

MINI-6

QUENCH THE FIRE OF THE RAGING GOD

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING
FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

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Though your allies are bloodied and decimated, you remain determined to quench the threat. Tracking the remains of the cult to Imdolphyn you find aid in short supply as the final reckoning approaches. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure that the challenging finale of the Embers of Dawn mini-campaign set in Imdolphyn for characters levels 1-4. It is recommended that you play the Embers of Dawn mini-campaign adventures in sequential order with one character for the best enjoyment and play possibilities within the mini-campaign, but it is not required.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Andy Collins, Rob Heinsoo, and James Wyatt.

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OFFICIAL D&D PLAY

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an event, or you received it from your organizer. To play this adventure and receive rewards for it, you must schedule it as an 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 schedule a game for public play, you must be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network. Information on enrolling in the program can be found at www.wizards.com/wpn. If you are scheduling the game for private play, you do not need to be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network. The person who schedules the event, called the organizer, is in charge of making sure the event is scheduled before play, runs smoothly on the date scheduled, and gets reported back to Wizards in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table Dungeon Master (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the organizer is also the table DM. You don't have to be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network to DM this adventure if you are not the organizer.

By scheduling and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First, it is an official game, tracked under your play history. Second, DMs gain rewards for scheduled play if they are members of the DM REWARDS program. DMing this adventure is worth one (1) point.

To learn more about event scheduling and DM REWARDS, visit the D&D Events website at www.wizards.com/dnd and click on "Events."

PREPARING FOR PLAY

In order to play this adventure, you'll need copies of the following D&D 4th Edition rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. Any other rules referenced in this adventure will be noted in the **New Rules Items** section at the end of the adventure.

Throughout this adventure, text in bold italics provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a session tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an officially scheduled event, complete and turn in this sheet to your organizer directly after play.

READING MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

Most of the information should be easy to understand, as it mirrors the information presented in the *Monster Manual*. Attacks may have a letter next to them designating the type: M for melee, R for ranged, C for close, and A for area. A lower-case letter (used only in some melee and ranged attacks) denotes that the attack can be used as a basic attack.

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

As the DM of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You take the words on these pages and make them come alive. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

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

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

- You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure. This is especially important and applicable outside of combat encounters, but feel free to use the "scaling the encounter" advice (usually for adjusting to different-sized groups) to adjust combat encounters for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time in an adventure.
- **Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group.** Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a "chance to shine."
- **Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately.** Watch for stalling, as play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish the adventure too early;

provide them with a full play experience. *Living Forgotten Realms* adventures are designed to be played within 3.5 - 4 hours; try to be very aware of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.

- **Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to interact with their environment.** Players should always know when enemies are affected by conditions and are bloodied. They should be given clues about how to interact with their surroundings so they can tackle skill challenges, combats, and puzzles without getting too frustrated over lack of information. This helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out a good choice from a clue.

In short, being the DM for a *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure isn't about following the adventure's text word-for-word; it's about creating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* are filled with good information about being a DM for a D&D game.

APPROPRIATE CHARACTER LEVELS

This adventure is designed for player characters (PCs) levels 1 - 4. Characters that fall outside of the level range may not participate in the adventure. Make certain to check the levels of the PCs before beginning play to ensure that they are the proper level.

Each adventure has a low-level version and a high-level version. The low level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the lower levels of the adventure's level spread. The high level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the higher levels of the adventure's level spread.

A group may decide to play the high level when their levels are more suited to the low level if everyone in the group agrees to do so; however, some of the rewards may not be available to them. Conversely, a group may decide to play the low level when their levels are more suited to the high level if everyone in the group agrees; however, some of the rewards may be less than what they'd ideally want from the adventure.

Reading the Numbers: Each encounter has a level and sometimes other values (such as XP or skill check DCs) listed with two numbers divided by a slash. The number before the slash is always the value for the low-level version of the adventure; the number after the slash is the value for the high-level version of the adventure.

FAILING TO DEFEAT AN ENCOUNTER

If a group fails to defeat an encounter - that is, if they have to flee from a combat because it's too tough or they reach the predetermined number of failures in a skill challenge before reaching success - they are only awarded half experience points (round down) for the encounter. If they manage to tackle the encounter later and defeat it, award them the other half of the experience points for the encounter.

CHARACTER DEATH

If a PC dies during the course of the adventure, the player of that character and the rest of the group have two options, provided that they have access to the Raise Dead ritual (either a PC has it and can use it or the characters return to civilization), they have access to the body, and it is possible to return the dead PC to life.

- **Pay the component cost for the ritual.** If the group chooses this option, the cost should be divided evenly among the group (500 gp for heroic tier, 5,000 gp for paragon tier, and 50,000 gp for epic tier). Using a source outside the group to cast the ritual costs 20% more than the component cost. Total cost when using an outside source is 600 gp for heroic tier, 6,000 gp for paragon tier, and 60,000 gp for epic tier. A PC that dies and chooses this method of return gains full (or half, if the party was defeated) experience points from the encounter in which the character died, but no experience points for any encounters that were missed while the character was dead. If there are encounters remaining, the PC continues to earn experience as normal, and receives a normal cut of the rewards at the end of the adventure.
- **Invoke the Death Charity clause.** If the group cannot afford to pay for the ritual (or doesn't desire to do so), the PC can choose to return to life at the end of the adventure. Doing so forfeits all rewards (including treasure and story rewards) earned for the adventure except experience points gained prior to the character's death (the character receives the experience point award for the encounter in which they died). The PC cannot participate in the same adventure a second time.

MILESTONES

No matter if the characters succeed or fail in an encounter, they reach a milestone if it is the second encounter they've had since the start of the adventure or their last extended rest. **Encounters that do not give out experience points do not count for purposes of reaching a milestone.** Make certain to mention this information to the players when applicable, as it gives each PC another action point and affects how some magic item powers are used.

LASTING EFFECTS

Sometimes a PC suffers a lasting effect that isn't easily resolved before the end of the adventure. The two most common lasting effects are the death penalty and diseases.

Death Penalty: When a character dies and is brought back to life by the Raise Dead ritual, that character suffers a -1 penalty to all attack rolls, skill checks, saving throws, and ability checks until they have reached three milestones. The player should simply record the adventure where the character died on their adventure log, and then keep a running tally of milestones reached. Once the PC has reached the third milestone since coming back to life, they no longer suffer the penalty.

Diseases: Diseases take hold of a character and last until they are cured or they reach their final state. Normally, a PC makes an Endurance check after each extended rest to see if the disease improves, worsens, or maintains its current condition. At the end of the adventure, any character suffering from a disease must resolve the disease to either its cure or final state, using the necessary number of extended rests to do so. Other characters adventuring with the PC may decide to aid the afflicted character during this time. If a disease reaches its final state and the PC can get a Cure Disease ritual cast (and pay the appropriate costs), they may do so.

Other Lasting Effects: Other effects that last beyond the scope of the adventure should be resolved at the DM's discretion. Any effects that last for a specific period of time (that end after a certain number of days or a certain number of extended rests) should be resolved at the end of the adventure in which the effect was obtained (unless otherwise specified). Effects that use some sort of adventuring benchmark of unknown duration (such as milestones) should be recorded on the character's logsheet and tracked across adventures.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This adventure assumes the characters have participated in the previous five adventures in the Embers of Dawn mini-campaign (MINI1-1 thru MINI1-5) as they have been fighting the Cult of the Reborn Flame.

In *MINI1-1 Stirring the Embers*, the characters stumbled upon strange goings-on in Tarmalune. After some investigation they discovered the presence of the Cult of Reborn Flame and confronted Lakeral, a member of the cult. They killed Lakeral and discovered that he was sent from Sambral to oversee cult operations in Tarmalune.

In *MINI1-2 The Burning Scent of Perfumed Swords*, the characters traveled to Sambral to investigate further. They discovered other adventurers had been on the trail of the cult, but were killed, driven insane, or were simply missing. The PCs' investigation eventually led them to a perfume shop where they interrupted the cult's ceremonial games and defeated the cultists there. They learned that the cultists operating in Sambral were sent by their superiors in Ramekho.

In *MINI1-3 Building the Pyre*, the PCs traveled to Ramekho, being attacked by the cult's hired goons on the way. Once in Ramekho, they investigated the cult's work in the local mines to open a rift the Elemental Plane of Fire in an attempt to sacrifice the entire city to their sleeping deity and disrupted their activities. They then went to confront the cult leader at his local estate, getting a glimpse of the leader before he escaped. At the end of the adventure, they learned the cult leader was retreating to Harglast and using the cover identity Pырultimus.

In *MINI1-4 Coaxing the Flame*, the characters traveled to Harglast where their investigations discovered that the Cult of the Reborn Flame was destroying all trace of their activities in the city in an effort to cut off the trail the party was following. The PCs successfully gathered enough information to realize the cult was implementing their end game plan to awaken Achazar outside of Tarmalune. The PCs gathered all the many allies they made in this and previous adventures with the intent of attacking the ritual and destroying the cult once and for all.

At the start of *MINI1-5 Pyrophobia* the attack has occurred but was only been partially successful. While the PCs and their allies succeeded in stopping the ritual, many were killed and the others, including the PCs, were driven temporarily mad by the horrific extraplanar events they witnessed. In an effort to remove the taint from their minds, the PCs undertook a ritual to merge their minds with the sleeping Dawn

Titan Achazar and leave his influence behind them. After recovering their minds, it became clear that their ally Myrelas (*MINI1-2 The Burning Scent of Perfumed Swords*) was still being influenced, but not by the Flame. He was being scryed upon by the leader of the Cult, Pyrultimus himself! The PCs followed this link to a den of the cult under the Golden Teacup Darren, a place they knew well from *MINI1-1 Stirring the Embers*. While raiding it, they discovered that the real identity of Pyrultimus is Inar Venenellin, a merchant noble from the city of Imdolphyn.

With this information, the PCs resolved to finish the threat of the cult once and for all.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

This adventure takes place in Imdolphyn of the Windrise Ports. For more information on Imdolphyn, see Appendix #1.

Introduction: The PCs arrive in Imdolphyn and rendezvous at a small home owned by the Mecatoris merchant family from Sambral (*MINI1-2 The Burning Scent of Perfumed Swords*). This home will serve as their base of operation while they conduct their investigation in the city.

Encounter One: The PCs search for information on the cult leader through his cover identity, Inar Venenellin, which was uncovered in *MINI1-5 Pyrophobia*. They learn that their target is well-connected, well-liked, and powerful merchant noble in Imdolphyn. A direct assault or seeking aid from the authorities seems highly unlikely, but the party learns that the cult leader is holding a masque tomorrow, giving the party a chance to get close to him inside his home and possibly uncover proof of his corruption. The party has roughly two days to prepare. If the PCs fail this skill challenge, the cult leader realizes his foes are in the city and purposely leaks information to them, setting a trap for them.

Encounter Two: The party prepares their cover story and investigates ways into the masque. The PCs might attempt to be hired as staff or guards, get an invitation themselves, or try to find a way to sneak in. Story Objects from previous adventures may help.

Encounter Three: The party attends the masque and have a chance to explore some parts of the estate. While doing so, they can try to locate proof or determine which of the guests might also be cultists. Open violence is clearly a poor idea, as there are ample guards and the PCs are without most of their armor and weapons. Success in this investigation not only helps identify which of the guests are potential enemies, but also helps the PCs realize that something big is about to happen.

Encounter Four: During the party, a handful of special guests get invitations to a private audience. If the PCs failed the skill challenge in Encounter One, they are among those receiving the invitations. If the PCs did not fail the skill challenge in Encounter One, they will have to sneak after the departing guests or bluff their way into joining the group. If the PCs don't go with the guests, they will be able to continue investigating and eventually find their way to the captured guests in Encounter Five and gain surprise on the guards. If they do go, the PCs are led through a maze of tunnels to an underground temple where they quickly discover that the "special guests" are to be sacrificed right here in the mansion in a second attempt at the ritual to wake the Raging Flame. As they are captured, the odds appear overwhelming, so the PCs will have to bide their time until they can make their escape.

Encounter Five: Amidst the scared and powerless guests below the mansion, a chance presents itself to escape when many of the guards are called away and the other guards are distracted. The PCs have the chance to fight for their freedom and free the other guests. Of course after the battle, the PCs will have to decide what to do with the rest of the guests who are all non-combatants.

Encounter Six: Now in the heart of their enemy's stronghold and with all of the remaining cult leadership close at hand, the PCs have a chance to do something to end the threat but they are without much of their equipment. Fortunately their surviving allies come through for them and manage to send much of the party's gear to them along with a message and warning that time is running out.

Encounter Seven: The PCs escape into the tunnel complex beneath the estate and learn more about the depths of depravity of the cult. The corruption is truly despicable and disturbs even those with the strongest stomach. This encounter describes the overall complex in detail.

Encounter Eight: While investigating the complex, the party encounters some twisted cultists, their forms warped by the rituals of the cult. They are accompanied by some of the guards that left in Encounter Five, returning to bring more sacrifices to the ritual. The creatures attempt to feast on the adventurers.

Encounter Nine: Further investigation uncovers a library of sorts, containing much of the cults gathered lore, but it protected by a cunningly trapped vault. If the party is successful in gaining access to the lore, they gain an advantage in the final combat and rescue a long lost friend.

Encounter Ten: The party arrives in the inner sanctum of the cult as Pyrultimus (Inar Venenellin) is

attempting the ritual. The PCs must do all they can to stop the cult before it's too late! Cultists and sanity shaking fire creatures abound. This battle is the culmination of twelve rounds of play and is meant to be as epic as possible for a heroic tier adventure.

Conclusion: The cult is dead... or is it? As the PCs recover from their exploits the players are treated to cut away scene that depicts one of their allies succumbing to corruption and foreshadowing the upcoming Quest Adventure Stir Not the World's Doom that continues the series.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

The alliance you began so many weeks ago is in shambles. You are beginning to remember the barely successful assault to stop the ritual to awaken the Raging Flame and your witness to the Things that came through the rift that the cultist's opened. Many of your friends and allies have not survived your attempts to put down the Cult of the Reborn Flame, but despite these setbacks, by entering the mind of the Raging Flame, you have managed heal your shattered psyche and to acquire that which eluded you for so long. The leader of the cult, known to you previously as Pyrultimus, has a true identity and his name is Inar Venenellin; a merchant noble in the city of Imdolphyn.

With the aid of Althea Mecatoris and her riches, you have sailed into Imdolphyn under the cover of darkness and set up in a small home in a residential neighborhood. Now secreted in the home city of your foe, you need only discover a way to get at him, and this great nightmare will finally be at an end.

The matriarch of the rich Mecatoris merchant family of Sambral has arranged for the PCs to travel to Imdolphyn and has quietly acquired a non-descript home for the PCs to use as a headquarters while they investigate. The home has no special protections and has no servants, but it is well stocked with ample food and drink. Their anonymity is their best defense and given their foes political position, they should be warned to avoid going to the authorities for help.

The home has two bedrooms, a kitchen, and a central sitting room with a large hearth. The home abuts the street and has only a small, fenced backyard with a small stable and outhouse. Those PCs who have the Story Object MINI13 - Favor of the Mecatoris Family find their trunks and belongs have been delivered to the bedrooms and comfortable cots provided as well. PCs

without the favor have their belongings piled next to the front door in the sitting room.

If the players desire, give them a chance to explore the home and setup any defenses or plans they feel appropriate.

The adventure begins on the morning of the 9th day of Flamerule and the masque takes place on the night of the 10th day.

IN SLUMBER REMAIN QUEST CARD

Some PCs may have the *In Slumber Remain* Quest card in their stack. These PCs are looking to complete three tasks in order to participate in the second quest adventure, *Stir Not the World's Doom*. The creature they seek in order to complete task three can be found in the underground complex in Encounter 9. If a PC speaks with Vakekflik and asks where the sleeping god lies, he tells the information in Encounter 9. The player should record their successful completion of task three on their log. Should a PC have the In Slumber Remain Quest card in their stack and have already complete task three, give them the information in Encounter 9 anyway, as it provides additional clues about the Quest adventure.

ENCOUNTER ONE: STREETS OF COBBLESTONE SECRETS

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 2/3, COMPLEXITY 5 (625/750 XP)

SETUP

This encounter describes the opportunities the PCs have to investigate the city of Imdolphyn, the activities of the Cult of the Reborn Flame, their foe Inar Venenellin, and discover ways they might gain access to him. As the leader of a huge and dangerous cult, Inar (aka Pyrultimus) is not foolish enough to believe that the meddlesome adventurers would not be coming for him. While he may not know how and when, he is ever watchful and he does his best to prevent the PCs from realizing that the cult is searching for them.

As the party gathers more and more information, the cult is also searching for them. Should they fail this skill challenge, the cult is alerted to their presence and leaks the necessary information to lure the PCs into their trap. If the PCs are successful, they discover all the information they need before the cult can find them.

Should the PCs wish to divert from information gathering to the devising of plans, you may need to move to Encounter Two for more information and eventually back to the skill challenge.

The narrow cobblestone streets and soaring buildings of Imdolphyn rival those of Tarmalune for the gem of the Windrise Ports. A thriving city based on the shipping and textile trades, Imdolphyn hides its secrets behind fine clothes, elegant architecture and bustling commerce. Somewhere in this city lairs Inar Venenellin, and you will find him!

Before beginning this skill challenge, PCs native to the Windrise Ports have the opportunity to share what they know with their compatriots. Such PCs know the information provided in Appendix #1. If there are no natives of the Windrise Ports, any PC making a DC 15 History check knows the information as well. Failing that, this information can be used to augment the skill challenge.

This skill challenge has a number of scenes that attempt to address the different ways the PCs might attempt to investigate the city and the Cult. These scenes may occur in any order, and not all need be experienced. Information is provided in each scene to allow the DM to role-play out the encounters. The DM is

encouraged to flesh these role-playing vignettes out as much as suits the tastes of the players at the table.

SKILL CHALLENGE: COBBLESTONE SECRETS

Goal: To learn as much as possible about the Inar Venenellin without allowing the Cult of the Reborn Flame to know they are investigating.

