. If bandits were to capture Renn Maldrun after a failed raid, it might even be necessary.

### BAD TIMES BELOW

The caverns and tunnels beneath Rookhaven are more extensive than even Shryll knew. While the Helghast believed all connections with the Darklands had been collapsed and blocked, the creature was not in much shape to explore before it was sealed in under Raven Hall. If a few narrow paths did exist between Rookhaven and the Darklands, a force of Giaks might eventually mount an invasion via those caves.

### DARK CONNECTIONS

Magnamund has many caves deep beneath the surface, especially in nations like Sommerlund where the bedrock has been shattered by millennia of violent upheaval. It is entirely possible for creatures from far beyond Rookhaven's borders to travel these passages and take up residence in the province as a vicious new predator. In this way, the Heroes might be forced to deal with all manner of bestial enemies from packs of subterranean Shegamaz to powerful Agarashi.

### THE ETERNAL STRUGGLE

With Shryll's loss, Naar lost a valuable asset in his war against the forces of Good. The Helghast provided a touch of corruption in Sommerlund, a hidden shadow from which the God of Darkness might one day strike against his greatest enemies from within their own borders. Shryll may be gone, but Naar is not likely to relinquish his hold on Rookhaven so easily. The Heroes might not notice agents of the Darklands infiltrating the province, perhaps even led by another Helghast, until it is far too late...



## APPENDIX CAMPAIGN RESOURCES

### NEW ITEM – THE SUNHAMMER (BRONIN WAR MAUL)

Found in an ancient crypt beneath Starkriven Pass, this weapon once belonged to a Sommlending Knight of the Realm. While the knight's name is long lost, his huge battle hammer remains as a testament to his brave deeds and his honourable demise.

As a brutal work of art, the Sunhammer bears at double head of made of Bronin. One head is wide and blunt, while the other tapers to a sharp spike. Both heads are jacketed down the middle with a steel band bearing a golden sun crest with rays that stretch out in all directions. One head is wide and blunt, while the other tapers to a sharp spike. While the Sunhammer is a masterfully-made weapon, it bears no enchantments. Its Bronin construction does make it a superior weapon, however. The Sunhammer is a war maul, a new type of two-handed weapon described below.

**Qualities:** +1 to COMBAT SCORE, Impact 2, Heavy, Two Hands



### NEW ITEM – MIDNIGHT (THE SWORD OF SIR PERSICAR KALSKEN)

Once a sword of bright Sommlending steel and gleaming bronin, Midnight was forged by the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star to serve the sons of House Kalsken during their sworn duty as night sentries in the city of Anskaven during the Helghast Wars. Unfortunately, as the Kalsken family ascended in Sommerlund society, the unpleasant task of night duty upon the shoulders of lesser scions of the house. The same magic that made Midnight such a treasured heirloom also cursed it to decline along with the character of its wielders. By the

time Midnight found its way to the side of Persicar Kalsken, it was a night's shadow of its former self. Its tarnish has become so deep the blade looks blackened and its jewels no longer sparkle. Even its edge has dulled, though it is still a worthy weapon in the right hands.

Midnight is a Legacy blade, a weapon that reflects the character of its wielder. This rise or fall happens over time and echoes the wielder's personality and moral character. In the hands of a villain like Sir Persicar, Midnight is a dark sword with fearsome powers. A hero could redeem the blade, returning it to the weapon of light it once was.



With no influence from a wielder of any kind, Midnight adds nothing to COMBAT SKILL but grants the power of Midnight's Gaze - perfect vision in any kind of natural darkness - while the is unsheathed and in hand.

In Persicar's hands, Midnight grants +5 to Combat Skill, +6 against humans, affords him a bonus of +1 of all tests when causing fear or intimidation and he has access to Midnight's Wrath. Midnight's Wrath allows the wielder to pick a Random Number, adding that number to the ENDURANCE loss when inflicting damage in combat. This power can be used once per night, but only at night.

In the hands of a good wielder, the sword grants Midnight's Grace instead. This allows the wielder to draw upon the sword to heal himself or one other person touched for a Random Number + 1 (between 1 and 10 points of ENDURANCE). This power can be used once per night, but only at night.

