



SHADOWS OVER STORMREACH

A One-Round DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Adventure for
1st- to 3rd-Level Characters
CABAL OF SHADOWS™ Faction Adventure 2 for the XEN'DRIK
EXPEDITIONS™ Campaign

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Sources: *Complete Warrior* [Andy Collins, David Noonan, Ed Stark], *Eberron Campaign Setting* [Keith Baker, James Wyatt, Bill Slavicek], *Expanded Psionics Handbook* (Bruce Cordell), *Lords of Madness* (Richard Baker, James Jacobs, Steve Winter), *Miniature's Handbook* (Michael Donais, Skaff Elias, Rob Heinsoo, Jonathan Tweet), *Player's Handbook II* (David Noonan), *Secrets of Xen'drik* (Keith Baker, Jason Bulmahn, Amber Scott), *Spell Compendium* (Matthew Sernett, Jeff Grubb, Mike McArtor)

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INTRODUCTION

The Shadows Over Stormreach is the second faction adventure for the Cabal of Shadows faction of the XEN'DRIK EXPEDITIONS campaign. It is optimized for 1st-level characters. This means that it's designed and balanced for a group of four to five 2nd-level characters (PCs).

If your group deviates from this size and strength, each encounter features a section titled "Scaling the Encounter" so that you, the Dungeon Master (DM), can create a more enjoyable and better balanced adventure.

If there are only four of five PCs of the same level in your group, it's easy to use this section: just use the level entry that corresponds with the PCs' level (the optimized entry is given in the main adventure text). For groups of mixed levels and groups with six PCs, determine the average level of the PCs, and increase that average by one for groups of six PCs. Treat that level as the groups level. That said, as DM you have discretion when it comes to fitting the challenges of the adventure to your group. If your group finds the challenges too easy or too difficult, feel free to increase or decrease the level of challenge appropriately. The goal is to challenge the PCs and entertain the players, not to overwhelm or even underwhelm them. The most enjoyable D&D games are ones where failure and character death are possible, but success and reward are attainable through daring and smart play.

Shadows Over Stormreach has been designed to be part of the RPGA DUNGEON & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS: XEN'DRIK EXPEDITIONS program. Like all DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS adventures, it's recommended that PCs undertaking its challenges have at least one arcane spellcaster, a divine spellcaster (preferably a cleric), a strong warrior, and a rogue. Parties missing these valuable adventuring components may find *The Sabuagin Stone* very challenging, and the chances of character death higher. Please warn the players of this before play starts. DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS allow players to "take one for the team"; that is to play a fastplay wizard, fighter, rogue, or cleric in place of one of their characters, and gain experience point for their character. If the group lacks one of these vital four classes, suggest to your players to take advantage of this option.

RPGA~SANCTIONED PLAY

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA even from the RPGA website, or as part of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS retail program. To play *Shadows Over Stormreach* as part of the XEN'DRIK EXPEDITIONS campaign—a worldwide, ongoing D&D campaign set in EBERRON—you must sanction it as part of an RPGA event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends

meeting at the DM's house.

To sanction an RPGA event, you must be at least a HERALD-LEVEL gamemaster. The person who sanctions the event is called the senior gamemaster, and is in charge of making sure the event is sanctioned before play, runs smoothly on the date sanctioned, and then reported back to the RPGA in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table DM (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the senior gamemaster is also the table DM. You don't have to be a Herald-Level GM to run this adventure if you are not the senior GM.

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a few things. First, it allows the PCs participating in play to accumulate experience points (XP) and gold pieces (gp) to advance their XEN'DRIK EXPEDITIONS characters. Second, it allows the RPGA to track and record what character did during the adventure, and future adventures a written with what the majority of player did in mind—in this way characters' action shape the future of the campaign. Lastly, player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth four (4) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA sanctioned play on December 31, 2006.

To learn more about the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS: XEN'DRIK EXPEDITIONS character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.rpga.com.

THIS IS A FACTION ADVENTURE

This is a faction adventure for the Cabal of Shadows. This means that the story is suited for that group, and can only be played by Cabal of Shadows characters. As the DM you should make sure that only member of this faction play in this adventure, as play of another faction's character could invalidate the entire session



Cabal of Shadows Faction Symbol

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Stormreach is a city that lives in the shadows of giant ruins, the rubble of long past civilization. Odd secrets and mysteries of that ancient past are still being unraveled today despite human habitation for nearly two hundred years. One mystery that still confounds the people of Stormreach is the Circle of Visions. Scattered around the edges of the city are twelve rings of standing stones that once a month on a random night offer a strange vision under the moon. What the vision will be, and in which ring it will appear, seems to have to no discernable pattern, but remains a matter of great interest to many.

One such person is Valexa Von Ruthvek, an antiquities dealer who specializes in recovering items from the giant ruins that dot the surface of the mysterious continent. A powerful and respected scholar and broker of the rare and esoteric, Valexa has been trying to uncover the lost key that will explain the purpose and use of the Circle of Visions. Within the last week, she has acquired an ancient map of the Circle, along with incomplete notes written in the giant language that detail the pattern of which set of standing stones will activate on which nights. The map and notes are incomplete however, and only one more night remains before the pattern will be once again lost to antiquity. Valexa needs hired upstanding adventurers to travel to the standing stones and uncover the secrets. The Cabal of Shadows needs someone to murder those adventurers and take their place.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The adventure begins a few weeks after the events of *CBL-1 The Sabuagin Stone* during which operatives of the Cabal of Shadows met Hes, a member of street gang called the Bilge Rats. While working with Hes to recover the *ebon tableau* Hes mentioned that Valexa Von Ruthvek had found a map to some long lost crypt in or near the city and was looking for someone to bring back any lost artifacts that might be found there.

Adventure Start: The PCs meet with each other and other members of the Cabal in a warehouse on the Stormreach docks. They are enlisted to intercept the adventurers and capture the map and accompanying notes and complete the adventurers' mission in the name of the Cabal.

Part One – A Well Planned Murder: The PCs plan and ambush the adventurers hired by Valexa and take the map from them. Armed with the notes and the map, the PCs travel to one of the circles of standing stones.

Part Two – Vision Quest: The PCs arrive at the circle and have some time to study the notes and concoct a plan, before they witness one of the illusionary visions shown by the Circle of Visions. Through the map, they are drawn into a gate that leads to the inside of one of the many giant monuments that populate Stormreach.

Part Three – In Hand: The PCs discover that inside of the monument, a massive arm reaching toward the skies, is filled with tortured souls, cunning traps, and lost knowledge of the giants. The PCs must win through it all in order to escape to the city.

Part Four – Home Sweet Home?: The PCs encounter a shadow personality left behind in the monument. If they successfully negotiate, the monument will become the home of the Cabal of Shadows in Stormreach. In the process they learn about the location of a psionic shard that details a place called the Mere of Shattered Souls that is mentioned in the *Caldyn Fragments*. The shard rests at the below of Shargon's Teeth in the hands of an ancient aboleth. Its recovery will become a priority of the Cabal of Shadows.

Ending the Adventure: The PCs find a way out of the monument, whether through force, stealth or guile, and manage to reunite with the Cabal.

TROUBLESHOOTING

The introduction and the first two encounters operate on a timeline that flows regardless of the actions of the PCs. You must pay careful attention to the in game time in order to properly adjudicate this adventure. A summary of important events are listed here, though other expanded sections of this timeline can be found throughout the adventure.

Timeline

- Day One, Midnight: The PCs receive an invitation to speak with two members of the Council of the Obscured and while doing so are directed to complete a new mission. The documents they require to do this are in the hands of the some adventurers staying at the Wilted Rose Inn.
- Day Three, 8 AM: The adventurers leave the inn for a stone circle that is part of the Circle of Visions.
- Day Three, Midnight: The portal to the Hand of Stalwart Reverie opens.
- Day Four, 1 AM: The portal closes. If the PCs have not entered through the portal by this time, the adventure is over.

ADVENTURE START

The adventure begins a few weeks after the events of *CBL-1 The Sabuagin Stone* during which operatives of the Cabal of Shadows met Hes, a member of street gang called the Bilge Rats. While working with Hes to recover the *ebon tableau* Hes mentioned that Valexa Von Ruthvek had found a map to some long lost crypt in or near the city and was looking for someone to bring back any lost artifacts that might be found there. Having dealt with the events of the Well of Woe, the Council of the Obscured has decided that this off-hand rumor should be explored and exploited. The PCs have been chosen to carry out the Council's will.

The PCs arrive just before midnight on what remains of day one.

Under the cover of darkness you have answered the call and gathered in a warehouse blocks from the edge of the docks. As you wait in the dark of the empty warehouse, wallowing in the smell of day old fish, slowly more Children of the Shadows arrive until a the last two finally arrive. They make an odd couple. A shapeless robe and mask hide the pleasant female voice of The Melancholy, the speaker of the Mourners of Yore. She is escorted by an androgynous teen whose back sprouts white-feathered wings. The calm child must be Sublime, the angel of destruction

who leads the Children of Xoriat. Melancholy motions for you to gather around, "The Council of the Obscured has spoken. Stand and hear our words."

The Melancholy and Sublime have come on behalf of the Council of the Obscured, the ruling body composed of the four secret leaders of the four Obscura that make up the Cabal of Shadows. The pair presents the following mission details for the PCs to carry out. The pair take turns offering tidbits of information. Tailor each statement based upon the speaker and their audience.

- (The Melancholy) Operatives of the Cabal of Shadows recently dealt with an adept of the Traveler named Hes, a member of street gang called the Bilge Rats. While working with Hes to recover the *ebon tableau* he mentioned that Valexa Von Ruthvek had found a map to some long lost crypt in or near the city and was looking for someone to bring back any lost artifacts that might be found there.
- (The Melancholy) Whatever these artifacts are it is likely that they will be powerful and aid the Cabal significantly in their efforts to take over Xen'drik. The Council has decided that the Cabal should lay claim to them.
- (The Melancholy) Other members of the Cabal of Shadows attempted to apply for the position, only to find out that Von Ruthvek had already hired a group of local adventurers and given them the map.
- (Sublime) The time for guile has passed and force must be brought to bear. The PCs are to locate the adventurers and murder them before they can complete the mission. Then once all witnesses are out of the way, the PCs are to finish the mission in their place and bring the results back to this warehouse.
- (The Melancholy) Valexa Von Ruthvek is known to be a powerful wizard and may be useful in the future. The PCs should avoid her if at all possible, and if they do interact with her, they should avoid a confrontation they would likely lose.
- (Sublime) The Cabal has very little information about what Von Ruthvek is exploring or pillaging. The PCs should feel free to murder or torture anyone necessary to uncover the information they need, as long as they do not expose the Cabal to their enemies in the city.
- (Sublime) The Cabal is not allocating any additional resources beyond the PCs for this task, as they have proved themselves quite capable in the past. Failure is not expected.
- (The Melancholy) The adventurers are currently preparing for their expedition. They were last seen staying in the Wilted Rose, an inn not far from the Red Ring. It appears that they do not plan to leave to the morning after tomorrow. The PCs should have approximately a full day investigate and execute their plan. (It is currently very late in the evening.)

Once the PCs have had the opportunity to ask questions of their leaders, they are free to devise and carryout their plan as they see fit. Proceed to **Part One**.

Development: Should any PC believe themselves powerful enough to effect a coup and attempt to slay

one of the leaders of the Cabal, Sublime and the Melancholy ruthless put the foolish upstart down. Their power drastically dwarfs that of the PCs at this point and you may feel free to elaborate of their hideously gruesome death without bothering to roll for initiative.

ROLE-PLAYING MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF THE OBSCURED

The Melancholy and Sublime are two of the four individuals that sit upon the Council of the Obscured and make decisions for the Cabal of Shadows. They are old and powerful individuals whose goals exceed the daily concerns of normal folk. Their powers exceed anything the PCs may muster. When portraying them, it is important that they maintain an air of otherworldly mystery.

The Melancholy: The Melancholy speaks for the Mourners of Yore in the Council of the Obscured. While her true identity is unknown, the voice and mannerisms are decidedly female. The Melancholy is generally a moderating force among the Council that urges solidifying the position of the Cabal by active recruiting of new members and the establishment of safe houses.

Sublime: The speaker of the Children of Xoriat takes the form of masked teen of indeterminate sex with fine white angel-like wings. The child, known as Sublime is disturbingly calm for one of the Children and speaks of the eradication of whole cities with the same intensity one might discuss the weather. During discussions on how to proceed, Sublime generally urges the most violent and bloody methods.