Complexity: 5 (12 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Arcana, Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight, Perception, Streetwise, Thievery

Other Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight, Intimidate, Perception, Stealth, Streetwise

Victory: The PCs gain information about the upcoming masque without alerting the Cult.

Defeat: The Cult of the Reborn Flame is aware that the PCs are coming and are able to prepare a trap.

Scene 1: Asking on the Streets

In this scene, the party relies on good old fashioned legwork and hits the streets. By asking in taverns, buying a few drinks, spreading around some coin, or just knowing who to ask, the PCs can attempt to gain some general information. Asking around should cost the PCs 1d10 sp per check. Should they choose to spend an extra gp, they gain +1/gp to the check to a maximum of +5.

Diplomacy DC 5/6 (1 success, 1 maximum): The PC generally tries to be nice to the citizens and asks general purpose questions, possibly pretending to be new in town. This line of questioning garners some general information suitable for tourists (and is found in Appendix #1). While the average person doesn't seem to know much about Inar, the Imdarm Merchant-Lords are generally well-liked and respected.

Streetwise DC 10/11 (1 success, 3 maximum): The PC knows who and how to ask without being noticed. In addition to all the information for the Diplomacy check above, for one success each, the PC can find out:

- Inar Venenellin is one of the Imdarm Merchant-Lords, the mercantile nobility that sit on the Lords' Council in the Hall of Coins, advising the city's ruler, Lord Othmeera Talask, a retired trader in textiles and scents. The citizen can also direct the PC to the Golden Way, where the Hall of Coins can be found; though the Imdarm are rarely there they all have official offices there.
- Inar Venenellin has a mansion in the chic Upper East Bank district where many of the Imdarm reside. In particular, his walled mansion is on Alustrian Ferry, a tree-lined boulevard in the northeast corner of the district.

It is likely one could find him there, should they have an appointment and choose to call on him.

- Inar Venenellin operates the Emerald Exchange, a market near the River Tantulph where the ship captains barter for supplies, crew or jobs, and offload their wares to buyers. The symbol of the Emerald Exchange is a green crab holding a sack (which the PCs may have seen in previous adventures on some members of the Cult of the Reborn Flame).

Streetwise DC 15/16 (0 successes, 1 maximum):

While asking around, a shadier ship's boson named Fird from the *Crashing Wave*, mentions that if the PC really wants to know what's going on in this city, he should speak with Soztel, the Keeper of Secrets. Soztel makes his money trading rumors and facts for coin out of the back room of the Cyrion Spice House on Aphthria Street. By asking the proprietor if he has any ground almond and offering to pay top coin for any he might have, the PC will be let into a the illicit dice game running in the back where Soztel is normally found.

Scene 2: The Hall of Coins

The Hall of Coins is a square white marble building, covered in gold leaf and decorated with representations of coins. It is open during daylight hours and is bustling with the functionaries that keep the city running. In addition to the city government and the Lords' Council chamber, each of the Imdarm has an office inside, though few are often there. Members of the Coin Guard are in ample supply, as are House Ulthmir mercenaries, making the Hall of Coins a dangerous place for the PCs to start any trouble.

Bluff DC 17/18 (1 success, 1 maximum for Bluff OR Thievery): The PC concocts some story to convince Vernald (see Diplomacy for description) or the building security that the PC belongs inside the Imdarm's private office. Once inside it is clear that there is little of value, but paperwork present can give the location of both his home and his place of business. In addition, out of place is a discarded receipt for the purchase of mercenary services from House Ulthmir, to be used in one day and the address for House Ulthmir is listed. The use of this skill gives the same information as Thievery below, and thus only one success can be gained between the two skills.

Diplomacy DC 5/6 (0 successes, 1 maximum): Speaking with a young clerk, Vernald Pennelworth (a young, but somewhat pretentious human), at the courtesy desk just inside confirms that Imdarm Inar Venenellin does indeed have an office in the Hall of Coins, but he is neither in residence, nor may the PCs visit his empty office. Indeed the Imdarms meet but

once a season and their last meeting was but six days ago. Vernald is happy to direct the PCs inquiries to any number of other capable offices of city government.

Diplomacy DC 15/16 (0 successes, 1 maximum): Speaking with any of the House Ulthmir guards can determine that they are brokered through House Ulthmir which provides private, specialized security; both as bodyguards and additional security for large events. The House is owned by aging Imdarm Ulthmir, though his young daughter Sybilla has recently taken over day to day operations. If the PC was pleasant, the guard may confide that Sybilla is a flighty girl who does not seem to have a head for business. The guard can also provide the address of the House Ulthmir barracks in the Knight's Hill District where the PCs can go to hire mercenaries or sign up to become mercenaries.

Insight DC 10/11 (0 successes, 1 maximum): The PC reads Vernald's behavior and realizes the young man has an over-inflated sense of his importance as a bureaucrat and the use of flatter will aid in speaking with him. The PC receives a +2 bonus to Bluff and Diplomacy checks made against Vernald.

Perception DC 10/11 (0 successes, 1 maximum): The PC realizes there appear to be two kinds of guards. The Coin Guards in official uniforms appear to be patrolling the building in general. The other set wear no consistent uniform, but all display a patch with the heraldic shield of a rampant leopard on a light blue background (House Ulthmir). These guards appear to be providing private security for dignitaries.

Thievery DC 17/18 (1 success, 1 maximum for Bluff OR Thievery): The PC manages to sneak into the hall outside the Imdarm's office and when no one is in the hallway, picks the lock. Once inside it is clear that there is little of value, but paperwork present can give the location of both his home and his place of business. In addition, out of place is a discarded receipt for the purchase of mercenary services from House Ulthmir, to be used in one day and the address for House Ulthmir is listed. The use of this skill gives the same information as Bluff above, and thus only one success can be gained between the two skills.

Scene 3: Inar's Home

Once the PCs have learned the location of Inar's home in the chic Upper East Bank district on Alustrian Ferry, they can further investigate the tree-lined boulevard in the northeast corner of the district. The mansion is quite large and has expansive grounds enclosed by a high stone wall. There is an iron gate that is guarded by five well-armed men (of various races).

This scene covers information gathering regarding the mansion and grounds. For actually attempts to sneak inside, see Encounter Two.

Arcana DC 20/21 (trained only; 1 success, 1 maximum): The PC detects magic and realizes there is a magical effect on the wall; possibly some sort of alarm spell that will trigger should someone attempt to scale the wall.

Bluff DC -- (0 success, potential for automatic failure): The guards have strict orders to allow no one inside. They are well-informed and professional but should the PCs pose a far-fetched story and repeatedly insist that they be allowed inside despite the guards attempt to turn them away, the guards take a detailed description of the PCs along with their supposed reason for seeing the Imdarm. They ask for the PCs' card and where they are staying so the guards might contact them as soon as the Imdarm is ready for them. If this should occur and any of the described PCs have the story object *MINI16 Known Description*, Inar realizes the description is close enough to his foes that he suspects the PCs might be in the city. He raises his guard and the PCs receive one automatic failure for the skill challenge.

Perception DC 10/11 (1 success, 2 maximum): By finding a tall tree on the other side of the boulevard (there are none near the wall), the PC can climb to a comfortable position and watch the mansion and its grounds for several hours. It becomes clear that the complex is well patrolled. There are guards with dogs walking the grounds, and men posted at regular positions around the home. These guards all wear blackened armor and seem to know each other. Should the PC wait long enough (four hours) and make a second Perception check (for the second success) they note a number of people arrive at the gate with a wagon and be granted access to the grounds after they are thoroughly searched. The people set up a large tent and several tables near the reflecting pond before leaving. The wagon has Tyne and Sons Catering painted on the side and can be followed back to the catering shop (Scene 6).

The extended use of the Perception skill (more than four hours observing the grounds) gives the PC a benefit in attempting to sneak onto the grounds later on (See Encounter Two).

Scene 4: The Emerald Exchange

The Emerald Exchange is large fenced-in market near the River Tantulph that contains several warehouses, notice boards, and a central stage around which barkers offer supplies, crew, jobs, and wares from distant ports. During daylight hours it is filled with the hustle and bustle of a thriving commerce and at night workers

move out cargo and stack up the next day's auctions. Over the gate is a large crab holding a sack painted green.

Diplomacy DC 5/6 (1 success, 1 maximum): The PC manages to find Taylin, a shrewd but friendly elf woman who runs the barkers for the Exchange. She shares that Inar isn't in, but does stop in infrequently, though she wouldn't expect to see him for a day or two since he is having some big society shindig up at his mansion in the Upper East Bank district, though she's not exactly sure where in the district. She rarely gets away from the docks and the Exchange.

Perception DC 10/11 (1 success, 1 maximum): The use of this skill must be unlocked by the successful use of the Stealth skill. Searching through the office paperwork notes that on the orders of Inar, the Exchange itself has been purchasing large amounts of fresh seafood to be delivered to Tyne and Sons Catering on the morning of the 10th of Flamerule.

Stealth DC 15/16 (0 successes, 1 maximum): The PC snoops around, looking through the papers in the office while avoiding the many people working there at all hours. A successful Stealth check gives no successes, but allows the use of the Perception skill.

Scene 5: Soztel, Keeper of Secrets

Arriving at the Cyrion Spice House on Aphthria Street the PCs find a quiet, well-appointed shop. There are no other customers currently and the shop is deserted except for an older human man behind the counter. By asking the proprietor if he has any ground almond and offering to pay top coin for any he might have, the PC will be lead through a beaded curtain and let into a the illicit dice game running in the back. Five men are crowded around a well-used table smoking heavily and trading coins over rolls of a pair of old, rounded dice. Sitting in the corner is a fat dragonborn in food-stained robes, smoking from a water pipe and blowing smoke rings. A half eaten chicken lies on a plate next to him.

Should anyone try to start any trouble, 3 Dragonborn Soldiers (*Monster Manual* p.86) come in through the back door and try to drive the PCs off while Soztel flees.

Insight DC 15/16 (1 success, 1 maximum): After speaking with Soztel for a few minutes, the PC realizes that he will sell any secret for the right coin and speaking with him may be dangerous. Should the PCs draw attention to themselves, there is very little preventing him from selling out the PCs to Inar.

Intimidate DC 17/18 (0 successes, 1 maximum): By threatening violence but not going so far as to alert the guards (see above), the PC gains a +2 bonus on

Streewise checks made to negotiate information from Soztel.

Perception DC 15/16 (0 successes, 1 maximum): Through the cracked back door, the PC catches a glimpse of the heavily armed dragonborn guards waiting outside.

Streetwise DC 10/11 (1 success, 4 maximum): For each success, and 5 gp, Soztel can give the PCs the following pieces of information.

- Imdarm Inar Venenellin maintains a mansion in the Upper East Bank district, an office in the Hall of Coins, and owns the Emerald Exchange near the River Tantulph. He also provides the addresses of each.
- On the night of the 10th, Inar Venenellin is hosting quite a social event. It is said to be a masque with food provided by the posh Tyne and Sons Catering. In addition Soztel knows House Ulthmir has been hired to provide additional security beyond the Imdarm's normal security forces. Armor and weapons are expressly forbidden to the guests.
- The invitations are much sought after and Soztel has heard they bare a magical sigil that is impossible to fake. That said; for 10 gp he can provide the PCs with a guest list in case they wish to "acquire" a real invitation or escort for the evening. Each invitation is good for the listed person and one guest, but given the masks, who is to say who does or does not belong (see Appendix #2)?
- For an additional 25 gp, Soztel can arrange for a "reference" for anyone recently new to town and looking for work at Tyne and Sons Catering or House Ulthmir.

Story Objects: If any of the PCs speaking with Soztel has the story object *MINI16 Known Description*, Soztel has heard that Inar is looking for them. After speaking with them he forwards their inquires onto Inar's people and the PCs receive one automatic failure for the skill challenge.

However, at the end of the meeting, if any of the PCs meeting with Soztel have the story objects *MINIO2 Tarmalune Contact* (Karadandel the Sly), *MINI18 Respect of Vlotho the Blue* or *MINI20 Gratitude of Tarmalune* (Karadandel the Sly), Soztel asks if they are friends of Karadandel or Vlotho, as he seems to recall them mentioning the PCs. He warns the PC that they need to be more careful to whom they talk with and what they say. Out of respect for fellow information brokers, he does not sell out the PCs to Inar and they do not receive the automatic failure for having the story object *MINI16 Known Description*. He also warns the PCs to avoid

speaking with the authorities as the Merchant Lords will be immediately notified of the PCs, no doubt causing the party even more problems.

Scene 6: Tyne and Sons Catering

Tyne and Sons Catering is a soaring two story building that has a cathedral ceiling showroom with multiple kitchens, prep rooms, and cold storage in the back. Crystal chandeliers and crisp white linens mark this establishment as serving the rich.

When the PCs enter the business, they are immediately greeted by Hasreene, a well dressed half-elven woman who runs the day to day operations. Her opinion of the PCs is formed by her first sight of their manner and dress. Those appearing to be rich are greeted graciously and she offers them a seat at one of the many tables where they are served an assortment of teas and sweets. If they are rough and dirty, or come heavily armed, she tries to remain polite but is clearly disturbed by the party's presence and she tries to usher them out as quickly as possible. PCs who look rough or dirty take a -5 penalty to social skill checks with Hasreene.

Arcana DC 15/16 (1 success, 1 maximum): This check can only be made if a successful Diplomacy or Stealth roll has been made (see below). The PC notices that many of the herbs being used in the cooking have uses in ritual magic to purify the body of sacrifices. None of the cooks know anything of the herbs, other than the client asked for them. Their use maybe unusual, but it does add a pleasant flavor to the seafood they have been asked to prepare.

Bluff DC 5/6 (1 success, 2 maximum): Those pretending to be looking for a caterer can pull information out of Hasreene quickly. She is quick to offer references, including that Tyne and Sons is indeed catering Imdarm Venenellin's masquerade the night of the 10th. If the PCs do not know where his home is yet, she freely supplies that information. Further if the PCs inquire about the caterer's ability to serve large groups, particularly on the 10th or there about, Hasreene admits that the caterer is hiring more staff at the moment to meet their expanding needs.

Diplomacy DC 10/11 (0 successes, 1 maximum): If the PCs ask politely, Hasreene is willing to show the PCs some of the preparations for the Imdarm's party, as an example of their work. This opens up the use of the Arcana skill above.

Diplomacy DC 15/16 (1 success, 1 maximum): Should the PCs push Hasreene, she can be convinced to name some of the more famous guests who are expected to be attending the masquerade. See Appendix 2: the Guest List for some ideas.

Intimidate DC 10/11 (0 successes, 6 maximum): By threatening some of the staff (cooks or servers), the PCs can “convince” some of them to quit. Doing so makes it easier to get hired in Encounter Two. If the PC has Soztel’s reference, the staff knows the type of business Soztel is involved in and the PCs gain a +4 bonus to this check. At the DM’s discretion, other skills (such as Bluff or Thievery) might also be appropriate for this purpose.

Stealth DC 10/11 (0 successes, 1 maximum): The PC sneaks into the kitchens to observe the food being prepared. This opens up the use of the Arcana skill above.

Scene 7: House Ulthmir

Traveling to the Knight’s Hill District, the PCs can quickly locate the House Ulthmir barracks. A small business front is accessible to the public with a large courtyard and barracks enclosed by a 10-foot tall stone wall, displaying a heraldic shield of a rampant leopard on a light blue background. While owned by Imdarm Karick Ulthmir, he is never found within, instead leaving the running of the business to his young daughter Sybilla. Those seeking to hire or looking for work can meet with her in a tastefully done office.

Sybilla is an attractive young human woman with a long blonde hair done up in the latest style, adding nearly twelve inches to her already significant height. She is dressed more like a socialite than a business woman. She greets the PCs warmly with a broad smile and asks their business with House Ulthmir. Sybilla is flighty and not very insightful, and is dealing with the pressures of taking over a complicated and established business. She is both looking to expand to new clients and hire more staff.

Bluff DC 5/6 (1 success, 1 maximum): Should the PCs claim be interested in hiring the security services of House Ulthmir but ask about previous jobs, Sybilla foolishly mentions that the House is providing security for Imdarm’s masque on the night of the 10th and very briefly shows them some of the plans for that event. Successful use of this skill opens up the Perception skill below.

Diplomacy DC 15/16 (1 success, 4 maximum): Sybilla does not have an especially good head for the security the business and when hiring new staff is instead more impressed by well-spoken and attractive PCs than those who are actually competent in their fields. The DM should award a +2 bonus to be hired if the PC is expensively dressed or is of an exotic looking, but not monstrous, race. If the PC has Soztel’s reference, they gain a +4 bonus to this check. If hired on as staff, the PC gains advantages in Encounter Two.

Perception DC 10/11 (1 success, 1 maximum): If the PCs have managed a successful Bluff (see above) and Sybilla shows her the plans for the masque’s security briefly, they can make a Perception check to spot useful information for sneaking in. This gives advantages in Encounter Two.

Thievery DC 15/16 (2 success, 1 maximum): Sybilla’s office is not well organized, but should the PCs manage to find the incomplete security plans, a PC may steal them and find out more about how to beat the security.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

When the PCs are ready to enact a plan to gain access to the mansion or the masque, proceed to Encounter Two.

Success: The PCs have gathered the information they need to progress without significantly alerting the Cult of the Reborn Flame and Inar to their presence. The PCs have the opportunity (depending on their future choices) to gain an automatic surprise round at the beginning of Encounter Five.

Failure: While the PCs might have figured out how to get inside the masquerade, they took too long to gather the information and the cult knows they are coming and make plans accordingly. This will have an impact in Encounters Three, Four, and Five.

WHAT DO I DO IF MY PLAYERS DON’T FINISH THE SKILL CHALLENGE?

What happens if the PCs neither succeed nor fail before moving on to Encounters Two or Three? Some party’s might ask exactly the right questions to concoct a plan without making twelve checks. That’s fine. If the PCs didn’t let their presence be known, consider the skill challenge a success and move on with the PCs’ plan.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

If the PCs succeed in the Skill Challenge, they receive 125/150 experience points each.