It gains power as its wielder does, as the chart opposite shows:





Wielder's Rank	COMBAT SKILL Bonus	Power if wielder is Good	Power if wielder is Evil
0	+0	Midnight's Gaze	Midnight's Gaze
1-3	+1	-	-
4-5	+2	Additional +1 against Darkspawn at night	Additional +1 against wielder's own race at night
6-7	+3	-	-
8-9	+4	+1 to all tests against fear and mind control	+1 to all tests made to cause fear or intimidation
10	+5	Midnight's Grace	Midnight's Wrath

## BLOOD RAVEN (MINOR ROLE)

Martial prowess is prized throughout Sommerlund, trained and honed in every province as a matter of pride. Rookhaven is no exception, though their soldiers – the Blood Ravens – have been much maligned due to the actions of people like Sir Persicar. Now free to once again serve with honour and distinction, the Blood Ravens have the chance to create a new legacy.

Under Renn Maldrun's guidance, Blood Ravens are trained in the manner of the Dun Masks before them. They are a light skirmishing force with a specialty in defending each other, striking fast, and protecting those in their care. Eschewing heavy armour for the benefits of mobility and speed, Blood Ravens tend to favour ranged combat and striking from defensible positions such as city walls or hidden guard blinds set up all across Rookhaven.

### Being a Blood Raven

Blood Ravens were once known for their brutal tactics and harsh treatment of those supposedly under their protection. This was a result of their commander's corruption and Shryll's psychic influence. Though they are now free from both, the stigma of their reputation still haunts them. This drives Blood Ravens to be exemplary in both word and deed, as only spotless, honourable service to their fellow Corries can hope to erase the sins of their past.

All Blood Ravens have two distinctive pieces of gear – a steel Helmet with a crimson cloth mask across the face and a matching tabard. These mark their history as Blood Ravens and pay homage to the fact that their leader was once a bandit and has now chosen a better path, just as they have.

### CHARACTERISTICS

To find out what your Blood Raven's COMBAT SKILL is, pick a random number and add 15 to it. The result becomes be your COMBAT SKILL. Your initial COMBAT SKILL will always total between 15 and 24.

For ENDURANCE, follow the same procedure: pick a random number and add 15 to it. Your starting ENDURANCE will always total between 15 and 24.

For WILLPOWER, pick a random number and add 10 to it. Your starting WILLPOWER will always total between 10 and 19.

Once you have determined your COMBAT SKILL, ENDURANCE, and WILLPOWER scores, enter them on your Action Chart.

Blood Ravens can use the following Techniques in battle: Charge, Deadly Dodge, and Unfair Fight.

At Rank Four, a Blood Raven may learn an additional Technique of his or her choice.

Whenever a Blood Raven fights while benefitting from cover of any kind, he or she gains a +1 to COMBAT SKILL. If a Blood Raven is fighting from cover within Close Range of another Blood Raven doing the same, this bonus increases to +2 CS.

### Blood Raven Abilities

Blood Ravens begin with martial training, impressive willpower and experience in both battle and civil duty. The ranks and rank titles of the Soldier are shown here.

#### Rank / Number of Abilities

1  
2  
3  
  
4  
5

#### Rank Title

Rook-Squire  
Red Rook  
Blood Raven (Choose an ability to Advance)  
Crimson Guard  
Scarlet Marshal (Choose an ability to Advance and one to Master.)





Most Blood Ravens are Rank 2 soldiers, Red Rooks, and tend to act in pairs. They seldom venture out of Rave Hall or the Village of Rookhaven alone, especially as their skills work best when operating as a group. Choose five Blood Raven Abilities from the following options. These will create a list of abilities, up to all five for a Blood Raven of maximum rank.

## RAVEN'S FLIGHT

Years of experience have taught you how to travel long distances without exhaustion. Your stamina is extraordinary and you can walk for hours without slowing or breaking your stride. You may ignore the first time you would require rest or a Meal during an adventure.

### Advanced Raven's Flight (+2 Ability Bonus)

Your increased resistance to fatigue shows in your ability to withstand punishment. Your ENDURANCE score is permanently increased by your Ability Bonus.

### Master Raven's Flight (+3 Ability Bonus)

The keys to surviving a forced march are distribution of weight and wise management of one's reserves. Your WILLPOWER increases by 1 point and you gain an addition Backpack slot.

