

MINI1-2

# THE BURNING SCENT OF PERFUMED SWORDS

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING  
FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

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Investigations bring you to the perfumed back alleys of Sambral where it becomes clear that you are not the first to look into the activities of the fire cult. All those who have come before you have disappeared or been left a ruin of their former selves; leaving you to wonder, “Will you share their fate?” A Living Forgotten Realms adventure that is part of the *Embers of Dawn* mini-campaign set in Sambral 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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This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2012.

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## 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 RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned 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 is the second in the Embers of Dawn mini-campaign. In *MINI1-1 Stirring the Embers*, the adventures stumbled onto a conspiracy when they were attacked by a pressgang in Tarmalune. After defeating the press gang, the PCs learned that mysterious agent had hired the thugs to round up people from the docks

who would be easily forgotten. After some investigation, the PCs identified the agent behind the press gangs. The agent was working for Lekaral, an old-money aristocrat and who lived in a strange mansion that was once a sanitarium.

The party met Lekaral, and discovered that he was part of the Cult of Reborn Flame and that the prisoners were subjected to bizarre and mysterious experiments involving the Raging Flame in Tarmalune. Lekaral died in the fight that ensued, but at the adventure's end, the characters learned that he had been sent from Sambral to oversee advance operations in Tarmalune.

## DM'S INTRODUCTION

Following up on the information gathered from the cultists in Tarmalune (*MINI1-1 Stirring the Embers*), the party travels to Sambral in the Windrise Ports. On their way there, they hear stories of strange occurrences such as disappearances and hot-blooded tempers leading to violent duels in the streets. The similarity to events in Tarmalune should urge the PCs to investigate.

In Encounter 1, the party must search for clues of the Cult of Reborn Flame in Sambral through an extended skill challenge. This skill challenge includes elements from Encounters 1 through 4.

In Encounter 2, the PCs must overcome obstacles to gain access to the notes of an Inquisitive who was investigating the fire cult. In Encounter 3, a troupe of Sambrese bravos challenge the party as their investigation is an affront to their honor. The party can make friends with the bravos and even join their troupe. If the PCs fail any of the skill challenges, the PCs attract the attention of the Sentinels of Sambral. This is discussed in Encounter 4.

In Encounter 5, the PCs must reach the cellar of an incense shop which houses the secret entrance to the cult's hidden den. The cult has warded their entrances as discussed in Encounter 6, and the party must battle their way through the guards to the hidden cult den in Encounter 7.

Once in the den, the PCs have the opportunity to learn more about the cult as discussed in Encounter 8. In Encounter 9, the cult sacrifices one of the kidnap victims to the Firebird, a creature of elemental fire. Finally, the party can face the cult leaders in Encounter 10

The adventure concludes with the party receiving information that the cult's superiors are based in Ramekho, and the characters board a ship for that port to continue their quest to end the cult.

## IN SLUMBER REMAIN QUEST CARD

Some PCs may have the Divine Lullabies 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 man they seek in order to complete task two can be found among the revelers in the Encounter 8. If a PC speaks with Garachi and offers the correct code phrase, he responds accordingly and the player should record their successful completion of task two on their log.

## PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

The PCs are most likely following up on the information gathered from the cultists in Tarmalune (MINI1-1 *Stirring the Embers*). Clues in that adventure hinted more of the cult would be found in Sambral, the most southern of the Windrise Ports. If the players have not played *Stirring the Embers*, then they should develop their own reasons for visiting Sambral.

The following presumes that the PCs are arriving from Tarmalune. If this is not the case, alter the text as needed.

***For many days the galley has sailed through the Dragon Sea, bound for the perfumed city of Sambral from Tarmalune. When the galley rounds the Windsheer Cape and enters the Bay of Pearls, the wind dies to a faint breeze and the surface of the water stills. The sailors furl the two lanteen sails and take to the oars. The wake of the galley ripples the crystal-clear waters of the bay which is barely 20 fathoms deep. The iridescent sandy floor of the bay glistens in the refracted sunlight.***

The name of the galley is the Soaring Stingray. It is owned by the Mecatoris - a rich, merchant family in Sambral, whom the party will meet later in the adventure.

PCs may know information about Sambral or they may ask the sailors about their destination. For a summary of information about the city, see Appendix 1.

If no PC has played *Stirring the Embers*, the characters overhear the sailors talking about recent events in Tarmalune.

- Press gangs were working the docks in Tarmalune, capturing people who would easily be missed. The sailors don't know what happened to missing.
- A fire cult was somehow involved in the Tarmalune disappearances, but the sailors don't know how.

- There have been a rash of disappearances in Sambral, but they aren't due to press gangs. It's been happening for several months now.
- Sambral has always been known for its bravos - troupes of swordsmen who prowls the streets looking for blood and glory. Their clashes have been even more violent than normal lately.

When the party has heard of some of the information about Sambral, read the following:

***As you draw near Sambral, the bay becomes thick with fishing boats and pearl divers. Your first glimpse of the city is the spectacular sea-ward tower that gleams with mother-of-pearl. The city itself is built on a series of terraces on a steeply sloping hillside. The terraces are joined by roads that are more akin to stairs than streets. A small river tumbles down the rises in a series of waterfalls that split the city roughly in half. Magnificent bridges arc over the river on each of the terraces.***

***The galley slides through the water to dock at one of the many piers in the city's harbor. You are met at the docks by a dozen children clamoring for your attention to guide you to the finest inns in Sambral.***

The PCs can brush the children aside or pay one a silver piece to guide them to an inn. If the PCs decide to hire a guide, use Sheth from Encounter 1 or Klaertis, a young human boy who is constantly hinting that he needs a larger tip. Feel free to make up your own street urchin.

Depending upon the party's wants, they have several options for where they can stay. The three most prominent inns are:

- The Golden Pearl (high quality and high prices).
- The Sleeping Titan (modest and clean).
- The Homebound Breeze (sailor's flop house, cheap).

See Appendix 1 for more information about Sambral's inns.

# ENCOUNTER 1: CATCHING THE SCENT

## SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 2/4, COMPLEXITY 3 (375/525 XP)

### SETUP

Once settled in Sambral, the PCs should start seeking out information about the cult they encountered in Tarmalune, the disappearances, or the rising violence in the city. This search is represented by an extended skill challenge which is designed to be non-linear and is interspersed with Encounters 2, 3, and 4. For a flow chart of the investigation, see Appendix 2.

### SKILL CHALLENGE

**Goal:** To find the fire cult in Sambral.

**Complexity:** 3 (8 successes before 3 failures)

**Victory:** The PCs discover the hidden entrance to the cult's den.

**Defeat:** The PCs gain the attention of the Sentinels. Go to Encounter 4.

### SCENE 1

In the first scene, the PCs look for any leads on the cult or news about missing people. Unlike the disappearances they found in Tarmalune, the people who disappeared in Sambral are not street people or those with no families. Many of these people are adventurers, bravos, and inquisitives, and their disappearance has been noticed.

The PCs must find someone who knows of the disappearances. Ask the party how they want to find people who know about the disappearances. They may wish to listen to gossip in the taverns, people-watch in the markets, speak to the Sentinels, or approach the priests at the few temples in the city.

The set of skills described below applies if the PCs attempt to find people who have friends or family who have gone missing. If the PCs try other methods, be flexible and use the skills below as guidance. Some examples:

- The PCs go to the Sentinels. Use History as a supporting skill (+2 bonus to primary check for knowing the city's lore) and either Bluff or Diplomacy as primary (which grants access to the case file).
- The PCs approach a temple. Use Religion as a supporting skill and Bluff and Diplomacy as primary (the priest tells what he knows).

- If the PCs use underworld connections, use Streetwise as a supporting skill and Bluff and Intimidate as primary.

**Step One:** Finding Knowledgeable People

**Primary Skills:** Heal, Insight, Perception

**Supporting Skills:** History, Streetwise

One success at any of the following skills identifies one of the NPCs below and opens Step Two.

**Heal DC 10/13** (1 maximum)

The PC identifies a person as going through severe emotional trauma. Perhaps they have suffered a loss recently?

**History DC 10/13** (0 successes, 1 maximum)

The PC knows common Sambrese customs and expressions of speech. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to the next primary skill check.

**Insight DC 10/13** (1 maximum)

The PC realizes that a particular person is severely worried. Perhaps this person had a friend or family disappear?

**Perception DC 10/13** (1 maximum)

The PC notices that the NPC is distracted, disheveled and appears to be missing sleep. Perhaps this person had a friend or family disappear?

**Streetwise DC 10/13** (0 successes)

The PC gets tips as to where people have gone missing. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to one primary skill check.

**Success:** The following is a list of individuals who know people who have gone missing. Feel free to make up your own.

**Sheth** is a young dragonborn male who is just shy of adolescence. He greets ships at the piers and offers to show newly arrived passengers around Sambral for a few coins. His father works for a dwarven weaponsmith on the High Rise, hauling charcoal and feeding the forges. Sheth's elder brother, Tordarr, disappeared two weeks ago. Tordarr was a member of a bravo troupe, even dressing up in poncy fashions and scenting up.