PART ONE: A WELL PLANNED MURDER

This encounter covers any investigation the PCs may attempt concerning the adventurers and their mission, as well as the PCs plan to steal the map and eliminate their rivals. This encounter is nonlinear and the PCs may proceed as they wish, even avoiding some places of interest. The PCs have just over a day to complete this encounter before the adventurers leave on their expedition. If this occurs, all is not lost if they are able to follow the adventurers to the correct ring of standing stones.

Knowledge Checks

Those PCs with Bardic Knowledge, Knowledge (history) or Knowledge (local) may attempt a skill check to know information about the Circle of Visions.

- DC 5: A dozen ancient statues and monoliths are spread throughout Stormreach. One statue has a humanoid figure holding a knife in one hand and a snake in the other. Another monolith is simply a massive arm reaching toward the skies. Many are crumbled or half-broken.
- DC 15: Among the weirdest of the giant ruins are the twelve rings of standing stones scattered about the fringes of the city called the Circle of Visions. Their function and operation is unknown but once a month, an illusion will appear at night in the center of one of the circles.
- DC 20: Sometimes the image is a simple one, such as a fluttering dove, a crashing wave, or a flowering fruit-tree. But other times the

images are more disturbing: a menacing quori or a sinister ziggurat deep within the jungle. Thus far no one has been able to figure out the timing of the mysterious images or their purpose.

Gathering Information

In order to prepare for a confrontation with the adventurers hired by Valexa Von Ruthvek or the eventual mission to the Circle of Visions, some PCs might attempt to gather information on the streets. Feel free to role-play out these brief encounters, or use the Gather Information skill as fits the temperament of the table. Those that role-play these encounters may receive any of the following information as the judge sees fit based upon whom they speak with. For those rolling skill checks, natives of Xen'drik receive a +5 to this roll (representing either ability to speak with fellow natives). The PCs should receive an additional +1 to their check for every extra 10 gp they spend (up to +5 for 50 gp spent). Assume rolling Gather Information costs the PC 3d4 gp in drinks and bribes and takes three hours. Depending on whom the PCs specifically approach, the DM may also allow Bluff or Diplomacy checks with certain NPCs.

The Adventurers at the Wilted Rose: There is not much to find out about the adventurers staying at the Wilted Rose, one the streets, but a successful Gather Information check provides all the information of the rolled DC, and lower.

- DC 10: *Yes, there are a few young adventurers staying at the Rose. Last night they were arguing over what they should call their newly founded group. I think they must be relatively new at this.*
- DC 15: *Well, let me see. There was a gnomish man who talked a lot. He wore a chain shirt and carried a bunch of different weapons. There was a dirty orc, with a real big sword. He didn't talk much, mostly grunts. Oh, and there was a really pretty woman wearing just a dress. She was trying to get the other woman to bathe her wolf. I don't think the wolf seemed happy about that. The woman in the dress kept trying to put perfume on the poor wolf.*
- DC 25: *Oh sure, they are in the Wilted Rose. They have the company room in the northeast corner of the second floor.*

The Circle of Visions: The Circle of Visions is a relatively common sight to natives of Stormreach, and most locals can tell inquisitive PCs about them.

- DC 5: *There are dozens of ancient statues and monoliths throughout Stormreach like that one. My favorite is a monolith done up like a massive fist reaching toward the sky.*
- DC 10: *The Circle of Visions is a giant ruin of the twelve rings of standing stones scattered about the fringes of the city. No one knows why, but every month, always on a different day and no one knows which, some image appears in one of them. I think it might some kind of ancient giant idea of art.*
- DC 20: *The image that appears in one of the rings seems random. Sometimes it is a simple one like a fluttering dove, a crashing wave, or a flowering fruit-tree, but other times the images are more disturbing: a menacing quori or a sinister ziggurat deep within the jungle. It's possible it is some sort of prophecy device. Like maybe it shows you the location of a lost city or*

something when it is time for someone to rediscover it?

Circle of Visions

The PCs might choose to visit one of the stone circles before attacking the adventurers. In this case they are free to walk out of Stormreach to one of them.

Directions are easily acquired, as they are well-known landmarks. Assume that it takes roughly an hour to walk to one of the circles. Whichever one they choose to visit is not relevant as all of them are similar in appearance.

The ring of standing stones is huge, each would have been considered a boulder for the giants who built it and is nearly a small hill for someone of your stature. Grass grows high surrounded the circle, but inside, only packed earth remains. No altar or sizable stone of any note mars the inside of the ring.

The ring is made up of ten large stones arranged in a circle. Each gray stone is twenty to thirty feet high and is not marked by any specific runes or writing. A thorough search finds no secret doors or compartments though a DC 12 Survival check (with the Track feat) will find the tracks of booted humanoids that are a few days old. The ring is a popular destination with the young or curious, so tracks are not uncommon.

Those capable of casting *detect magic* will note the presence of moderate illusion magic (Spellcraft DC 21 to determine the school; 21st-caster level).

Should the PCs attempt to destroy the circle in anyway, it should prove next to impossible. A DC 45 Strength check is needed to push one of the stones over. Each stone has a Hardness of 8 and requires 1800 points of damage to crack it in half.

The Red Ring

Given the proximity of the Wilted Rose to the Red Ring, PCs who played *CBL-1 The Sahuagin Stone* may be worried that Burgundy Clor, who they have previous run afoul of, might be involved in some way. In this case, the location is a convenient landmark and is features only due to pure coincidence. Clor is in no way involved, unless the PCs make him involved.

Particularly devious PCs might guess that Clor is always on the lookout for fresh meat for the ring. Any PCs that take some of the adventurers alive might attempt to sell them to Clor in order to earn a little extra money.

It takes little effort for the PCs to be directed to someone willing to help them around the Red Ring, though given their previous dealings with Clor, he is not personally willing to meet with them. A squat goblin named Grot, with yellow skin and smelling of sour milk approaches the PCs curious if they wish to post a bet or have other business. Grot recognizes anyone who played the previous adventure and nervously asks the PCs to bare him no ill will. Grot, who refers to himself in the third person between sniveling, is actually quite well connected and none of the regular gamblers fall for his act anymore. He is one of Clor's men. Grot attempts to needle out why they might wish to meet with Clor, hinting that he might know a way they could speak with "the boss." Once the PCs come clean as to why they wish to deal, Grot will explain that Clor isn't meeting with anyone but he would likely be interested in purchasing the adventurers.

Treasure: Grot will offer 30 gp per living adventurer; 50 gp if the PCs threateningly bring up how Grot sold them out in the previous adventure. He will go no higher.

Development: If the PCs become violent on the streets in front of the Red Ring, some of Clor's thugs will take exception. Use a sufficient number of gnolls, ogres and trolls to drive the PCs away. Clor is will have to be dealt with another day.

Von Ruthvek's Splendors of the South

It is possible that the PCs may choose to investigate the adventurer's backer, despite any warnings they may have already received, and go in search of Valexa Von Ruthvek. In this case, they can find her at her home and shop, Von Ruthvek's Splendors of the South.

A small shop sits just off the main thoroughfare, in the shadow of a large sculpture of a long plumed bird. A flower box of blooming tropical plants does little to hide the bars across the windows that glow faintly with the fires of the arcane. A quaint sign over the door reads, "Von Ruthvek's Splendors of the South, please come in."

Valexa Von Ruthvek (N female gnome magewright 8/lore master 5) is one of Stormreach's best-known antiquities dealers, able to identify even the most puzzling items uncovered among the giant ruins. She keeps a wide array of magic items and other curiosities in her store, although it's mostly under lock, bar, and magical ward in order to deter thieves. Von Ruthvek offers magic item identification services for the usual rates, and she'll even pay adventurers for a full expedition report if she's interested in finding out more about a particular relic of the ancient giants.

She is only open during daylight hours, and at other times retires to her home above the shop. During work hours, she is in the store happily speaking with customers like a pleasant elderly neighbor woman, or tinker with a new acquisition. She is happy to see any visitors other than drow, of whom she is instantly suspicious of due to her raiding of many of their sacred sites. If questioned about the job she posted previously, she replies that the position has been filled and offers to take the PCs names for consideration on future jobs. She will not discuss the current job, and becomes suspicious of those that press her. She is well acquainted with the many thieves and treasure seekers of Stormreach and has no wish to lose another valuable find to another.

If consulted on the Circle of Visions or the history of the sculptures that dot Stormreach, Valexa will happily discuss the history of the place, and can offer all the information listed above or in the adventure background. She will not specifically discuss the map or where she sent the adventurers.

Development: It is possible that the PCs will attempt to rob Valexa's store, or worse, attempt to murder her despite being told not to. You should make it clear that there are many visible wards and defenses throughout the shop (Valexa wishes to deter thieves). If combat ensues, she will *teleport* away and return two rounds later with an overwhelming force of guardsmen. If it comes to this, show the PCs no mercy. They were warned not to approach her.

The Wilted Rose (EL 5)

Eventually the PCs will have to go to the Wilted Rose in search of their intended victims. How the attack

plays out is entire up to the PCs, and this encounter may well vary significantly based upon their actions. As the DM, you will have to adjust accordingly.

THE INN

The Wilted Rose is a simple affair with a taproom and kitchen on the first floor and a handful of rooms for let on the second story. It is in a plain neighborhood where many of the neighbors are professionals that live above their shops. The following statistics apply to the inn unless otherwise noted in an individual room description.

Ceilings: The ceilings on the first floor rise to a height of fifteen feet, though rafters decorated with various trophies can be easily reached at ten feet. The second floor ceilings are a cramped ten feet high.

Exterior Wood Walls: 6 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 60; AC 5; Break DC 20.

Interior Wood Walls: 3 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 30; AC 5; Break DC 20.

Exterior Wood Doors: 1.5 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 15; AC 5; Break DC 18; Open Locks DC 25.

Interior Wood Doors: 1 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 10; AC 5; Break DC 15; Open Locks DC 20 (bedrooms only).

Light: During the day, all of the windows on the ground floor are generally unshuttered to admit light. Given the currently pleasant weather, the doors are also generally open as well. In the evenings all common spaces including the upstairs hallways, are light by lanterns, in addition to the fireplaces in the taproom and the kitchen. In the hallways the lamps are kept low and unless altered, the halls are consider shadowy illumination. Individual sleeping rooms come equipped with a lantern, but at any given time of day its use varies with the occupants.

Magic: With the possible exception of anything carried by the adventurers the PCs have come in search of, there are no magical auras in the Wilted Rose.

Windows: None of the windows in the Wilted Rose actually have panes of glass. Instead each has a tight fitting shutter that can be locked and barred from the inside. When closed, the shutters use the following statistics: 0.5 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 5; AC 5; Break DC 13; Open Locks DC 15.

Hours of Business: The Wilted Rose is open for business from six in the morning to midnight. During the six hours when not in operation, all exterior doors and windows are shut and locked.

Staff: Arthen Turchers and his young family operate The Wilted Rose. During the day, Arthen the innkeeper is generally behind the bar serving patrons and whittling on a block of wood. Arthen is a pleasant fellow always willing to listen to a new tale. He is beginning to show a bald spot in his brown hair. His wife Pesse spends most of the time in the kitchen preparing meals, though at least once every other day she climbs to the second story to change the linens. Pesse is a quiet, overworked woman with pronounced crow's-feet and long braided black hair. Arthen and Pesse's eleven-year-old son, Horth has grown up working in the Wilted Rose and looks to take over the family business some day. During evening hours, Horth sleeps in the kitchen with a large knife in case a patron requires something or tries to skip out on a bill. During the day Horth runs errand for the inn or does various menial jobs that upkeep the inn. Horth is a dark haired, enthusiastic boy that already fancies himself quite the innkeeper. He is very protective of his family and home and his youthful enthusiasm is likely to get him killed in

defense of the inn and its patrons. The accompanying statistics block can be used for any of the inn staff.

ARTHEN, PESSE, OR HORTH TURCHERS

CR 1/2

Male or female human commoner 1

NG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +0

Languages Common, elven.

[rule]

AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10

hp 3 (1 HD)

Fort +1, **Ref** +0, **Will** +1

[rule]

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee dagger +0 (1d4/19-20)

Ranged thrown dagger +0 (1d4/19-20)

Base Atk +0; **Grp** +0

[rule]

Abilities Str 11, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 10

Feats Skill Focus (Craft)

Skills Craft (Cooking for Pesse, Woodworking for Arthen and Horth) +7, Handle Animal +4, Listen +5

Possessions dagger, pouch with 5 cp.