## SKIRMISHER

You thrive when you are unencumbered and able to move freely in battle. As long as your armour (if any) reduces your Order of Battle by 2 or less and you carry no Shield, you may add your Ability Bonus to your COMBAT SKILL.

### Advanced Skirmisher (+2 Ability Bonus)

You move fast and strike even faster, often finishing an opponent before they know they are under attack. When you go before your opponent in the Order of Battle, you add your Ability Bonus to any ENDURANCE damage you inflict, even if that value was 0.

### Master Skirmisher (+3 Ability Bonus)

Knowing that the way to win any battle is to hit first and hit hardest, you make your speed count. You may move to the top of the Order of Battle by spending a point of Kai's Favour. If you do, your first attack inflicts double the ENDURANCE damage listed on the Combat Results table.

## BLACK BOLTER

Your aim with a crossbow is deadly accurate and your eagle eye lets you pick off targets at a distance that few others could hit. When using a crossbow, you no longer suffer a COMBAT SKILL penalty for Ranged Attacks made at Far Range; instead gain your Ability Bonus as a positive modifier.

You are also skilled at efficient ammunition storage; your quiver can hold 24 bolts. When you take this ability, you gain a crossbow and a quiver of 24 arrows.

### Advanced Black Bolter (+2 Ability Bonus)

When you attack at Far Range with a crossbow, your attacks are preternaturally accurate. You may pick two numbers when resolving a Ranged exchange at that distance and use whichever one you prefer.

### Master Black Bolter (+3 Ability Bonus)

Masters of long-range combat learn to lead their shots and wait for the perfect opportunity to strike. If you spend an entire round motionless and take no other action, your next round is considered Aimed. Any ranged attack you make that round with a crossbow inflicts double the ENDURANCE damage listed on the Combat Results Table plus double your Ability Bonus.

## SCARLET SHADOW

You have an ability to move during combat that others find either fascinating or frustrating, depending on whether they are friend or foe. If you have not yet initiated an exchange with an enemy, you can Evade from combat with them without getting attacked in return.

### Advanced Scarlet Shadow (+2 Ability Bonus)

Your speed and mobility lets you engage opponents quickly. You can always use the Charge Technique and it has no cost when you do so. If you successfully inflict ENDURANCE damage when you Charge, you may add your Ability Bonus with Scarlet Shadow to the damage dealt.

### Master Scarlet Shadow (+3 Ability Bonus)

Speed is both your sword and shield in combat. In any round in which you have moved at least one Range Band, you gain your Ability Bonus to both COMBAT SKILL and Defence.

## SHOCK AND AWE

Your training in combat includes ways to intimidate your opponents and convince them to flee. This intimidation does not always work, but when it does, you are victorious without drawing your sword. At the beginning of combat, you may force your opponent(s) to make a WILLPOWER Test (Difficulty 6). Failure means that the enemy suffers a -2 penalty to COMBAT SKILL for the duration of the battle. Enemies who pick a 0 immediately flee if possible. Enemies immune to psychic attacks are also immune to Shock and Awe.

### Advanced Shock and Awe (+2 Ability Bonus)

Your skill at frightening your opponents has become far more effective. You may now add your Ability Bonus to the Difficulty of the WILLPOWER Test needed to resist you.

### Master Shock and Awe (+3 Ability Bonus)

Your fearsomeness is now so effective you can drive shaken opponents into a panicked flight from the field of battle. On the second round of combat, you may use Shock and Awe again. Any opponent already suffering the -2 penalty from your first use of Shock and Awe immediately flees if they fail the second WILLPOWER Test.





## STARTING EQUIPMENT

A Blood Raven starts with the following equipment. Your basic possessions comprise hardy outdoor clothes, a Helmet (Special Item), a tabard, and leather boots. You also have a backpack, a belt, and a leather pouch in which you keep your money (Gold Crowns). To find out how much money you start with, pick a number from the Random Number Table and add 10. The number you choose equals the number of Gold Crowns you possess. Note this number in the Belt Pouch section of your Action Chart.