ENCOUNTER TWO: A PLAN COMES TOGETHER

SETUP

Hasreene (Perception +3, Sense Motive +5)

House Ulthmir Guard (Perception +5, Sense Motive +5)

Sybilla Ulthmir (Perception +0, Sense Motive +0)

This encounter is not an encounter in the traditional sense, but is an extension of the previous skill challenge, covering the adjudication of the actual plans the party might generate in an attempt to gain access to the Imdarm's estate and the secret cult leader that lies within. While this encounter tries to cover all the different options, the players will inevitably come up with additional ideas. In general, all but the most slipshod of plans should work. The PCs need to get into the estate and gain access to the masque in order to continue the advantage.

While these scenarios discuss how the PCs might approach these situations, much of the actual role-playing is left to the DM to tailor to his or her table's taste and the actions they have taken during Encounter One.

GETTING HIRED AS A GUARD

Getting hired as a guard is relatively easy for those diplomatic PCs who impress Sybilla (see Encounter One; Scene 7). House Ulthmir is understaffed since she took over and they need more trained mercenaries to cover the needs of the masque. New hires are assigned either to the patrol grounds or to those guards watching the front gate. PCs with these duties are well positioned to help other party members gain access, as they check the invitations or watch for those coming over the wall.

The security staff is expected to arrive together one hour before nightfall to sweep the grounds and get prepared. They may wear any weapons or armor they normally have, but are expected to appear professional and clean. There are given a House Ulthmir patch to wear, designating them as a hired guard. Grizzly trophies or items covered in profane symbols will be expressly forbidden. Those who cause problems over these rules will be fired.

While it is difficult to slip away entirely during the party, it should be relatively easy for a PC to get five to ten minutes relatively unobserved outside the home to

set up any plans needed to assist other PCs with getting inside the masque.

However, the home is still well guarded by them Imdarm's person security and they balk at any hired mercenaries going inside past the kitchen or foyer, given the party is intended to be largely held outside in the tent. They watch all entries and staff, and the home is protected with spells that ring a mental alarm should unauthorized personnel move about the inside of the house unescorted. Gaining access to Inar or most of his home is nearly impossible before the party. His personal quarters are extremely well guarded and the Imdarm is not on the premises and none of the staff have been informed as to where he is.

GETTING HIRED AS CATERING STAFF

Getting hired on as catering staff takes a small amount of effort on the part of the PCs. Any PC that has not already presented themselves as a potential client in Encounter One, Scene 6, stands a credible chance of looking for work.

Given the quality of their clientele, Hasreene is very concerned about an employee's ability to know when to talk and when to be silent, as well as anticipating a guest's needs in a social setting. She demands a brief interview during which she tests their skill with etiquette. Given time, this may be entertaining to role-play, but barring any obvious blunders, any PC who trained in Diplomacy is automatically hired without rolling. Those PCs who are not trained must attempt a DC 19/20 Bluff (to fake it) or DC15/16 Diplomacy (to really try) skill check to be hired. If the PCs were able to intimidate some of the staff to quit before presenting themselves as job candidates, Hasreene is more desperate to staff the openings before party. The PCs gain a +4 bonus to the above Bluff or Diplomacy checks. If instead of using Soztel's reference to convince the staff to quit and instead offer it to Hasreene, they gain +2 bonus to the above Bluff or Diplomacy checks. Once a PC is hired they are whisked off to be fitted for a uniform and then given a crash course in how to behave as a server or cook. They arrive onsite in the company of the rest of the catering staff about one hour before the beginning of the party and they are under the same restrictions as the hired security (see Getting Hired as a Guard, above), except that they have even more supervision and may not wear armor or carry any weapons. There are however ample numbers of kitchen knives at hand. Until the party begins, Hasreene is constantly watching the new hires to make sure they don't embarrass her. She is present when the Imdarm's

guards search all of her staff thoroughly for hidden weapons BEFORE they get onto the grounds. When the searches begin, the PC a chance to ditch any contraband, but those hiding weapons will be immediately fired if they do not. Those that try to hide a small weapon (such as a dagger) or small implement (such as a wand) despite realizing they will be searched, must succeed in a DC 19 Thievery check (or use an item power, ritual or power that would make hiding it automatic).

Should the PCs fail these checks, Hasreene is just not willing to take a chance on the uncouth PC and she orders them out of the establishment. The PC will have to find another way into the party.

GOING AS A GUEST

The ways that a PC might actually go as a guest are as varied as there are players who play this adventure. Some likely possibilities are covered here:

Getting a Date: All of the guests have been given an invitation that is valid for themselves and one other. At the beginning of the adventure, the following guests do not have a “plus one” and might be open to one of the PCs should they seek them out in the way described below. This should require some role-playing improvised by the DM. Information about whom, where, and how to approach a guest can be uncovered with a successful DC 10/11 Streetwise check requiring one hour and 1d4 gp.

- *Imdarm Jaqalwar Lansena:* Jaqalwar Lansena is a well known dashing, playboy sailor, who owns a substantial trading fleet. He is known to move from one social conquest to the next, on the lookout for exotic beauties to decorate his arm. Any female PCs of exotic races such as drow, elves, eladrin tieflings, or genasi can easily sway him. Stranger races such as dragonborn or shadar-kai will have to work harder and be exceptionally beautiful or have a particular flirtatious approach. Regardless, any PC attempting to seduce Jaqalwar must have a Charisma of at least 12.
- *Capatin Belyssa Erstros:* Formerly Belyssa the Whaler (from *MINI1-1 Stirring the Embers*), Belyssa is an amazon of a women who has recently come into good fortune and been made captain of her ship the *Devastation*. Any PC with story object *MINI11 Tarmalune Contact (Belyssa)* can convince her to take them as her date. Otherwise the PC must be a rough and tough male. The shorter the better.

- *Cileroc the Fire of Lylorn:* For reasons that will be made clear to the PCs later, Cileroc is more than willing to take any woman to the masquerade and he doesn't especially care who they are. One sacrifice is as good as the next.
- *Elgar Faer:* Elgar is not married and generally has no need for company but realizes there are certain social expectations. He normally hires an escort; the prettier and quieter the better. He prefers to be seen with dwarven or human woman.

Masquerading as a Guest: It is possible that the PCs might try to disguise themselves as guests. This plan can only work is they find a way inside first, as no one checks invitations once guests are inside the gardens. If the PCs claim to be guests who lost their invitation or were robbed, the gate guards (unless they are also PCs) are unsure how to proceed. They ask for the PCs names and then send to house for clearance to allow the PCs entrance. Recognizing either fake names, or the names of guests who are already present (or who arrive later), the PCs are amazingly granted entrance, but they will automatically be given an invitation to the “special” party during Encounter Four. Inar can always use more sacrifices.

Stealing an Invitation: Once the PCs know who has been invited, it is quite possible that they might attempt to steal an invitation. While likely challenging this option is not impossible. The DM should devise the appropriate scene based on the information provided in the guest list; Appendix 2.

The problem is that when the sigil is checked at the gate, it will ring false and their rouse will immediately be uncovered and the PC will be turned away. The sigils may be altered however to prevent this (see *Crashing the Party*, below).

CRASHING THE PARTY OR SNEAKING IN

The ease of crashing the party, or sneaking in after it has already begun, depends on what plans the PCs have already made. If the PCs have been assigned to the security detail as House Ulthmir guards, they can easily “overlook” the entrance of some additional guests or someone climbing the wall and then strolling the grounds to the party (though the guard will have to explain why the alarm went off). The DM is encouraged to role-play out the PCs' plan, but should allow it to succeed automatically if the PCs have managed to get a man onto the security detail.

If the PCs do not have the advantage of having a plant among the guards, they will have to find a way

inside. Bluffing their way past the gate guard as a guest is difficult since each named person bears an invitation with a sigil that is unique to them and the guards are given a wand to pass over the person and the invitation. If the correct person is carrying the invitation, the wand glows white. If the person is not the one intended by the unique sigil, the wand glows red. A PC does not have time before the party to create a new sigil or forge an invitation, but should they manage to steal an invitation, a PC trained in Arcana can take five minutes and alter the sigil to work for one of the PCs with a DC 15/16 Arcana check, but unfortunately there is no way to know if the modification was successful until the wand is passed over it.

If the PCs try to sneak in, they might attempt to climb the wall. Doing so requires a DC 20 Athletics roll, but triggers the magical *alarm*. Failure by more than five means the PC falls ten feet and takes 1d10 points of falling damage. Triggering the *alarm* causes the grounds to be searched for intruders and the PC will need to make two DC 15/16 Stealth checks to avoid them. The *alarm* can be disabled with a DC 15/16 Arcana check. Failure by more than five causes it to trigger and alerts the guards.

Modifiers: If the PCs have spent more than four hours examining the grounds during the skill challenge in Encounter One, they gain a +2 bonus to their Stealth check. If they successfully saw or acquired the security plans in Sybilla's office, they gain an additional +4 bonus to their Stealth check and automatically know that the *alarm* is present on the wall.

ASKING FOR HELP

What happens if the PCs try to go to the authorities for help? Short of Lord Othmeera Talask (who is not in the city at the time of this adventure), the Imdarm Merchant-Lords are the most powerful people in the city. Even if the PCs could convince anyone that one of the Imdarms is a dangerous cultist, there is no one powerful enough to do anything about it.

In his home city where he is much beloved, Inar is well protected by the Coin Guard and his personal security. Should the PCs go to the guard with their testimony (they have no physical proof), the guards will hold them for eight hours (or if necessary less, so there just enough time that they PCs could still get to the party) of questioning where it becomes quite clear that the guard believes the PCs are potentially dangerous threats to the city's rulers and they are trying to discover who their allies are and just how deep this Tarmalune sponsored terrorist threat goes. Unable to prove anything, the guards eventually let the PCs go with

warning to get out of town as soon as possible before something happens to them. The city can be a "*dangerous place for foreigners...*"

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs have managed to gain entrance to the grounds and the party begins, proceed to Encounter Three. If some of the PCs have not managed to get into the party by the end of this Encounter, they have until the end of Encounter Four to gain entrance, likely by sneaking in, before they start to miss out on the action and it will be hard for them to catch up to the rest of the party. DMs are encouraged to provide an appropriate distraction for especially inept PCs show that they can manage to get inside.

What if the PCs Attack? What happens if the PCs attack the guards? Clearly this is disastrous for the continuation of the adventure. The guards begin arriving in waves (use the guards from Encounter Five first followed by the guards described in Encounter Four) every four rounds until the PCs are subdued or flee. If the PCs are subdued, they are imprisoned with the guests in Encounter Five in order that they might be sacrificed along with the others.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER THREE: CELEBRATE

SETUP

The PCs have now managed to gain entrance into the party through one method or another and have a short time to explore the grounds or speak with the other guests. This encounter may be shortened or skipped if this adventure is being played in a convention setting where time is an issue, but covers the information the PCs might gain by role-playing with the guests during the opening hours of the party.

The night is crisp and clear under the stars. Paper lanterns are hung from ropes lining the paths of the Imdarm's gardens and a quartet plays soft, haunting music near long tables laden with scrumptious food and drink. Guests in finery flirt and dance, their faces hidden by garish masks.

As this encounter begins, the PCs are either staffing the party as security personnel or as catering workers, or as guests themselves. How they approach the various guests is up to them but if the PCs are not especially proactive the DM can invent reasons to embroil the PCs in conversation, particularly with some of the more garrulous NPCs. In addition to the NPCs listed here, there are dozens more and the DM is free to add NPCs of their own design as long as it does not disrupt the party or change future encounters.

Each NPC is described and their personal motivations given. Below each is a list of skill checks that may provide additional information regarding the NPC.

Of particular note, Imdarm Inar Venenellin has not yet made an appearance at the party. No one knows when he is expected to arrive.

Imdarm Jaqalwar Lansena (male human): Jaqalwar Lansena is a well known dashing, playboy sailor, who owns a substantial trading fleet. He is known to move from one social conquest to the next, on the lookout for exotic beauties to decorate his arm. He has arrived at the party looking for a good time and perhaps a little adventure. Unlike, in his view, Imdarm Inar Venenellin, he is less formal and is quite willing to mix with the staff; particularly if the serving girl is very attractive or has access to the Lord's well-stocked wine cellar.

Insight DC 10: Jaqalwar is a shrewder social mover than he might initially appear. While he plays the part of the playboy sailor, it is, at least in part, a façade.

Perception DC 15: Jaqalwar has a bulge in his boot that might be a weapon. (It is in fact a small dagger. The guards are not about to tell one of the Imdarm what they can and cannot do.)

Thievery DC 20: The PC is able to lift the dagger from the Imdarm without notice.

Imdarm Shodsi Minuku (female human): Another of the city's Merchant-Lords, Shodsi spends more time in the Hall of Coins debating trade policy than running her family's share of the fashion industry. She is late middle-aged and is a lion of a woman, with her meek husband Rol following in her wake, his hands never far from her schedule, which he dutifully maintains.

Shodsi is in fact concerned about the stories she hears about dangerous cults in the Windrise Ports. While she doesn't believe there are any currently operating in Imdolphyn, she fears it is only a matter of time before they darken the city's streets. While she is not initially willing to listen to claims that a fell Imdarm is a murderous mastermind behind one of these cults, she can be made at least sympathetic to the idea that the PCs have uncovered some information that implicates some citizens.

Diplomacy DC 10: The PC has displayed enough tact that Shodsi is willing to listen the PC's tales of crazed cultists, though she warns that substantial proof will need to be forthcoming before she will back any claims the PCs make.

Intimidate DC 15: The PC is able to intimidate Rol sufficiently to gain a look at the Imdarm's planner. Inside is a wealth of information concerning Shodsi and her plans to elevate the standard of living for the citizenry.

Insight DC 10: Shodsi is truly concerned with the well-fare of the city. For a Merchant-Lord she is very well informed and involved.

Bilmam Amziz (male tiefling): Bilman is a respected builder whose skills have been put to the test all over Imdolphyn. Famous for slim soaring towers and suspension bridges, he is considered the last word in Imdolphian architectural design and has nearly a dozen on-going projects. Bilman is somewhat overwhelmed by his fame and attends the ball in the company of his equally wide-eyed younger sister, Ileesho. They know nothing of cults or alien creatures from beyond space and time.

Arcana DC 5: Bilman understands just enough of the basics of magic to augment his craft. In particular, he has been observing and can discuss the details of the alarm on the Imdarm's walls if properly distracted into such a conversation.

Bluff DC 15: The PC is able to trick Bliman into disabling the alarm on the walls surrounding the garden just to show how it can be done, of course.

Insight DC 10: Bilman is actually the naïve architect that he appears to be. He is introverted and meek unless discussing his building projects.

Capatin Belyssa Erstros (female human): Formerly Belyssa the Whaler (from *MINI1-1 Stirring the Embers*), Belyssa has recently come into good fortune and been made captain of her ship the *Devastating*. She is a heavily tattooed red-haired woman, with strong arms, with a rough manner who has been invited as a novelty. She doesn't realize that to many, she is the joke of the party. She is aware of the cults and vows to back any move the PCs make, unfortunately she will be stone drunk by the time combat begins, and in no shape to help.

Insight DC 5: There is no guile in Belyssa. She is a rough, crude sailor dressed in ill-fitting finery.

Cileroc the Fire of Lylorn (male human): Cileroc made his fortune as a privateer in the service of Lord Othmeera Talask. He now invests in a number of dockside businesses. A favorite of the city's ruler, it is conventional wisdom that Cileroc will eventually be raised to the level of Imdarm and placed on the council. Cileroc is member of the Cult of the Reborn Flame and his meteoric rise is in no small part to aid from the cult. While he plays the part of the young, shrewd politician, he is anxious for the real festivities to begin.

Bluff DC 20: If a PC intimates that they are a member, or perhaps just aware of, the Cult of the Reborn Flame, Cileroc lets his mask slip just a bit and there is the faintest hint of recognition in his eyes.

Insight DC 10: Cileroc is nervous or anxious for something.

Insight DC 20: Something is wrong with Cileroc. Something about his demeanor is off and he displays a disturbing lack of empathy for others that suggests psychopathic behavior.

Elgar Faer (male dwarf): Elgar is dour dwarven moneylender. He holds notes on half the city, and is a common glowering face at most large social gatherings, as most important people like to try to keep on Elgar's good side in case they should ever need his services.

Insight DC 10: Elgar is clearly more concerned with wealth than comfort or human suffering. It is likely that he can be bought for just about any purpose if the price was high enough.

Streetwise DC 10: Speaking with Elgar, the PC realizes that Elgar is willing to make loans that might otherwise be considered disreputable or illegal.

Mol Flesz (male dragonborn): Mol is a highly placed member of the City Guard. Rumors that he can be bribed to overlook certain less than legal contraband coming through the city seem at odds with his vaulted Dragonborn sense of honor, but the stories persist nonetheless. He attends the party in the company of his nitpicking, rotund wife, Thava.

Mol is not entirely comfortable in this fancy social situation, but does his best to maintain his stoic, honorable composure while inspecting the buffet. No matter what embarrassing comments his wife may make, he pretends not to hear them. Any suggestions that there is an evil cult running through the city are taken to a personal affront to his efforts in the Coin Guard. He demands the PC retract his lies immediately.

Insight DC 10: Mol is an honorable man who does not make conversation lightly.

Streetwise DC 10: Mol is clearly a capable man and looks like he knows how to handle himself adequately in a fight.

Tiilra Nonintarr (female air genasi): An air genasi who is a talented, much sought after, singer; Tiilra is married to wealthy jeweler, Mintiir, who supplies many of the rich in Imdolphyn. Both are attending the party. Tiilra is the center of attention and pleasant courtly conversation, just salacious enough to gather a crowd of hangers on, but polite enough to avoid embarrassment.

Diplomacy DC 10: The PC is able to hold their own in conversation with Tiilra and earn a pleasant smile.

Insight DC 10: Tiilra is clearly a social animal who's fame and wit could be more devastating than any blade.

Insight DC 20: While Mintiir avoids conversation, he seems keenly interested in any conversations the PCs have regarding cults in the area. (Mintiir is a member of the Cult of the Reborn Flame, but Tiilra is not and he hopes to induct her tonight, or sacrifice her if she refuses.)