**Kaldos Petrou** is a pearl diver in his late 30s. His skin is a deep leathery brown from spending his days on a boat, diving for pearls. He lives on the Bayside with his wife and three children. His adolescent daughter Bellanka vanished just two days ago. She had just gotten paid for at her sail-mending job and had run off to do some shopping. No one has seen her since.

**Hesione** is a tailor of fashionable clothes and owns a shop on the High Rise. A lovely young woman, she has recently converted to Sune, even going so far as to dye her hair red in honor of Lady Firehair. She is being courted by half-a-dozen men. One of her suitors Zagreus Dosse (also a customer) vanished about a week ago. He was always exquisitely dressed and scented finely.

**Failure:** The PCs gain one failure on this skill challenge, and gain the attention of the Sentinels. Go to Encounter 4. When resolved, return to this scene and the PCs can try again.

**Step Two:** Getting the Lead to the Inquisitive

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate

**Supporting Skills:** Insight

**Bluff DC 15/17** (1 maximum)

The PC lies to the person to gain her trust, and the person tells the PCs her story of vanished friends or family. A failed Bluff check reveals that the party is untrustworthy and gives a -2 circumstance penalty to all future checks with this NPC. A failed Aid Another check irritates the target and gives a -2 circumstance penalty to the final check.

**Diplomacy DC 15/17** (1 maximum)

The PC befriends the individual, and the person tells the PCs her story of vanished friends or family. A failed Aid Another check offends the target and gives a -2 circumstance penalty to the final check.

**Insight DC 10/13** (0 successes, 1 maximum)

The PC gets a feel for which words would be most effective with the target. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to the next primary skill check.

**Intimidate DC 15/17** (1 maximum)

The PC bullies the target into submission and the person tells her story of vanished friends and family. A failed Intimidate check grants a -2 circumstance penalty to all future checks with this NPC. A failed Aid Another check shows the PCs as weak and gives a -2 circumstance penalty to the final check.

**Success:** When the PCs receive 1 success, the person they are talking to tells them about the missing inquisitive allowing the party to move on to Scene 2.

***“Please, don’t offer me false hope. There was another Inquisitive by the name of Enaridas Vardane, who was asking questions about the disappearances. He said he would put an end to it, but he vanished weeks ago like smoke in a breeze.”***

If the PCs don’t think of it themselves, the individual suggests that Enaridas, being an inquisitive, might have left notes or other clues. The individual can give directions to the inquisitive’s apartment. He was staying at Cabrena’s Boarding House, which is located on the First Rise. His room number was 36.

**Failure:** The person panics and calls for the Sentinels. Go to Encounter 4. When resolved, return to this scene and the PCs can try again with another NPC.

## SCENE 2

In this scene, the party can follow up on what the inquisitive learned.

**Success:** If the PCs obtain the inquisitive’s notes, they gain confirmation that a fire cult is behind the disappearances. They gain one success in this skill challenge

**Failure:** The PCs gain one failure on this skill challenge and gain the attention of the Sentinels. Go to Encounter 4. When resolved, return to this scene and the PCs can try again.

## SCENE 3

A troupe of bravos who are unhappy with the PCs challenge them.

**Success:** If the PCs defeat the bravos, they tell them that Davien Mecatoris (one of the ones who disappeared) is still alive. The PCs gain one success in this skill challenge and this opens up Scene 4.

**Failure:** The PCs gain one failure on this skill challenge. However, they still learn of Davien Mecatoris through gossip. This does not grant a success but opens up Scene 4.

## SCENE 4

When the PCs arrive at the mansion of Davien Mecatoris, read the following:

***The mansion of the Mecatoris family claims a particularly prominent position on the Second Rise. The imposing mansion overlooks the Bay of Pearls below and is surrounded by gardens and a verdant lawn. The path up to the house is blocked by a guarded gate.***

Davien Mecatoris is a young scion of the very rich family who own multiple ships (including the Soaring Stingray - the galley that carried the party to Sambra). Davien is a bravo and the leader of the Flashing Blade at Dusk Troupe. He was investigating the disappearances when the cult abducted him. They offered him to the Firebird as a sacrifice, but Davien survived the experience and

managed to escape the cult's den. He was found by the Sentinels, covered in severe burns from head to toe, and raving. His mind was shattered by his near-death experience. He has been recuperating at home ever since.

### **Path One - Talking Their Way In**

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Diplomacy, Heal, Intimidate

**Supporting Skills:** History, Insight, Nature, Religion, Streetwise

If the PCs ask to speak with Davien Mecatoris, after a bit of a delay, they are allowed the guards onto the porch of the mansion, where they are met by Davien's mother, Althea Mecatoris, who also happens to be one of the Twelve Lords of Sambral. Althea is a tall, thin, steel haired, woman with a serious mien. They must convince her to let them see Davien. Two successes open up Scene 5.

#### **Bluff DC 15/17 (2 maximum)**

The PCs fabricate a false story that explains why they need to see Davien. A failed Bluff check reveals that the party is untrustworthy and gives a -2 circumstance penalty to all future checks with Althea. Althea allows only one PC to talk to her at a time, prohibiting Aid Another.

#### **Diplomacy DC 15/17 (2 maximum)**

The PCs attempt to persuade Althea to allow her to see them. Althea allows only one PC to talk to her at a time, prohibiting Aid Another.

#### **History DC 10/13 (0 successes, 1 maximum)**

The PCs recognize the name Mecatoris and understand its wealth and power. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to the next Bluff or Diplomacy skill check.

#### **Intimidate DC -/-**

The Mecatoris family is far too rich and powerful to be intimidated by the PCs. Use of this skill automatically fails.

#### **Insight DC 10/13 (0 successes, 1 maximum)**

The PC gets a feel for which words would be most effective with Althea Mecatoris. A successful check reveals that Intimidate is of no value here. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to the next Bluff or Diplomacy skill check.

#### **Streetwise DC 10/13 (0 successes, 1 maximum)**

The PC understands that the Mecatoris family is yearning for vengeance on whoever injured their

favorite son. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to the next Bluff or Diplomacy skill check.

**Success:** The party gains a success on the skill challenge and is permitted in to see Davien, opening up Scene 5.

**Failure:** Althea tires of the PCs and orders them off her property. If they fail to do so, she calls the Sentinels. Go to Encounter 4. The party can still try to get into the mansion via sneaking or they can let another character do the talking but all social skill checks with Althea are at -2.

### **Path Two - Sneaking In**

**Primary Skills:** Stealth, Thievery

**Supporting Skills:** Perception

The PCs can sneak into the mansion to meet with Davien. Two successes open up Scene 5.

#### **Perception DC 10/13 (0 successes, 2 maximum)**

PCs spot the guards patrolling the mansion. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to the next Stealth check.

#### **Stealth DC 15/17 (1 success, 1 maximum)**

The PCs sneak past the guards and gain entry to the mansion.

#### **Thievery DC 15/17 (1 success, 1 maximum)**

The PCs must pick one of the locks on mansion to gain entry.

**Success:** The party gains a success on the skill challenge and sneaks in to see Davien, opening up Scene 5.

**Failure:** The PCs are caught and the Sentinels are summoned. Go to Encounter 4. The party can try again or they can talk their way in, but all social skill checks with Althea are at -2.

### **SCENE 5**

When the PCs gain access to Davien, read or paraphrase the following, you will need to adjust the text if the party snuck in to see him:

*Althea leads you into the Mecatoris mansion. The house reveals the family's wealth and power with fine furniture and exquisite art in room after room. Eventually, you arrive at the bedroom of Davien Mecatoris. He lies on a bed, propped up on pillows and wrapped in bandages from head to toe. A large bowl of salve sits on the table next to a small statue of Tempus -*

*the first religious icon you've seen in this house. Davien groans in agony then whimpers.*

Davien's mind is shattered from his recent experiences. He wakes with nightmares, reliving the horrific sensation of Feeding the Flames from the Firebird in the fire cult's den. Every time he tries to tell others about what he happened there, he descends into hysteria. If the PCs lean close, they can hear him say: "the Flames..."; "It flies..."; "Please no, it burns..."

With patience and understanding, the PCs can draw the story out of him.

#### **Diplomacy DC 15/17 (2 maximum)**

The PC shows compassion to the convalescing Davien. They are persistent but gentle in their questioning.

#### **Heal DC 15/17 (2 maximum)**

The PC takes efforts to ease Davien's pain. While he has been seen by the best physicians in Sambral, even the best overlook things or perhaps the PC has some rare ointment to heal burns.

#### **Insight DC 10/13 (0 successes)**

PC understands the pain Davien is experiencing. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to a primary skill check.

#### **Intimidate DC -/-**

Intimidate causes Davien to recoil in fear as he degenerates into whimpering and provides no useful information. Use of this skill automatically fails. Also, Althea Mecatoris family takes extreme offense at use of Intimidate on her horribly injured son.

#### **Nature DC 10/13 (0 success, 1 maximum)**

A PC who analyzes the burns notices that they are hideous. They could only have been caused by exceptionally hot flame, such as that created by a primordial. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to any primary skill.

