

CASTLE TERRAVANTE, THE VAULT OF OMNILEX, AND THE CRYPT OF THE WRETCHED

INTRO

This adventure consists of two parts: a castle full of schemers and a two-part dungeon beneath. They are easily separated, so there are a number of ways to use it:

- You can just use the castle scenario and, instead of the dungeon entrance, place a large and heavy treasure there (you'll see why making it heavy makes it more fun).
- You can ignore the castle and just use the dungeon.
- You can use the first part of the dungeon in any scenario.
- You can use the second part of the dungeon in any scenario.
- The second part of the dungeon leads onto yet more dungeon—but you can put a treasure there instead (preferably a very heavy one).

Stats here are written for Lamentations of the Flame Princess and should translate easily to any old-school RPG. For 5th Edition D&D, multiply Hit Dice by 7 to get hit point totals and add 5 to all damage.

If you need help translating or have any other questions, get in touch: zakzsmith AT hawtmayle dawt calm.

PART ONE: CASTLE TERRAVANTE

The point of this part of the scenario is NPCs making drama. If you use it, squeeze the NPCs for as much drama, intrigue, romance, and/or comedy as you can. The more personality you give them, the more it will pay off later.

The Referee will be obliged to choose which PC (and corresponding player) would best respond to the following predicament:

Everyone agreed you were good for Hollis of the Frail March (gender, if any, left up to the Referee), and everyone agrees it was a very bad break-up. You're very tired of being reminded that somehow, afterward, they managed to marry into the (LotFP standard: Portuguese/Fantasy standard: Broceliande Elvish) aristocracy. After making some Duke or Duchess' life hell for two years, the noble spouse died, leaving Hollis March inexplicably in charge of a duchy in a land where they still haven't learned the language.

And, really, who cares? Except the word now is that there is a magnificent treasure somewhere below the immensely well-guarded Castle Terravante. And Porcelino—an old mutual friend now serving as advisor to the Duke or Duchess—is saying that your former lover has been behaving erratically, and that if you would only visit, perhaps your presence could have a calming effect. You seemed so good for each other.

The Approach

An easy way to start is with the players on the road to Terravante. They'll meet up by chance with the Count or Countess of Otranto (see below), who will be overbearing, full of questions, and insist on joining the party once they realize they're headed in the same direction.

The Count/ess will happily help the party with any random encounters along the way, and will at least try to give an outward show of helpfulness. If the Count/ess dies or otherwise doesn't turn up on time this is fine: it'll make everyone in the castle panic, which will be good for some drama down the line.

The Castle

Once the party arrives, they'll meet everyone:

Hollis the Difficult, Duke or Duchess of Terravante

...will agree to see you and your dirty friends, but grudgingly. Still quite dishy, perhaps even somewhat improved by the skin care regime and expanded opportunities for bathing, but also still a big fan of "You *know* what you did!" (you don't), "What are you even doing in Portugal/Broceliande?" and (about any other party member) "Is that so-and-so?"—as if they can't quite conceive you still deign to spend time with them. Though they will admit it's nice to speak to someone from the old days. They're quite exhausted with the tribulations of running a great house and duchy, especially one at war and where they still don't speak the language—and, quite secretly, still sweet on you. Hollis is vulnerable to flattery, gossip and practical advice and repulsed by threats, boasting, fighting, rudeness and asking what's in the basement. The basement? Why do you want to see what's in the basement? What's even going on here? Why are you so obsessed with going under the *ground* all the time? Is this about *treasure* again? God you're impossible. There's always a chance things might get physical, so:

HD 4 HP 16 Speed 120' Armor 12 Morale 6 Attack +5 rapier (d8hp), letter opener (d4hp), or thrown goblet (d2hp) Special: Hollis will not kill their former lover, and will have to morale check to kill one of their companions, unless it's someone of whom they are jealous.

The Count or Countess of Otranto

...is a frequent visitor to Castle Terravante, and covets both the affections of the Duke or Duchess and the superior station a connubial resolution to their ambitions would bring. Attractive in an arrogant kind of way. Hates Hollis' ex-lover with a cold and practical passion but is surprisingly good at disguising it, and will even attempt to take the role of friend and confidant to the newcomer and/or their party. Not above seducing

or killing any of them if there's a convenient way to cover it up. A duellist of some renown.

HD 10 HP 50 Speed 120' Armor 14 (leather) Morale 9 Attack +10 rapier (d8hp) or dagger (d4hp) **Skills:** Stealth 3, Sneak Attack: 3

Porcelino

An obliging, practical, and often cheerfully—inebriated man. A former dragoon and pub owner, he has most of the necessary military and administrative skills to pick up the immense slack left by Hollis' utter disinterest in the lives of Portuguese/Elvish merchants and peasants. Injuries and age have left him useless in a fight but he has Languages 5 and knows at least a little about everyone in the castle.