Perception DC 15: Mintiir wears a pendant under his shirt that displays a flame.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs have the opportunity to question some of the guests, or the players have tired of the party and are anxious to explore for Inar Venenellin, proceed to Encounter Four.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

There is no treasure to be found in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER FOUR: INVITATION TO A PRIVATE PARTY

SETUP

This encounter begins as the PCs notice that some of the party guests are getting messages by some of Imdarm Inar's personal guard. As these smiling privileged few and their retainers are lead off, the PCs are left wondering how to get invited to the private party that is almost certainly where the secretive Inar Venenellin is to be found.

Conversation and cheerful music drift through the garden trees alongside a warm breeze that gently stirs the paper lanterns. The party appears to be quite the success, despite the absence of the host.

As you scan the crowd once again, you notice one of the Imdarm's personal guards handing gilded card to one of the guests who smiles broadly after reading it. The guard then leads the guest into the mansion. It's then that you notice there are guards handing similar cards to nearly a dozen different guests. It would seem that there is a private party about to begin.

If the PCs failed the skill challenge, add the following:

A well-dressed guard walks up you and hands you a card covered in calligraphy that says, (if the PC is a guest) "Please join me for a private audience for my most important guests, Inar Venenellin;" (if the PC is a caterer or guard) "Please follow to a private party where you are needed to serve/protect my important guests."

The guard then gestures for you to follow him inside.

How the PCs proceed now depends on the rouse they used to enter the party. If the PCs are dates of any of the guests, then their escort receives an invitation and they are welcome to go inside with them. All of the named NPCs receive an invitation. If the PCs are masquerading as an invited guest, then that guest also receives an invitation which is mistakenly given to them. If the PCs have simply crashed the party, they will need to discover a way to follow or are staffing the party and did not fail the skill challenge. Each of the invited guests has several individuals in their retinue of hangers on and it is easy to blend in as they travel. The guards do not know who is with the guests, and most of the guests are intoxicated and not paying attention to who comes with them. If the

PCs are working as guards or caterers, they easily notice several members of the party staff are going with the guests and the PCs can easily follow along with the crowd.

If a PC try to follow covertly behind the boisterous crowd, have them make some Stealth rolls to shadow them, but allow them to be automatically successful. These PCs will be able to witness what occurs below, but can begin Encounter Five outside of the cell. In this situation (and if they succeeded in the skill challenge), they gain a surprise round at the beginning of Encounter Five.

If the PCs failed the skill challenge in Encounter One, they were noticed and the guards have been directed to get the PCs into the mansion without alerting them to what is about to happen. The guards seem shocked if any of the PCs are so rude as to refuse the Imdarm's invitation (for guests) or order (for employees). They will not use force to the PC to accompany them but will suggest that the offending PC should consider leaving the party (for guests) or that they will be fired for refusing (for employees). If that is not enough to convince them to come along, allow the PC to remain outside. The guard is watching for them to follow however, so they will not gain the automatic surprise at the beginning of Encounter Five.

THE PARTY'S OVER

Once inside the mansion, the guards, and there are a lot of them, lead the small crowd down a set of stairs into the basement, and into a pen to await their eventual slaughter as sacrifices to the Raging Flame!

The inside of the Imdarm's mansion is opulent but tasteful. The guards direct the party of guests down a set of stairs, presumably leading into the basement. There is a sense of excitement from the intoxicated crowd, eager to be invited to this private audience with one of the city's Merchant Lords.

The anticipation, however, quickly turns to confusion as the guests reach the bottom of the stairs. Instead of the lavish party expected, there are dozens of well-armed guards and a starkly plain cellar with two exits, one a door made of iron bars.

One of the guards, a particular brutish bugbear, yells at the nervous crowd. "Alright you lot, through door or I snap youse neck. Those who don't talk back won't git hurt. Everyone else will be! Move!" The guards begin shoving the crowd through the opened cell door.

Give the PCs a chance to decide how to proceed, but if the PCs are in the crowd of guests (and not shadowing

behind), there are guards on the stairs, guards blocking the other door, and guards shoving them with their weapons towards the open cell. It is clear that the PCs, who should not have most of their equipment, are dreadfully outnumbered. Be sure to make it clear to the PCs that they have very little chance of escaping at this time, and many of the more or less innocent guests would likely be killed during their escape attempt. This is complicated by the fact that if they have any hope of getting close to Inar, an escape attempt with lots of witnesses will likely take them far from his lair.

The guards do their best to be intimidating, but avoid using lethal attacks. They know that their master needs live sacrifices, though they needn't be unhurt. If forced to, they avoid killing any PC that must be subdued.

If the PCs insist on fighting, they face the following guards:

- Four Bugbear Warriors (*MM* p.135)
- Two Dragonborn Soldiers (*MM* p. 86)
- Two Dwarf Bolters (*MM* p.97)
- Two Halfling Prowlers (*MM* p. 152)
- Fifteen Human Lackeys (*MM* p. 162)
- One Human Mage (*MM* p. 163)

The guests in the crowd do not fight. A few of them laugh nervously that maybe this is some sort of practical joke on the part of their host. Should combat break out, they flee to the far corners of the room or into the cell. See the **Features of the Area** in Encounter Five for a further description of the area.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs are captured and imprisoned with the rest of the guests, they must bide their time until an opportunity presents itself to break free. Proceed to Encounter Five.

If the PC insisted on fighting the guards and somehow managed to succeed despite the odds, give them the experience for Encounter Five and move to Encounter Six.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone (unless they fought the guards, and then they receive the XP for Encounter Five and it does count towards a milestone).

TREASURE

There is no treasure to be found in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER FIVE: JAILBREAK

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/5 (750/1000
XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

6 Human Lackeys (Level 7) (L)
1 Dwarf Bolter (Level 4) (D)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

6 Human Lackeys (Level 9) (L)
1 Dwarf Bolter (Level 6) (D)

This encounter assumes the PCs have either gone along with their ruse and been captured along with several other party guests, or they have been subdued and put in the cell with the other captives. If some of the PCs are roaming free and did not defeat the large crowd of guards (which would cause the PCs to move directly to Encounter Six) the DM should adjust the read aloud text accordingly.

If the PCs succeeded in the Skill Challenge and are shadowing behind the guards, they witness the events from cover and gain automatic surprise when the fight begins.

As the adventurers ponder what to do next, read:

Looking about the large cell, you quickly take stock of its complete emptiness. With the exception of you and the other trapped guests, there is nothing but bare stone walls.

Before you can begin formulating a plan, a halfling comes through the other door. "Faerog, his Lordships wants to see you and the boys right away. I'm ta take a few of the others upstairs and keep watch over the shindig."

The bugbear offers a toothy smile, "No doubt he be ready to start the ritual and he's looking for some strong backs to slit the throats he's already collected." He points at one of the dwarves and a collection of humans behind him. "You lot stay here and get the next sacrifice ready while we go see what he needs."

With that, the bugbear and most of the guards go through the other door, deeper into the underground

complex. The halfling and the dragonborn head up the stairs and the dwarf begins fiddling with a key ring.

As the dwarf goes to open the door, the PCs have what may be their best chance for liberation. When the dwarf goes to open the door, he will not have his crossbow in hand and the majority of the guards will have left the room.

If the PCs do not take the opportunity, Mol Flesz's wife Thava will comment "If only we had any real heroes to save us," and following a deep sign, Mol will step up and haphazardly swing at the dwarf, missing wildly but starting the combat. None of the NPCs (those that should be are too drunk to stand) are effective combatants, but the DM should feel free to describe the crowd's efforts "help."

DM Note: For powers that have the Weapon key word, a fist is considered a weapon (and thus any power that requires a weapon can still be used). Also not that spells with the Implement key word do not require an implement, but rather gain benefits from magical implements (and thus can still be used).

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area in front of the cell is relatively open.

Illumination: Torches on the wall provide ample illumination. The torches are marked on the map with a * and can be pulled from the scones as minor action. They can double as a club (without the +2 proficiency bonus), though using them as a weapon extinguishes the flame. If some of the torches are extinguished in the fight, the light conditions may change to dim (concealment) or even complete darkness (total concealment).

Cell Doors: The barred cell doors provide cover for attacks passing through them. The metal bars require a DC 28 Strength to break and they have an AC and Reflex of 5 and Fortitude of 10. They can be destroyed by doing 60 hp of damage.

Crowd: The four squares against the back wall of the cell are filled with the party guests trying to avoid as much of the combat as possible. These squares are difficult terrain, but a PC can try to hide among them gaining concealment.

TACTICS

The dwarf bolter tries to back pedal away from combat as quickly as possible so he can use his crossbow without fear of Opportunity Attacks. If cornered, he uses his hammer instead.

The human lackeys try to fight in groups of two, giving each other flank, while staying close to each other in order to benefit from their *Mob Rule* power.

Both the dwarf and the lackeys choose to knock out a PC rather than kill them, knowing that the PCs are needed for the sacrificial rites about to begin. The lackeys are entirely under Inar's sway and are true believers in the cult. They fight to the death. The dwarf is less confident and he if is bloodied and the party has slain all the human lackeys, he tries to make a run for it and warn the other guards in the complex, trying to run for the temple (note that the door to the hallway is not open, so he will need to spend an action in order to open it).

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove two human lackeys.

Six PCs: Add two human lackeys.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Following the combat, the PCs have to make several important choices regarding the disposition of prisoners and their fellow captives.

Fellow Captives: It is possible following the investigations of Encounter Three that the PCs will have cause not to trust some of their fellow captives. Once the party wins their freedom, they will have to decide what to do with the rest of the party-goers that were captured alongside the PCs. The PCs could lock them in the cell, though the guests will object strenuously, they are not in a position to argue with the PCs.

Should the PCs choose to let all of them go, Cileroc (who is a cultist) will warn the remaining house guards that the PCs are loose and those guards will reinforce the final combat, arriving shortly after it begins. See Encounter Ten for more details.

Interrogating Cultists: If the PCs interrogate the dwarf or any of the lackeys, they can gain some helpful information. Beyond threats that Pyruktmus will flay their souls or the Raging Flame will burn his enemies alive, they admit that there are several creatures "blessed" by Achazar including an angel who has turned from the false gods and a lycanthrope blessed by the Flame who protects the Master. They also know that strange creatures that appear to be a mass of floating tentacles move through the halls and seem to obey the Master's will. All of the cultists are dangerous fanatics and must be slain or locked away, or they will do their best to warn the other cultists and slay the PCs whenever given the chance.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

If the PCs defeat the guards they receive 150/200 experience points each. Note that the Encounter Level and the experience for this encounter has been increased by one to account for the significant disadvantage the PCs find themselves at when the combat begins.

TREASURE

The lackey's have no treasure, but PCs might choose to claim the six clubs, six suits of leather armor, suit of chainmail, warhammer or crossbow. Since the PCs will shortly get their own gear back, there is no need to spend lots of time trying to figure out who will fit into which sets of armor.

The dwarf bolter carries a *power gem* that the PCs can claim as their own.

ENCOUNTER FIVE: JAILBREAK STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

| Dwarf Bolter | Level 4 Artillery |
|--|---------------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 175 |
| Initiative +5 Senses Perception +8; low-light vision | |
| HP 46; Bloodied 23 | |
| AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 16, Will 14 | |
| Saving Throws +5 against poison effects | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Warhammer (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 2 damage. | |
| r Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage. | |
| Aimed Shot | |
| The dwarf bolter gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and deals an extra 1d6 damage with ranged attacks against creatures that don't have cover. | |
| Stand Your Ground | |
| When an effect forces a dwarf to move-through a pull, a push, or a slide – the dwarf moves 1 square less than the effect specifies. | |
| When an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Common, Dwarven |
| Skills Dungeoneering +10, Endurance +7 | |
| Str 14 (+4) | Dex 16 (+5) Wis 12 (+3) |
| Con 16 (+5) | Int 11 (+2) Cha 10 (+2) |
| Equipment chainmail, warhammer, crossbow with 20 bolts | |

| Human Lackey | Level 7 Minion |
|--|-------------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 75 |
| Initiative +3 Senses Perception +4 | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion | |
| AC 19; Fortitude 17, Reflex 14, Will 15; see also <i>mob rule</i> | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +12 vs. AC; 6 damage. | |
| Mob Rule | |
| The human lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human lackeys are within 5 squares of it. | |
| Alignment Any | Languages Common |
| Str 16 (+6) | Dex 11 (+3) Wis 12 (+4) |
| Con 14 (+5) | Int 10 (+3) Cha 13 (+4) |
| Equipment leather armor, club | |

ENCOUNTER FIVE: JAILBREAK STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

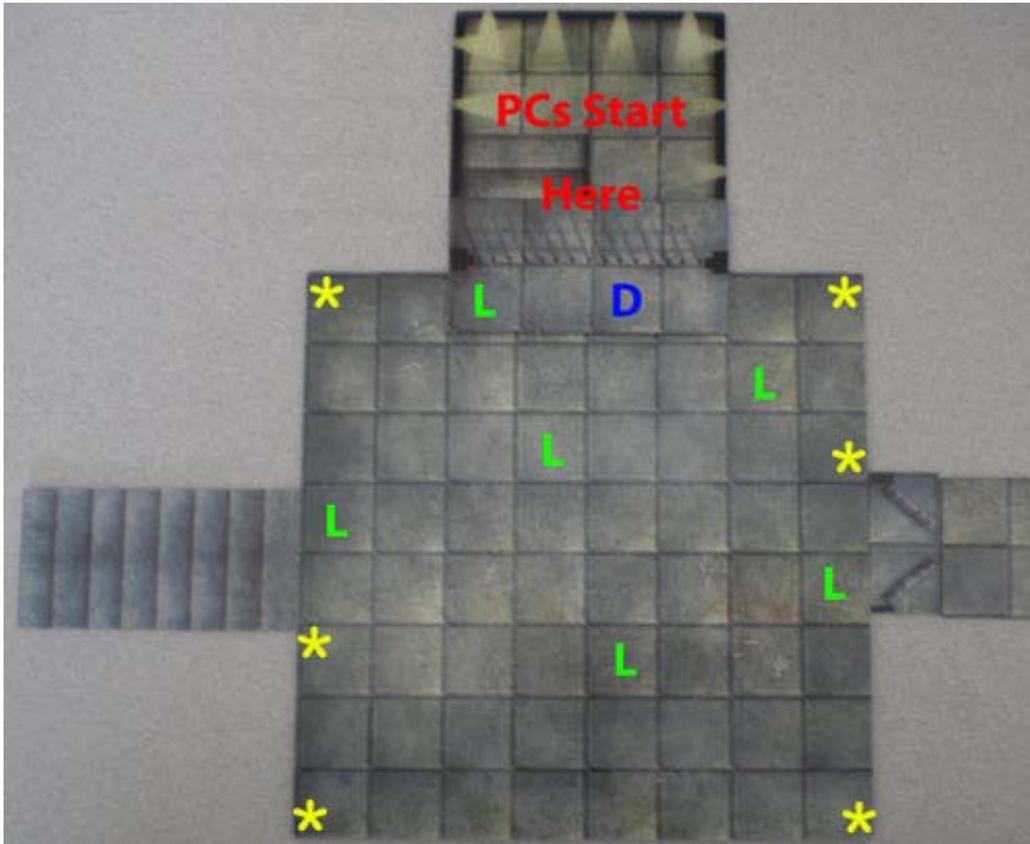
| Dwarf Bolter | Level 6 Artillery |
|---|---------------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 175 |
| Initiative +6 Senses Perception +8; low-light vision | |
| HP 58; Bloodied 29 | |
| AC 19; Fortitude 18, Reflex 18, Will 16 | |
| Saving Throws +5 against poison effects | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Warhammer (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage. | |
| r Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +12 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage. | |
| Aimed Shot | |
| The dwarf bolter gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and deals an extra 1d6 damage with ranged attacks against creatures that don't have cover. | |
| Stand Your Ground | |
| When an effect forces a dwarf to move-through a pull, a push, or a slide – the dwarf moves 1 square less than the effect specifies. When an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Common, Dwarven |
| Skills Dungeoneering +10, Endurance +7 | |
| Str 14 (+4) | Dex 16 (+5) Wis 12 (+3) |
| Con 16 (+5) | Int 11 (+2) Cha 10 (+2) |
| Equipment chainmail, warhammer, crossbow with 20 bolts | |

| Human Lackey | Level 9 Minion |
|--|-------------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 100 |
| Initiative +4 Senses Perception +5 | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion | |
| AC 21; Fortitude 19, Reflex 16, Will 17; see also <i>mob rule</i> | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +14 vs. AC; 7 damage. | |
| Mob Rule | |
| The human lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human lackeys are within 5 squares of it. | |
| Alignment Any | Languages Common |
| Str 16 (+6) | Dex 11 (+3) Wis 12 (+4) |
| Con 14 (+5) | Int 10 (+3) Cha 13 (+4) |
| Equipment leather armor, club | |

ENCOUNTER FIVE: JAILBREAK MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Halls of the Giant Kings x1



ENCOUNTER SIX: CARE PACKAGE

SETUP

Teamster Joade (Streetwise +4)

After the combat outside the cells, it is assumed that the party decides to venture further into the complex to slay the cult leader and rescue whatever captives he may hold.

As you proceed through the corridor, deeper into the dungeon beneath the Imdarm's mansion, you see a swirl of blue smoke that grows until it takes on the shape of a small man carrying a chest. The man smiles and puts the chest down. "Whew, I didn't think that was actually going to work. Hi, remember me, Joade? We met a few months ago in Tarmalune? At least I think it was you, you look all blue and smoky. Anyway, Yulis the fortune teller said you'd be needing some help and that things were about to get real bad. With her help, I rustled up all your gear that I could find and got her to send it. I hope this will help..." His voice trails off as the smoke dissipates, leaving behind a very real chest.