#### **Religion DC 10/13 (0 success, 2 maximum)**

Davien is a recent convert to Tempus (and the only one in the entire Mecatoris household to do so). If a PC recognizes the significance of the Tempus statue, they can extol to him the virtues of the Foehammer. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to any primary skill.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

**Victory:** When the PCs obtain 8 successes in this extended skill challenge, Davien tells the PCs of his experiences with the cult.

*Davien looks at you with renewed purpose, and his words hiss out through cracked lips. "I remember a hidden door in a cellar. So many scents. It made it hard to think. It was a perfume shop. I've been there before. The Burning Incense. They hide below for now. They will consume us all. In a fire that is never exhausted. You must stop them."*

When the PCs are ready to follow up on this information, go to Encounter 6.

**Defeat:** If the PCs fail the final stage of the skill challenge, then Davien still tells them his story. However, the Mecatoris family is very upset at the PCs for their treatment of Davien. The PCs do not receive Favor of the Mecatoris.

If the PCs take exceedingly long and do not manage to find the cult's den within four days, the leaders of the cult leave town, concluding the adventure.

#### EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 375/525 experience points each for completing this encounter successfully.

## ENCOUNTER 2: THE INQUISITIVE'S ROOM

### SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 2/4, COMPLEXITY 1 (125/175 XP)

#### SETUP

The PCs have located the home of Enaridas Vardane, the missing inquisitive who was investigating the disappearances in Sambral. Enaridas was renting a room at Cabrena's Boarding House. He hasn't paid his rent since his disappearance almost a month ago, and Cabrena has locked his room until he pays arrears.

#### SKILL CHALLENGE

**Goal:** To gain entry to Enaridas' room and find his research notes on the disappearances.

**Complexity:** 1 (4 successes before 3 failures)

**Victory:** The party finds Enaridas' notes.

**Defeat:** Cabrena calls the Sentinels. Go to the Encounter 4.

#### SCENE 1

In this scene, the PCs attempt to gain entry into Enaridas' room.

*Cabrena's Boarding House is located on the seaward side of First Rise of Sambral. It is a square building four stories high. The rooms face onto balconies that overlook a central courtyard. The doors are numbered, and room 36 is on the third story. Access to the upper stories is gained by stairway that climbs around the edge of the courtyard. The rooms all appear to have windows on the outside of the building. An arched passage through the first floor allows access to the courtyard from the street. Judging by the sign painted on the wall, the landlady lives on the first floor next to the entryway.*

The main challenge here is Cabrena. She is an older widow whose husband drowned at sea years ago. She lives alone with a dozen cats and makes ends meet by managing the boarding house. She's angry at life and takes it out on her boarders. She loves her cats far more than any person, except her deceased husband. No matter how provoked, she does not attack the characters. If the party attacks Cabrena, her loud screams are heard by a patrol of Sentinels.

The PCs can use a number strategies to gain entrance to Enaridas' room. Below are the two paths

most likely to be taken by the party. If the PCs come up with a third path, adjudicate using these skills as guidance.

The easiest way to get into Enaridas' room is to pay his back rent and kick in a little extra. If the PCs give Cabrena 25/35 gold, Cabrena gives them the key, and the party automatically gains the two successes needed for this scene.

If the party waits for Cabrena to leave, they are sorely disappointed. She never leaves her cats and has food delivered. She's also a light sleeper so the DCs do not change at night.

When the PCs gain two successes in the same path, they gain entry to Enaridas' apartment. Additional successes do not count toward victory in this skill challenge, but do allow more characters into Enaridas' room to help with the next scene.

#### Path 1 - Through the Window

**Primary Skills:** Acrobatics, Athletics, Thievery

**Supporting Skills:** Dungeoneering

##### Acrobatics DC 15/17 (1 maximum)

The character uses acrobatic stunts to reach Enaridas' window. However, the window is stuck and has to be forced (Athletics) or jimmied open (Thievery).

##### Athletics DC 15/17 (1 maximum)

The character climbs the outside of the boarding house to reach Enaridas' window. However, the window is stuck and has to be forced (Athletics) or jimmied open (Thievery).

##### Athletics DC 10/13 (1 maximum)

A character can only make this check with a prior successful Acrobatics or Athletics check to reach the window. The character forces the window open and gets inside Enaridas' room.

##### Dungeoneering DC 10/13 (0 successes, 1 maximum)

The character notices some of the peculiarities of the structure of the boarding house. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to the next primary skill check in this path.

##### Thievery DC 10/13 (1 maximum)

A character can only make this check with a prior successful Acrobatics or Athletics check to reach the window. The character opens the window and gets inside Enaridas' room.

#### Path 2 - Through the Front Door

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Intimidate, Stealth, Thievery

**Supporting Skills:** Insight

**Bluff DC 15/17** (1 maximum)

The character gives Cabrena a story as to why they should be allowed into the building. A failed Bluff check reveals that the party is untrustworthy and gives a -2 circumstance penalty to all future checks with Cabrena. Enaridas' door has a brand new lock on it, requiring the PCs to get the key from Cabrena or bypass the lock with a Thievery check.

**Bluff DC 10/13** (1 maximum)

A character can only make this check with a prior successful Bluff or Intimidate check. The character convinces Cabrena to give the party the key to Enaridas' room. A failed Bluff check reveals that the party is untrustworthy and gives a -2 circumstance penalty to all future checks with Cabrena.

**Diplomacy DC -/-** (0 successes)

Cabrena has no interest in being the PC's friend. Attempts using Diplomacy automatically fail. She might even throw a cat at the PC.

**Insight DC 10/13** (0 successes, 1 maximum)

A successful check reveals that Diplomacy is of no value.

**Intimidate DC 15/17** (1 maximum)

The PC bullies Cabrena into letting them into the building. A failed Intimidate check grants a -2 circumstance penalty to all future checks with Cabrena. A failed Aid Another check shows the PCs as weak and gives a -2 circumstance penalty to the final check. Enaridas' door has a brand new lock on it, requiring the PCs to get the key from Cabrena or bypass the lock with a Thievery check.

**Intimidate DC 10/13** (1 maximum)

A PC can only make this check with a prior successful Bluff or Intimidate check. The PC bullies Cabrena into giving them the key to Enaridas' room. A failed Intimidate check grants a -2 circumstance penalty to all future checks with Cabrena. A failed Aid Another check shows the PCs as weak and gives a -2 circumstance penalty to the final check.

**Stealth DC 10/13** (1 maximum)

The character sneaks past Cabrena. However, Enaridas' door has a brand new lock on it, requiring the PCs to get the key from Cabrena or bypass the lock with a Thievery check.

**Thievery DC 15/17** (1 maximum)

A character can only make this check if they have gotten past Cabrena. The character successfully unlocks the door to Enaridas' room.

**SCENE 2**

In this scene, the PCs search Enaridas' room.

*Enaridas' room is small and stuffy. The stale air is a testament that the room has not been disturbed in some time. The man has collected all sorts of odd bits of the Arcana and macabre. Of particular note is a claw of a bulette, the head of a galeb duhr, and the mandibles of an umber hulk; all labeled. A painting of a purple worm hangs on the wall.*

Enaridas was aware that he was tangling with something big when he was investigating the disappearances. He made copies of his notes and left a wallet containing them behind in a secret compartment.

**Step One - Finding the Wallet**

**Primary Skills:** Arcane, Perception

**Supporting Skills:** Dungeoneering

**Arcana DC 15/17** (1 maximum)

A character notices that the monsters all have a burrow speed and they are looking or pointing at one particular floorboard. Hidden in the space below that floorboard is the wallet holding Enaridas' notes.

**Dungeoneering DC 10/13** (0 maximum)

A character notices that there is a hollow space under the floorboards. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to the next primary skill roll.

**Perception DC 15/17** (1 maximum)

A character notices that one of the floorboards is missing nails at one end. Hidden in the space below is the wallet holding Enaridas' notes.

**Step Two - Opening the Wallet**

**Primary Skills:** Athletics Thievery

The wallet is made of thick leather with a lock on it. If the party cut the wallet, this bypasses the final part of the skill challenge but damages the contents. If the party cuts their way into the wallet, tear the Player Handout into 4 to 6 pieces and let the players put it back together.

**Athletics DC 15/17** (1 maximum)

A character breaks the lock with brute force.

**Thievery DC 20/22** (1 maximum)

A character opens the lock on the wallet.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

**Success:** When the PCs have successfully discovered the wallet, give them Player Handout 1. Return to Encounter 1 to continue the investigation.

**Failure:** If the PCs failed this encounter and were picked up by the Sentinels, they can come back later and try again. However, all DCs are raised by 2.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 125/175 experience points each for completing this encounter successfully.

## TREASURE

If the characters take a few of the more rare items collected by Enaridas, they can sell them to a collector for 75/100 gp. In the secret compartment under the wallet, the party finds a *magic implement +1*.