Father Vedras

...acts as chaplain and spiritual advisor to the Duke or Duchess. He found out about the secrets in the basement after the deceased previous Duke or Duchess (their spouse) seized the castle years ago. Vedras' main concern is to hide the dungeon entrance at all costs from the Inquisition/Church of Vorn who will, he has no doubt, view it as evidence of-, and material for the pursuit of-, witchcraft. If he in any way gets the impression that the party's visit has anything to do with the dungeon he will attempt to find a way to disgrace them and so have the party expelled from the castle. His secondary concern is to just sort of wandering around being a dick to the staff, reminding them to follow the Castle's numerous obscure social rules. He has Sleight of Hand: 4 and Stealth: 3.

Sylvia Torres

...is a pretty handmaid in Hollis' service. She will fall hopelessly in love with one of the party members at first sight and will be as forward about pursuing a liason as propriety will allow. She eats gossip like candy and, once her appetites are satisfied, exudes it like perfume.

The Guards are never more than a scream away (d6 of them) and do what they're told, though one is sleeping with Sylvia Torres. There are 100 of them.

HD 2 HP 10 Speed 120' Armor 16 (chain) Morale 9 Attack +3 short sword (d6hp) or halberd (d10hp) or (in battle) crossbow d8hp

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Physically, the situation is as follows:

Things in the castle tend to be about a 5 minute walk (and one chance encounter with one of the nosy NPCs above) away from one another. The Duke/Duchess' quarters are at the top of the tallest tower.

The dungeon entrance itself is on the first floor, at the end of a forgotten, windowless 40' hall which is itself behind a concealed and locked door behind several tons of wheat at the back of a pantry attached to the main kitchen. Only Father Vedras even knows where the pantry door leads.

The entrance is sealed with wax and incised with prayers to Christ/Vorn designed to keep evil spirits inside. It works, too, unless some idiot breaks the seal, which is easy so long as you have something pointy and are not a vampire, tiefling, part-demon, or otherwise supernaturally evil force. The incantations, notably, do not repulse werewolves.

If the party enters, then unless the PCs do something to make this impossible, Father Vedras and ten guards will be waiting for the players when they come out of the Vault.

If you just want to deal with the intrigue in the castle, you can just put a very heavy and inconvenient to move treasure here instead of a dungeon entrance.

Physically, the castle is fairly formidable: 30' wide 30' deep moat, drawbridge, murder holes and crossbow slits into the gatehouse, 80' walls, on a craggy hilltop.

In additional to all this, at a dramatic moment—like when the players return from the dungeon or like at dinner or as they wake up there will be a rebel army at the gates and a great battle will ensue outside the castle (soldiers' stats as Guards above) which will (if the party doesn't do anything about it) turn into a siege. While the Terravante forces will eventually prevail (unless the party initiates something that prevents it), the siege will last 4+d10 days.

The opposing army is nothing too unusual, its just there's a lot of them. The idea is that the players will have to:

- Fight their way through this army with their loot,
- Sneak their way past this army with their loot.
- Join in the defense of the castle
- ...or do something else clever.

PART TWO: THE VAULT OF OMNILEX

Referee notes:

The main thing about this opening part of the dungeon is *darkness*. Visibility is always a maximum of fifteen feet here due to part of the enchantment keeping Omnilex, Demon Prince of Ooze, entombed. This includes torches, lanterns, infravision, ultravision, darkvision, and any and all magic spells. Nothing, not a laser, not a halogen lamp, not a house on fire is even dimly visible if it's more than 15 feet away. If the sun was down here, you would be burned to a crisp long before you even saw it.

This part of the dungeon is about weird things emerging from the dark and split-second decisions about what to do because of it, the monsters are the kind low-level parties should run away from. The map provided is what *you* know, chances are the PCs will

only see a tiny, confused sliver of what's drawn there.

The Set-Up:

Look at the map. The players enter on top left onto a narrow staircase without railings (I just colored it pink on the map to distinguish from the platform beneath, it's actually weathered grey stone) through a door incised with powerful clerical magic incantations on both sides. Total darkness and silence in every direction—the only visible thing are the narrow steps down.

Once the staircase flattens into a path, it is twenty feet above another narrow platform path (so the party won't see it unless they make a special attempt to see what's below). At the south end of this lower platform is another wax-sealed door, much like the one leading into this area, which leads to the Crypt. Twenty feet beneath the lower platform is what appears to be an endlessly churning black liquid occasionally interrupted by streaks and rumors of colossal eyes, mouths and far stranger orifices—this ocean is the demon prince Omnilex, and he is, mercifully, asleep (due to the magic that imprisons him here).