Characters that played *MINI1-1 Stirring the Embers* recognize Joade as the teamster who first helped them ferry the wounded to see Halagothra when their adventures with the Cult of the Reborn Flame first began. Those PCs who played *MINI1-4 Coaxing the Flame* recognize Yulis as the fortune teller from Harglast who had tamed a pocket of magic taking the form of blue smoke beneath the Blood and Bones Fortunehouse. Both have been allies of the PCs in their fight against the Cult of the Reborn Flame.

Inside the chest the PCs can find all of their armor, weapons, and items that they left behind. Anything they stashed somewhere, took great pains to hide, or they are already carrying is obviously not in the box. Only those things that Joade could have gotten access to without supernatural aid are to be found in the box.

In addition there are may be two more items of interest in the box. If any PC has story object *MINI12 Tarmalune Contact* and choose Joade on that story object, Joade has put a little something extra in the box for them. In a sack labeled with that PC's name is a *potion of healing* and a *ritual scroll of Tenser's floating disk*.

The second item of interest is a plain wooden scroll tube sealed in blue wax. Inside is a prophecy written in a feminine hand (by Yulis). Give the players Appendix #3.

This prophecy suggests that the tome in the Flame Vault watched by Rathloff (Encounter Nine) can be used to bypass the Barrier of Flesh and the sliding statues in Encounter Ten.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs are re-equipped, they are ready to continue to Encounter Seven and exploring the complex beneath the mansion.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

Unless any of the PCs have Joade as a contact on story object *MINI12 Tarmalune Contact*, the only treasure here is the PCs' own possessions. If a PC has the correct story object, they receive a *potion of healing* and a *ritual scroll of Tenser's floating disk*.

ENCOUNTER SEVEN: HALLS OF HORROR

SETUP

This encounter describes the rooms in the dungeons beneath Inar's home. While the PCs explore this disturbing lair, the judge will break away to Encounters Eight and Nine, and then come back to Encounter Seven, as described below.

The door from the room with the cell in it leads to a four way intersection. To your left there is a metal door with a light coming from underneath it. A man's voice can be heard talking in hushed tones. To your right the passage ends in a T-intersection. Directly ahead, there is a strange fleshy mass that blocks your progress. Bubbles of translucent skin slough off a clear slime that pools on the stone floor, only to evaporate seconds later.

ROOM 1: THE CELL

This is the room where Encounter Five takes place and it is described there.

ROOM 2: LATRINE

A foul smell emanates from this room, somewhere between offal and rotted meat. Two low steps lead into a murky pool of water at the rear of the room, arranged for bathing. There are hooks in the wall above the pool. Against the wall that the door enters from is a pit that the smell radiates from. A wooden bench with holes cut into the seats rests across the cavity.

This room is used by the temple guards for their various biological needs. Those investigating the latrine pit will note that the detritus seems to move with a life of its own. If attacked, a strange yellow slime bubbles up through any holes poked into the sludge. The slime blindly groups in the direction of the PCs forming tendrils that wave in the air.

The slime creature is a byproduct of the temples otherworldly experimentation. Whatever alien beast it may be, Inar finds it to be relatively harmless and it seems content to feed off the offal poured into the pit with it; or so he believes. The rotten meat smell comes from one unlucky guard who was pulled off the bench one evening and drowned beneath the sludge. His body, floating just beneath the surface, bears bite wounds, strange since the slime appears to have no teeth.

Should a PC actually climb into the cesspool, the creature moves away from them and does not bother them. If the PCs insist, they can easily kill the creature using fire.

ROOM 3: BARRACKS

The smell of old sweat and unwashed clothing marks this room as a dormitory or barracks as much as the bunk beds and trunks.

This room is empty of guards when the PCs first arrive, all the guards having either been deployed above ground or gone deeper into the temple. If the PCs take the time to search the trunks, they find a collection of useful items among the guards' personal possessions (see the Treasure entry below).

ROOM 4: LIBRARY

When the PCs open the door to the library, proceed to Encounter Nine.

ROOM 5: TEMPLE

The door to this room, if there is one, is beyond a barrier of warm, slimy flesh. What keeps the slippery spheres of viscera from collapsing to the ground is not clear, but it looks as if one could worm their through to whatever horror dwells on the other side.

The Barrier of Flesh is a scab created by the joining of two worlds (a DC 15 Arcana suggests this may be the case). The temple to the Dawn Titans beyond the door has been corrupted by infernal magic and the twisted insanity of the Far Realm. Any power that Inar could reach out to in order wake his burning master, he has fully embraced. That power is held in check by this oozing barrier that also serves as a first line of defense. Moving through the Barrier of Flesh counts as moving through difficult terrain. The Barrier provides both cover and concealment from those on the other side, but does not completely block sight or passage. However, those who are not numbered among Achazar's faithful find crossing the Barrier to be extremely disturbing and take 2d6 + 3 points of fire and psychic damage. Any PC that possesses the story object *MINI11 Branded* (from *MINI-1 Stirring the Embers*) takes half damage. PCs that ALSO have *MINI19 Achazar's Blaze* (from *MINI-5 Pyrophobia*) take no damage. The Barrier does not seem to take damage from weapons or spells. Nothing within the PCs power can harm it.

The tome recovered from the Flame Vault in Encounter Nine contains an incantation that will part

the Barrier of Flesh, causing to split and then wither away as a Standard action and a successful DC 15 Arcana or Religion check.

The Barrier of Flesh mutes sound sufficiently that combat in the hallway will not be heard in the temple.

Once the PCs pass through the first Barrier of Flesh and open the door to the temple, proceed to Encounter Ten.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Following the investigation of Room 2 or 3, proceed to Encounter Eight. If the PCs are moving to investigate room 5 and have not had Encounter Eight, move directly there before proceeding to Encounter Ten. When the PCs investigate room 4, move to Encounter Nine. If the PCs have had Encounter Eight and then move towards Room 5 without having had Encounter Nine, Rathloff opens the door from the library (his chain is just long enough) to see what the commotion is.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

Stored among the possessions of the guards in the barracks are a set of *bracers of enforced regret*, a pair of *boots of free movement*, and a *baffling cape +1*.

ENCOUNTER SEVEN: HALLS OF HORROR

TILE SETS NEEDED

Halls of the Giant Kings x1



ENCOUNTER EIGHT: PERIL OF THE MIND

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 4/6 (875/1250 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

Faerog (Level 5) (F)

6 Crazy Human Rabble (Level 2) (C)

4 Fell Taint Thought Eaters (Level 2) (T)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

Faerog (Level 7) (F)

6 Crazy Human Rabble (Level 4) (C)

4 Fell Taint Thought Eaters (Level 4) (T)

Having just managed to reequip themselves, the party has ventured into the dungeon. As the PCs are exiting room 2 or 3, a group of guards, this time reinforced by the Fell Taint Thought Eaters, are returning to the cell to find out what's taking so long for the Dwarf Bolter to bring more sacrifices.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

Footsteps and a strange thrumming echo from down the hallway as Faerog the bugbear comes into view. Behind him are several men, or at least they once were. All of them have a wild look, and their eyes seem to have been replaced with orbs of fire. Strangle tendrils, dripping with ooze, emerge from under their clothes and snake into their ears.

But that is not the strangest creatures before. Floating behind them are four twisted knots of tentacles, each tentacle festooned with eyes and ending in grasping maws. Wisps of fog drip from their many mouths and the thrumming seems to emanate from the fell creatures.

Faerog breaks into a wide, toothsome grin and says, "Take them."

The guards attack immediately and do not stop to talk. It is quite possible that give the confinement of the fight that the PCs might fall back into the rooms on either side of them. See Encounter Seven for their descriptions.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Torches on the wall provide ample illumination.

TACTICS

The Crazy Human Rabble rush forward, trying to keep at least two other Rabble within 5 squares so they gain the benefit of *Mob Rule*. They try to get into melee as quickly as possible so their *Psychic Feedback* affecting as many PCs as possible and they can use their *Aura of Madness* to slide foes into flanks. The Rabble fight to the death, but purposely knock out any PC they defeat.

Faerog begins the combat using his *Psychic Scream* on as many PCs as possible. When he does so, he throws back his head and tentacles that end in fanged mouths come out of his mouth and scream. He then uses his action point and tries to get into flank with one the Rabble so that he can gain the benefit of his *Predatory Eye*. He uses his *Skullthumper* at the first opportunity. If Faerog is bloodied and all of the Thought Eaters have been slain, he tries to run for Inar and warn him that the PCs are loose.

Two of the Fell Taint Thought Eaters close and use *Thought Fog* on as many foes as possible. The other two do so on the second round. On other rounds, they move back and up and use *Spirit Haze* until their *Thought Fog* recharges. The Fell Taints fight till defeated and they do not take prisoners. If an opportunity presents itself, all of them swarm a downed foe and use their *Fell Taint Feeding*. Even if one of them kills the downed PC, the others waste their turn attempting to feed on that target.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove one Fell Taint Thought Eater and one Crazy Human Rabble.

Six PCs: Add one Fell Taint Thought Eater and one Crazy Human Rabble.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter does not end until either all of the monsters are defeated or all the PCs are disabled. Should the PCs be defeated, the survivors wake up on the floor in Encounter Ten, as Inar prepares to sacrifice them.

If the PCs are still exploring, return to Encounter Seven. If they have finished and are ready to end the threat, Move to Encounter Ten.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

If the PCs defeat the guards and their fell companions, they receive 175/250 experience points each.

TREASURE

Faerog carries 25/25 gp in his belt pouch.

ENCOUNTER EIGHT: PERIL OF THE MIND STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

| Faerog, Bugbear Warrior | Level 5 Brute |
|--|--------------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 200 |
| Initiative +5 Senses Perception +4; low-light vision | |
| HP 76; Bloodied 38 | |
| AC 17; Fortitude 17, Reflex 15, Will 14 | |
| Speed 6 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| m Morningstar (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +7 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage. | |
| M Skullthumper (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon | |
| Requires morningstar and combat advantage; +5 vs. Fortitude; 1d12 + 6 damage, and the target is knocked prone and dazed (save ends). | |
| P redatory Eye (minor; encounter) | |
| The bugbear warrior deals an extra 1d6 damage on the next attack it makes with combat advantage. It must apply this bonus before the end of its next turn. | |
| P syhic Scream (standard; recharge 6) ♦ Psychic | |
| Close blast 5; targets enemies; +8 vs. Will; 1d8 + 3 psychic damage. The target is dazed and during its turn, the target must attack the enemy nearest to it at the start of its turn (save ends). | |
| F arm Realm Action | |
| The bugbear warrior gains 1 action point. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Goblin |
| Skills Intimidate +9, Stealth +11 | |
| Str 20 (+7) | Dex 16 (+5) Wis 14 (+4) |
| Con 16 (+5) | Int 10 (+2) Cha 10 (+2) |
| Equipment hide armor, morningstar | |

| Crazed Human Rabble | Level 2 Minion |
|--|-------------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 31 |
| Initiative +1 Senses Perception +1 | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion | |
| AC 15; Fortitude 13, Reflex 11, Will 11; see also <i>mob rule</i> | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +6 vs. AC; 4 damage. | |
| A ura of Madness (opportunity, when a creature starts its turn within 3 squares of the human rabble) | |
| The human rabble slides the triggering creature 1 square. | |
| P syhic Feedback (when the human rabble drops to 0 hit points) ♦ Psychic | |
| Each enemy adjacent to one or more human rabble takes 2 psychic damage. | |
| M ob Rule | |
| The human lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human lackeys are within 5 squares of it. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Common |
| Str 14 (+3) | Dex 10 (+1) Wis 10 (+1) |
| Con 12 (+2) | Int 9 (+0) Cha 11 (+1) |
| Equipment club | |

DM Note: Faerog is a Bugbear Warrior with the Those Who Hear theme applied.

| Fell Taint Thought Eater | Level 2 Controller |
|--|-------------------------|
| Small aberrant magical beast | XP 125 |
| Initiative +2 Senses Perception +6 | |
| HP 26; Bloodied 13 | |
| AC 14; Fortitude 13, Reflex 13, Will 15 | |
| Resist insubstantial Vulnerable 5 psychic | |
| Speed 1, fly 6 (hover) | |
| m Tendril Caress(standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic | |
| +6 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage. | |
| R Spirit Haze (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic | |
| Ranged 10; +6 vs. Will; 1d4 + 5 psychic damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the fell taint thought eater's next turn. | |
| A Thought Fog(standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ Psychic, Charm | |
| Close blast 5; targets enemies; +5 vs. Will; the target is slowed (save ends). <i>First Failed Saving Throw:</i> The target is immobilized instead of slowed (save ends). | |
| F ell Taint Feeding (standard; at-will) ♦ Healing | |
| Targets a helpless or unconscious creature; the fell taint thought eater loses insubstantial and its fly speed until the end of its next turn, and it makes a coup de grace against the target. If the thought eater kills the target, it regains all of its hit points. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages - |
| Str 11 (+1) | Dex 12 (+2) Wis 10 (+1) |
| Con 13 (+2) | Int 5 (-1) Cha 16 (+4) |

ENCOUNTER EIGHT: PERIL OF THE MIND STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

| Faerog, Bugbear Warrior | Level 7 Brute |
|---|--------------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 200 |
| Initiative +6 Senses Perception +4; low-light vision | |
| HP 96; Bloodied 48 | |
| AC 19; Fortitude 19, Reflex 17, Will 14 | |
| Speed 6 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| m Morningstar (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +9 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage. | |
| M Skullthumper (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon | |
| Requires morningstar and combat advantage; +7 vs. Fortitude; 1d12 + 7 damage, and the target is knocked prone and dazed (save ends). | |
| P redatory Eye (minor; encounter) | |
| The bugbear warrior deals an extra 1d6 damage on the next attack it makes with combat advantage. It must apply this bonus before the end of its next turn. | |
| P syhic Scream (standard; recharge 6) ♦ Psychic | |
| Close blast 5; targets enemies; +10 vs. Will; 1d8 + 3 psychic damage. The target is dazed and during its turn, the target must attack the enemy nearest to it at the start of its turn (save ends). | |
| F arm Realm Action | |
| The bugbear warrior gains 1 action point. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Goblin |
| Skills Intimidate +9, Stealth +11 | |
| Str 20 (+7) | Dex 16 (+5) Wis 14 (+4) |
| Con 16 (+5) | Int 10 (+2) Cha 10 (+2) |
| Equipment hide armor, morningstar | |

| Crazed Human Rabble | Level 4 Minion |
|--|-------------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 44 |
| Initiative +2 Senses Perception +2 | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion | |
| AC 17; Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 13; see also <i>mob rule</i> | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +8 vs. AC; 5 damage. | |
| A ura of Madness (opportunity, when a creature starts its turn within 3 squares of the human rabble) | |
| The human rabble slides the triggering creature 1 square. | |
| P syhic Feedback (when the human rabble drops to 0 hit points) | |
| ♦ Psychic | |
| Each enemy adjacent to one or more human rabble takes 2 psychic damage. | |
| M ob Rule | |
| The human lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human lackeys are within 5 squares of it. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Common |
| Str 14 (+3) | Dex 10 (+1) Wis 10 (+1) |
| Con 12 (+2) | Int 9 (+0) Cha 11 (+1) |
| Equipment club | |

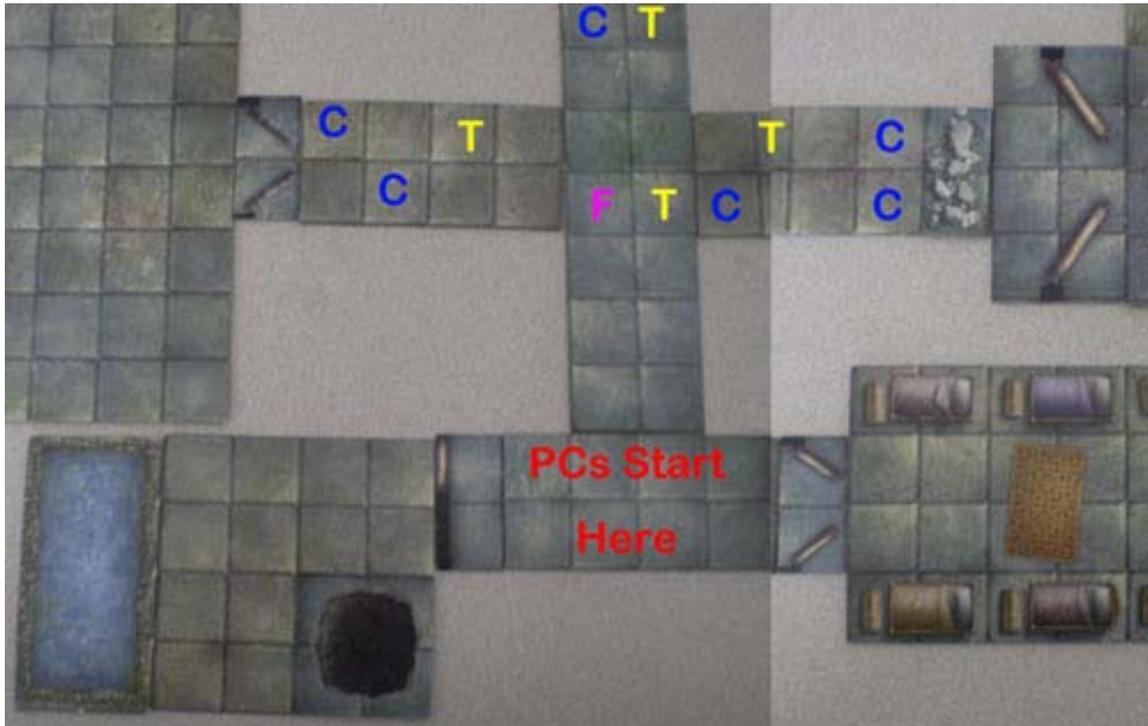
DM Note: Faerog is a Bugbear Warrior with the *Those Who Hear* theme applied.

| Fell Taint Thought Eater | Level 4 Controller |
|--|-------------------------|
| Small aberrant magical beast | XP 250 |
| Initiative +3 Senses Perception +7 | |
| HP 42; Bloodied 26 | |
| AC 16; Fortitude 15, Reflex 15 Will 17 | |
| Resist insubstantial Vulnerable 5 psychic | |
| Speed 1, fly 6 (hover) | |
| m Tendril Caress(standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic | |
| +8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage. | |
| R Spirit Haze (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic | |
| Ranged 10; +8 vs. Will; 1d4 + 6 psychic damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the fell taint thought eater's next turn. | |
| A Thought Fog (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ Psychic, Charm | |
| Close blast 5; targets enemies; +7 vs. Will; the target is slowed (save ends). <i>First Failed Saving Throw:</i> The target is immobilized instead of slowed (save ends). | |
| F ell Taint Feeding (standard; at-will) ♦ Healing | |
| Targets a helpless or unconscious creature; the fell taint thought eater loses insubstantial and its fly speed until the end of its next turn, and it makes a coup de grace against the target. If the thought eater kills the target, it regains all of its hit points. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages - |
| Str 11 (+1) | Dex 12 (+2) Wis 10 (+1) |
| Con 13 (+2) | Int 5 (-1) Cha 16 (+4) |

ENCOUNTER EIGHT: PERIL OF THE MIND MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Halls of the Giant Kings x1



ENCOUNTER NINE: DARK AND TWISTED TOMES

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/4 (750/875 XP)

SETUP

Important NPCs:

Rathloff (Arcana +15, Religion +10)

Vakekflik the Gelugon (MM p. 63)

This encounter includes the following traps at the low tier:

Flame Vault (Level 3) (V)

This encounter includes the following trap at the high tier:

Flame Vault (Level 5) (V)

When the PCs enter Room 4, the library, they find their long lost ally Rathloff the Occultist. Originally met in *MINI1-3 Building the Pyre*, he went missing in *MINI1-5 Pyrophobia* during the attack on the cult's ritual to awaken the Raging Flame.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

This room is almost cozy, its walls draped in dusty tomes and the floor sheltered by a thick rug. A crackling hearth warms the room with several large wingback chairs facing it. An elderly man sits in one of the chairs, a book in his lap and a manacle snaking from his right leg to a ring set in the floor.