## ENCOUNTER 3: BRAVADO

### ENCOUNTER LEVEL 1/3 (500/750 XP)

#### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 Myrelas the Gallant (M)
- 4 Sambral Bravo (B)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 Myrelas the Gallant (M)
- 4 Sambral Bravo (B)

The party is accosted by a troupe of bravos who have lost one of their own in the disappearances. They take umbrage at the party's investigation which suggests that the bravos cannot handle it themselves.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

*You realize something is amiss when the other pedestrians in the square scurry to the side. A group of armed bravos stand shoulder to shoulder, blocking your path. They are dressed for a fight - with leather cuirasses, vented sleeves, and large plumed hats.*

*The leader steps forward, doffs his cap and bows low to you. "I am Myrelas the Gallant of the Peerless Champions. You have besmirched our reputation. This insult cannot stand; I demand satisfaction. Draw your blades and have at you!" With that, he unsheathes an exquisite rapier. His companions follow suit, each one challenging a different member of your party.*

The PCs are likely to not have any idea what the bravos are talking about. At this point, Myrelas has no interest in explaining. Depending upon how the battle goes, Myrelas explains his actions to the party afterward.

#### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Fountain:** This fountain counts as difficult terrain and costs three squares of movement.

**Onlookers:** The onlookers are eager to see some bloody street theatre. Entering a square of onlookers grants concealment for one round. At the beginning of that characters' next turn, the onlookers move away, removing that particular 10 ft. square of onlookers from the board.

**Stairs:** The stairs count as difficult terrain and cost two squares of movements.

#### FIGHTING THE DUEL

Each of the PCs has been challenged to a one on one duel. Those that make a successful Streetwise check (DC 10/13) realize that they have been challenged to a street duel and that these duels are generally fought until bloodied with the first participant bloodied is expected to yield. Attacking a yielded opponent is bad form, as is interfering in another duel, and will generally result in infamy throughout the streets of Sambral.

If a PC attacks a bravo who is not his or her challenged opponent, the crowd hisses in disapproval, granting that particular PC a -2 circumstance bonus to all social checks in Sambral (this penalty does not apply within the fire cult's den from Encounter 8 on). While the crowd hisses and boos in disapproval each time a PC violates the rules of the duel, a PC never gets more than one circumstance penalty this way.

#### TACTICS

Each of the bravos attempts to square off with one of the PCs. If the party take steps to prevent this (using the fighter's *Come and Get It* ability for example), then the bravos mock the characters as cowards. The bravos do their best to direct all attacks at their chosen opponent and not attack other characters. The bravos attempt to use their ability to push targets to force PCs into the fountain, down stairs, or into other obstacles.

Myrelas challenges the strongest looking melee combatant as his opponent. He fights with flair and abandon. He compliments PCs on good strikes and wishes them better luck on their next swing when they miss. He uses his minor actions to wink at any pretty women present (using onlookers if no PCs qualify).

Myrelas uses his Bravo Feint ability constantly to gain combat advantage. Each time he does this, the PCs can make a Perception check opposed by Myrelas' stealth to notice that he is actually shifting his shape to gain advantage of combat.

If Myrelas or a bravo bloodies a character, they attempt to Intimidate the PC into surrendering. For example: "You are bested. Yield now and only your glory is punctured." If the PC surrenders, the bravos no longer attack that individual, and the bravo fighting that PC withdraws from the fight to watch the other duels.

Myrelas and the bravos yield if they are reduced to bloodied. They bow to the victorious character and step aside from the fight. They encourage the character that bested them to step to the side and let the others finish

their duels. If a PC refuses to stand aside after defeating a bravo, the bravo constantly calls upon that PC to leave the fight, explaining that she is diminishing the glory of the other PCs.

Please note the xp for this encounter has been decreased because of the brovos' non-lethal tactics. Please play them accordingly.

The brovos avoid killing any onlookers, but if the PCs are not so careful, proceed to Encounter 4 as the Sentinels arrive to arrest the offender. Individual murderous PCs are looked up for the duration of the rest of the adventure, though those PCs who did not kill any innocent onlookers are welcome to continue playing.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

**Four PCs:** Remove one the Sambral bravos.

**Six PCs:** Add another Sambral bravo.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends when all the duels have been completed.

**Success:** If more bravos have yielded than PCs, the party is victorious. Myrelas invites the characters to join him for a drink, and his troupe adjourns to a nearby tavern. Myrelas is a charming, flamboyant man with strong emotions and flair for the dramatic. Even if the PCs lose the duel, but fought valiantly and fairly, Myrelas still invites the PCs for wine.

Over many bottles of wine, Myrelas tells the characters why he felt the need to challenge them. He lost one of his best troupe members, Iphimedra, to whatever is snatching people. With a successful DC 10/13 Insight check, the PCs can tell that Myrelas is very attached to Iphimedra and the two might be lovers. He also tells them the following about his attempts to investigate further.

*“Davien Mecatoris, the leader of the Flashing Blade at Dusk Troupe, was one of the vanished, but he was recently found burned within an inch of his life in an alley here in Sambral. Since he and I are rivals, his family won’t let me near him. However, you, my new friends, you might have a chance. His family has a mansion on the west end of the Second Rise. It’s stupendous; you can’t miss it.”*

Myrelas asks that if they find the kidnappers that they rescue Iphimedra. He reluctantly admits that he cannot give a description of her because she is a doppelganger

and changes her appearance often. If the PCs ask, Myrelas confirms that he is a doppelganger as well. Myrelas knows of the doppelganger pretending to be Lekaral in *MINI1-1 Stirring the Embers*. He has always disliked that doppelganger as having no honor or taste, and is not upset that the other doppelganger is deceased.

PCs might suggest that Myrelas change his appearance to gain entrance to the Mecatoris mansion. Myrelas says that he considered this, but he has not for two reasons.

First, his dislike for Althea is too strong and he is afraid that he will lose his reason to his passion. Second, he has sworn an oath to not impersonate another person. That way the darkness lies, and he succumb to the dark history of his race.

If the PCs were valiant in the fight (such as by withdrawing from the fight if they won their individual duels) and are enjoyable drinking companions, Myrelas invites the party to join his troupe. If the PCs accept, they have the friendship of Peerless Champions who could be useful in later encounters.

If the PCs defeat the Peerless Champions and keep attacking after the bravos surrender, Myrelas gives the PCs the lead to Davien Mecatoris in exchange for his life and that of his friends. However, he does not extend an invitation to join his troupe.

When the party decides to meet with Davien Mecatoris, go to Encounter 1.

**Failure:** If more PCs did not fight according to the rules of the duel, the characters suffer a loss of reputation and suffer -2 circumstance penalty on all social checks in Sambral for the rest of the adventure (as described above). The party hears about Davien Mecatoris' return through gossip in the town later that night. Have everyone make a Streetwise check and give the information to the character who rolled the highest.

When the party decides to meet with Davien Mecatoris, go to Encounter 1.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 625/875 xp each for defeating the bravados.

## TREASURE

If the PCs best the Peerless Champions, Myrelas offers them a *luckblade* +1 (low level) or a *vengeful weapon* +1 (high level). The circumstance of how he gives them the blade depends on the outcome of the duels. Ideally, he awards them the weapon when they join the Peerless Champions.

## ENCOUNTER 3: BRAVADO STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Myrelas the Gallant	Level 3 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger) XP 150	
Initiative +6      Senses Perception +2	
HP 45; Bloodied 22	
AC 18; Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 16	
Speed 6	
m <b>Rapier</b> (standard; at-will) ◆ <b>Weapon</b>	
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.	
<b>Bravo Feint</b> (move; at-will) ◆ <b>Weapon</b>	
The doppelganger shifts 3 then attacks an adjacent target; +6 vs Reflex; the doppelganger gains combat advantage against the target until the end of the doppelganger's next turn.	
<b>Combat Advantage</b>	
The doppelganger sneak deals an extra 1d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
<b>Change Shape</b> (minor; at-will) ◆ <b>Polymorph</b>	
A doppelganger can alter its physical form to take on the appearance of any Medium humanoid, including a unique individual.	
Alignment Unaligned      Languages Common	
Skills Bluff +10, Intimidate +9, Stealth +9	
Str 11 (+1)	Dex 16 (+4)      Wis 12 (+2)
Con 13 (+2)	Int 10 (+1)      Cha 15 (+3)
Equipment rapier	

Sambral Bravo	Level 2 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid XP 125	
Initiative +5      Senses Perception +1	
HP 37; Bloodied 18	
AC 16; Fortitude 15, Reflex 14, Will 12;	
Speed 6	
m <b>Short Sword</b> (standard; at-will) ◆ <b>Weapon</b>	
+7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, and the Sambral bravo can shift 1 square.	
M <b>Double Slash</b> (standard; at-will) ◆ <b>Weapon</b>	
+7 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage (two attacks); 1d6+1 damage per attack. If both attacks hit the same target, the target is pushed 1 square.	
M <b>Deep Cut</b> (standard; encounter) ◆ <b>Weapon</b>	
+7 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage, ongoing damage 3 (save ends), and the Sambral bravo can shift 1 square.	
Alignment Unaligned      Languages Common	
Skills Intimidate +6	
Str 17 (+4)	Dex 14 (+3)      Wis 11 (+1)
Con 13 (+2)	Int 11 (+1)      Cha 10 (+1)
Equipment leather armor, short sword x2	