You may also choose Five items from the following list:

- Axe (Weapon)
- Dagger (Weapon)
- Leather Vestment (Special Item)
- Meal (Backpack Item)
- Potion of Laumspur (Backpack Item, one dose)
- Sword (Weapon)
- Short Sword (Weapon)
- Rope (Backpack Item)
- Crossbow (Weapon)
- Quiver (Special Item, contains twenty four bolts)
- Lantern (Special Item)
- Spear (Weapon)

## AGENT OF THE CROWN (ROLE)

Sommerlund has many defenders, from powerful Kai Lords and Magicians from the Brotherhood of the Crystal Star to the Sommlending Knights of the Realm and brave Border Rangers. All are adept at fighting the kingdom's enemies, but some of Sommerlund's greatest battles do not take place in its forests and fields. Some of the realm's most dangerous enemies work in secret, hiding from the light of justice. These foes require a subtle hand and a watchful eye, someone who can track their movements and untangle their plots before any harm can come to Sommerlund and its people. Agents of the Crown are trained to seek the hidden, reveal treachery, and remove threats that others might never even imagine. Trained in espionage and investigation, these loyal spies provide a vital, if unheralded, service. As a note, this Role is presented here as it appears in Sommerlund. With very minor changes, the Agent of the Crown Role could be used to represent the spies that serve any of the nations of Magnamund. The Elder Magi notably have many agents who spy on the forces of Darkness in virtually any nation of Magnamund, including the Darklands. Narrators are encouraged to tailor this Role as needed to suit their campaigns.

### Being an Agent of the Crown

Agents of the Crown are drawn from all walks of life in Sommerlund, recruited for a variety of reasons and trained in many different disciplines. An Agent of the Crown could be virtually anyone, from the dockhand throwing dice at the wharf to the grizzled old widow

running a tavern outside of Toran. The less conspicuous the better, as an obvious agent rarely lives very long.

## CHARACTERISTICS

To find out what your Agent of the Crown's COMBAT SKILL is, pick a random number. Add 10 to this number and the result will be your COMBAT SKILL. Your initial COMBAT SKILL will always be numbered between 10 and 19.

For ENDURANCE, follow the same procedure: choose a random number and add 15. Your starting ENDURANCE will always number between 15 and 24. For WILLPOWER, choose a random number and add 20. Your starting WILLPOWER will always number between 20 and 29.

Once you have determined your COMBAT SKILL, ENDURANCE, and WILLPOWER scores, enter them on your Action Chart.

Agents of the Crown know two Techniques, Deadly Dodge and Infuriate.

### Agent of the Crown Abilities

You begin the game as an Agent of the Crown, a skilled operative and spy in the employ of Sommerlund. The ranks and titles of the Agent of the Crown are shown here.

Rank / Number of Scout Abilities	Rank Title
1	Recruit
2	Sneak
3	Seeker
4	Listener
5	Agent
6	Shadow Detective
7	Vigilant
8	Noble Agent
9	Spy Lord
10	Royal Agent

Pick your Agent of the Crown's potential Abilities from the following options. These creates a list of ten abilities, from which you may choose a number equal to your rank to begin play. Most Agents of the Crown are Rank 3 or 4, with a few dozen Rank 5 Agents in service at any given time. Agents work alone most of the time, returning to their headquarters in Anskaven only when absolutely necessary. Long absences and lack of contact are considered part of the job.

### WINNOW WEAKNESS

You have a gift for finding vulnerabilities in the strongest armour. When you use a bladed weapon in battle, you reduce your enemy's Defence by your Ability bonus. If your weapon already does this, you may stack that with Winnow Weakness.





### **Advanced Winnow Weakness (+2 Ability Bonus)**

Your advanced skill allows you to claim a +1 to your COMBAT SCORE when wielding bladed weapons. This bonus is a flat increase and is not counted twice if you wield two blades.

### **Master Winnow Weakness (+3 Ability Bonus)**

As a Master of this Ability, you may spend 1 WILLPOWER to perform a Fatal Slash once per adventure. This is resolved like a normal attack but ignores all Defence your opponent may have. If your listed result on the Combat Results Table is E: 7 or more, your Fatal Slash is treated as a K (an instant Kill).

## **TACTICS**

You understand that battles are more than a clash of weapons. You can predict the actions of your opponents and can steer your allies to victory. Every round after the first full round (Surprise Rounds do not count), you and your allies gain a cumulative +1 to COMBAT SKILL.