Omnilex

Also mercifully, he's soft—falling onto him only does d4 damage for every ten feet fallen, less mercifully: touching him instantly causes terrifying apocalyptic visions which act as a *Confusion* as spell every round until you stop touching him and save two rounds in a row.

You can't really wake him up or hurt him and he is, functionally, infinitely deep and infinitely extensive in every compass direction. In this dungeon he's basically just the floor, but PCs who go to extreme lengths to hurt or awaken him are welcome to get instantly killed in some gruesome way.

Hunting Eyes

The hunting eyes are 7'-10' eyes which help the other creatures imprisoned in the vault find and kill PCs. They can (only) see 15 feet, and have no other senses—however all the creatures on the platforms can see whatever the eyes see and the nearest ones will converge on any prey they locate.

The eyes stay completely still until the PCs come within 15 feet, at which point they will begin to roll toward them and attempt to stay close to allow the monsters to find the party. They have no offensive abilities of their own.

As soon as an eye fixes its gaze on a party member, the party will hear the monsters in the dark coming closer, they are not stealthy. Make a big deal about these sounds in the

darkness.

The eyes can't roll up and down the stairs but can roll along the narrow walkways.

HD 5 HP 25 Speed 120' Armor 15 Morale 12 Attack None

The Creatures

These are a few of Omnilex's sons and daughters that were imprisoned here when he was, in aeons past. They'll try to kill and eat any animate thing that comes into the vault, *but they have no senses except sight*. They can see through their own eyes (15') and through the eyes of the Hunting Eyes.

Smart parties will probably try to run past or around them, so I haven't gone out of my way to make them too interesting, mechanically.

Upper Platform Creatures:

8-Eyed Goat

A 10' tall monstrosity, ragged, moaning.

HD 10 HP 40 Speed 120' Armor 13 Morale 12 Attack +10 d12hp gore Weakness No senses other than sight.

Hook Thing

15' tall thin, gaunt mockery of mankind, staggering stiltlike with long steel hooklike limbs where its forearms and fists ought to be.

HD 10 HP 40 Speed 120' Armor 14 Morale 12 Attack +10 d12hp stab Weakness No senses other than sight.

Ice Lizard

17' long, scrambling on eight legs and leaving a trail of ice behind

HD 10 HP 40 Speed 120' (including climbing) Armor 15 Morale 12 Attack +8 d8hp bite Special Leaves a trail of ice wherever it crawls, walking on the ice requires a save to avoid falling. **Weakness** No senses other than sight.

Oriac Ooze

Favored daughter of Omnilex, a 12-ish foot long carpet of hissing blue plasm. Note that in her starting position, she drips acid onto the platform below.

HD 10 HP 40 Speed 120' (including climbing) Armor 12 Morale 12 Attack +8 d8hp pls lose a point of AC to her acid touch **Special** Weapons will damage her but are useless afterward unless they're magic **Weakness** No senses other than sight.

Lower Platform Creatures:

Albino Ny'Mok

A pale and awful leech bloated to the size of a baby hippo on long, striding insectile

legs.

HD 10 HP 40 Speed 120' Armor 12 Morale 12 Attack +8 d8hp bloodsuck Weakness
No senses other than sight.

Rot Phoenix

A repulsive bird with a 70' wingspan corroded far beyond the capacity for flight.

HD 2 HP 10 Speed 120' (including climbing) Armor 13 Morale 12 Attack +10 d12hp
claw **Special** Regenerates d4hp per round after its killed. Undead. **Weakness** No
senses other than sight.

PART THREE: THE CRYPT OF THE WRETCHED

Referee notes:

The point of this area is atmosphere and spookiness. At least until the party starts a fight with the panthers.

The Set-Up:

From the Vault, this area appears to be a large rectilinear stone structure hanging in black space (or would appear to be if you crawled all over it shining your 15' visibility light). It is apparently only accessible from the wax-sealed door at the south end of the grey platform. These doors, in case you haven't already guessed, both repel evil and lead to extradimensional spaces.

The creatures from the Vault will not follow PCs into the Crypt.

Lighting conditions in the Crypt are normal, though note that in the Outer Crypt there is no light except what the party brings. The Den is lit by torches in wall sconces.

The Crypt is made of streaked and weathered marble, the ceilings are 20' high.

The Pools are filled with fresh, clean, holy water and consecrated to the White-Lipped Goddess. They are 20' deep.

The Healing Pool keeps the panthers alive. It is filled with holy water which, once per day per creature, will heal d4 damage and cure hunger and, of course, thirst. However, anyone drinking from the Pool is filled with a desire to stay in the Crypt—they must save three rounds in a row to cease doing everything in their power to remain.