## ENCOUNTER 3: BRAVADO STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Myrelas the Gallant	Level 5 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger) <span style="float: right;">XP 200</span>	
<b>Initiative</b> +6 <b>Senses</b> Perception +2	
<b>HP</b> 61; <b>Bloodied</b> 30	
<b>AC</b> 20; <b>Fortitude</b> 16, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 18	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Rapier</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b> +10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.	
<b>Bravo Feint</b> (move; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b> The doppelganger shifts 3 then attacks an adjacent target; +8 vs Reflex; the doppelganger gains combat advantage against the target until the end of the doppelganger's next turn.	
<b>Combat Advantage</b> The doppelganger sneak deals an extra 1d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
<b>Change Shape</b> (minor; at-will) ♦ <b>Polymorph</b> A doppelganger can alter its physical form to take on the appearance of any Medium humanoid, including a unique individual.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Skills</b> Bluff +11, Intimidate +10, Stealth +10	
<b>Str</b> 11 (+2)	<b>Dex</b> 16 (+5) <b>Wis</b> 12 (+3)
<b>Con</b> 13 (+3)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+2) <b>Cha</b> 15 (+4)
<b>Equipment</b> rapier	

Sambral Bravo	Level 4 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid <span style="float: right;">XP 175</span>	
<b>Initiative</b> +5 <b>Senses</b> Perception +1	
<b>HP</b> 53; <b>Bloodied</b> 26	
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 17, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 14;	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Short Sword</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b> +9 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage, and the Sambral bravo can shift 1 square.	
M <b>Double Slash</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b> +9 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage (two attacks); 1d6+1 damage per attack. If both attacks hit the same target, the target is pushed 1 square.	
M <b>Deep Cut</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Weapon</b> +9 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage, ongoing damage 3 (save ends), and the Sambral bravo can shift 1 square.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +7	
<b>Str</b> 17 (+5)	<b>Dex</b> 14 (+4) <b>Wis</b> 11 (+2)
<b>Con</b> 13 (+3)	<b>Int</b> 11 (+2) <b>Cha</b> 10 (+2)
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, short sword x2	



## ENCOUNTER 4: ATTENTION OF THE SENTINELS

**Important NPC:** Sentinel Teodora Petrides (Diplomacy +5, Insight +7, Intimidate +9, Streetwise +5)

### SETUP

In the course of their investigation, the party may gain the attention of the Sentinels. If so, a patrol of six Sentinels are dispatched to bring the characters in for questioning. The Sentinels approach the party and inform them that they are under arrest and must accompany them to the Pearl Citadel for questioning. If the characters comply, the Sentinels escort the party to the Pearl Citadel.

If the PCs refuse, the Sentinels inform the party that resisting arrest merely compounds their offense. If the characters continue to refuse, the Sentinels note that the PCs are heavily armed, back off, and wait at a distance for back-up.

The PCs have 10 minutes to lose the Sentinels before reinforcements arrive. Use your judgment as to whether the party's efforts to lose the Sentinels are successful. However, if they do so, a warrant is issued for the party's arrest. Each time the characters move from one location to another in the city, the party as a whole must make one DC 15/17 Bluff (to move in disguise) or Stealth check. Failure means they are seen and the enlarged force above captures them.

When back-up arrives (increasing the number of guards to 18), the Sentinels approach the PCs again and order their arrest. If combat is necessary, use the Human Guard statistics from p. 162 of the *Monster Manual* for 15 of the Sentinels. They are led by three Dragonborn Soldiers from p. 86 of the *Monster Manual* as officers. Unless the characters are immensely powerful, you can rule that the Sentinels automatically subdue the players.

### INTERROGATION

Adjust this text as needed depending upon how the PCs arrive at the citadel.

***Overlooking the harbor, the Pearl Citadel is a massive fortification and barracks that acts as the focal point of the military might of Sambral. The most striking feature of the citadel is the soaring Nacre Tower, built at the tip of the promontory and faces out over the sea. The***

***surface of the tower is set with mother-of-pearl so that it gleams in iridescent beauty.***

***You don't have much time to admire the view as the Sentinels marched through the gate and into a wing of the citadel. There you are shown to a spartanly furnished room and instructed to wait.***

***A few minutes a Sentinel officer enters, followed by a scribe. The officer is an athletic woman with a severe expression. She begins immediately. "I am Corporal Teodora Petrides. Please state your name for the record."***

With a blunt manner, Teodora interrogates the party. She wants to know what they know about the disappearances. She asks detailed questions about who the PCs have talked to and what they were told. She wants to know what other investigations they have undertaken. Tailor this conversation to reflect what the characters were doing that attracted the attention of the Sentinels.

Characters may use Bluff, Intimidate, or Diplomacy to avoid answering Teodora's questions. Teodora opposes with her skills listed above. A successful DC 15 Insight check reveals Teodora's general attitude as described below.

If the PCs answer her questions truthfully or they successfully evade her questions, she warns the PCs to not investigate the matter any further. Too many have gone missing already. She does not want them to be the next entries on her list of missing people.

If the PCs fail to best Teodora on the opposed checks and refuse to answer her questions, she has them held in the prison overnight. She comes the next day and begins the questioning again. Repeating incarceration another day, if needed. After two nights in jail, she releases the party.

Normally, Teodora is very tightlipped about her investigation into the disappearances and will not share information with foreign adventurers. However, if the party is having a particularly hard time getting clues to locate the cult, Teodora can give them enough information to get back on track. What information she shares depends on the circumstances, but make it as limited as possible so that the PCs still have to work through the skill challenge.

If the PCs attract the Sentinels a second time, Teodora is annoyed, and they spend another night in prison even if they answer her questions. If they are brought in a third time, they are incarcerated for two nights, during which time the leaders of the Cult of the Reborn Flame leave Sambral.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The PCs are released. This encounter erases all failures that the PCs have gained in the course of the skill challenge in Encounter One. However, word gets about that the party was brought in for questioning by the Sentinels. The PCs have a -2 to all Social checks in Sambral for the rest of the adventure. This penalty is cumulative if the PCs are brought in multiple times. This penalty does not apply to social checks within the fire cult's den.

If the PCs are incarcerated for four days, either for multiple arrests or refusing to answer Teodora's questions, the leaders of the cult leave town and the adventure concludes.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

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

## ENCOUNTER 5: BURNING INCENSE

### SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 1/3, COMPLEXITY 1 (125/175 XP)

#### SETUP

The party has gathered enough information to realize that those responsible for the disappearances have a den beneath the Burning Incense, a shop specializing in fragrances. The following description assumes the PCs arrive during the day. If the PCs arrive at night, the doors and windows are closed and locked. The PCs can see the flickering light from an oil lamp on the third floor.

*The Burning Incense is a small shop on the cliffward side of the Second Rise. The shop occupies the first two stories, while the upper two floors appear to be the private residence of the proprietor. The door and windows are all open to the pleasant breeze coming in off the bay. A beaded curtain shrouds the door, but you can see several customers inside.*

When the PCs enter the shop during the day, read the following. If it is night, adjust the text as needed and remove references to the fragrance merchant.

*Walking through the beaded curtain is like hitting a wall of fragrance. The shop is well-stocked with a wide array of candles, perfumes, incense, and potpourri. A stair leads up to the second floor where there appears to be even more merchandise. A few rich Sambrese wander about, perusing the wares.*

*A door at the back of the shop opens and the fragrance merchant enters, carrying several boxes of scented candles. You catch a glimpse of a stair leading down before he shuts the door. The shopkeeper is a wiry man, dressed in hose and a tunic decorated with ribbons. His hair is elaborate braids hanging in loops. Even from here, you can smell the heavy musk he is wearing.*

The perfume merchant is Kallipos. He is part of the Cult of the Reborn Flame and runs this shop that conceals one of the main entrances to the cultist's den deep inside the cliffs of Sambral. He is a fastidious man who constantly primps his hair and clothing. Something of a snob, unless the PCs ooze money, he ignores them. If they make a nuisance of themselves, he is quick to call

the Sentinels. Getting past Kallipos to the cellar and the entrance of the cult's den is a skill challenge.

#### SKILL CHALLENGE

**Goal:** To find reach the cellar of the Burning Incense.

**Complexity:** 1 (4 successes before 3 failures)

**Victory:** The PCs gain access to the cellar of the perfume shop.

**Defeat:** The PCs gain the attention of the Sentinels. Go to the Encounter 4.

#### Path 1 - During the Day

In this path, the PCs attempt to gain entry to the cellars of the Burning Incense during the day when Kallipos is about.

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Intimidate, Stealth

**Supporting Skills:** Insight

#### Bluff DC 15/17 (4 maximum)

A character can use Bluff to distract Kallipos away from the stair leading to the cellar. How the PC accomplishes this, is up to them. A failed check heightens Kallipos' suspicions that something fishy is going on, giving a -2 circumstance penalty to all checks in this path. A failed Aid Another check also heightens Kallipos' suspicions, giving a -2 circumstance penalty to the final check.