[rule]

Hook "What are you doing in MY inn?!?!?"

1. TAPROOM

The taproom has a well-worn bar opposite the door with a fireplace to the left and wooden stairs rising to the ceiling ahead and to the left. Underneath trophies and pennants that hang from the rafters, a door proceeds to another room; likely a kitchen. A man sits behind the bar, whittling and whistling to himself. Dozens of whittled animals play among the bottles behind the bar.

The taproom is a comfortable room where any adventurer might choose to wile away hard earned gold while swapping tall tales and boasts. Pennants with heraldry from all across the globe decorate the rafters alongside the stuffed heads of various game animals. From six bells in the morning to midnight, the front door is open for business and Arthen waits behind the bar to serve any who demand his attention. At other times, the front door is locked and no one is present in the taproom to answer any knocks.

2. KITCHEN

Smokey smells of past meals and a lingering fire greet you. Cabinets, a hearth, and a thick table mark this room as the inn's kitchen.

The kitchen is staffed at all times. During business hours Pesse is here fixing meals for visitors and guests. At night, Horth sleeps here in case a guest is in need of assistance. While Horth is available to help customers sleeping in the inn during the shutdown hours, he is accustomed to ignoring drunks who pound on the door and so efforts to rouse him in this manner are ignored.

3. INDIVIDUAL ROOM

This plain room contains a bed and dress with basin and lamp. Sea breezes drift through the shuttered window almost covering the smells of dust and old wood.

This room is available for guests to rent. Each of these rooms contains one bed, a washbasin and pitcher, and a lamp with sufficient oil for one evening. All doors and windows to these rooms are locked.

Only the room marked with a "*" is occupied during the duration of this adventure. The marked room houses a half elven sailor named Grarrys who has recently been bounced from his ship for excessive drinking. Grarrys spends most of his time, and the last of his coin, drinking in the taproom or passed out in his room waiting for opportunity to knock. If awakened by sounds of combat, he ignores it unless it infringes upon his room. He is all too afraid that he will be unable to pay his debts and will wind up fighting in the Red Ring; the victim of a press gang.

GRARRYS CR 1/2

Male or female half-elf expert 1

N Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +2; **Senses** Low-light vision; Listen +1, Spot +1

Languages Common, Elven, Undercommon

[rule]

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12

hp 5 (1 HD)

Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2; +2 against Enchantment effects

Immune sleep effects

[rule]

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee short sword +2 (1d6+2/19-20)

Ranged javelin +2 (1d6+2)

Base Atk +0; **Grp** +2

[rule]

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

Feats Skill Focus (Profession [sailor])

Skills Balance +6, Climb +6, Profession (sailor) +7, Survival +4, Swim +6, Tumble +6, and Use Rope +6

Possessions short sword, dagger, two javelins, leather armor, faded bandana, flute with coded parchment inside, empty wineskin, pouch with 13 gp.

[rule]

Description A tanned seadog, with a few days of stubble and a hangover.

Hook "Arrr, buy me a drink or leave me be."

4. COMPANY ROOM (EMPTY)

A hearth, three bunk beds, and long table with benches are spread throughout the room.

The company room is meant for those groups who wish to share costs and sleep in a common room. This room is currently unoccupied.

5. COMPANY ROOM (OCCUPIED)

A hearth, three bunk beds, and long table with benches are spread throughout the room. Equipment and dirty clothes are strewn about. A nest of blankets has been made on the floor in front of the fireplace.

The adventurers have rented this company room and come and go during the day. During the evening hours the young adventurers keep watch and maintain a low lamp offering shadowy illumination to the room. If no one is present in the room, the lamp is dark. For more information concerning the newly formed company

working for Valexa Von Ruthvek, consult **The Adventurers** below.

THE ADVENTURERS (EL VARIES)

The location and tactics of the targeted adventurers vary with the time of day in which they are encountered, but largely they revolve around the Wilted Rose. This subsection details the adventurers, their schedule, and their general behaviors.

Consaern Vaelir: male gnome marshal 1: hp 11; Combat Statistics.

Ghorr: male orc barbarian 2: hp 29; Combat Statistics.

Lalitha d'Orien: female human sorcerer: hp 11; Combat Statistics.

Ral: wolf animal companion: hp 13; Combat Statistics.

Tiirma the Claw of Pylas Talaer: female elf druid 1: hp 10; Combat Statistics.

Timetable: Unless alerted to the PCs intentions or otherwise distracted the adventurers follow this schedule. If the PCs disrupt the schedule, you should have the adventurers react and logically adjust their plans based upon any knowledge the PCs might accidentally leak. As a general rule the party attempts to avoid ever going anywhere by themselves without at least one other member of the party escorting them unless otherwise noted.

Day One, Midnight: The adventurers retire to their room and effect standard watch procedures.

Day Two, Seven AM: Tiirma goes downstairs to get breakfast for the company. She returns after ten minutes.

Day Two Eight AM: The company eats breakfast in the taproom.

Day Two, Ten AM: Consaern and Lalitha visit a nearby scrivener to acquire paper, ink, and quills so they might better detail what they observe in the Circle of Visions. Ghorr, Tiirma, and Ral remain in the Wilted Rose playing dice games and enjoying their share of the upfront payment. Consaern and Lalitha return by lunch.

Day Two, Noon: The company eats lunch in the taproom. They remain there for several hours discussing their upcoming mission and reviewing their list of supplies.

Day Two, Three PM: Tiirma and Ral go to a nearby greengrocer to acquire some fresh meat for the trip. The rest of the company remains in the Inn. She returns one hour later.

Day Two, Five PM: Ghorr gets into an argument with the sailor Grarrys. Grarrys retires to his room before harsh words escalate to violence. Consaern does his best to mediate.

Day Two, Six PM: The company eats dinner in the taproom.

Day Two, Eleven PM: The party retires and effect standard watch procedures.

Day Two, Two AM: Ghorr leaves his watch to visit the outhouse in back of the Wilted Rose. His exit wakes Ral.

Day Three, 7 AM: The company eats breakfast in the taproom.

Day Three, 8 AM: The company leaves for the stone circle of the Circle of Visions noted in their map.

SPEAKING WITH TIIRMA

It is possible that members of the Children of Xoriat Obscura will attempt to confront Tiirma prior to any attack in order to warn her away or recruit her. Tiirma is guarded at first; having been warned repeatedly by Consaern that spies may attempt to prevent them from completing their job. Tiirma, as a Valenar druid, views the other members of her party as weak and her volatile emotions quickly get the better of her in any discussion, drawing her out of her shell. Her demeanor varies based upon the PC. Urbane and noble PCs draw her contempt while nature or martial oriented PCs of common backgrounds make her comfortable. Fellow Valenar draw pleasant conversation while drow are treated harshly. She cannot be bought with gold.

She feels Consaern talks too much in order to cover up the inadequacies of his short stature and she feels strongly that Lalitha is a weak noble who does not deserve to be part of her fellowship. The only member of the fellowship she cares for in the least is Ghorr who is strong and straightforward.

Tiirma can be convinced to abandon her company and not participate in any conflict if the PC promises to deal harshly with Lalitha and leave Ghorr alive. She will not leave them until after the PCs have ambushed the company, as she does not yet fully trust her new acquaintance and wishes to see that promises are kept. She is also not ready to consider joining the Cabal of Shadows, even if membership is offered, but she is willing to entertain a future meeting. If this agreement is made she and Ral will stay out of any fight unless Ghorr is killed.

Watch Schedule: While sleeping, the adventurers have a standard watch schedule. Each watch lasts for two hours. In general Ral is not allocated to a specific watch, but sleeps for short periods, waking randomly. At any given time during the night, there is a 30% chance that is awake. This chance rises to 70% when Tiirma is on watch.

Watch One: Consaern Vaelir

Watch Two: Ghorr

Watch Three: Lalitha d'Orien, Tiirma

Watch Four: Tiirma

Tactics: The tactics used by the party vary wildly based on how they are confronted. Assuming they are all awake, Consaern is motivating their Dexterity. He fills in whatever gap is needed by entering melee with his longspear, using his bow to provide missile support, or throwing a tanglefoot bag to immobilize a foe. Generally Ghorr rages and charges the nearest foe; likely using his Power Attack for the maximum amount unless the foe is in heavy armor. Tiirma sends Ral into melee to trip troublesome foes so Ghorr need only fight one person at a time. Meanwhile, Tiirma summons another wolf with her Ashbound feat to further increase their number of melee fighters. Lalitha makes liberal use of her *color spray* spell; using her dimensional leap to get away from dangerous foes. If the party is caught by surprise, they make as much noise as possible to wake their allies while trying to distract foes from sleeping allies.

Development: Eventually the PCs will need to acquire the map and notes from the adventurers. Lalitha carries the map and Consaern carries a wooden book of loosely bound, and partially burned, notes. The original notes detail the use of the map in giant, but they are incomplete. They chart a natural phenomenon with no recognizable pattern that could apparently be witnessed by use of the Circle of Visions. The true purpose of the

Circle of Visions is not discussed, only how it might be used to observe this particular phenomenon. The notes suggest a number of days and nights going back several centuries when the Circle might be used, though that portion is heavily damaged. The last readable entry occurs on the third night of this adventure. After that, the pattern will be lost to ages and whatever fire damaged the originals. The notes clearly state which stone circle to attend, and what time.

In addition to the original giant notes, a female hand (Valexa Von Ruthvek) has faithfully transcribed the entire document into gnomish.

ADVENTURERS OF THE WILTED ROSE

CONSAERN VAEIR CR 1

Male gnome marshal 1

CG Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +0; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot -1; low-light vision

Languages Common, Gnome.

[rule]

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 15; +4 AC against giants

hp 11 (1 HD)

Fort +5, **Ref** +0, **Will** +1; +2 against illusions

[rule]

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee mwk longspear +2 (1d6+2/x3) or longsword +2 (1d6+2/19-20)

Ranged mighty composite longbow +1 (1d6+1/x3)

Base Atk +0; **Grp** +1

Atk Options +1 to hit kobolds and goblins

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, tanglefoot bag

Marshal Spells Known:

Minor— *motivate Dexterity* (+3 to Dex checks, skills and initiative)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):

1/day— *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *prestidigitation*, *speak with animals* (burrowing mammal only, duration 1 minute)

[rule]

Abilities Str 12, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 16

Feats Battlefield Inspiration (allies gain +2

circumstance save vs. fear)

Skills Bluff +7 Craft (alchemy) +1, Diplomacy +11, Listen +1, Sense Motive +3

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork longspear, longsword, mighty composite longbow [+1], 20 masterwork arrows, chain shirt

[rule]

Hook Go get 'em boys!

Description Consaern is a brightly dressed, gregarious gnome who chatters constantly.

CONSAERN VAEIR CR 2

Male gnome marshal 2

CG Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +0; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot -1; low-light vision

Languages Common, Gnome.

[rule]

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 15; +4 AC against giants

hp 19 (2 HD)

Fort +6, **Ref** +0, **Will** +2; +2 against illusions

[rule]

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee mwk longspear +3 (1d6+2/x3) or longsword +3 (1d6+2/19-20)

Ranged mighty composite longbow +2 (1d6+1/x3)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +2

Atk Options +1 to hit kobolds and goblins

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, tanglefoot bag

Marshal Spells Known:

Major— *hardy soldiers* (+1 DR to all allies)

Minor— *motivate Dexterity* (+3 to Dex checks, skills and initiative)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):

1/day— *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *prestidigitation*, *speak with animals* (burrowing mammal only, duration 1 minute)

[rule]

Abilities Str 12, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 16

Feats Battlefield Inspiration (allies gain +2

circumstance save vs. fear)

Skills Bluff +5 Craft (alchemy) +1, Diplomacy +16, Listen +1, Sense Motive +4

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork longspear, longsword, mighty composite longbow [+1], 20 masterwork arrows, chain shirt

[rule]

Hook Go get 'em boys!

Description Consaern is a brightly dressed, gregarious gnome who chatters constantly.

TIIRMA THE CLAW OF PYLAS TALAER CR 1

Female elf druid 1

CN Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +6; low-light vision

Languages Common, Elven.