In the corner, away from the fire, an arcane circle is inscribed upon the floor. Inside it stands a large insectoid-looking humanoid holding a longspear. An aura of cold originates from the creature, and it cocks its head as you enter.

Those PCs who have met Rathloff in *MINI1-3 Building the Pyre* recognize him right off. He greets those PCs with the story object *MINI15 Friend of Rathloff* by name, and is quite happy that anyone might have come to rescue him. With a few swings of a stout weapon or an easy Thievery check to pick the lock, the PCs can free Rathloff with little difficulty. He can share the following information with the PCs:

- He and many of the miners from Ramekho were with the PCs when they attacked the cult's ritual on the hills outside Tarmalune. When Pyrultimus

(Rathloff doesn't know his real name) opened the rift the Raging Flame's mind, he was able to speak some words of power he read in one of his tomes. The incantation protected his mind, but the sight of the Dawn Titian's mind and the *Things* than came through the rift shattered the minds of his allies (just as they did the PCs in *MINI1-5 Pyrophobia*). One of the creatures, a twisted knot of tentacles, covered him in a fog that slowed his limbs and eventually made it so that he couldn't move. It was then that the cult captured him during the chaos.

- Rathloff woke up here and for the last several weeks Pyrultimus has been forcing him to use his scholarly talents to research a number of eldritch questions; most of them quite dark and disturbing. Rathloff has unwillingly helped Pyrultimus, who seems to be a talented ritual caster as well, to work out another way to try to wake Achazar. It combines Lekeral's research on the dragonblooded (*MINI1-1 Stirring the Embers*) and the ritual the PCs disrupted (*MINI1-5 Pyrophobia*) with infernal pact magic that Rathloff worked out from conversations with Vakekflik.
- Rathloff did not want to help Pyrultimus, but the fiend promise to kill his granddaughter Glindarra if he didn't. He doesn't believe Pyrultimus has her, but he thinks the man could get to her easily enough. (The PCs last saw Glindarra in the company of Halagothra the Healer who they may or may not suspect is actually her grandmother; see *MINI1-3 Building the Pyre*).
- Pyrultimus used a ritual scroll to summon and bind a devil, which Rathloff has since learned is called Vakekflik. Vakekflik has been very helpful plumbing the dark secrets contained within Pyrultimus' occult library. Though Rathloff doesn't trust Vakekflik, and would not council in favor of freeing him, he does empathize with his captivity.
- Rathloff knows that Pyrultimus keeps the research he has performed, along with some of his most valuable tomes and spellbooks, in a vault that is protected with a magical puzzle. Rathloff does not know how to open it, but his observations suggest to him that it is protected by powerful magic that might make it quite dangerous.
- Rathloff doesn't think the PCs will need the contents of the vault to stop Pyrultimus, but it would likely be helpful.
- Rathloff shows obvious signs of torture and malnourishment. In addition to his normally elderly and infirm condition, this makes him even

less likely to be useful in a fight. If freed, he aides the PCs in gathering any information from the library and then asks to slip away from the dungeons so he can be reunited with his granddaughter.

The entire time that the PCs speak with Rathloff, Vakekflik stands quietly into the binding circle watching them, softly making insect clicking noises to himself. Should they address him, he tries to be helpful in hopes that the puny mortals will disrupt the circle and free him.

- Vakekflik has been helping Rathloff combine the rituals that Pyrultimus (he also does not know Inar's real name) had already gathered with infernal pact magic. It seems likely that Pyrultimus plans to bind himself further to Achazar the Dawn Titan in a bid for power and to awaken it.
- Vakekflik does not believe that Pyrultimus is as powerful as he claims to be, as many of the rituals and spells he uses has seemed to come from scrolls and items. The fact that he can use them at all makes it likely that he is an arcane caster however. He suspects that Pyrultimus is some kind of warlock.
- Vakekflik has seen that most of the creatures and mortals here have been corrupted by the twisted power of the Dawn Titans. In addition to them, he senses another powerful immortal nearby, but that creature is not a devil like himself. He cannot tell if it is an angel, some planar elemental creature, or something worse.
- Vakekflik promises that if the PCs free him, that he will aid them in stopping Pyrultimus. This is of course a lie, and Rathloff advises against it. Should the PCs free him, he uses his *Freezing Breath* on the party and then plane shifts away, back to the Nine Hells.
- Should the PCs wish to free Vakekflik, Rathloff suggests they gather up the most valuable books and then set fire to the library. A simple fire is not hot enough to harm Vakekflik, but it will eventually destroy the circle and free him, but it will take quite some time and the party will be long gone by then.
- Vakekflik knows nothing about the vault, but he agrees that it is magical and likely quite dangerous.

IN SLUMBER REMAIN QUEST CARD

Some PCs may have the *In Slumber Remain* Quest card in they stack and be on a quest to find out more about the

sleeping Dawn Titans. If the PC has completed task 1 (*Find and read a moldy tome that plums the murky tale of Darkturret and its tie to the sleeping god.*) and task 2 (*Find a man with a tattoo of a flame. Tell him "The cleansing flame thrives during even the coldest night," and then ask him when the next conflagration of souls will occur.*), they have sufficient information to ask a question of Vakekflik. If a PC with the Quest card I their stack asks Vakekflik where the sleeping god lies, he cocks his head to the side and offers what might be a smile. He says the following:

"So you seek the sleeping god puny mortal? Not the pretender Achazar, but the true sleeping god will have his conflation of souls before the year is out. Your path may start in the ruins of Darkturret in Gontel but it will take you to the frozen wastes of Fimbrul. There it waits under a millennia of ice and the chains of the divine. Seek the Key of Citrotralech in Darkturret. If you do not claim it, it will surely be used and then Toril will tremble beneath his wrath and the Dawn War will start anew."

Vakekflik will say precious little beyond this on the subject. He admits that as one of the immortals who served the gods in the war against the Dawn Titans, such a war will no doubt embroil him against the same foes as the PCs. That said, certain oaths prevent him from sharing any more information.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The fireplace and several candles illuminate the room with ample light.

Arcane Circle: The binding circle prevents Vakekflik from leaving it or attacking anyone outside of the circle. Anyone who steps inside the circle can be attacked. By simply scrapping a portion of the drawing away, Vakekflik is freed. However this must be done with purpose. Area of effect or close powers not specifically targeted at the circle will not affect it.

Bookshelves: The walls are covered in shelves that are packed with arcane tomes of questionable lore. Summoning demons, live sacrifice, and selling ones soul to alien entities from beyond space and time are some of the tamer subjects. Simply perusing one of the many tomes is a sanity shaking experience. To the right person, many of the tomes might be worth substantial coin, though most Good churches would consign these books to the flame first.

Flame Vault: This complicated vault, set into the wall, appears to be made of a strange alien metal. It has a circular metal door with a handle in the middle. Six circular patterns of glyphs are themselves arranged in a

circular pattern around the edge of the door. Each pattern surrounds a complicated lock. If the PCs attempt to open the vault, see the statistics block on the following page. Vakekflik is unaffected by the Flame Vault while inside the arcane circle, and Rathloff will wait in the hall while the PCs fiddle with the trapped safe. Do to the magic of the Flame Vault, none of the books are damaged by its attacks.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Decrease the difficulty of all the skill checks by one.

Six PCs: Increase the difficulty of all the skill checks by one.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs have decided whether to free Rathloff and Vakekflik, and have decided whether to open the vault or not, they are free to move back to Encounter Seven if they are not done exploring or to Encounter Ten if they are ready to assault Inar and the Cult of the Reborn Flame.

If the PCs have recovered the tomes from the Flame Vault, one is a huge, moldering tome with a decorative binding. It is filled with disturbing pictures of flayed men and fleshy horrors. If the PCs are willing to intone the incantations in the obviously evil book, they can use the tome to bypass the Barrier of Flesh and gain an advantage against the statues in Encounter Ten.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

If the PCs defeat the Flame Vault they receive 150/175 experience points each.

TREASURE

If the PCs allow Rathloff to gather the choicest tomes from the shelves, they will each receive 50/75 gp from their sale.

If the PCs successfully open the vault, they receive a ritual book with *Knock*, *Hand of Fate* and *Speak with Dead*.

ENCOUNTER NINE: DARK AND TWISTED TOMES STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Flame Vault Trap | Level 3 Solo Warden XP 750 |
| Trap: This complex magical lock takes a skill challenge to unlock, and each wrong move has dire consequences for those attempting to open it, as well as those nearby. | |
| Perception | |
| ◆No perception check is needed to notice the vault or that the six complicated glyph patterns must be trigger unlock the door. | |
| Additional Skill: Arcana | |
| ◆DC 10: The PC identifies the correct order the locks must be opened in. | |
| ◆DC 10: The PC identifies the correct order the glyphs must be tapped in order to allow a lock to be picked without automatic failure. | |
| Additional Skill: History | |
| ◆DC 10: The PC quickly searches through the books in the library identifying the symbols around the lock and giving a +2 bonuses to attempts to pick that lock. | |
| Additional Skill: Religion | |
| ◆DC 10: The PC identifies a few of the writings as blasphemous symbols meaning fire, summoning, and poison. | |
| Additional Skill: Thievery | |
| ◆DC 15: The PC taps the glyphs surrounding the lock in the right order and then picks the lock. | |
| Trigger | |
| When a PC begins working on a lock, the door to the room magically slams shut. The trap is a complexity 2 skill challenge (6 successes before 3 failures) that requires a DC 15 Thievery check for each success. With each failed check, the trap makes one of the following attacks (in order of failure). The trap may take more than one Immediate Reaction per turn, if more than one attempt to disable a lock is failed per turn. With each success or failure, another attempt to disable a lock must be made before the end of the attempting creature's next turn or a failure in the challenge is accrued. One the third failure all the locks reset and the door to the room opens, requiring the skill challenge to be performed anew, but ending the immediate threat. | |
| Attack (First Failure) ◆ Fire | |
| Immediate Reaction | Close blast 5 |
| Target: Each creature in the blast when the trap activates. | |
| Attack: +8 vs. Reflex | |
| Hit: 2d6 + 3 damage and target takes ongoing 3 fire damage (save ends) | |
| Miss: Half damage and target takes no ongoing fire damage | |
| Attack (Second Failure) ◆ Summoning | |
| Immediate Reaction | |
| Effect: The Flame Vault summons a Skeleton in a square adjacent to the vault. The skeleton begins attacking the nearest creature on its initiative. | |
| Attack (Third Failure) ◆ Poison | |
| Immediate Reaction | Close blast 5 (zone) |
| Target: Each creature in the blast when the trap activates. | |
| Attack: +8 vs. Fortitude | |
| Hit: 1d6 + 3 poison damage | |
| Effect: Any creature starting their turn in the poison cloud takes 5 points of poison damage. The cloud provides concealment inside it. The cloud persists for 5 rounds. | |
| Countermeasures | |

◆A character can ready a standard action to make a DC 15 Arcana check (trained only). The PC channels magical energy into the lock to delay its effects. If successful, the negative effect for failure can be delayed one round, giving PCs a chance to move away from the vault.

◆A character can ready a standard action to make a DC 20 Arcana check (trained only). The PC channels magical energy into the lock and causes it to reset. This negates one failed attempt and resets the lock.

◆The door to the vault has AC 15, Reflex 10, Fortitude 20, and hp 200. If the door is destroyed, the trap is disabled.

◆The door to the room has AC 10, Reflex 10, Fortitude 15, and hp 40. It has not lock but is instead magically sealed (requiring a DC 20 Arcana check (trained only) to open without destroying the door. If it is destroyed the PCs can gain access to the room (if in the hallway) or flee (if in the room).

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Skeleton | Level 3 Soldier XP - |
| Medium natural animate (undead) | |
| Initiative +6 | Senses Perception +3; darkvision |
| HP 45; Bloodied 22 | |
| AC 18; Fortitude 15, Reflex 16, Will 15 | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant | |
| Speed 5 | |
| m Longsword (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon | |
| +10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage and the target is marked until the end of the skeleton's next turn; see also <i>speed of the dead</i> . | |
| Speed of the Dead | |
| When making an opportunity attack, the skeleton gains a +2 bonus to the attack roll and deals an extra 1d6 damage. | |
| Alignment Unaligned Languages - | |
| Str 15 (+3) | Dex 17 (+4) Wis 14 (+3) |
| Con 13 (+2) | Int 3 (-3) Cha 3 (-3) |
| Equipment chainmail, heavy shield, longsword | |

ENCOUNTER NINE: DARK AND TWISTED TOMES STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

| Flame Vault Trap | Level 5 Solo Warden XP 875 |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Trap: This complex magical lock takes a skill challenge to unlock, and each wrong move has dire consequences for those attempting to open it, as well as those nearby. | |
| Perception | |
| ◆ No perception check is needed to notice the vault or that the six complicated glyph patterns must be triggered to unlock the door. | |
| Additional Skill: Arcana | |
| ◆ DC 12: The PC identifies the correct order the locks must be opened in. | |
| ◆ DC 12: The PC identifies the correct order the glyphs must be tapped in order to allow a lock to be picked without automatic failure. | |
| Additional Skill: History | |
| ◆ DC 12: The PC quickly searches through the books in the library identifying the symbols around the lock and giving a +2 bonus to attempts to pick that lock. | |
| Additional Skill: Religion | |
| ◆ DC 12: The PC identifies a few of the writings as blasphemous symbols meaning fire, summoning, and poison. | |
| Additional Skill: Thievery | |
| ◆ DC 17: The PC taps the glyphs surrounding the lock in the right order and then picks the lock. | |
| Trigger | |
| When a PC begins working on a lock, the door to the room magically slams shut. The trap is a complexity 2 skill challenge (6 successes before 3 failures) that requires a DC 17 Thievery check for each success. With each failed check, the trap makes one of the following attacks (in order of failure). The trap may take more than one Immediate Reaction per turn, if more than one attempt to disable a lock is failed per turn. With each success or failure, another attempt to disable a lock must be made before the end of the attempting creature's next turn or a failure in the challenge is accrued. One the third failure all the locks reset and the door to the room opens, requiring the skill challenge to be performed anew, but ending the immediate threat. | |
| Attack (First Failure) ◆ Fire | |
| Immediate Reaction | Close blast 8 |
| Target: Each creature in the blast when the trap activates. | |
| Attack: +10 vs. Reflex | |
| Hit: 2d8 + 4 damage and target takes ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends) | |
| Miss: Half damage and target takes no ongoing fire damage | |
| Attack (Second Failure) ◆ Summoning | |
| Immediate Reaction | |
| Effect: The Flame Vault summons two Skeletons in squares adjacent to the vault. The skeletons begin attacking the nearest creature on their initiative. | |
| Attack (Third Failure) ◆ Poison | |
| Immediate Reaction | Close blast 8 (zone) |
| Target: Each creature in the blast when the trap activates. | |
| Attack: +10 vs. Fortitude | |
| Hit: 1d6 + 4 poison damage | |
| Effect: Any creature starting their turn in the poison cloud takes 5 points of poison damage. The cloud provides concealment inside it. The cloud persists for 5 rounds. | |
| Countermeasures | |

◆ A character can ready a standard action to make a DC 17 Arcana check (trained only). The PC channels magical energy into the lock to delay its effects. If successful, the negative effect for failure can be delayed one round, giving PCs a chance to move away from the vault.

◆ A character can ready a standard action to make a DC 22 Arcana check (trained only). The PC channels magical energy into the lock and causes it to reset. This negates one failed attempt and resets the lock.

◆ The door to the vault has AC 16, Reflex 11, Fortitude 21, and hp 240. If the door is destroyed, the trap is disabled.