#### Diplomacy DC -/-

The snobbish and suspicious Kallipos cannot be swayed by Diplomacy. Any attempts to use Diplomacy result in automatic failure.

#### Insight DC 10/13 (0 successes, 1 maximum)

The character understands Kallipos' motives and intent. A successful check reveals that Diplomacy is of no use here, and grants a +2 circumstance bonus to one primary skill check in this path.

#### Intimidate DC 15/17 (4 maximum)

A character can intimidate Kallipos into letting them into the cellar. A failed Aid Another check shows the PCs as weak and gives a -2 circumstance penalty to the final check.

#### Stealth DC 15/17 (4 maximum)

A character can sneak past Kallipos. No character can make this check more than once, however, they can Aid Another freely. A failed check heightens Kallipos' suspicions that something fishy is going on, giving a -2 circumstance penalty to all checks in this path.

### **Path Two - During the Night**

In this path, the PCs attempt to gain entry to the cellars of the Burning Incense during the night when it is closed.

**Primary Skills:** Athletics, Stealth, Thievery

**Supporting Skills:** Dungeoneering, Perception

#### **Athletics DC 15/17** (1 success, 1 maximum)

A character can break open one of the windows with a successful Athletics check. The party must make one successful Athletics or Thievery check to succeed in this path.

#### **Dungeoneering DC 10/13** (0 successes, 1 maximum)

A character notices good vantage points, overhangs that create deep shadows, or weaknesses in the locks. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to one primary skill check in this path.

#### **Perception DC 15/17** (0 successes, no maximum)

The character keeps an eye out for any witnesses. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to the next Stealth check.

#### **Stealth DC 15/17** (3 maximum)

A character can sneak up to the shop without being seen. No character can make this check more than once.

#### **Thievery DC 15/17** (1 success, 1 maximum)

A character can pick the lock on the door or a window to gain entry. The party must make one successful Athletics or Thievery check to succeed in this path.

## **ENDING THE ENCOUNTER**

If the PCs are successful, they reach the cellar of the Burning Incense. There they must find the secret door to the Cult of the Reborn Flame's den.

If the PCs are unsuccessful, they gain the Attention of the Sentinels. Go to Encounter 4. In addition, Kallipos places another guardian at the door to the den. Add one additional Perfumed Sentry in the ready room in Encounter 7.

### **EXPERIENCE POINTS**

The PCs earn 125/175 experience points each for completing this encounter successfully.

## ENCOUNTER 6: FOULS SMELLS

### ENCOUNTER LEVEL 1/3 (500/750 XP)

#### SETUP

This encounter includes the following traps at the low tier:

- Lavender Smoke Trap (level 2) (brazier)
- Rose Smoke Trap (level 2) (brazier)
- Mint Smoke Trap (level 2) (brazier)
- Jasmine Smoke Trap (level 2) (brazier)

This encounter includes the following traps at the high tier:

- Lavender Smoke Trap (level 4) (brazier)
- Rose Smoke Trap (level 4) (brazier)
- Mint Smoke Trap (level 4) (brazier)
- Jasmine Smoke Trap (level 4) (brazier)

When the party descends the stair from the Burning Incense, read:

*The stairs from the Burning Incense lead you to an upper cellar and then to a lower cellar. The lower cellar is sparsely furnished with only a single set of shelves and an unlit brazier. The shelves hold four jars of aromatic oils. A small measuring ladle with a long handle lies on the shelf next to them.*

The cultists don't want anyone stumbling into their hidden den so the door only opens when the correct password is spoken or when aromatic oils are put in the brazier in a certain order. A DC 20/21 Perception check locates the door but not how to open it. The PCs do not know the password (which is "Bazamarl" - the cult leader's name) so they will have to overcome the puzzle to gain entry.

Bazamarl anticipated that some of the cultists might forget the password so he left a clue for them to gain entry. However, he did not want to make it easy for them as a reminder to remember the password. If the PCs search the room, a DC 15/17 Perception check finds the note, tucked behind the jars of oil.

For the text of the note, see the Player Handout.

To solve this puzzle, the party must add the correct amount of four different aromatic oils in the proper order to the bowl then light the brazier. The amount and oil are:

- Step 1: add 3 drams of mint
- Step 2: add 4 drams of lavender
- Step 3: add 2 drams of rose

- Step 4: add 1 dram of jasmine

If the PCs fail to add the oils to the bowl in the proper order or add them in the wrong amounts, they activate the trap when they light the brazier. The severity of the trap varies with how badly the PCs failed to follow the instructions.

#### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Brazier:** This large brazier is made out of copper. There is a unlit charcoal at the bottom. Over the coals hangs a copper bowl, the inside of which is coated with the residue of burned oil.

**Illumination:** The cellar is unlit and is in complete darkness. Any light must be provided by the party. There is an unlit oil lamps hanging from the ceiling. A character can light the oil lamp as a standard action. The lamps provide bright light in a 10 square radius.

**Shelves:** The shelves hold four jars. They are clearly labeled lavender, mint, jasmine, and rose. The dust around the jars is disturbed so a character can tell that they are used frequently. Next to the jars is a ladle that measures out 1 dram (1/8 of a fluid ounce).

**Stair:** Stairs down from the store. These act as difficult terrain and cost 2 squares of movement.

#### THE TRAP

The bowl is actually four traps in one. Each trap corresponds to one of the aromatic oils. If this oil is added in the wrong sequence or the incorrect amount, the corresponding trap triggers. If multiple oils are incorrect, then multiple traps trigger. The trap triggers once each time the brazier is lit then resets.

If any of the traps are triggered, the brazier billows out smoke in a close blast 5. The trap is magical and picks its origin square and blast squares to catch as many characters as possible. The oils burn out after one round and the smoke clears the round after that. The smoke from a triggered trap is particularly foul smelling.

Attacking the brazier triggers all four traps simultaneously. The traps trigger once each round that it is attacked. Destroying the brazier reveals the secret door.

#### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Due to the nature of this encounter, it does not scale based on the number of PCs present.

#### ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

**Success:** Once the PCs have solved the puzzle, read the following:

*A pleasant aroma fills the air as the fire consumes the mixture of oils. Smoke swirls upward from the brazier, caressing the wall with vaporous tendrils. The smoke fills in cracks in the stone wall forming lines that creates an archway. There a grinding sound as the stone inside the arch pivots, revealing a darkened corridor beyond.*

This passage takes the PCs to the fire cult's den and Encounter 7.

If the PCs destroy the brazier, the secret door reveals itself and opens with a touch.

**Failure:** If the party is unable to defeat the traps and have to retreat to the upper cellar, each character must make a Stealth check DC 5/7 or be heard by Kallipos. If three or more characters fail, Kallipos hears them and summons the Sentinels. Go to Encounter 4.

If the party intimidated Kallipos in Encounter 5, Kallipos has fled the shop as soon as the characters descended into the cellars and is not around if they are forced to retreat.

Once Kallipos is dealt with, the party can rest in the upper cellar and try again.

#### **EXPERIENCE POINTS**

The PCs earn 500/750 xp each for defeating this encounter.

#### **TREASURE**

The PCs find a small satchel left in the hallway just past the secret door. Inside, they find 25/50 gp and a *chime of awakening*.

## ENCOUNTER 6: FOUL SMELLS STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Lavender Smoke Trap	Level 2 Obstacle XP 125
<b>Trap:</b> Smoke from a brazier billows forth to fill an area with its poisonous fumes.	
<b>Perception</b> Characters can't use Perception to detect this hazard. Additional Skills: Arcane A DC 20 Arcana check reveals that smoke produced by the brazier is magical.	
<b>Trigger</b> Lavender oil is added in the wrong order to the brazier, or the wrong amount of lavender oil is added to the brazier.	
<b>Attack</b> Standard Action                      Close Blast 5 Target: All creatures in blast. Attack: +5 vs. Fortitude Hit: 1d10 poison damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends). Effect: The target takes a -5 penalty to Perception checks until it completes an extended rest.	
<b>Countermeasures</b> ♦ A character who makes a successful Endurance check (DC can avoid the effect (but not the poison damage) of the Lavender Smoke). ♦ An adjacent character can disable the trigger on the bowl with a DC 25 Thievery check. ♦ A DC 20 Arcana check grants the party a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the trap. ♦ A character can attack the brazier (AC 12, all other defenses 10; hp 120; resist 5 all). Destroying the brazier disables all four traps and reveals the secret door.	

Rose Smoke Trap	Level 2 Obstacle XP 125
<b>Trap:</b> Smoke from a brazier billows forth to fill an area with its poisonous fumes.	
<b>Perception</b> Characters can't use Perception to detect this hazard. Additional Skills: Arcane A DC 20 Arcana check reveals that smoke produced by the brazier is magical.	
<b>Trigger</b> Rose oil is added in the wrong order to the brazier, or the wrong amount of rose oil is added to the brazier.	
<b>Attack</b> Standard Action                      Close Blast 5 Target: All creatures in blast. Attack: +5 vs. Fortitude Hit: 1d10 poison damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends). Effect: The target loses one healing surge.	
<b>Countermeasures</b> ♦ A character who makes a successful Endurance check (DC 15) can avoid the effect (but not the poison damage) of the Rose Smoke. ♦ An adjacent character can disable the trigger on the bowl with a DC 25 Thievery check. ♦ A DC 20 Arcana check grants the party a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the trap. ♦ A character can attack the brazier (AC 12, all other defenses 10; hp 120; resist 5 all). Destroying the brazier disables all four traps and reveals the secret door.	