[rule]

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14

hp 10 (1 HD)

Fort +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4; +2 against Enchantment effects

Immune sleep effects

[rule]

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee scimitar +2 (1d6+2/18-20)

Ranged shortspear +2 (1d6+2)

Base Atk +0; **Grp** +2

[Class] Spells Prepared (CL 1st):

1st — *cure light wounds*, *produce flame*

oth — *create water*, *detect poison*, *flare*

[rule]

Abilities Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ Wild empathy (+0)

Feats Ashbound (Summoned creatures last twice as long and gain +3 luck bonus to attack rolls)

Skills Concentration +5, Knowledge (nature) +2, Listen +6, Search +1, Spot +6, Survival +8

Possessions scimitar, three shortspears, dagger, two bundles of holly and mistletoe, leather armor, heavy wooden shield

[rule]

Hook I will feast upon your entrails.

Description A dirty elven woman with wild brown hair wearing skins.

TIIRMA THE CLAW OF PYLAS TALAER **CR 2**

Female elf druid 2

CN Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +6; low-light vision

Languages Common, Elven.

[rule]

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14

hp 17 (2 HD)

Fort +5, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5; +2 against Enchantment effects

Immune sleep effects

[rule]

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee scimitar +3 (1d6+2/18-20)

Ranged shortspear +3 (1d6+2)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +3

[Class] Spells Prepared (CL 2nd):

1st — *cure light wounds, magic fang, produce flame*

oth — *create water, detect magic, detect poison, flare*

[rule]

Abilities Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ Wild empathy (+o), woodland stride

Feats Ashbound (Summoned creatures last twice as long and gain +3 luck bonus to attack rolls)

Skills Concentration +7, Knowledge (nature) +2, Listen +7, Search +1, Spot +6, Survival +8

Possessions scimitar, three shortspears, dagger, two bundles of holly and mistletoe, leather armor, heavy wooden shield

[rule]

Hook *I will feast upon your entrails.*

Description A dirty elven woman with wild brown hair wearing skins.

RAL, CR ~

Male wolf animal companion

N Medium animal

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +3, Spot +3; Low-light vision, scent

[rule]

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15

hp 13 (2 HD)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

[rule]

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee bite +3 (1d6+1)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +2

Atk Options Trip

[rule]

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

SQ Link, share spells

Feats Track, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Hide +2, Listen +3, Move Silently +3, Spot +3, Survival +1

Possessions Studded leather barding

[rule]

Tricks Attack (x2), Defend, Down, Guard, Heel, Track

GHORR CR 1

Male orc barbarian 1

CN Medium humanoid (orc)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen -2, Spot -2; 60' darkvision

Languages Common, Orcish.

[rule]

AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 12

hp 17 (1 HD);

Fort +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0

Weakness Light sensitivity

[rule]

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee falchion +8 (2d4+10/18-20) or longsword +8 (1d8+7/19-20)

Ranged mighty composite longbow +3 (1d8+4/x3)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +8

Atk Options Power Attack, rage 1/day

[rule]

Abilities Str 24, Dex 13, Con 20, Int 6, Wis 6, Cha 6

SQ Illiteracy

Feats Power Attack

Skills Climb +9, Jump +9

Possessions Falchion, longsword, mighty composite longbow [+4], 20 masterwork arrows, chain shirt, grappling hook, 50' hemp rope, backpack, wineskin, bag of partially rotten well-gnawed rats.

[rule]

Hook **angry grunt**

Description An unwashed orc chewing on a dead rat.

When not raging, Ghorr has the following changed statistics

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

hp 15 (1 HD);

Fort +5, **Will** -2

Melee falchion +6 (2d4+7/18-20) or longsword +6 (1d8+5/19-20)

Grp +6

Abilities Str 20, Con 16

Skills Climb +7, Jump +7

GHORR CR 2

Male orc barbarian 2

CN Medium humanoid (orc)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen -2, Spot -2; 60' darkvision

Languages Common, Orcish.

[rule]

AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 12; Uncanny dodge

hp 29 (2 HD);

Fort +9, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

Weakness Light sensitivity

[rule]

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee falchion +10 (2d4+10/18-20) or longsword +9 (1d8+6/19-20)

Ranged mighty composite longbow +4 (1d8+4/x3)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +9

Atk Options Power Attack, rage 1/day

[rule]

Abilities Str 24, Dex 13, Con 20, Int 6, Wis 6, Cha 6

SQ Illiteracy

Feats Power Attack

Skills Climb +10, Jump +10

Possessions Masterwork falchion, silver longsword, mighty composite longbow [+4], 20 masterwork arrows,

chain shirt, *cloak of resistance* +1, grappling hook, 50' hemp rope, backpack, wineskin, bag of partially rotten well-gnawed rats.

[rule]

Hook *angry grunt*

Description An unwashed orc chewing on a dead rat.

When not raging, Ghorr has the following changed statistics

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Uncanny dodge

hp 25 (2 HD);

Fort +7, **Will** -1

Melee falchion +8 (2d4+7/18-20) or longsword +7 (1d8+4/19-20)

Grp +7

Abilities Str 20, Con 16

Skills Climb +8, Jump +8

GHORR CR 3

Male orc barbarian 2/fighter 1

CN Medium humanoid (orc)

Init +1; **Senses** Listen -2, Spot -2; 60' darkvision

Languages Common, Orcish.

[rule]

AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 12; Uncanny dodge

hp 43 (3 HD);

Fort +11, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

Weakness Light sensitivity

[rule]

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee falchion +11 (2d4+10/18-20) or longsword +10 (1d8+6/19-20)

Ranged mighty composite longbow +5 (1d8+4/x3)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +10

Atk Options Instantaneous Rage, Power Attack, rage 1/day

[rule]

Abilities Str 24, Dex 13, Con 20, Int 6, Wis 6, Cha 6

SQ Illiteracy

Feats Improved Toughness, Instantaneous Rage, Power Attack

Skills Climb +10, Jump +11

Possessions Masterwork falchion, silver longsword, mighty composite longbow [+4], 20 masterwork arrows, chain shirt, *cloak of resistance* +1, grappling hook, 50' hemp rope, backpack, wineskin, bag of partially rotten well-gnawed rats.

[rule]

Hook *angry grunt*

Description An unwashed orc chewing on a dead rat.

When not raging, Ghorr has the following changed statistics

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Uncanny dodge

hp 37 (3 HD);

Fort +9, **Will** -1

Melee falchion +9 (2d4+7/18-20) or longsword +8 (1d8+4/19-20)

Grp +8

Abilities Str 20, Con 16

Skills Climb +8, Jump +9

Lalitha d'Orien CR 1

Female human sorcerer 1

CG Medium humanoid (human)

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

Languages Common

[rule]

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10

hp 6 (1 HD)

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2

[rule]

Speed 6 ft. (30 squares)

Melee dagger -1 (1d4-1/19-20)

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

Base Atk +0; **Grp** -1

Special Actions Metamagic Specialist (can apply metamagic feats without increasing casting time)

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*

[class] Spells Known (CL 1st):

1st (4/day)— *charm person* (DC 14), *color spray* (DC 14)

oth (5/day)— *acid splash* (+2 ranged touch), *daze* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *read magic*

[rule]

Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 16

Feats Least Dragonmark (Mark of Passage: *dimensional leap* 1/day), Still Spell

Skills Bluff +7, Concentration +6, Spellcraft +3, Survival +2

Possessions combat gear plus dagger, light crossbow, 15 masterwork bolts, 2 spell component pouches, fine clothing, 100-gp necklace with the crest of House Orien.

[rule]

Hook *I'm sure there's something I have that you want. We can come to an agreement.*

Description An attractive woman with long brown hair, dress in a finely cut gown of silk.

LALITHA D'ORIENT CR 2

Female human sorcerer 2

CG Medium humanoid (human)

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

Languages Common

[rule]

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11

hp 11 (2 HD)

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

[rule]

Speed 6 ft. (30 squares)

Melee dagger +1 (1d4-1/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +4 (1d8/19-20)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +0

Special Actions Metamagic Specialist (can apply metamagic feats without increasing casting time)

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*

[class] Spells Known (CL 2nd):

1st (5/day)— *charm person* (DC 14), *color spray* (DC 14)

oth (6/day)— *acid splash* (+3 ranged touch), *daze* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *light*, *read magic*

[rule]

Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 16

Feats Least Dragonmark (Mark of Passage: *dimensional leap* 1/day), Still Spell

Skills Bluff +8, Concentration +7, Spellcraft +4, Survival +2

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork, dagger, light crossbow, 15 masterwork bolts, 2 spell component pouches, fine clothing, 100-gp necklace with the crest of House Orien, *bracers of armor* +1.

[rule]

Hook *I'm sure there's something I have that you want. We can come to an agreement.*

Description An attractive woman with long brown hair, dress in a finely cut gown of silk.

LALITHA D'ORIEN CR 3

Female human sorcerer 3

CG Medium humanoid (human)

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

Languages Common

[rule]

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11

hp 16 (3 HD)

Fort +3, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

[rule]

Speed 6 ft. (30 squares)

Melee dagger +1 (1d4-1/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +4 (1d8/19-20)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +0

Special Actions Metamagic Specialist (can apply metamagic feats without increasing casting time)

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*

[class] **Spells Known** (CL 3rd):

1st (6/day)— *charm person* (DC 14), *color spray* (DC 14), *grease* (DC 14)

oth (6/day)— *acid splash* (+3 ranged touch), *daze* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *light*, *read magic*

[rule]

Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 16

Feats Least Dragonmark (Mark of Passage: *dimensional leap* 1/day), Still Spell, Sudden Widen

Skills Bluff +9, Concentration +8, Spellcraft +5, Survival +2

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork, dagger, light crossbow, 15 masterwork bolts, 2 spell component pouches, fine clothing, 100-gp necklace with the crest of House Orien, *bracers of armor* +1.

[rule]

Hook *I'm sure there's something I have that you want. We can come to an agreement.*

Description An attractive woman with long brown hair, dress in a finely cut gown of silk.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

1st-Level Characters: Use the first level version of each NPC adventurer.

3rd-Level Characters: Use the second level version of each NPC adventurer.

4th-Level Characters: Use the third level versions of Ghorr and Lalitha and second level versions of Consaern and Tiirma.

Translating the Notes

It is quite likely that no one in the party will be able to read giant or gnome. In this case they have several options.

- They may be able to cast *comprehend languages* themselves in order to read the notes.
- The party might think to hire a caster for hire. In one hour they can find Pori, a sickly human 1st-level magewright that for 10 gp will cast *comprehend languages* for them and read the documents. Pori will become very interested in the notes and map while reading and may have to be permanently silenced, though he promises not to speak of what he reads if the PCs double his fee. If the PCs decide to kill him, he tries to run from any combat, but is effectively a noncombatant and dies from even the feeblest of attacks.
- Some PCs may think to seek out Hes, a 7th-level adept they met in *COS-1 The Sabuagin Stone*. Finding Hes takes two hours, but once found, Hes is willing to cast a *comprehend language*, *cure light wounds*, or *cure moderate wounds* (he has one of each memorized) for the PCs for normal prices. Those members of the Instruments of Change Obscura may have his favor (Obscura Reward #1; Cert ID EXCS01). In this case, Hes is willing to cast these three spells free of charge.
- Some PCs may try to contact another member of the Cabal of Shadows to aid them. Such calls for aid go unanswered. No one capable of helping them is near enough or available to aid them in time.
- Failing all other options, the correct stone circle is marked on the ancient giant map. While the notes are meaningless, at least the PCs can find there way to the right location though they will not know the correct time to arrive so hurrying there early is probably for the best. The circle they want is an hour walk from the Wilted Rose.

PART TWO: VISION QUEST

This encounter deals with the circle of standing stones indicated upon the recovered map, and what occurs when the PCs investigate at the time described in the incomplete notes. If the PCs visit the circle at any other time, see the Circle of Visions subheading in **Part One**.

The ring of standing stones is huge. Each stone would have been considered a boulder for the giants who built it and is nearly a small hill for someone of your stature. The stones leave huge shadows in the moonlight, reaching across the ground like great black grasping limbs. All is quiet and several minutes remain before the appointed time.

The PCs have a few moments to examine the circle before the vision activates. Each gray stone is twenty to thirty high and is not marked by any specific runes or writing. A cursory glance finds no secret doors or compartments and there is no one lying in wait to ambush the PCs. A more detailed description of the area is provided in **Part One**.

Once the PCs have prepared themselves to witness whatever might occur, proceed with the following read aloud text.