◆ The door to the room has AC 11, Reflex 11, Fortitude 16, and hp 50. It has no lock but is instead magically sealed (requiring a DC 22 Arcana check (trained only) to open without destroying the door. If it is destroyed the PCs can gain access to the room (if in the hallway) or flee (if in the room).

| Skeleton | Level 3 Soldier XP - |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Medium natural animate (undead) | |
| Initiative +6 | Senses Perception +3; darkvision |
| HP 45; Bloodied 22 | |
| AC 18; Fortitude 15, Reflex 16, Will 15 | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant | |
| Speed 5 | |
| m Longsword (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon | |
| +10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage and the target is marked until the end of the skeleton's next turn; see also <i>speed of the dead</i> . | |
| Speed of the Dead | |
| When making an opportunity attack, the skeleton gains a +2 bonus to the attack roll and deals an extra 1d6 damage. | |
| Alignment Unaligned Languages - | |
| Str 15 (+3) | Dex 17 (+4) Wis 14 (+3) |
| Con 13 (+2) | Int 3 (-3) Cha 3 (-3) |
| Equipment chainmail, heavy shield, longsword | |

ENCOUNTER NINE: DARK AND TWISTED TOMES MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Halls of the Giant Kings x1



ENCOUNTER TEN: TO SNUFF THE FLAME

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 5/7 (1000/1500 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

Fallen Angel of Valor (Level 4) (A)

Fiery Wereboar (Level 3) (W)

4 Crazy Human Rabble (Level 2) (C)

Inar Venenellin (Level 5) (I)

This encounter includes the following <creatures and/or traps> at the high tier:

Fallen Angel of Valor (Level 6) (A)

Fiery Wereboar (Level 5) (W)

4 Crazy Human Rabble (Level 4) (C)

Inar Venenellin (Level 7) (I)

Upon opening the large doors to the temple, the PCs witness the scene described below. The squares they are standing in are between two Barriers of Flesh.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

Another mass of oozing flesh blocks passage through the door, but through that dripping mess you make the horrors of the room beyond. Pyrultimus, Inar Venenellin, the leader of the Cult of the Reborn Flame, leads a foul ritual; a pile of bodies, both party guests and some of the guards lies at his feet. The corpses look like they have been boiled alive before having their throats slit. The air is split between two blasphemous statues, revealing a roiling flame.

An angelic man made of flame with hair of black, grasping claws and a large man-boar with fire red fur turn their attention to you while several robed cultist chant praise to the Raging Flame.

This temple to Achazar, the Raging Flame, is the last refuge of the Cult of the Reborn Flame. Inar is making his last effort to awaken his dark master. He has sacrificed several souls in an attempt to forge a pact with Achazar, and using their blood, all tainted by the blood of dragons, to open the rift to Achazar's mind. Impatient for the sacrifices to continue, Inar has completed that part of the ritual using his own guards when the dwarf bolter failed to bring more guests. Several parts of the

ritual are similar to those witnessed by the PCs in previous adventures in this series.

Inar cackles with made glee and orders his followers to attack. This battle is the culmination of twelve rounds of play and is meant to be as epic as possible for a heroic tier adventure. Make the fight as exciting as possible and if your players can handle it, do not hold back! With no more need for sacrifices, the creatures no longer try to knock out PCs when dropping them below 0 hit points.

DM Note: Should the PCs have let Cileroc go at the end of Encounter Five, he will have warned the remaining house guards that the PCs are loose. If your party is especially strong and has not been challenged, the DM can use this excuse to add additional Crazy Human Rabble, a Halfling Prowler, two Dragonborn Soldiers, or other guards (described at the end of Encounter Four) arriving during the fight from the direction of Room 1. If your party is already struggling, do not consider adding any additional foes.

Using the Tome from the Flame Vault: Those PCs searching through the tome recovered in Encounter Nine find nothing helpful to stop the ritual outright (short of killing Inar), but there is an incantation (DC 15 Arcana or Religion) that can be uttered as a standard action. The incantation turns off the statues described below.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The blazing rift brightly lights the room.

Alchemical Supplies: Near the pit is a large pile of alchemical supplies, essential oils, and rare incenses; all needed to prepare the ritual area. Now this area is difficult terrain with an added danger. As a standard action, a creature can topple handfuls of chemicals onto a foe adjacent to the alchemical supplies as a Dex vs. Reflex attack for 2d6 +3 points of acid damage. There are only enough supplies to make this attack once. Also, hidden among the piles (DC 5 Perception) is a silver ritual dagger that will be useful against the wereboar.

Altar of the Raging Flame: This large rounded stone block can be used to take cover.

Barrier of Flesh: There is another large Barrier blocking the entrance to the room. Its effects and properties are the same as the one described in Encounter Seven. Moving through the Barrier of Flesh counts as moving through difficult terrain. The Barrier provides both cover and concealment from those on the other side, but does not completely block sight or passage. However, those who are not number among Achazar's faithful find crossing the Barrier to be

extremely disturbing and take 2d6 + 3 points of fire and psychic damage. Any PC that possesses the story object *MINI11 Branded* (from *MINI1-1 Stirring the Embers*) takes half damage. PCs that ALSO have *MINI19 Achazar's Blaze* (from *MINI1-5 Pyrophobia*) take no damage. The Barrier does not seem to take damage from weapons or spells. The tome recovered from the Flame Vault in Encounter Nine contains an incantation that will part the Barrier of Flesh, causing to split and then wither away as a Standard action with a successful DC 15 Arcana or Religion check.

Boiling Oil: There is a large cauldron of boiling oil that is used in the sacrifices. Anyone entering or starting their turn in the cauldron takes 1d10 + 3 points of fire damage. The cauldron is magical heated and physically attached to the floor, so it cannot be moved. It is large enough to grant cover.

Pillar of Fire: The Pillar of Fire is a connection to Raging Flame himself. Any creature without the Fire keyword entering or starting their turn in the Pillar of Fire takes 2d6 + 3 points of fire damage and is then teleported 1d6 squares in a random (horizontal) direction (roll 1d8 for scatter direction). The square they land in must be a legal square and cannot be occupied by another creature, so the creature cannot end up in a wall, but could fall into the pit or the cauldron of boiling oil. If the generated random square is not a legal choice, reroll.

Pile of Dead Bodies: This gore-filled square is difficult terrain.

Pit: This pit was used to hold the sacrifices until they were needed. It is ten feet deep. A DC 15 Athletics check is required to climb out.

Statues: The two statues on either side of the fiery rift are large enough to grant cover. One depicts a flame covered demon and the other is of a tentacled horror with a three eyes and a large central mouth emitting fiery gout. The magic of the statues suck in potential sacrifices. Any living creature that is not a follower of Achazar (all the NPCs are) or does not have the story object *MINI19 Achazar's Blaze* (from *MINI1-5 Pyrophobia*) and ends their turn within two squares of a statue is slide one square towards the Pillar of Fire.

TACTICS

The Fallen Angel of Valor moves into melee range as quickly as possible to use his *Blade Fury* or *Lightning Strike* as efficiently as possible. When not needing to use his minor action, he activates *Movement of the Mind* to better position his allies. The Fallen Angel of Valor is utterly insane and fights to the death.

The Fiery Wereboar fights as a large humanoid with its maul, trying to block access to Inar. It focuses on creatures wielding silver weapons first. He changes his damage to fire damage unless the target seems to be resistant, in which case he switches back. When the Fiery Wereboar is bloodied, he changes into a Dire Boar and begins using his *Gore* attack. He is devoted to Inar and fights to the death, unless Inar and the angel are both slain, in which case he surrenders.

The Crazy Human Rabble rush forward, trying to keep at least two other Rabble within 5 squares so they gain the benefit of *Mob Rule*. They try to get into melee as quickly as possible so their *Psychic Feedback* affecting as many PCs as possible and they can use their *Aura of Madness* to slide foes into flanks. The Rabble fight to the death.

Inar is still casting the ritual and must use a minor every round to keep it going. If the PCs can prevent him from speaking or spending a minor action, the ritual will be disrupted and he will attack them all out, planning to try again at a later date. Inar starts by cursing one of his own minions and then uses *Hunger of Hadar* to catch as many of the PCs as possible and his own cursed minion, so that he can spread his curse to as many PCs as possible after killing the minion using his *rod of corruption*. He then spends an action point to use *Fiery Bolt*. In future rounds he sustains his zone and uses *Eldritch Blast*, relying on *Caiphon's Leap* and the Fallen Angel of Valor's *Movement of the Mind* to get him out of trouble. Inar is devoted to his cause and the PCs have already foiled his attacks to many times. If he is in danger of being defeated, he throws himself into the fiery pillar so his burnt corpse can be shunted elsewhere in the room and his soul can join with the Raging Flame.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove two Crazy Human Rabble and subtract 20 hit points from Inar.

Six PCs: Add two Crazy Human Rabble and add 20 hit points to Inar.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

When the PCs have defeated the cultists, move to Concluding the Adventure.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

If the PCs defeat the Inar and the Cult of the Reborn Flame they receive 200/300 experience points each.

TREASURE

The various occult knickknacks and jewel has a value of 75/100 gp. Inar wears a *circlet of authority* and carries a *rod of corruption +1*. The angel of valor wears a *flameburst weapon +1*.

ENCOUNTER TEN: TO SNUFF THE FLAME STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

| Fallen Angel of Valor | Level 4 Soldier |
|--|------------------------------|
| Medium immortal humanoid (angel) | |
| Initiative +8 Senses Perception +4 | |
| Angelic Presence Attacks against the angel of valor take a -2 penalty until the angel is bloodied. | |
| HP 56; Bloodied 28 | |
| AC 20; Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 15 | |
| Immune fear; Resist 10 fire | |
| Speed 6, fly 9 (hover) | |
| m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage. | |
| M Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage. | |
| M Blade Flurry (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| The angel of valor makes a longsword attack and a dagger attack. | |
| A Lightning Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Lightning | |
| Close burst 1; targets enemies; +7 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 2 lightning damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the angel of valor's next turn. | |
| Fiery Blades (minor, usable only while bloodied; at-will) | |
| Until the start of the angel of valor's next turn, the angel of valor's weapons deal fire damage and attack the target's Reflex defense instead of AC. | |
| Aura of Madness (opportunity, when a creature starts its turn within 3 squares of the human rabble) | |
| The angel of valor slides the triggering creature 1 square. | |
| Mind of Movement (minor, recharge 5 6) | |
| Each ally within 5 squares of the creature can shift 2 squares as a free action. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Supernal |
| Str 23 (+10) | Dex 18 (+8) Wis 14 (+6) |
| Con 16 (+7) | Int 11 (+4) Cha 16 (+7) |
| Equipment chainmail, longsword, dagger | |

| Crazed Human Rabble | Level 2 Minion |
|--|------------------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | |
| Initiative +1 Senses Perception +1 | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion | |
| AC 15; Fortitude 13, Reflex 11, Will 11; see also <i>mob rule</i> | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +6 vs. AC; 4 damage. | |
| Aura of Madness (opportunity, when a creature starts its turn within 3 squares of the human rabble) | |
| The human rabble slides the triggering creature 1 square. | |
| Psychic Feedback (when the human rabble drops to 0 hit points) | |
| ♦ Psychic | |
| Each enemy adjacent to one or more human rabble takes 2 psychic damage. | |
| Mob Rule | |
| The human lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human lackeys are within 5 squares of it. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Common |
| Str 14 (+3) | Dex 10 (+1) Wis 10 (+1) |
| Con 12 (+2) | Int 9 (+0) Cha 11 (+1) |
| Equipment club | |

DM Note: The Fallen Angel of Valor is an Angel of Valor with the Those Who Hear theme applied.

| Fiery Wereboar | | Level 3 Elite Brute | |
|--|----------------------|---------------------|--|
| Large natural humanoid (shapechanger) | | XP 300 | |
| Initiative +1 | Senses Perception +2 | | |
| HP 71; Bloodied 35 | | | |
| Regeneration 5 | | | |
| AC 15; Fortitude 20, Reflex 15, Will 14 | | | |
| Saving Throws +2 | | | |
| Action Point 1 | | | |
| Immune moontusk fever; Resist 5 fire; | | | |
| Vulnerable silver (if the wereboar takes damage from a silver weapon, its regeneration does not function on its next turn) | | | |
| Speed 6, (8 in boar form) | | | |
| m Maul (standard; usable only while in humanoid form; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| +6 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage. | | | |
| m Gore (standard; usable only while in boar form; at-will) | | | |
| +8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage, ongoing 5 damage (save ends) | | | |
| M Death Strike (when the wereboar drops to 0 hit points) | | | |
| The wereboar makes a gore or maul attack. | | | |
| Bloodied Resilience (while bloodied) | | | |
| The wereboar gains a +2 bonus to all defenses and deals ongoing 10 damage with its gore attack instead of 5 ongoing damage. | | | |
| Change Shape (minor; at-will) ♦ Polymorph | | | |
| A wereboar can alter its physical form to appear as a dire boar (<i>MM</i> 35) or a unique humanoid (see "Change Shape," page 216). | | | |
| Body of Flame | | | |
| Any creature that hits the scion of flame with a melee attack takes fire damage equal to 3 damage. | | | |
| Fire Master | | | |
| The scion of flame can convert any attack power it has to fire, change a power's energy keyword to fire, or add fire energy to an attack power that doesn't normally deal energy damage. | | | |
| Alignment Evil | | Languages Common | |
| Str 20 (+8) | Dex 10 (+3) | Wis 12 (+4) | |
| Con 16 (+6) | Int 10 (+3) | Cha 11 (+3) | |
| Equipment hide armor, maul | | | |

DM Note: The Fiery Wereboar is a Wereboar with the Scion of Flame Template. The Fiery Wereboar has had his ability to infect with moontusk fever burned out him by his communion with the Raging Flame.

| Inar Venenellin | | Level 5 Elite Skirmisher | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 400 | |
| Initiative +5 | Senses Perception +2 | | |
| HP 100; Bloodied 50 | | | |
| AC 17; Fortitude 17, Reflex 18, Will 19 | | | |
| Saving Throws +2 | | | |
| Action Point 1 | | | |
| Speed 6 | | | |
| m Pact Blade (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| +8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 1 damage. | | | |
| r Eldritch Blast (standard; at-will) | | | |
| Range 10; +6 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 4 damage. | | | |
| R Fiery Bolt (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire | | | |
| Range 10; +5 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 3 fire damage and adjacent creatures take 1d6 + 5 fire damage. | | | |
| A Hunger of Hadar (standard; encounter) ♦ Necrotic | | | |
| Burst 1 within 10 squares; creates a zone of darkness that blocks line of sight until the end of Inar's next turn. Creatures that enter or start their turn in the zone take 2d10 necrotic damage. Inar can sustain the zone as a minor action and when he does so, he makes a Secondary attack (+5 vs. Fortitude) against each creature in the zone, doing 1d6 + 3 necrotic damage on a hit. | | | |
| C aiphon's Leap (Immediate Reaction, usable only when a cursed enemy hits Inar with a melee attack; encounter) ♦ Teleportation | | | |
| The damage taken is reduced by 3 and Inar teleports 2 squares. | | | |
| W arlock's Curse (minor; 1/round) | | | |
| Inar can place a curse on the enemy closest to him that he can see. The cursed enemy takes +1d6 points of damage from Inar's attacks. See also <i>Caiphon's Leap</i> and <i>Pact Boon</i> . | | | |
| P act Boon (no action, when a cursed enemy is dropped to 0 or fewer hp) | | | |
| Inar gains 5 temporary hit points. | | | |
| Alignment Evil | | Languages Common, Supernal | |
| Skills Arcana +9, Bluff +10 | | | |
| Str 10 (+2) | Dex 12 (+3) | Wis 11 (+2) | |
| Con 14 (+4) | Int 14 (+4) | Cha 17 (+5) | |
| Equipment pact blade, <i>rod of corruption</i> +1, <i>circlet of authority</i> | | | |

Rod of Corruption: Whenever your pact boon is triggered, instead of taking its normal benefit you can transfer your Warlock's Curse to each enemy within 5 squares of the original target.