The Black Panthers who occupy the crypt are ordinary animals, under an ancient geas to protect this place—their five senses work normally. They will attack anyone who disturbs the Crypt—which they interpret as touching anything, including the pools, statues, tombs or the door inside the Den. Basically the only thing they'll allow intruders

to do is walk respectfully around, admiring the tombs, in which case the panthers will just slink around the tombs nearby, looking spooky.

If there is a fight then the nearest other panther will move toward any sound of struggle on the second round, another the third round, another the fourth, etc until the cats can neither see movement or hear growling. If the party manages to subdue the cats and keep quiet after, the rest of the cats will assume their fellow has killed whatever threat to the tombs it came upon.

If all the panthers are slain then there will be no immediate change, but the next time anyone sees this place the tombs will be broken open and the dead long gone. The cultists will have returned as liches and evil revenants.

If captured and sold the panthers are worth 500sp/gp each. The captain of the palace guard at Castle Terravante will totally buy them though Father Vedras will swear up and down that it's cursed and evil.

The Statues and Cherubs appear to be ordinary funerary sculptures, though very old, missing the tops of their heads from roughly the nose up.

Those schooled in history or religion will recognize that at least some of these deformations are intentional and that this indicates the statues are dedicated to the White-Lipped Goddess.

The Statue to the East of the Den is different. Close inspection will reveal the hand on the left side has three ordinary fingers and a second opposable thumb where the pinky should be. This hand is warm to the touch and screws off.

The hand is a magic item of living stone which will respond to the commands of the nearest human-intelligence brain and which gains all the abilities of whatever living hand is closest to it. If it is nearest a thief's it can pick locks, if it is nearest a wizard it can do its half of the gestures necessary for spells, etc. "Nearest" is interpreted quite literally, however, so if you hit someone in the head with it or send it scuttling across the floor to pickpocket a sleeping goblin, the target will gain control of the hand.

The Tombs are large, impressive freestanding mausolea (a la Pere Lachaise cemetery) containing the remains of the cultists that summoned vile Omnilex to this plane of existence.

Those schooled in history or architecture will recognize them as being carved in a variety of ancient styles over a period of 150-250 years.

Those schooled in languages will recognize the script on the tombs as being the ancient tongue of the Forest Sauvage in (LotFP: Brittany/Fantasy settings: Broceliande).

Those who can read this language will see that the inscriptions are clearly hostile to their inhabitants and are designed to keep their spirits from ever finding peace, like

“Within these narrow walls sleeps Calumnous Roderick, a liar and taker of lives, may he take no other home”.

Opening the tombs reveals the cultists were stripped of valuables before being interred but...

One of the Tombs (marked on the map but otherwise unremarkable) contains a jewelled stone dagger in multicolored fortification agate inscribed with a dedication to Omnilex and worth 5000sp/gp. Anyone attempting to pick it up will unconsciously grasp it with their off-hand. There it will remain until that creature is dead. It cannot be removed save by removing the hand or via an elaborate and questy curse-removing ritual (a *Remove Curse* spell won't do it).

The dagger grants the user an automatic second melee attack against virgins, at advantage to hit and damage. It also thirsts for virgin blood, however, and the user will not be able to come within ten feet of one without attacking.

Inside the walled Den the majority of the panthers relax and recline on a platform on the far side of a moat amid a variety of luxurious and curiously clean throw pillows. There are 33 of them and they're worth 100sp/gp each.

At the bottom of the the moat lies the partially-chewed remains of a dead tomb robber the cats are too indolent to finish eating.

She is (Portuguese/a Borceliande elf) in chainmail with a shield, clutching a now-worthless pillow and a longsword.

Her pack contains:

- a dagger
- 60' of rope
- a grappling hook
- a net
- caltrops
- a tin of lard
- still-preserved iron rations for 4 days
- a skin of fresh water
- a sprig of wolfsbane
- various looted baubles totalling 550sp/gp
- and her body is tattooed with an inscription that *Read Magic* or a familiarity with the Portuguese/elves of this area will reveal makes her invisible to the gods of goblinkind and thus immune to goblin magic. Copying it will do nothing but ripping the skin off and sewing it to someone or something will offer a similar protection.

The door in the south wall of the Den is not locked but contains a sliding latch mechanism just complicated enough that no cat will ever figure it out.

It leads to one of two things:

-More dungeon (which I intend to make)

-or, if you want to end this adventure sooner, a big treasure which takes two PCs to lift and which they will get no experience points for until they get it back through the vault and into the castle.

Black Panthers

HD 4 HP 20 Speed 120' (including climbing) **Armor 15 Morale 10 Attack:** +4 d10hp
bite or claw