A faint glow begins to swirl in the center of the circle, until it coalesces in the image of a closed door. The door silently swings wide, and behind it there appears to be a dark

hallway. There appears to be something at the end of the hallway, too small to see and just out of sight without moving near the illusion.

Any PC that approaches the door will find that they can place their hand through the door without disrupting the image; in fact they can even step inside. When viewed from behind, there is no image at all. In all ways the image appears normal. Those interacting with the door itself will find it insubstantial, unlike the hallway.

The vision radiates moderate illusion and transmutation magic (*detect magic*, Spellcraft DC 21 to determine the school; 21st-caster level).

Every PC that succeeds in a DC 5 Listen check will note that the sounds made by the party seem to echo from the dark hallway, as if the hallway itself was real. This is of course, because the hall is real. Stepping through the door places the PC in the hallway marked on DM's Map #2. The image remains for one hour, or until the entire party steps through.

Development: It is possible that some of the PCs will refuse to investigate the doorway. In this case, the image remains for up to one hour to give recalcitrant PCs the opportunity to join their fellows in the hallway. Until the entire party enters the hallway, or until those refusing to do so leave the area of the Circle of Visions, the hallway does not connect to anywhere and no force available to the PCs can open or destroy the doors in the hallway. If the hour elapses with some PCs inside the hallway, and others outside unwilling to explore, the doorway image disappears and those inside are connected to the rest of the complex. Those outside miss the rest of the adventure.

Once the party has entered through the vision of the doorway, proceed to **Part Three: In Hand**.

PART THREE: IN HAND

This encounter begins when the PCs enter the Hand of Stalwart Reverie via the Circle of Visions. Centuries ago, during the Quori invasion, the Hand of Stalwart Reverie was a bastion of the giant resistance. A hold built to resist the many forms of the Quori's intrusion. As all things must however, some of the tower fell to ruin as one of the dream chambers failed and the nightmares were able to slip inside. In short order, the madness spread until all inside were given over to the desires of the Quori. In an attempt to staunch the flow of horrid dreams before it could enter the rest of Xen'drik, the cloud giant lord of the tower, Deondag Master of Rites, sealed the tower forever. Yet even the great Master of Rites must sometimes dream, and in doing so, sometimes he touches the Circle of Visions. It is through one of his dreams that the PCs have managed to gain entrance into the Hand of Stalwart Reverie.

The PCs begin on the first floor of the tower, in the hallway outside room 1. Those that arrive cannot see or interact with the portal to the Circle of Visions. The trip is one way.

GENERAL FEATURES

The following rules generally apply to the Hand of Stalwart Reverie unless otherwise listed in an individual room description.

Ceilings: The ceiling in each room rises to a height of thirty feet on the first and second floors, and forty feet high on the third and fourth floors.

Exterior Stone Walls: 5 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 900; AC 5; Break DC 65.

Interior Stone Walls: 3 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 540; AC 5; Break DC 50.

Interior Stone Doors: 4 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 60; AC 5; Break DC 28. The complex has no exterior doors.

Light: Unless otherwise listed, all rooms are under the effects of numerous *light* spells that give the entire tower a diffuse blue-silver glow. The lighting is subdued and shadows are easily cast and in many rooms the dream echoes may generate light, or decrease the light normally present.

Magic: In addition to the *light* (faint evocation) spells found in each room, the entire tower was meant to be a bastion from the depredations of the Quori. As such, the walls of the tower are protected by a variant of the *dimensional lock* (strong abjuration) and *mind blank* (strong abjuration) spells. No transportation or communication spells function through the walls. Thus no one may enter or leave the tower or communicate with anyone on the outside. These effects do not affect anyone inside the tower attempting to *teleport*, use *telepathy*, or similar magic entirely within the tower. Only those effects that attempt to cross the exterior walls are blocked.

Windows: Very few rooms in the tower have windows. Those that do are covered both by *wall of force* and one-way variant of the *illusionary wall* spell that is only seen from the outside. Anyone looking out of the window can automatically recognize Stormreach without any skill check. But those who succeed in a DC 15 Knowledge (local: Stormreach) or Knowledge (geography) recognize the landscape and realize that they are in one of the giant monuments. In this case, a huge stone fist. Those that succeed in the skill check recall that this particular sculpture has no visible windows.

1. BEDCHAMBER; FIRST FLOOR

This large room is dominated by huge crystal box that could easily hold four men. Strange uneven glass protrusions rise from the top of box at one end, and ropes or hoses made of some unknown material lead from that end into the wall. Several of the glass rods appear to have been smashed, and there is a crack in the surface of the crystal box.

The large box is one of the giants' dream chambers that protected their sleep from intrusion by the Quori. Each is large enough to hold a giant lying horizontally. They open at the slightest touch, and a gigantic pillow and bedspread, protected from the passage of time by the sealed crystal, can be found inside. The hoses are flexible and lead into the wall, but to where is not obvious. If they are severed or removed from the wall, they drip a viscous oily fluid that reflects a rainbow of colors.

Sadly, in their madness the giants destroyed all of the chambers but one. You may play the one functioning chamber as you see fit. The intact dream chamber is as above, but it is not smashed. When opened, a faint mist smelling of wildflowers is emitted and the crystal begins to glow with a white light of its own. Anyone laying inside and closing the lid will drift off to a peaceful rest for eight hours where they will always have the same dream; that of an endless plain of wildflower covered meadows. Anyone inside the lid may attempt to rest falling asleep by succeeding in a DC 10 Will save. Those who make the save, or those PCs who are elves, cause a malfunction in the dream chamber causing it to immediately open. The white light changes to a harsh red until the machine is closed

again. Note that Kalashtar do not dream, and thus while they may be put to sleep by the dream chamber, they do not experience the dreamscape of wildflowers on an endless plain.

Treasure: In the one intact chamber, the owner has left behind a backpack. In addition to a large dagger and a quart jug of oil, there is a *potion of bless weapon* in a wineskin and a *scroll of shatter*, roughly the size of a blanket.

2. ELEVATOR (EL 1); FIRST FLOOR

The door opens in a plain square room, smaller than those previously seen in the complex. On the same wall as the door, a square of crystal is set into the marble wall at the height of a longspear. A depression, the size and shape of a giant's hand is set into the crystal.

A magical lift provides access to the various floors of the complex, but its operation may prove somewhat problematic for medium sized explorers. Do not tell the players how to activate the elevator, it is up to them to determine. To operate the elevator, the user must place their hand in the depression ten feet up, and will the elevator to move. This requires a DC 12 Wisdom check. The user gains a +2 circumstance bonus if they speak giant. If the check is failed, roll for a mishap below. Barring a mishap, the elevator automatically stops at each floor. When the elevator stops on a floor, the door to that floor automatically swings open.

1d6

Mishap

- 1 *Failure to Activate:* Nothing happens
- 2 *Speed Malfunction:* The elevator moves in the direction intended but at a vastly accelerated speed. All riders must make a DC 10 Balance check or suffer 1d6 points of nonlethal damage as they are thrown about the walls of the lift.
- 3 *Miscommunication:* The user fails to correctly direct the elevator and it moves in the opposite direction intended. If this would cause the elevator to move in an impossible direction (down when on the first floor or up when on the fourth floor), treat this mishap as though a 2 had been rolled.
- 4 *Incomplete Arrival:* The elevator stops short of its planned floor. The door opens, but the PCs are ten feet below the ground. This error cannot be corrected until the PCs close the door to the elevator, which requires someone to exit the elevator.
- 5 *Incomplete Stop:* The elevator misses its destination and stops between floors. The door opens, but the PCs are ten feet above the ground. This error cannot be corrected until the PCs close the door to the elevator, which requires someone to exit the elevator.
- 6 *Power Shut Down:* The user accidentally turns off the elevator. If the elevator is on any floor but the first, it free falls to the bottom floor where a safety mechanism catches it. All riders must make a DC 10 Balance check or suffer 2d6 points of nonlethal damage as they are thrown about the walls of the lift. Success results in half damage.

Free Floating Dreams

The tower is filled with the dream echoes of the giants that died in the Quori invasion. Each is a nightmare so strong that it eventually overwhelmed the giants and drove them to madness and death. On each floor the PCs should encounter a dream echo at the places marked "*" upon the map. The DM may add more if time permits and he or she feels the players are enjoying them. Here is a list of possible dream echoes. If desired, creative DMs may make their own tailored to the sensibilities of backgrounds of their players. Each experience requires a DC 8 Will save to avoid being shaken for one minute. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

1. A roiling wave of flesh and eyes, sweeping a giant along with it flows rapidly down the corridor and envelops the PCs in a brief darkness until it passes them. The PCs are left damp with saliva after it has gone.
2. A multi-colored mist flows through the room. The mists feels rough like sand as it moves across the skin instead of damp or cold.
3. A howling wind blows through the area leaving a foul taste in the PCs mouth reminiscent of grave dirt.
4. A swarm of insects that make no sound fly toward the party. They swarm a randomly determined PC and crawl inside his mouth, nose, and ears. The PC feels strangely complete afterwards.
5. No light can penetrate this area for several minutes. The darkness is filled with whispers in giant, all suggesting horrible tortures that will be visited upon the listener.
6. The area is filled with a transparent jungle scene filled with furry animals and bright birds foraging for food. Suddenly, as a PC moves through it, the whole scene turns into a hungry monster, the animals and bushes being appendages of the beast that attempts to consume the PC.

3. DINING HALL; SECOND FLOOR

A huge hall is dominated by vast tables, each a veritable sea of wooden planks in its own right. An unlit massive fireplace is placed against the wall to your right. A long ago scorched giant sized skeleton lies with its head inside the hearth.

At one time, the giants who lived here used this room as a general eating area. As madness swept the tower, one of the giants placed his head in the fire and laid down in death. There is no danger from the skeleton, but those making a successful DC 10 Listen check can hear movement coming from the nearby kitchen.

4. LOUNGE; SECOND FLOOR

The immense door gives way to a forest of a shaggy rug and a comfortable lounge or parlor. A couch and several chairs are arrayed around the exterior of the room with a large cabinet to one side. In one rust and rot stained chair, a giant skeleton lies in pieces. Giant sized knitting needles mixed among its bones, many blunted or bent with the force used to drive them through the giant's body. Light pours through a window on the wall opposite the door.

The lounge area was used for relaxation and socializing by the giants that once lived here. When the complex fell to the Quori, one of the giants found his way to this room where he pierced his flesh and eyes with a dozen

knitting needles, each the size of a shortspear. The giant is long dead.

This room also has a window, as described in the general features section above.

Treasure: The cabinet holds several items of interest for the PCs. In addition to a dozen brittle candles, each the size of a halfling, there are three tindertwigs each just shorter than a short sword. Above the candles, some fifteen feet in the air, the top shelf has several bottles. Two of these jugs are *potions of lesser restoration* and three are *oil of magic weapon*. Sized for giants, there is but one use per jug. Each of the bottles are labeled in giantish.

Wooden Cabinet Doors: 1 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 10; AC 5; Break DC 18, Open Locks DC 20.

5. KITCHEN; SECOND FLOOR (EL 9)

The whirling blades of a metal monstrosity dominate the kitchen. Looking vaguely like a large warforged with six arms that end in kitchen utensils, this creature stirs, chops, and prepares nonexistent food; completely unaware of your existence.

All the food in the kitchen has long since rotted away to dust but the construct created to serve the giants, an earlier design than the actual warforged, has been attempting to provide for the giants all these years. It has become quite erratic given the years and ignores all attempts to interact with it, emitting only the occasional beep or squeal. If the PCs attempt to forcibly prevent it from doing its job, it attacks until such time as it has a clear path back to the kitchen, in which case it returns. Despite its appearance, the construct is not actually a warforged, and harbors no sentience at all.

Large Animated Object: hp 52, Hardness 10; *Monster Manual* 14.

6. GREAT HALL; THIRD FLOOR (EL 9)

This great hall is in utter disarray. Tables have been overturned and tapestries lie on the ground torn to shreds. Images of giant warriors silently engage in a frenzied battle with each other bathed in the light coming from several windows in the walls. The skeletons of a dozen giants are spread through the hall. A disturbing echoing mutter underlies it all.

Once the great hall was used for large gatherings, but now only the dream echoes of the giants remain endlessly performing their dance of death over their bones. Windows line the exterior walls and offer a fine view of the city from above.