Mint Smoke Trap	Level 2 Obstacle XP 125
<b>Trap:</b> Smoke from a brazier billows forth to fill an area with its poisonous fumes.	
<b>Perception</b> Characters can't use Perception to detect this hazard. Additional Skills: Arcane A DC 20 Arcana check reveals that smoke produced by the brazier is magical.	
<b>Trigger</b> Mint oil is added in the wrong order to the brazier, or the wrong amount of mint oil is added to the brazier.	
<b>Attack</b> Standard Action                      Close Blast 5 Target: All creatures in blast. Attack: +5 vs. Fortitude Hit: 1d10 poison damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends). Effect: The target takes a -5 penalty to Acrobatics and Athletics checks until it completes an extended rest.	
<b>Countermeasures</b> ♦ A character who makes a successful Endurance check (DC 15) can avoid the effect (but not the poison damage) of the Mint Smoke. ♦ An adjacent character can disable the trigger on the bowl with a DC 25 Thievery check. ♦ A DC 20 Arcana check grants the party a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the trap. ♦ A character can attack the brazier (AC 12, all other defenses 10; hp 120; resist 5 all). Destroying the brazier disables all four traps and reveals the secret door.	

Jasmine Smoke Trap	Level 2 Obstacle XP 125
<b>Trap:</b> Smoke from a brazier billows forth to fill an area with its poisonous fumes.	
<b>Perception</b> Characters can't use Perception to detect this hazard. Additional Skills: Arcane A DC 20 Arcana check reveals that smoke produced by the brazier is magical.	
<b>Trigger</b> Jasmine oil is added in the wrong order to the brazier, or the wrong amount of jasmine oil is added to the brazier.	
<b>Attack</b> Standard Action                      Close Blast 5 Target: All creatures in blast. Attack: +5 vs. Fortitude Hit: 1d10 poison damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends). Effect: The target takes a -2 penalty to all saves until the target takes an extended rest.	
<b>Countermeasures</b> ♦ A character who makes a successful Endurance check (DC 17) can avoid the effect (but not the poison damage) of the Jasmine Smoke. ♦ An adjacent character can disable the trigger on the bowl with a DC 25 Thievery check. ♦ A DC 20 Arcana check grants the party a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the trap. ♦ A character can attack the brazier (AC 12, all other defenses 10; hp 120; resist 5 all). Destroying the brazier disables all four traps and reveals the secret door.	

## ENCOUNTER 6: FOUL SMELLS STATISTICS(HIGH LEVEL)

Lavender Smoke Trap	Level 4 Obstacle XP 175
<b>Trap:</b> Smoke from a brazier billows forth to fill an area with its poisonous fumes.	
<b>Perception</b> Characters can't use Perception to detect this hazard. Additional Skills: Arcane A DC 20 Arcana check reveals that smoke produced by the brazier is magical.	
<b>Trigger</b> Lavender oil is added in the wrong order to the brazier, or the wrong amount of lavender oil is added to the brazier.	
<b>Attack</b> Standard Action                      Close Blast 5 Target: All creatures in blast. Attack: +7 vs. Fortitude Hit: 1d10+1 poison damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends). Effect: The target takes a -5 penalty to Perception checks until it completes an extended rest.	
<b>Countermeasures</b> ♦ A character who makes a successful Endurance check (DC 17) can avoid the effect (but not the poison damage) of the Lavender Smoke. ♦ An adjacent character can disable the trigger on the bowl with a DC 25 Thievery check. ♦ A DC 20 Arcana check grants the party a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the trap. ♦ A character can attack the brazier (AC 12, all other defenses 10; hp 120; resist 5 all). Destroying the brazier disables all four traps and reveals the secret door.	

Mint Smoke Trap	Level 4 Obstacle XP 175
<b>Trap:</b> Smoke from a brazier billows forth to fill an area with its poisonous fumes.	
<b>Perception</b> Characters can't use Perception to detect this hazard. Additional Skills: Arcane A DC 20 Arcana check reveals that smoke produced by the brazier is magical.	
<b>Trigger</b> Mint oil is added in the wrong order to the brazier, or the wrong amount of mint oil is added to the brazier.	
<b>Attack</b> Standard Action                      Close Blast 5 Target: All creatures in blast. Attack: +7 vs. Fortitude Hit: 1d10+1 poison damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends). Effect: The target takes a -5 penalty to Acrobatics and Athletics checks until it completes an extended rest.	
<b>Countermeasures</b> ♦ A character who makes a successful Endurance check (DC 17) can avoid the effect (but not the poison damage) of the Mint Smoke. ♦ An adjacent character can disable the trigger on the bowl with a DC 25 Thievery check. ♦ A DC 20 Arcana check grants the party a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the trap. ♦ A character can attack the brazier (AC 12, all other defenses 10; hp 120; resist 5 all). Destroying the brazier disables all four traps and reveals the secret door.	

Rose Smoke Trap	Level 4 Obstacle XP 175
<b>Trap:</b> Smoke from a brazier billows forth to fill an area with its poisonous fumes.	
<b>Perception</b> Characters can't use Perception to detect this hazard. Additional Skills: Arcane A DC 20 Arcana check reveals that smoke produced by the brazier is magical.	
<b>Trigger</b> Rose oil is added in the wrong order to the brazier, or the wrong amount of rose oil is added to the brazier.	
<b>Attack</b> Standard Action                      Close Blast 5 Target: All creatures in blast. Attack: +7 vs. Fortitude Hit: 1d10+1 poison damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends). Effect: The target loses one healing surge.	
<b>Countermeasures</b> ♦ A character who makes a successful Endurance check (DC 17) can avoid the effect (but not the poison damage) of the Rose Smoke. ♦ An adjacent character can disable the trigger on the bowl with a DC 25 Thievery check. ♦ A DC 20 Arcana check grants the party a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the trap. ♦ A character can attack the brazier (AC 12, all other defenses 10; hp 120; resist 5 all). Destroying the brazier disables all four traps and reveals the secret door.	

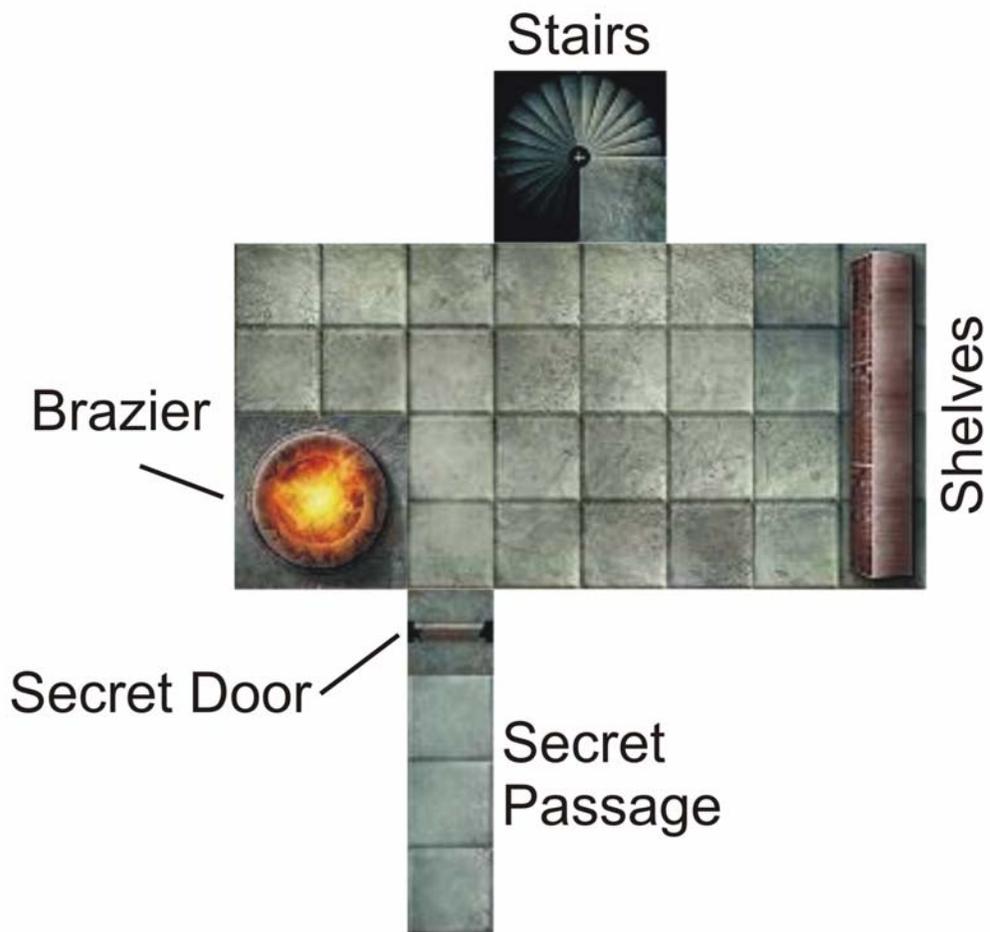
Jasmine Smoke Trap	Level 4 Obstacle XP 175
<b>Trap:</b> Smoke from a brazier billows forth to fill an area with its poisonous fumes.	
<b>Perception</b> Characters can't use Perception to detect this hazard. Additional Skills: Arcane A DC 20 Arcana check reveals that smoke produced by the brazier is magical.	
<b>Trigger</b> Jasmine oil is added in the wrong order to the brazier, or the wrong amount of jasmine oil is added to the brazier.	
<b>Attack</b> Standard Action                      Close Blast 5 Target: All creatures in blast. Attack: +7 vs. Fortitude Hit: 1d10+1 poison damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends). Effect: The target takes a -2 penalty to all saves until the target takes an extended rest.	
<b>Countermeasures</b> ♦ A character who makes a successful Endurance check (DC 17) can avoid the effect (but not the poison damage) of the Jasmine Smoke. ♦ An adjacent character can disable the trigger on the bowl with a DC 25 Thievery check. ♦ A DC 20 Arcana check grants the party a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the trap. ♦ A character can attack the brazier (AC 12, all other defenses 10; hp 120; resist 5 all). Destroying the brazier disables all four traps and reveals the secret door.	