### **Advanced Tactics (+2 Ability Bonus)**

As useful as your insights are to others, you reap a greater advantage as your ability increases. After the first full round, you (and only you) gain your Ability Bonus to COMBAT SKILL. After this, you gain +1, as the basic Tactics ability, each round.

### **Master Tactics (+3 Ability Bonus)**

In the heat of battle, your tactical skills are exemplary. With preparation, your skills are unmatched. If you have one hour to prepare for a battle and know exactly where it will take place, you may add your Ability Bonus to you and your allies' place in the Order of Battle, and to the first ENDURANCE damage each of you inflict during the combat.

## **EFFICIENCY**

An agent has to move fast, travel smart, and pack light. You understand and appreciate this truism and you can always get the most from your gear and the space it takes in which to store it. You can pack 2 Meals or 2 Potions in a single Backpack space. This can be done multiple times. When you drink potions that affect your Characteristics, such as Laumspur, any benefit gained is increased by 1 point. You also get a free Weapon at Rank 5; this is chosen from any option shown on your starting list.

### **Advanced Efficiency (+2 Ability Bonus)**

You gain an additional Backpack space and may carry an additional Weapon. Your belt pouch can hold 100 coins. Potion benefits now increase by your Ability Bonus.

### **Master Efficiency (+3 Ability Bonus)**

You are so efficient in your actions and preparations that you can accomplish most things with minimal effort. You gain the Charge Technique, your ENDURANCE is permanently increased by 2 points, and can carry a second belt pouch. This second pouch has a capacity

of 50 coins and can be hidden anywhere on your person. Finding this pouch requires a Perception Test (TN 9).

## **WEB OF NAMES**

For skilled agents, success is often a case of who they know rather than what they know. You have a network of contacts who possess useful skills and are in positions that can be of practical use to you. Once per adventure, you can request that a helpful character is nearby and willing to assist you. The Narrator will determine who this is and what he or she can do for you. Your contact gains your Ability Bonus where appropriate whenever they are acting on your behalf.

### **Advanced Web of Names (+2 Ability Bonus)**

Your circle of contacts is wider and more diverse, and so are their capabilities. You may now use this Ability twice per adventure. Alternatively, you can spend both uses at once to make your contact especially helpful or highly placed. Again, the Narrator is the final judge regarding the details of your contacts.

### **Master Web of Names (+3 Ability Bonus)**

Your past deeds and your current reputation have gained you a loyal follower. With the Narrator's assistance, make a Rank 7 character using any Role or Archetype that makes sense considering what you have done over the course of your adventures. This follower is under your control during play but will only remain loyal if he or she is treated well.

## **EVERYMAN**

You can become remarkably inconspicuous when you choose to be. You may simply have 'one of those faces' that enable you to blend in with your surroundings unnoticed, or you may possess the ability to disguise yourself. Within one hour of seeing you, most passers-by will forget everything about you. They will be unable to recognize you again or provide any useful description of you to a third party. You may also add your Ability Bonus to Stealth Skill Tests.

### **Advanced Everyman (+2 Ability Bonus)**

You have developed an extraordinary ability to hide in plain sight. Unless you are making overt or suspicious actions (such as engaging in combat or carrying weaponry openly in an area where weapons are prohibited), people tend to assume you have a right to be where you are and will not interrupt or attempt to apprehend you. Characters with 5 Ranks or more in any Role or Archetype, and adversaries with the Veteran trait, are immune to this ability.

### **Master Everyman (+3 Ability Bonus)**

You can now use your Everyman abilities in any situation involving Stealth. You may claim Everyman as justification for an Ability Trump for the Stealth skill. In urban areas, you can automatically hide from anyone of lower Rank than you unless success is physically impossible.



## MANY FACES

Disguise has become a specialty of yours. If you are able to study someone for one hour, you may use a disguise kit (or other appropriate materials) to transform your appearance so that you closely resemble that person. This transformation process requires between one to three hours to achieve, plus a WILLPOWER Test with a Difficulty ranging from 5 to 9. The Narrator should determine the precise time needed and the level of Difficulty depending on the nature of your target and how much effort will be needed to successfully impersonate him or her.