Creatures: One of the giants does not rest easy, driven mad by forced into suicide he has returned as an allip. Shaped like a roiling heart made of shadow, the allip now inhabits the echo that was his body in life. His arms branch into the shadowy veins and arteries that stretch through the transparent giant's body. Any living creatures that enter the hall attract his attention and the dream echo breaks off from the endless combat to charge at the PCs. While the giant may be harmless as he soundlessly snarls and swings his morningstar, the touch of the shadowy heart inside is not.

Allip: hp 26; *Monster Manual* 10.

Tactics: As the harmless image of the giant charges the PCs they come in range of its *Babble* effect. The allip then attacks the party until all of the PCs are unconscious from its Wisdom drain. The allip will not leave the great hall, so the PCs may flee it by moving to another floor.

Development: If the party is incapacitated by the allip, they find themselves in an alleyway outside of the monument. There is no way for them to find their way back in.

Treasure: Amidst the rubble and bones the PCs can find an *elixir of fire breath* and the decaying remains of several pouches containing 500 gp.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

1st-Level Characters: The dream echoes do not interact favorably with the allip's incorporeality, and its miss chance is reduced to 30% instead of the normal 50%.

3rd-Level Characters: There are two allips.

4th-Level Characters: There are three allips.

7. CLOSET

This small room is filled with mops and brooms, each the size of a tree. In one corner, a skeleton lies in a heap amongst tatters of a robe. A massive metal bucket the size of a tent has crushed the giant sized skull and is now hopelessly dented from repeated violent contact with the creature's head.

This small broom closet has since become the tomb for one of the cloud giants that had lived here.

Treasure: A DC 5 Search of the tatters of his robe will find a corked stone flask the size of a wineskin that radiates faint conjuration magic. Inside is a *potion of cure moderate wounds*. The entire contents of the jug must be consumed for the magic to take effect.

8. IDIOTY TRAP; FOURTH FLOOR (EL 4)

The door to this floor opens to a plain marble hallway. Directly ahead, a set of huge metal doors bars passage to further progress. In front of the doors is a black pedestal upon which rests a glass sculpture nearly the size of a giant's head. It appears as though the glass has been shaped into the form of a brain.

When Deondag imprisoned the minds of the giants, all of them were beyond his capacity to aid. Before confining himself, he placed one of his brethren here as a final guardian before the final chamber where he was to rest with the shattered minds of his clan until such time as allies could aid them. The fractured mind of the giant now directs the trap.

Touch of Idiocy Trap: See Sidebar.

Development: If this trap incapacitates the PCs, especially after having encountered the allip, they find themselves in an alleyway outside of the monument. There is no way for them to find their way back in.

IDIOTY TRAP CR 4

Description A hallway with one entrance from the elevator and a set of double doors at the end of the hall. In the center of the room is a smooth black pillar on which rests a glass brain. When anyone enters the hallway, black tentacles grow from the floor and grope blindly at everyone in the hall. There is one lashing tentacle per PC. Those touched are affected by a *touch of idiocy*.

Search DC 19; **Type** Magical

[Rule]

Trigger proximity (*alarm*); **Init** +2

Effect *Touch of idiocy* cast on each target in the room each round (+6 touch attack), applying a 1d6 penalty to the target's Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores. While this penalty does not stack, the highest penalty applies if multiple are in effect. This penalty lasts for 30 minutes. Destroying the glass brain shuts down the entire trap.

Duration 7 rounds

[Rule]

Destruction AC 14; hp 10 (per lash); AC 16; hp 18 (glass brain; destroying the glass brain destroys the entire trap)

Disarm Disable Device DC 27 (per lash)

Dispel DC 14 (per lash)

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

1st-Level Characters: No change.

3rd-Level Characters: Raise the melee touch attack bonus to +7.

4th-Level Characters: Raise the melee touch attack bonus to +8.

Once the PCs have dealt with the trap, they can approach the brass doors. One door depicts the night sky with a fiery comet and a host of stars while the other shows the sky during the day with swirling clouds and the shining sun. The doors are locked, and this lock is further complicated by that fact that it is fifteen feet above the floor.

Metal Doors: 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; AC 5; Break DC 28, Open Locks DC 20. The complex has no exterior doors.

When the party enters the double doors, proceed to **Part Four**.

PART FOUR: HOME SWEET HOME?

This encounter deals with Deondag, Master of Rites, and the Hall of Cognition. This room can only be reached through the doors in the fourth floor that are guarded by the *touch of idiocy* trap.

9. HALL OF COGNITION; FOURTH FLOOR

Around a sharp corner, three sides of the hall are filled with a forest of black pedestals of varying heights but each at least the height of two longswords. In the center, a pillar, larger than the others, stands prominent with the bodes of giant in disintegrating robes around it. Each of the pillars bares a glass brain atop it, much like the one in the hall before the doors to this room. As you enter, many of the glass cerebrums flash wildly with scintillating colors and your mind is assaulted with a cacophony of voices that have no sound, only deafening volume inside your head. Seconds later the central sculpture glows brilliantly and then there is silence through which you hear a voice without sound. "I am Deondag, the Master of Rites. Why do you trespass here

slaves?" Whomever the unseen speaker is, they are speaking to you in your native language.

This room is home to what remains of the proud cloud giant clan, Clan Urazga, who called the Hand of Stalwart Reverie home. The minds of each confined to one of the glass brain constructs of Deondag, the only one of them to hold out against the madness of the Quori infiltration. He stays sane by constantly tending to his brothers and sisters, and only his power checks their incessant wails in check.

Creatures: Deondag sense the entrance of the PCs and by their limited size, assumes them to be drow slaves. He is completely unaware of the current state of Xen'drik outside of the Hand of Stalwart Reverie and sees the approach of slaves as a good sign that fellow giants have finally come to aid him. His initial attitude is Friendly, though somewhat patronizing since he assumes the PCs to be slaves. Explaining the state of Xen'drik or that the PCs are not slaves shifts his attitude to Indifferent. Any threats immediately make him Hostile.

Deondag, Master of Rites: male disembodied cloud giant; hp 26; Combat Statistics.

Deondag is aware of his predicament. The magic he used to creature the devices that house his clan was one use and he requires more of the famed magic that was wielded by the giants of old. Once the situation is explained to him, assuming no violence already directed towards him, The Master of Rites will enter into negotiations with the PCs and make an effort to avoid any further confrontation. He has several things he might offer and likely has things the PCs need. Any violence against him, or any of the other glass brains that house a member of his clan will immediately meet with a swift reprisal. Listed below in no particular order is a list of offers and demands pertinent to this negotiation. Deondag is pragmatic, but is still evil. He is not will to receive nothing for one of his offers and expects to be repaid at least equally to what he offers. In order to make an agreement, with Deondag the PCs must agree to his terms, meeting one of his demands for each of his offers. He is smart and is used to being in a position of power, despite his currently diminished state. During discussion with Deondag, the giant may offer any explanations about where the PCs are or who he is without demanding recompense. You may substitute other appropriate offers or demands that seem appropriate. If the players ask, all of the demands are within the powers of the Cabal of Shadows, though since they made the negotiation the Cabal may force the PCs to aid in fulfilling them.

Offers

1. One way transport of the Hand of

2. Stalwart Reverie for the trapped PCs.
An Alliance with the Cabal where he offers his knowledge of ancient Xen'drik.
3. Transport in and out of the Hand of Stalwart Reverie whenever desired for members of the Cabal.
4. Allowing the Cabal of Shadows to call the Hand of Stalwart Reverie their new home, and allow members to live there in secret.
5. A charting of times and places the Circle of Visions can be used to enter the Hand of Stalwart Reverie.
6. Information about the Mere of Shattered Souls and the Draconic Prophecy.
- Demands**
1. Healing magic from the Cabal in order to cure the madness of his fellow clan members.
2. Extensive knowledge of the outside world and new magic.
3. Aid in returning he and his fellow clan members to new bodies (Construct, Live, or Undead).
4. Proper burial for the bodies of his fellow clan members according to giant customs.
5. The capture of some primordial giants or warforged so that he might probe their minds as suitable candidates for possession by he and his clan mates.
6. A significant bribe of magic items worth 2000 gp X the average party level.

Tactics: Deondag was once a powerful psion, but the ritual that placed his mind inside the glass brain has radically altered his abilities. Should it come to combat, Deondag does his best to kill all of his foes with the mental powers he retains. He uses his *fog cloud* to limit ranged attacks or targeted spells and then begins using his *cerebral fracture*. Well aware that the device that holds his thoughts is but mere glass he targets anyone who gets close to it with his *brain lock* ability. If that fails, he uses his *levitate* to float up to the ceiling.

Development: If Deondag is slain, all of the other glass brains offer one cacophonous roar before shattering themselves. Though all of the dream echoes remain, all of the magical effects within the tower cease. The PCs may freely exit the tower through any of the windows. The sudden appearance of windows on the well-known and previous ignored monument draws the attention of the Storm Lords within a day and they occupy the tower making it no longer suitable for a secret home for Cabal operations in Stormreach.

DEONDAG, MASTER OF RITES CR 4

Male disembodied cloud giant in a glass brain
NG Medium giant (Air)
Init +4; **Senses** Listen +15, Spot +15; Mindsight
Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Elven, Undercommon; telepathy 120'
[rule]
AC 5, touch 5, flat-footed 5
hp 21 (20 HD); Hardness 1
Immune Critical hits and sneak attacks

Resist Before applying hardness, Deondag takes half damage from electricity and fire, and one quarter damage from cold

Fort +7, **Ref** +2, **Will** +12

Weakness Deondag is vulnerable to *shatter* spells as a crystalline creature

[rule]

Speed 0 ft. (0 squares)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Base Atk +13; **Grp** -

Psionic-Like Abilities (CL 3rd):

At will – *cerebral fracture* (DC 17)

1/day – *brain lock* (DC 16), *force screen*.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th):

3/day – *levitate* (self plus 2,000 pounds), *obscuring mist*;

1/day – *fog cloud*.

[rule]

Abilities Str -, Dex -, Con -, Int 19, Wis 16, Cha 13

Feats Ability Focus (cerebral fracture), Blind-fight, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Mindsight, Toughness

Skills Concentration +7, Craft (glassworking) +14, Diplomacy +3, Intimidate +11, Listen +15, Perform (singing) +2, Psicraft +11, Sense Motive +9, Spot +15
[rule]

Cerebral fracture (Sp): Deondag can inflict horrible pain upon any mind that he can detect by shattering the skull and disrupting the electrical impulses of the brain. All creatures within the range of his telepathy take 1d6 points of damage and may attempt a DC 17 Will save for half damage. Do to their unusual construction, warforged receive a +2 circumstance bonus to this saving throw.

[rule]

Description: A large glowing glass brain on a marble pedestal.

Hook *Tremble before me slaves!* *glass brain floats into the air*

DEONDAG, MASTER OF RITES CR 5

Male disembodied cloud giant in a glass brain

NG Medium giant (Air)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +15, Spot +15; Mindsight

Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Elven, Undercommon; telepathy 120'

[rule]

AC 5, touch 5, flat-footed 5

hp 26 (21 HD); Hardness 1

Immune Critical hits and sneak attacks

Resist Before applying hardness, Deondag takes half damage from electricity and fire, and one quarter damage from cold

Fort +7, **Ref** +2, **Will** +13

Weakness Deondag is vulnerable to *shatter* spells as a crystalline creature

[rule]

Speed 0 ft. (0 squares)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Base Atk +14; **Grp** -

Psionic-Like Abilities (CL 4th):

At will – *cerebral fracture* (DC 17)

1/day – *brain lock* (DC 16), *force screen*.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th):

3/day – levitate (self plus 2,000 pounds), obscuring mist;

1/day – fog cloud.

[rule]

Abilities Str -, Dex -, Con -, Int 19, Wis 16, Cha 13

Feats Ability Focus (cerebral fracture), Blind-fight, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Mindsight, Toughness

Skills Concentration +8, Craft (glassworking) +14, Diplomacy +3, Intimidate +12, Listen +15, Perform (singing) +2, Psicraft +12, Sense Motive +10, Spot +15

[rule]

Cerebral fracture (Sp): Deondag can inflict horrible pain upon any mind that he can detect by shattering the skull and disrupting the electrical impulses of the brain. All creatures within the range of his telepathy take 2d6 points of damage and may attempt a DC 17 Will save for half damage. Do to their unusual construction, warforged receive a +2 circumstance bonus to this saving throw.

[rule]

Description: A large glowing glass brain on a marble pedestal.