ENCOUNTER TEN: TO SNUFF THE FLAME STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

| Fallen Angel of Valor | | Level 6 Soldier |
|--|----------------------|-----------------|
| Medium immortal humanoid (angel) | | XP 250 |
| Initiative +9 | Senses Perception +5 | |
| Angelic Presence Attacks against the angel of valor take a -2 penalty until the angel is bloodied. | | |
| HP 72; Bloodied 36 | | |
| AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 18, Will 17 | | |
| Immune fear; Resist 10 fire | | |
| Speed 6, fly 9 (hover) | | |
| m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| +11 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage. | | |
| M Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| +11 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage. | | |
| M Blade Flurry (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| The angel of valor makes a longsword attack and a dagger attack. | | |
| A Lightning Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Lightning | | |
| Close burst 1; targets enemies; +9 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 3 lightning damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the angel of valor's next turn. | | |
| Fiery Blades (minor, usable only while bloodied; at-will) | | |
| Until the start of the angel of valor's next turn, the angel of valor's weapons deal fire damage and attack the target's Reflex defense instead of AC. | | |
| Aura of Madness (opportunity, when a creature starts its turn within 3 squares of the human rabble) | | |
| The angel of valor slides the triggering creature 1 square. | | |
| Mind of Movement (minor, recharge 5 6) | | |
| Each ally within 5 squares of the creature can shift 2 squares as a free action. | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Supernal | |
| Str 23 (+10) | Dex 18 (+8) | Wis 14 (+6) |
| Con 16 (+7) | Int 11 (+4) | Cha 16 (+7) |
| Equipment chainmail, longsword, dagger | | |

| Crazed Human Rabble | | Level 4 Minion |
|--|----------------------|------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 44 |
| Initiative +2 | Senses Perception +2 | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion | | |
| AC 17; Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 13; see also <i>mob rule</i> | | |
| Speed 6 | | |
| m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| +8 vs. AC; 5 damage. | | |
| Aura of Madness (opportunity, when a creature starts its turn within 3 squares of the human rabble) | | |
| The human rabble slides the triggering creature 1 square. | | |
| Psychic Feedback (when the human rabble drops to 0 hit points) | | |
| ♦ Psychic | | |
| Each enemy adjacent to one or more human rabble takes 2 psychic damage. | | |
| Mob Rule | | |
| The human lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human lackeys are within 5 squares of it. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Common |
| Str 14 (+3) | Dex 10 (+1) | Wis 10 (+1) |
| Con 12 (+2) | Int 9 (+0) | Cha 11 (+1) |
| Equipment club | | |

DM Note: The Fallen Angel of Valor is an Angel of Valor with the Those Who Hear theme applied.

| Fiery Wereboar | | Level 5 Elite Brute | |
|--|----------------------|---------------------|--|
| Large natural humanoid (shapechanger) | | XP 400 | |
| Initiative +2 | Senses Perception +3 | | |
| HP 107; Bloodied 53 | | | |
| Regeneration 5 | | | |
| AC 17; Fortitude 22, Reflex 17, Will 16 | | | |
| Saving Throws +2 | | | |
| Action Point 1 | | | |
| Immune moontusk fever; Resist 5 fire; | | | |
| Vulnerable silver (if the wereboar takes damage from a silver weapon, its regeneration does not function on its next turn) | | | |
| Speed 6, (8 in boar form) | | | |
| m Maul (standard; usable only while in humanoid form; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| +8 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage. | | | |
| m Gore (standard; usable only while in boar form; at-will) | | | |
| +8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, ongoing 5 damage (save ends) | | | |
| M Death Strike (when the wereboar drops to 0 hit points) | | | |
| The wereboar makes a gore or maul attack. | | | |
| Bloodied Resilience (while bloodied) | | | |
| The wereboar gains a +2 bonus to all defenses and deals ongoing 10 damage with its gore attack instead of 5 ongoing damage. | | | |
| Change Shape (minor; at-will) ♦ Polymorph | | | |
| A wereboar can alter its physical form to appear as a dire boar (<i>MM</i> 35) or a unique humanoid (see "Change Shape," page 216). | | | |
| Body of Flame | | | |
| Any creature that hits the scion of flame with a melee attack takes fire damage equal to 4 damage. | | | |
| Fire Master | | | |
| The scion of flame can convert any attack power it has to fire, change a power's energy keyword to fire, or add fire energy to an attack power that doesn't normally deal energy damage. | | | |
| Alignment Evil | | Languages Common | |
| Str 20 (+8) | Dex 10 (+3) | Wis 12 (+4) | |
| Con 16 (+6) | Int 10 (+3) | Cha 11 (+3) | |
| Equipment hide armor, maul | | | |

DM Note: The Fiery Wereboar is a Wereboar with the Scion of Flame Template. The Fiery Wereboar has had his ability to infect with moontusk fever burned out him by his communion with the Raging Flame.

| Inar Venenellin | | Level 7 Elite Skirmisher | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 600 | |
| Initiative +6 | Senses Perception +3 | | |
| HP 120; Bloodied 60 | | | |
| AC 20; Fortitude 20, Reflex 21, Will 22 | | | |
| Saving Throws +2 | | | |
| Action Point 1 | | | |
| Speed 6 | | | |
| m Pact Blade (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| +11 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage. | | | |
| r Eldritch Blast (standard; at-will) | | | |
| Range 10; +9 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 damage. | | | |
| R Fiery Bolt (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire | | | |
| Range 10; +8 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 5 fire damage and adjacent creatures take 1d6 + 7 fire damage. | | | |
| A Hunger of Hadar (standard; encounter) ♦ Necrotic | | | |
| Burst 1 within 10 squares; creates a zone of darkness that blocks line of sight until the end of Inar's next turn. Creatures that enter or start their turn in the zone take 2d10 necrotic damage. Inar can sustain the zone as a minor action and when he does so, he makes a Secondary attack (+8 vs. Fortitude) against each creature in the zone, doing 1d6 + 5 necrotic damage on a hit. | | | |
| Caiphon's Leap (Immediate Reaction, usable only when a cursed enemy hits Inar with a melee attack; encounter) ♦ Teleportation | | | |
| The damage taken is reduced by 3 and Inar teleports 2 squares. | | | |
| W arlock's Curse (minor; 1/round) | | | |
| Inar can place a curse on the enemy closest to him that he can see. The cursed enemy takes +1d6 points of damage from Inar's attacks. See also <i>Caiphon's Leap</i> and <i>Pact Boon</i> . | | | |
| Pact Boon (no action, when a cursed enemy is dropped to 0 or fewer hp) | | | |
| Inar gains 7 temporary hit points. | | | |
| Alignment Evil | | Languages Common, Supernal | |
| Skills Arcana +10, Bluff +11 | | | |
| Str 10 (+3) | Dex 12 (+4) | Wis 11 (+3) | |
| Con 14 (+5) | Int 14 (+5) | Cha 17 (+4) | |
| Equipment pact blade, <i>rod of corruption</i> +1, <i>circlet of authority</i> | | | |

Rod of Corruption: Whenever your pact boon is triggered, instead of taking its normal benefit you can transfer your Warlock's Curse to each enemy within 5 squares of the original target.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The following occurs days after the PCs end the threat of the Cult of the Reborn Flame.

The days following the destruction of the Cult of the Reborn Flame see you traveling back to Tarmalune. Nestled in the home of Halagothra the Healer, you are surrounded by those friends and allies who survived the horrors of the cult.

As young Glindarra brings a tray of drinks, the crackling fire in the hearth no longer bears the sinister connotations it might once have. Yulis and Jaode talk quietly in the corner as they take drinks from the girl's tray. Althea Mecatoris sits in a large chair by the window, the center of a conversation with nearly a dozen other familiar faces. Halagothra gestures for attention and raises her glass, "To fallen friends!" The old woman drains her glass of brandy quickly and then remains quiet while hanging her head.

In the silence that follows Glindarra asks, "Halagothra, where's grandfather?"

* * * *

Thousands of miles away, an elderly man trudges through ice and snow. The wind whips his white hair and thin cloak wildly. His frail hands hold a huge, moldering tome. He lovingly caresses the decorative binding before opening it slowly. On a page opposite a picture of a flayed man is a map, festooned with arcane symbols. "Yes... we are close. Soon we will wake her. This time it will be done right. Nothing can corrupt men of pure hearts."

Behind the old man, a wild gleam in tortured face, are dozens of darkly cowed figures standing silently. Unseen by the elderly man, a tentacle flicks out from where on face is hidden by hooded shadow.

The story of Returned Abeir and the Windrise Ports continues with the sequel to the Embers of Dawn Mini-campaign, QUEST2-1 *Stir Not the World's Doom*, premiering at Origins 2010.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs were successful in defeating Inar and the Cult and Imdarm Shodsi Minuku survived (very likely) the jailbreak, all the PCs gain the story object **MINI21 Friend of Imdarm Shodsi Minuku**. All PCs with the

story object **MINI19 Achazar's Blaze** (from **MINI1-5 Pyrophobia**) who participated in the defeat of Inar gain the story object **MINI22 Champion of the Brand**.

REWARDS SUMMARY

At the conclusion of the adventure, the PCs earn experience points, treasure, and possibly story awards. All totals listed here are per PC. A number before the slash is the low-level value; after the slash is the high-level value.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Give PCs a full award for each encounter they successfully completed, and a half award if they were unsuccessful. Give no award if the characters did not play the encounter at all.

Encounter 1: Streets of Cobblestone Secrets
125 / 150 XP

Encounter 5: Jailbreak
150 / 200 XP

Encounter 8: Peril of the Mind
175 / 250 XP

Encounter 9: Dark and Twisted Tomes
150 / 175 XP

Encounter 10: To Snuff the Flame
200 / 300 XP

Minor Quest: End the Threat of Pyrultimus
50 / 75 XP

Major Quest: Devotion to the Windrise Ports
The PC has played all of the Embers of Dawn Mini-Campaign adventures (MINI1-1 through MINI1-6) in order.
250 / 300 XP

Total Possible Experience
1100 / 1450 XP

Gold per PC
150 / 200 gp
(Encounter 8: 25 / 25 gp, Encounter 9: 50 / 75 gp, Encounter 10: 75 / 100 gp)

TREASURE

Each PC receives treasure in the form of gold pieces as well as one share from a treasure bundle. The treasure bundle may give the PC more gold, a magic item, or something else of value. Each player makes one and
MINI1-6 Quench the Fire of the Raging God

only one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure bundle. Note that it is possible (and likely) that some characters will not select a bundle for each session of play.

If characters buy or sell magic items or other gear during the adventure (or pay for services) add or subtract that amount from the total gold the PC receives at the end of the adventure. If a player selects an option that gives their character more gold, add that amount to that character's base gold award. It is possible and permissible for a character who spends more gold than he or she earns to have a negative total for the adventure. PCs receive 20% of the item's market price when they sell any magic item or consumable. They receive 50% of the market price for ritual books and alchemical formulas.

If a player selects a magic weapon or suit of armor for their PC that is not specific on the type of item listed, they must select the exact item at the time they choose that bundle. For example, if a *duelist's weapon +1* is listed as a choice in a bundle, a player selects the form of the weapon amongst the choices possible for that magic item (light blades). If the player selects the item as a *+1 duelist's dagger*, the player writes that information down on the PC's adventure log and the item is forever after that specific weapon.

An asterisk next to a magic item means that it is an item that appears in the **New Rules** section.

EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BUNDLES:

Bundle A: *Power Jewel* (item level 5; Adventurer's Vault)
Found in Encounter Five

Bundle B: *Bracers of Enforced Regret* (item level 2; Adventurer's Vault 2)
Found in Encounter Seven

Bundle C: *Boots of Free Movement* (item level 6; Adventurer's Vault)
Found in Encounter Seven

Bundle D: *Baffling Cape +1* (item level 3; Adventurer's Vault 2)
Found in Encounter Seven

Bundle E: *Circlet of Authority* (item level 7)
Found in Encounter Ten

Bundle F: *Flameburst Weapon +1* (item level 3)
Found in Encounter Ten

Bundle G: *Rod of Corruption* +1 (item level 3)

Found in Encounter Ten

Bundle H: Ritual book with *Knock, Hand of Fate* and *Speak with Dead*

Found in Encounter Nine

Consumable Plus Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add a *potion of resistance (resist 5 fire)* plus 210 / 310 gp to the total "Gold Per PC" listed above. The player should write the consumable gained on their adventure log. That character (and only that character) then receives the consumable plus gold instead of any other treasure reward.

More Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add 250 / 350 gp to the total "Gold Per PC" listed above. That character (and only that character) then receives that total gold instead of any other treasure reward.

STORY AWARDS

Award these if the PC completes the condition for the award in the adventure. Pass out certificates to the players for their story awards. Normally, if a PC earns three awards, they may only have 2 of them and must pick which two they want before ending the session (exceptions to this will be noted in the story award text).

MINI21 Friend of Imdarm Shodsi Minuku

You have routed out the Cult of the Reborn Flame from the city of Imdolphyn and in the process made an ally of Imdarm Shodsi Minuku. For saving her life and her city, Shodsi looks out for you when you are Imdolphyn. As a powerful but honest Merchant-Lord who sits on the Lords' Council Imdolphyn, Shodsi will never get you out of the repercussions of a crime you have actually committed but she grease the wheels of bureaucracy or help you should be falsely accused. She can provide introductions to people of position or arrange fine meals at the best restaurants. The extent of her ability to help and generosity is limited to the city of Imdolphyn and the opinion of the DM.

MINI22 Champion of the Brand

You bare the mark of Achazar, the Raging Flame but have defeated the cultists that sought to wake him and cleanse the Windrise Ports of their taint. To a great many people who are aware of your secret struggle, you are a Champion of the Brand.

MINI1-6 *Quench the Fire of the Raging God*

Many say that the blazing strength of your convictions must keep you warm in even the fiercest cold, but you know a terrible secret that they cannot. The brand still burns and it stokes an ember inside you that eats away at your soul. The fight against the rising of the Dawn Titans isn't over.

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

Mark the answers to the following adventure questions on the tracking form. <This is an optional section.>

1. Did the PCs defeat Inar?

- They never got far enough to encounter him.
- He got away.
- He was captured.
- He was killed.

2. Did the PCs rescue Rathloff?

- Yes
- No

3. How do you (the DM) rate this adventure?

- Five stars - excellent (best possible rating)
- Four stars - very good
- Three stars - average
- Two stars - below average
- One star - really awful (worst possible rating)

4. How do the players rate this adventure? (You can average their individual ratings or use any other system that is agreeable to the group.)

- Five stars - excellent (best possible rating)
- Four stars - very good
- Three stars - average
- Two stars - below average
- One star - really awful (worst possible rating)

NEW RULES

Baffling Cape

Level 3

This rippling cape allows you to slip past an attacking foe.

Lvl 3 +1 680 gp

Item Slot: Neck

Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will

Power (Daily ♦ Teleportation): Immediate Reaction. *Trigger:* An enemy adjacent to you misses you with a melee attack. *Effect:* Swap positions with the triggering enemy.

Reference: Adventurer's Vault 2, page 96.

Boots of Free Movement

Level 6

You deftly avoid entanglement on these well-crafted boots.

Item Slot: Feet 1,800 gp

Property: Gain a +2 item bonus to saving throws against effects that apply the slowed, immobilized, or restrained condition.

Power (Encounter): Minor Action. Make a saving throw against a slowed, immobilized, or restrained effect that a save can end.

Reference: Adventurer's Vault, page 126.

Bracers of Enforced Regret

Level 2

When an enemy presses you, the power of these simple steel bracers lets you turn the tables.

Item Slot: Arms 520 gp

Property: While you're marked, you gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls against the enemy that marked you.

Reference: Adventurer's Vault 2, page 96.

Potion of Resistance

The color and smell of this potion varies with the protection it provides.

Lvl 4 40 gp Lvl 24 21,000 gp

Lvl 14 800 gp

Potion

Power (Consumable): Minor Action. Drink this potion and spend a healing surge. You do not gain hit points as normal. Instead, gain resist 5 to damage of a specific type until the end of the encounter. The damage type (acid, cold, fire, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, or thunder) is determined when the potion is created. Only one potion of resistance can be in effect on you at once.

Level 14: Gain resist 10 to damage of the specified type.

Level 24: Gain resist 15 to damage of the specified type.

Reference: Adventurer's Vault, page 188.

Power Jewel

Level 5

Magical energy pulses within this stunning jewel, allowing you to use a power you have already expended.

Wondrous Item 1,000 gp

Power (Daily): Minor Action. This power allows you to regain the use of an encounter power of 1st or 3rd level.

Special: You must have reached at least one milestone today to activate this item.

Reference: Adventurer's Vault, page 176.

APPENDIX #1: IMDOLPHYN

Based upon the Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide, p. 217.

Imdolphyn

Imdolphyn is the second-largest of the Windrise Ports with soaring and ornate structures. A wealthy city that specializes in shipbuilding and textiles its ships are constructed in vast yards along the banks of the placid River Tantulph, where the majority of the city's commerce and activity occurs. The ruler here, Lord Othmeera Talask, a retired trader in textiles and scents, has ambitions to overtake Tarmalune's prominence amongst the Windrise Ports.

It often seems to outsiders that the citizens of Imdolphyn have something to prove to foreigners. Even the lowliest dock hand wears jewelry or has a fine silk shirt as a display wealth and sophistication. Masks and balls are common for the slightest provocation, and all the homes are extravagantly decorated. Imdolphyn has a thriving service industry that exceeds those available in most other cities in the Realms.

Population: 75,000. The inhabitants of Imdolphyn are mostly human, with a significant population of genasi, dwarves and dragonborn.

Government: The city-state is ruled by Lord Othmeera Talask who is advised by the Imdarms on the Lords' Council. The Imdarm Merchant-Lords represent the most powerful merchant families in Imdolphyn and serve in various bureaucratic roles.

Defense: Approximately 500 members of the city's Coin Guard enforce the laws and protect civic buildings. Given the city's size and the small size of the official city guard, most rich families employ their own mercenary guards. House Ulthmir is common source for these men and women. Imdolphyn also regularly gives Letters of Marque to ship captains to raid the pirates that plague the Windrise Ports in exchange for the captain's promise to defend the city in the event of a navel attack.

Inns: The Windchill (cheap dockside inn), Sonrei's (high quality and high prices), and many more.

Tavern: The Silver Cup (average prices, good wine selection), Up the Mountain (specializing in imported brandies, offers a unique special dish each day), Fortillo de Noch's (very expensive restaurant, only those of station can get a table) and many more.

Supplies: The Emerald Exchange (for anything sold from or to a ship), Cloth of Gold (textile market), Spice of Life (offering a selection of rare scents)

Temples: Like most cities in Returned Abeir, organized religions are a new introduction since the Blue Breath of Change. Imdolphyn's largest temple is the Vault of Coin (Waukeen). Other temples and shrines include: Pools of Reflection (Sune), The Platinum Halls (Bahamut), Dread Altar (Tiamat, hidden) the Levy (Vergadain) and the Golden Anchor (Valkur).

IMDOLPHYN LORE

A character knows the following information with a successful skill check.

History DC 10: Imdolphyn is known for shipbuilding with additional industries in textile and perfume manufacture. It is ruled by Lord Othmeera Talask, a retired trader.

History DC 15: Imdolphyn has a mostly one-way rivalry with Tarmalune. Imdolphyn is a slightly larger city than Tarmalune, but lacks its egalitarian and cosmopolitan attitudes that make Tarmalune the jewel of the Windrise Ports. It is always striving to gain prominence over its rival.

Nature DC 10: The calm River Tantulph runs through the city, separating the lower city where the docks and commerce are location from the upper hills where the rich estates are found. Good fishing can be found on its wide delta.

Streetwise DC 10: In Imdolphyn, coin is king, and a thriving underworld exists. As long as the crime stays out of plan sight, the Coin Guard tends to ignore it. Public violence will not be tolerated however, and such displays are immediately set upon.

APPENDIX #2: GUEST LIST

The following names are just some of the notables among the guests invited to the masquerade on the 10th of Flamerule at the home of Imdarm Inar Venenellin.

Imdarm Jaqalwar Lansena

Imdarm Shodsi Minuku

Bilmam Amziz

Capatin Belyssa Erstros

Cileroc the Fire of Lylorn

Elgar Faer

Mol Flesz and wife

Tiilra Nonintarr

APPENDIX #3: THE PROPHECY

This scroll is written in a feminine hand and sealed inside a plain wooden scroll tube with blue wax.

I have seen the future and it is this:

An old friend guards the key to doors of flesh and stones that move,

The flesh blocks the burning lock,

**The end of all things is splayed before the fallen, the changed, and
he who would rise.**