People well acquainted with the target, or those who are very likely to recognize them, may make a Perception Test with a Difficulty equal to your result on the Disguise Test. If this Test is successful, your attempt at disguise has failed under scrutiny.

### Advanced Many Faces (+2 Ability Bonus)

Your talent for disguise has markedly improved, allowing you now to add your Ability Bonus to Disguise Tests. You also can mimic voices and replicate physical mannerisms with uncanny accuracy. Your greater level of skill allows you to force others to retake their Perception Tests in order to see through your disguise. When retesting, their second result is final.

### Master Many Faces (+3 Ability Bonus)

You are capable of making a personal transformation that can seem almost magical. When you make Disguise Tests, you treat 0's as 5's. When others make Perception Tests to see through your efforts, they must treat 9's as 4's.

## WHISPERS

You are privy to rumours, secrets, and gossip. This often allows you to put what other people know to good use. When it is feasible for

you to seek information from others, you may add your Ability Bonus to Investigate, Occult, or Sage Tests.

### Advanced Whispers (+2 Ability Bonus)

Your powers of deduction provide you with a further insight into gathered information. Choose Investigate, Occult, or Sage; when testing that ability, you may use Whispers as an Ability Trump.

### Master Whispers (+3 Ability Bonus)

You have obtained a wealth of reliable sources of information about all manner of subjects. When seeking new information from people you meet for the first time, your past experience can be put to great effect. You no longer need to go in search of sources of information; invariably these sources will seek you out and willingly share with you what they know, or at least what they believe to be true. You may now use Whispers as an Ability Trump for Investigate, Occult and Sage Skill Tests.

## DISCERNING SIGHT

You have very keen eyesight and are able to retain a wealth of detailed knowledge. Your memory is such that there is little of what you see that you cannot later recall in photographic detail. You may add your Ability Bonus to all Investigate and Perception Skill tests. This Ability also provides you with the skill needed to track.

### Advanced Discerning Sight (+2 Ability Bonus)

You have worked tirelessly to hone your senses to a point where the smallest detail of what you have seen or learned can be of great help to you in any given situation. You may now use Discerning Sight as an Ability Trump for Investigate and Perception.

### Master Discerning Sight (+3 Ability Bonus)

Very little escapes your attention and, when you muster all the facts you know about a given topic or situation, your conclusions are almost always correct. Once per adventure, you can automatically succeed at an Investigate or Perception Skill Test.

## INTERROGATOR

You have ways of making people talk. More importantly, you have ways of making people tell you what you need to know. When you make an Influence Skill Test to convince an unwilling subject to cooperate with you, you may add your Ability Bonus. The stubbornness and attention to detail that are required to be an effective interrogator grants you +1 to WILLPOWER.

### Advanced Interrogator (+2 Ability Bonus)

You can always detect when someone is telling a lie, unless they are using magic to cover their deception. However, knowing that someone is lying does not mean you will learn the truth. Subjects with the Stealth skill must succeed at a Difficulty 10 Test to deceive you.





### Master Interrogator (+3 Ability Bonus)

With enough time, you can erode the will of anyone who tries to resist your interrogation. As an exception to the retest rule, once per hour you may spend 1 WILLPOWER and retake a failed Influence Test that was made to coerce cooperation from a target. You may take these retests for as long as you wish to, so long as you can afford the 1 WILLPOWER cost each time.

### SECRET WARRIOR

Sommerlund is a nation of warriors; martial prowess is part of your heritage. Because of training given during your recruitment as an Agent of the Crown, you are extraordinarily adept with your weapon of choice. Pick any Weapon from your Starting List. You may add your Ability Bonus to your COMBAT SKILL whenever you wield this weapon.

### Advanced Secret Warrior (+2 Ability Bonus)

Like any other pursuit in your life, you never cease to study the many and varied arts of war. You may now add your Ability Bonus to your place in the Order of Battle. You may also add a second Weapon type to qualify for your Secret Warrior bonus. This Weapon type may be any type of weapon you have personally encountered.

### Master Secret Warrior (+3 Ability Bonus)

Your thorough study of close combat has provided you with a deep understanding of combat Techniques and battle strategies. You now have open use of all Techniques and may add your Ability Bonus to Technique Tests.