Hook *Tremble before me slaves!* *glass brain floats into the air*

DEONDAG, MASTER OF RITES CR 6

Male disembodied cloud giant in a glass brain
NG Medium giant (Air)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +15, Spot +15; Mindsight

Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Elven, Undercommon; telepathy 120'

[rule]

AC 5, touch 5, flat-footed 5

hp 31 (22 HD); Hardness 1

Immune Critical hits and sneak attacks

Resist Before applying hardness, Deondag takes half damage from electricity and fire, and one quarter damage from cold

Fort +8, **Ref** +3, **Will** +14

Weakness Deondag is vulnerable to *shatter* spells as a crystalline creature

[rule]

Speed 0 ft. (0 squares)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Base Atk +15; **Grp** -

Psionic-Like Abilities (CL 5th):

At will – cerebral fracture (DC 17)

1/day – brain lock (DC 16), *force screen*.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th):

3/day – levitate (self plus 2,000 pounds), *obscuring mist*;

1/day – fog cloud.

[rule]

Abilities Str -, Dex -, Con -, Int 19, Wis 16, Cha 13

Feats Ability Focus (cerebral fracture), Blind-fight, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Mindsight, Toughness

Skills Concentration +9, Craft (glassworking) +14, Diplomacy +3, Intimidate +13, Listen +15, Perform (singing) +2, Psicraft +13, Sense Motive +11, Spot +15

[rule]

Cerebral fracture (Sp): Deondag can inflict horrible pain upon any mind that he can detect by shattering the

skull and disrupting the electrical impulses of the brain.

All creatures within the range of his telepathy take 2d6 points of damage and may attempt a DC 17 Will save for half damage. Do to their unusual construction, warforged receive a +2 circumstance bonus to this saving throw.

[rule]

Description: A large glowing glass brain on a marble pedestal.

Hook *Tremble before me slaves!* *glass brain floats into the air*

DEONDAG, MASTER OF RITES CR 7

Male disembodied cloud giant in a glass brain
NG Medium giant (Air)

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +15, Spot +15; Mindsight

Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Elven, Undercommon; telepathy 120'

[rule]

AC 5, touch 5, flat-footed 5

hp 59 (23 HD); Hardness 1

Immune Critical hits and sneak attacks

Resist Before applying hardness, Deondag takes half damage from electricity and fire, and one quarter damage from cold

Fort +8, **Ref** +3, **Will** +15

Weakness Deondag is vulnerable to *shatter* spells as a crystalline creature

[rule]

Speed 0 ft. (0 squares)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Base Atk +15; **Grp** -

Psionic-Like Abilities (CL 6th):

At will – cerebral fracture (DC 18)

1/day – brain lock (DC 17), *force screen*.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th):

3/day – levitate (self plus 2,000 pounds), *obscuring mist*;

1/day – fog cloud.

[rule]

Abilities Str -, Dex -, Con -, Int 20, Wis 16, Cha 13

Feats Ability Focus (cerebral fracture), Blind-fight, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Iron Will, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Mindsight, Toughness

Skills Concentration +10, Craft (glassworking) +14, Diplomacy +3, Intimidate +14, Listen +15, Perform (singing) +2, Psicraft +14, Sense Motive +12, Spot +15

[rule]

Cerebral fracture (Sp): Deondag can inflict horrible pain upon any mind that he can detect by shattering the skull and disrupting the electrical impulses of the brain. All creatures within the range of his telepathy take 3d6 points of damage and may attempt a DC 18 Will save for half damage. Do to their unusual construction, warforged receive a +2 circumstance bonus to this saving throw.

[rule]

Description: A large glowing glass brain on a marble pedestal.

Hook *Tremble before me slaves!* *glass brain floats into the air*

NEW RULES MINDSIGHT

Originally presented in the *Lords of Madness*.

A creature that has this feat possesses innate telepathic ability that allows it to precisely pinpoint other thinking beings within range of its telepathy. The creature perceives where the others are and how powerful their intellects are.

Prerequisites: Telepathy special quality.

Benefits: A creature that has this feat can detect and pinpoint beings that are not mindless (anything with an Intelligence score of 1 or higher) within range of its telepathy. His works much like blindsense – the creature knows what square each thinking being is in, but it does not see the being, and the being still has total concealment unless the creature can see it by some other means.

The creature also perceives several observable characteristics about each being detected with mindsight, including the being's type and Intelligence score. The creature need not take any additional or special actions to gain this information; it is as obvious to mindsight as the being's race and clothing would be to eyesight.

Normal: Telepathy offers no special ability to sense other minds. The creature has to know that a being is there to communicate with it telepathically.

BRAIN LOCK

Originally presented in the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*.
Telepathy (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]

Level: Telepath 2

Display: Material and visual

Manifesting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Target: One humanoid

Duration: Concentration + 1 round

Saving Throw: Will negates

Power Resistance: Yes

Power Points: 3

The subject's higher mind is locked away. He is dazed and cannot take psionic actions (including manifesting powers or using psionic feats that require a decision to be used) for the duration of the power.

A brain locked subject is not stunned, so attackers get no special advantage against him.

FORCE SCREEN

Originally presented in the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*.
Psychokinesis [Force]

Level: Psion/wilder 1, psychic warrior 1

Display: Auditory

Manifesting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 min./level

Power Points: 1

You create an invisible mobile disk of force that hovers in front of you. The force screen provides a +4 shield bonus to Armor Class (which applies against incorporeal touch attacks, since the force screen is a force effect). Since it hovers in front of you, the effect has no armor check penalty associated with it.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

1st-Level Characters: Use the CR 4 version of Deondag.

3rd-Level Characters: Use the CR 6 version of Deondag.

4th-Level Characters: Use the CR 7 version of Deondag.

THE MERE OF SHATTERED SOULS AND THE PSIONIC SHARD

Deondag does not especially wish combat, so it is likely at some point that either he or the PCs will mention the *Caldyn Fragments* and the Draconic Prophecy in an effort to make gains in the negotiations. This mention causes Deondag to admit to knowing the location of a portion of this prophecy, but the PCs must barter for his response. If they do, he will agree to tell them the following.

The great crystal cerebellum is quiet, as if considering. Then its mind voice echoes in your already throbbing head. "There is a portion of the Caldyn Fragments that deals with the Mere of Shattered Souls. Indeed during the time Dal Quor was terminus we thought that it may have been the great time of upheaval spoken of in the Fragments. I sent one of my minions to recover a shard, a psionic device with information encoded upon it, from one of the islands where it was rumored to have lain. Sadly after he recovered the shard, he was taken by the great aboleth that dwells in the bay. Such creatures live for many thousands of centuries, and the shard is made of crystal so the salt water would not harm it. It is likely that both still exist in the depths of the blue. When you make good on your promises, I will tell your leaders when and where this occurred that you may recover the shard and leave the secrets it holds."

The PCs should realize that any information about the *Caldyn Fragments* is of the utmost importance and the manipulation of this prophecy is the whole basis of the Cabal. It must be recovered at any cost.

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

There are several ways the PCs can go astray, but regardless of their outcome, they must still report back to the those Council members that directed them to this mission for the Cabal.

Success

The mission is a success if the PCs both capture the documents and map from the adventurers and successfully find a way into the Hand of Stalwart Reverie. The PCs are even more successful if they successfully negotiate for access to the monument. The following read aloud text assumes a total success. If the PCs only succeed partially and do not succeed in gaining permanent access to the monument, proceed to the second read aloud text. Any PC that managed to enter the Hand of Stalwart Reverie receives the *Reflections of Dal Quor* story object.

Returning to the warehouse under the cover of night, you once again meet with two of the vaulted members of the Council of the Obscured; proof of your rapid ascent within

the Cabal of Shadows in just a short time. After nodding for you to approach, the pair listened intently as you described your successes, each seeming quite pleased. The Melancholy's voice drips with matronly affection, "You have done quite well my children. You gains have given us a new home from which we might cast our shadow over the entirety of Stormreach. And soon we shall see just how far you will go for our cause, as it seems likely we will have need of you to call on our new friends in the deep. Your success continues to advance our aims and your efforts have been noticed; even at the highest levels."

With that the veiled woman and the androgynous boy turn from you and walk away, discussing the ramifications of what you have told them.

Those PCs with a total success (i.e. they negotiated some Cabal access to the Hand of Stalwart Reveries) receive the **Portal Key** story object.

For those parties that only partially succeed, read the following read aloud text:

Returning to the warehouse under the cover of night, you once again meet with two of the vaulted members of the Council of the Obscured; proof of your rapid assent within the Cabal of Shadows in just a short time. After nodding for you to approach, the pair listened intently as you described your successes, each seeming quite pleased. The Melancholy's voice drips with matronly affection, "You have done quite well my children. Soon we shall see just how far you will go for our cause, as it seems likely we will have need of you to call on our new friends in the deep."

Sublime offers you only mild praise and you note what may be a veiled threat in his words. "It is a shame you were not able to gain us permanent access to this fist shaped monument. It might have given us a new home from which we might have cast our shadow over the entirety of Stormreach. Let me assure you that your exploits continue to be noticed at the highest levels. Perhaps next time you will succeed to an even greater degree?"

With that the androgynous boy and the veiled woman turn from you and walk away, discussing the ramifications of what you have told them.

Those PCs with a partial success (i.e. they DID NOT negotiate Cabal access to the Hand of Stalwart Reveries) do not receive the **Portal Key** story object.

FAILURE

Those PCs that do not succeed in gaining entrance to the Hand of Stalwart Reverie have done a poor job indeed. They do not receive either the **Reflections of Dal Quor** or the **Portal Key** story object. Read the following read aloud text to the players.

Returning to the warehouse under the cover of night, you once again meet with two of the vaulted members of the Council of the Obscured; proof of your rapid assent within the Cabal of Shadows in just a short time. You can only hope that the outcome of this mission does not adversely affect your standing, or health. After nodding for you to approach, the pair listened intently as you described your failures. The Melancholy constant shakes her head in what you can only reflects that regret on her masked face. Sublime listens calmly, displaying no outward emotion, though he has begun to pry at a nearby board, slowly splinting the crate he stands near.

The Melancholy's voice drips with matronly disappointment, "I have expected better, my children. I suppose what little you have brought us will have to do for now. Go. We will sent you out soon enough. Perhaps next

time we will have something not so difficult for your obviously limited talents."

Sublime offers only a mild addition that you note may be a veiled threat. "It is a shame you were not able to effect a better effort. Whatever this lead to might have given the ability to cast our shadow over the entirety of Stormreach. Let me assure you that your exploits continue to be noticed at the highest levels. Perhaps next time you will even succeed?"

With that the androgynous boy and the veiled woman turn from you and walk away, discussing the ramifications of what you have told them.

RESOLVING OBSCURA SECRET MISSIONS

Any PC that completes the secret mission given to them by their Obscura at the beginning of the adventure should receive the **Obscura Reward 3** story object. Here is a summary of what must be done to receive this reward.

- *Children of Xoriat*: Tiirma must survive the ambush upon the adventurers in the Wilted Rose.
- *The Defiance*: The party must forge an alliance with Deondag the Master of Rites. He is the only being of sufficient knowledge and power willing to aid the Cabal who makes an appearance in this module. Any others either are unwilling or do not have the necessary knowledge of the draconic prophecy.
- *Instruments of Change*: The PC must recover the coded message inside the flute in Grarrys' pack. Grarrys cannot be able to give a reliable description of the PC or the stolen item to anyone. This may be accomplished through magic, stealth, or violence.
- *Mourners of Yore*: The party must negotiate with Deondag for the right of settlement as well as the right of passage to and from the complex. The PC fails if Deondag is slain, as the Hand of Stalwart Reverie no longer remains secret.

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

1. How best describes how the PCs dealt with the hired adventurers?
 - a. The young adventurers were no match for the PCs and all were slain.
 - b. The rugged youths trounced the PCs ending the adventure.
 - c. The PCs used guile of stealth to recover the notes, leaving the adventurers relatively unharmed.
 - d. The PCs never found the adventurers.
2. How best describes the PCs interactions with the elevator?
 - a. The ancient device was easy to figure out and worked perfectly.
 - b. The party went through several trials and tribulations but figured it out.
 - c. The old thing was broken and nearly killed them all.