### SPECIAL BONUS: DEEPEST COVER

Deepest Cover is similar to Kai's Favour in that it is a special ability that all Agents of the Crown possess. It costs one Deepest Cover point to use and each Agent calculates how many points he or she receives in the same manner as Kai Lords and Kai's Favour.

An Agent of the Crown may spend a point of Deepest Cover whenever he or she is about to take a Test involving a skill his or her current cover identity should possess. Doing so allows them to make that Test as if they had the skill in question with a bonus of +3.

Deepest Cover resets to an Agent of the Crown's starting value at the beginning of an adventure. Spent points of Deepest Cover recover at a rate of one per week, but only if that week is spent with at least three hours of each day devoted to living undercover and interacting with others while doing so.

### STARTING EQUIPMENT

The Agent of the Crown starts with the following equipment. Your basic possessions comprise basic outdoor clothing, a suit of fine clothes, fine shoes, and sturdy leather boots. You also have a backpack, a belt, and a leather pouch in which you keep your money (Gold Crowns). To find out how much money you start with, pick a number from the Random Number Table and add 15. The number you choose equals the number of Gold Crowns you possess. Note this number in the Belt Pouch section of your Action Chart. You also possess a small messenger bird of a common type you choose. It has a message tube affixed to one leg and is trained to fly to Anskaven and back to you wherever you are. You also have a writing kit and ten small pieces of parchment sized to fit the message tube.

If one of your Abilities provides you with a COMBAT SKILL bonus when wielding a specific weapon, or limited set of weapons, you may choose ONE of those weapons and begin play equipped with it.

You may also choose four items from the following list:

- Dagger (Weapon)
- Leather Vestment (Special Item)
- Meal (Backpack Item)
- Potion of Laumspur (Backpack Item, one dose)
- Sword (Weapon)
- Short Sword (Weapon)
- Rope (Backpack Item)
- Bow (Weapon)
- Quiver (Special Item, contains six arrows)
- Mace (weapon)
- Lantern (Special Item)
- Mapmaker's Pack (Backpack Item)





CHARACTER NAME: Sir Persicar Kalsken

10

CHARACTER RANK:

CHARACTER CLASS: Sommlending Knight

### DISCIPLINES

DISCIPLINE	NOTES	ADV. MAS.
1. Code of Arms	advanced	—
2. Code of Compassion	cannot use	—
3. Code of Fortitude	advanced	—
4. Code of Honour	cannot use	—
5. Code of Might	advanced	—
6. Code of the Mount	advanced	—
7. Code of Strength	mastered	—
8. Code of Valour	cannot use	—
9. Code of Virtue	cannot use	—
10. Special: Aegis of the Damned	(sacrificed; Code of Right)	—

### WEAPONS

1. Broadsword (Midnight)
2. Dagger

### BACKPACK

1.	MEALS (Each Meal counts as one backpack item)
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	-3EP if no meal available when instructed to eat
6.	<b>BELT POUCH</b> (Maximum 50 GC or equivalent)
7.	
8.	

### COMBAT SKILL

Basic COMBAT SKILL: <b>17</b>
Modifiers: <b>+3</b>
Total: <b>20</b>

### ENDURANCE

Basic ENDURANCE: <b>25</b>
Modifiers:
Total: <b>25</b>

### WILLPOWER

Basic WILLPOWER: <b>13</b>
Modifiers:
Total: <b>13</b>

### ARMOUR

Plate Armour (Full)
---------------------

### DEFENCE

-
End loss

### SHIELD

Greatshield
-------------

### TRAITS

1. Striking
2. Noble Born
3. Vigilant
4. Commanding

### SKILLS

1. Perception
2. Influence
3. Riding
4. Might

### SPECIAL ITEMS

1. Midnight (Broadsword)
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.

### NOTES

Whenever an enemy uses a magical or psychic power against Persicar, that foe suffers one point of ENDURANCE damage immediately.
Aegis of the Damned affect's Mindblast if it's bonus is used against Persicar in combat.
Aegis has a special effect against detection spells and Sixth Sense. It cloaks Persicar, making him appear unremarkable and safe.
Aegis damage is not subject to Defence.

### BEACON OF LIGHT

Cannot Use
------------





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