- d. The DM had to help the PCs figure it out or the PCs never made it into the Hand of Stalwart Reverie.
3. How best describes how the PCs dealt with the animated cook?
 - a. Concerned for their safety they destroyed it.
 - b. After some interaction, they left it be.
 - c. They never encountered the cook.
4. How best describes how the PCs dealt with the allip?
 - a. The PCs know what true evil is and easily dispatched the inferior undead.
 - b. The allip was too much for the PCs and they were forced to flee.
 - c. The allip overpowered all the PCs and they were ejected from the tower.
 - d. The party never encountered the allip.
5. How best describes how the PCs interacted with the touch of idiocy trap?
 - a. No glass brain can stop a PC with a big club!
 - b. The PCs disarmed the trap.
 - c. The brain sucking tentacles were too much for the PCs after the allip and they ran.
 - d. The mad brain overcame the PCs and they were ejected from the tower.
 - e. The party never encountered the trap.
6. How best describes the PCs interactions with Deondag, Master of Rites?
 - a. All evil, they got along well.
 - b. All too evil, they came to blows and the PCs smashed him.
 - c. All too evil, they came to blows and the disembodied giant smashed them.
 - d. The party never encountered the giant in a jar.
7. What was the final outcome of Tiirma the Claw of Pylas Talaer?
 - a. The PCs convinced her not to fight, and she may be interested in joining the Cabal.
 - b. She escaped.
 - c. She's dead.

8. What was the final status of the Hand of Stalwart Reverie?
 - a. The Cabal will soon be picking out new carpeting and drapes.
 - b. The tower remains a secret but the Cabal won't be moving in.
 - c. The presence of the tower was exposed to Stormreach and the Storm Lords.

STORY OBJECTS

Obscura Reward #3: You have succeeding in a secret mission given to you by your Obscura. The benefit you receive depends upon the Obscura to which you belong.

Children of Xoriat: For your efforts, other members of your Obscura offer to train you in new offensive techniques. This story object unlocks the following feats from Complete Warrior: Close-Quarters Fighting, Instantaneous Rage, and Shield Charge.

Defiance: For your efforts, other members of your Obscura offer to train you in new interaction techniques. This story object unlocks the following feats from Players Handbook II: Fade into Violence, Master Manipulator, and Wanderer's Diplomacy.

Instruments of Change: For your efforts, other members of your Obscura offer to train you in new stealth techniques. This story object unlocks the following feats from Complete Adventurer: Disguise Spell, Force of Personality and Jack-of-all-Trades.

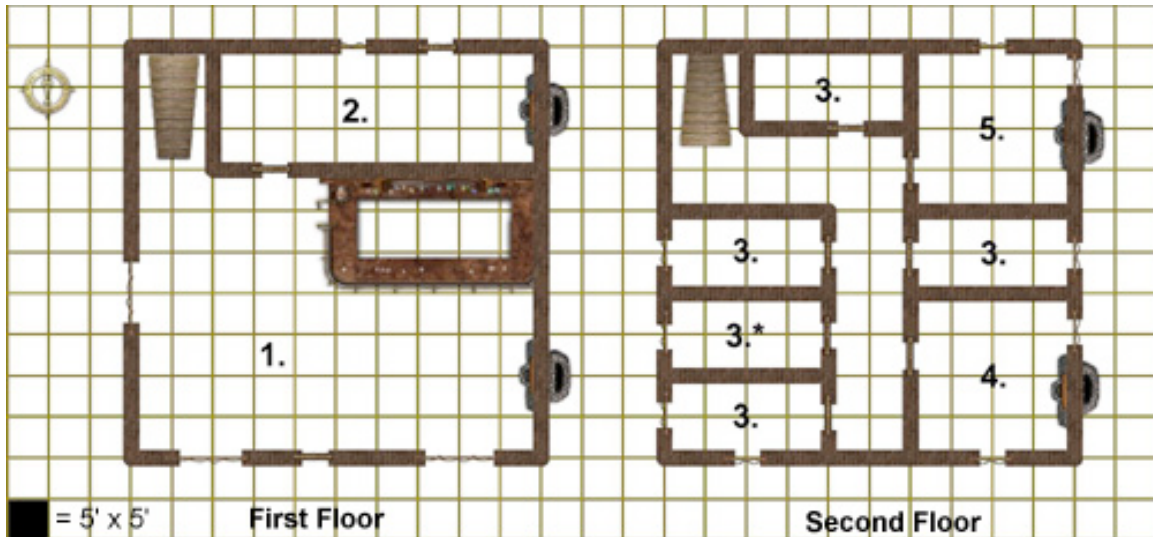
Mourners of Yore: For your efforts, other members of your Obscura offer to train you in new defensive techniques. This story object unlocks the following feats from Complete Warrior: Defensive Strike, Improved Buckler Defense, and Phalanx Fighting.

Reflections of Dal Quor: You have traveled the nightmare echoed halls of the Hand of Stalwart Reverie and been exposed to the remains of the dreams that haunt that place. You receive a +2 circumstance bonus on any saving throw to resist a mental attack made by a creature of Dal Quor. Your DM will adjudicate when this bonus applies.

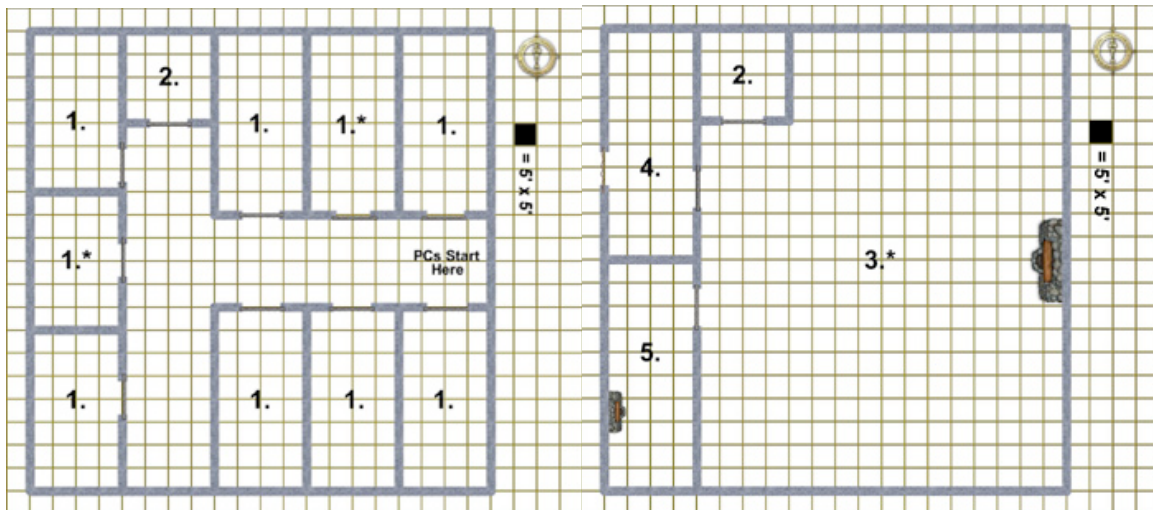
Portal Key: You have received a portal key from Deondag the Master of Rites in the Hand of Stalwart Reverie. You may use this key to gain safe entry into the secret complex by touching to the monument that stands in a quiet Stormreach neighborhood. Anyone touching you is also transported inside the complex with you. You may safely find rest and food within the home of the Cabal of Shadows.

DM MAPS

Part One: The Wilted Rose

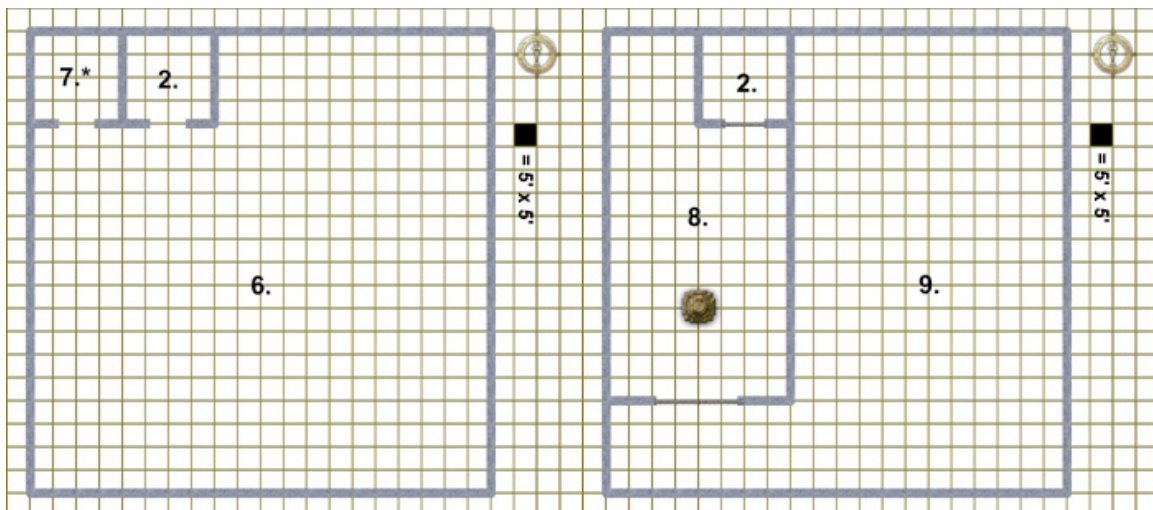


Part Three: The Hand of Stalwart Reverie



First Floor

Second Floor



Third Floor

Fourth Floor

HANDOUT 1: OBSCURA ORDERS

The DM should have each player secretly write down their membership in an Obscura, if any, and then provide them with the appropriate handout. These are SECRET orders and should only be shown to players whose PCs are in the listed Obscura.

Children of Xoriat

As you go to leave your meeting with the Council Members, Sublime asks that you attend him in the shadows. Enveloping you with his great feather wings, you can no longer hear any sounds from outside them. The stories say that the boy's frail body hides an intense power and while you see only his calm exterior, somehow the closeness is intimidating. He speaks to you without emotion.

"You will do me a favor. If you succeed, I will reward you. You will succeed. Among the adventurers hired by Valexa Von Ruthvek is a Valenar woman. In her heart burns a great and violent passion and I fancy turning her to our cause. No harm of any kind will come to this woman. If you can intrigue her with the possibility of our family so much the better, but this woman will live. Go now and bathe in the blood of your foes."

Goal: The Valenar elf woman among the adventurers must survive.

The Defiance

As you go to attend the meeting in the warehouse, a man bumps into you on the street. In the distraction he slides a brooch into your hand. The brooch displays one of the moons eclipsing the sun. Later on, when you are alone, you find that the front of the brooch is removable and a small note can be found inside.

Our list of allies in this new place is short, and it seems others with powerful friends already move to control the prophecy. You are to be on the look out for powerful new allies with knowledge of the prophecy that we might use their resources to outwit our foes. Use any means at our disposal to accomplish this task.

Goal: Enlist the aid of a powerful new ally for the Cabal of Shadows.

Instruments of Change

As you go to attend the meeting in the warehouse, you meet a woman on the street who is playing a seemingly random tune upon a lyre. No one seems to be offering her any coin for her atonal notes, but when you hum a response, she smiles and nods towards the hat. As you go to lay a copper inside, you note the bottom is lined with sheet music, which you easily pocket. Later on, when you are alone, you find that the words on the sheet music form a note.

In an inn somewhere in Stormreach, there is a sailor named Grarrys. He does not know it, but one of our agents in Sharn slipped a flute in to his pack before he left for Stormreach. Inside the flute is a rolled up parchment that contains vital correspondence written in a code. Unfortunately he was fired from his ship and left before one of our other operatives was able to purloin the flute. You must find Grarrys and recover the message. He should not be able to report to anyone that he was carrying it.

Goal: Find Grarrys and recover the message without him being able to identify you or the message.

Mourners of Yore

As you go to leave your meeting with the Council Members, The Melancholy asks that you attend her in the shadows. Drawing you close, you note the amethyst teardrops that decorated the left side of her mask. Something about her makes you feel safe. She speaks to you, her voice full of warmth.

"I had hoped you might be able to assist me, my child. Many of our siblings now come to these shores, as it seems that our final battle will be fought here. Many that come here cannot fend for themselves and so we must see to their needs, but our shelter is limited. We need a place to house our brothers and sisters that we may shield them from the cold nips at them and the danger that constantly hunts us. Find us a safe home, some place we might guard our children that no one else can easily find. I know I can trust you with this crucial task."

Goal: Find a secret place that may be both a home and headquarters for the Cabal of Shadows in Stormreach.