## ENCOUNTER 6: FOUL SMELLS MAP

### Tile Sets Needed

DT2 Arcana Corridors x1

DT3 Hidden Crypts x1



## ENCOUNTER 7: THE PERFUMED SENTRIES

### ENCOUNTER LEVEL 1/3 (500/750 XP)

#### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 2 Perfumed Sentries (S)
- 1 Clay Scout (C)
- 5 Perfumed Lackeys (L)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 2 Perfumed Sentries (S)
- 1 Clay Scout (C)
- 5 Perfumed Lackeys (L)

If the party failed Encounter 5, there are 3 Perfumed Sentries. The third one waits in the Ready Room.

The PCs enter this encounter at the end of the secret passage from the cellar of the perfume shop. As the party enters the area, read:

*Finally, you see a light ahead of you, and this tunnel is coming to an end. Up ahead, the passage opens into a large domed chamber with a statue of what looks like a column of flame. The door on the far side of the chamber is flanked by two sentries with leather armor and maces.*

If the party has any sort of light, the sentries are aware of their presence. Even if the PCs are without light, they must make opposed Stealth checks against the sentries' (and the clay scout's) Perception.

The sentries for the fire cult are not expecting any new abductees at this time, and they do not recognize the characters as adherents to the cult so they attack immediately.

#### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** The sentries have a lantern hanging from a hook on the wall. This provides bright light for the entire room.

**Statue:** The statue in the middle of the room acts as cover and blocking terrain. It is 10 feet tall, meaning that in most cases a reach weapon is required to strike a creature perched atop it. The statue is attached to the

floor and cannot be tipped over. A DC 15 Climb check allows a person to scale the statue. The statue has AC 5, Ref 5, Fort 10, and 20 hit points.

#### TACTICS

On their first action, the Perfumed Sentries shout out an alarm to the lackeys who are waiting in the Ready Room beyond. They double up on one PC, using their Dazing Strike on opposite turns to extend the effect of the daze and gain of combat advantage.

The Perfumed Lackeys rush out of the Ready Room, taking a double move to get in and among the PCs. They try to beat down any skirmishers or artillery characters among the party and provide flanks for the Perfumed Sentries, granting them combat advantage.

Both the lackeys and the sentries try to draw the characters close to the statue where the clay scout is more powerful.

The clay scout hides atop the statue in the middle of the room, where it uses its Mind Touch ability. It targets PCs adjacent to the statue to get the benefit of its Guard Object ability. The Perfumed Sentries eagerly exploit PCs dazed from this ability to gain combat advantage. If attacked, the clay scout uses its Redirect ability. It prefers to redirect to PCs, but will redirect to one of its allies if no PC is adjacent to the statue.

The cultists strike to subdue characters for sacrifice to the firebird.

#### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

**Four PCs:** Remove one of the perfumed sentries.

**Six PCs:** Add another perfumed sentry who is in the Ready Room with the lackeys.

#### ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

**Success:** When the PCs have defeated the Perfumed Sentries, they can press deeper into the cult's den. Fortunately for the party, the cultists were overeager to kill the intruders and forgot to send a runner to alert the rest of the cult.

**Failure:** The party can retreat back to the cellar of the Burning Incense where they can rest and recover. The cultists reinforce this position, replacing any dead, healing their wounded, and adding one extra Perfumed Guard.

If the party is captured by the cultists, they are tossed into cells in the cult's lair. If the PCs joined the Peerless Champions, then Myrelas sneaks in and frees

them, and they can then explore the cult's lair in Encounter 8.

If the PCs did not join the Peerless Champions, then they are taken to the Fire Pit. Go to Encounter 9.

#### EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 500/750 xp each for defeating the perfumed guards.

#### TREASURE

The Lackeys were playing cards in the Ready Room. Their stakes and the pot equal 50/100 gp. One of the sentries is carrying *bloodcut armor +1*.

## ENCOUNTER 7: THE PERFUMED SENTRY STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Perfumed Sentry	Level 2 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 125
<b>Initiative</b> +6 <b>Senses</b> Perception +1	
<b>HP</b> 37; <b>Bloodied</b> 18	
<b>AC</b> 16; <b>Fortitude</b> 12, <b>Reflex</b> 14, <b>Will</b> 12	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Mace</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+4 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage and the perfumed sentry shifts 1 square.	
R <b>Dagger</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Ranged 5/10; +6 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage. ,	
m <b>Dazing Strike</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+4 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the perfumed sentry's next turn, and the perfumed sentry shifts 1 square.	
<b>Combat Advantage</b>	
The perfumed sentry deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> Common
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +9, Streetwise +7, Thievery +9	
<b>Str</b> 12 (+2)	<b>Dex</b> 17 (+4) <b>Wis</b> 11 (+1)
<b>Con</b> 13 (+2)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+1) <b>Cha</b> 12 (+2)
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, mace, 4 daggers	

Perfumed Lackey	Level 1 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 25
<b>Initiative</b> +0 <b>Senses</b> Perception +0	
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
<b>AC</b> 15; <b>Fortitude</b> 13, <b>Reflex</b> 11, <b>Will</b> 11	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Short sword</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+6 vs. AC; 4 damage.	
<b>Mob Rule</b>	
A perfumed lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other perfumed lackeys are within 5 squares of it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> Common
<b>Str</b> 14 (+2)	<b>Dex</b> 10 (0) <b>Wis</b> 10 (0)
<b>Con</b> 12 (+1)	<b>Int</b> 9 (-1) <b>Cha</b> 10 (0)
<b>Equipment</b> short sword	

Clay Scout	Level 2 Lurker
Small natural animate (construct, homunculus)	XP 125
<b>Initiative</b> +7 <b>Senses</b> Perception +6; darkvision	
<b>HP</b> 31; <b>Bloodied</b> 15	
<b>AC</b> 16; <b>Fortitude</b> 13, <b>Reflex</b> 14, <b>Will</b> 15	
<b>Speed</b> 4; fly 3 (clumsy)	
m <b>Bite</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Poison</b>	
+3 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage, and the homunculus makes a secondary attack against the same target.	
Secondary attack	
+2 vs. Fortitude; the target is slowed (save ends)	
R <b>Mind Touch</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Psyhic</b>	
Range 10; +5 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 3 psychic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).	
<b>Guard Object</b>	
The clay scout gains a +4 bonus to attack rolls against targets adjacent to or carrying its guarded object.	
<b>Limited Invisibility</b> ♦ <b>Illusion</b>	
The clay scout is invisible to dazed creatures.	
<b>Redirect</b> (immediate interrupt; when targeted by a melee or a ranged attack; at-will)	
The clay scout makes an attack against the attacker; +4 vs. Will; the triggering attack targets a creature adjacent to the clay scout instead (as chosen by the clay scout).	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> -	
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +8	
<b>Str</b> 10 (+1)	<b>Dex</b> 15 (+3) <b>Wis</b> 10 (+1)
<b>Con</b> 13 (+2)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+1) <b>Cha</b> 16 (+4)

## ENCOUNTER 7: THE PERFUMED SENTRY STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Perfumed Sentry	Level 4 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 175
<b>Initiative</b> +6 <b>Senses</b> Perception +1	
<b>HP</b> 53; <b>Bloodied</b> 26	
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 14, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 14	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Mace</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage and the perfumed sentry shifts 1 square.	
R <b>Dagger</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Ranged 5/10; +8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 4 damage. ,	
m <b>Dazing Strike</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the perfumed sentry's next turn, and the perfumed sentry shifts 1 square.	
<b>Combat Advantage</b>	
The perfumed sentry deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +9, Streetwise +7, Thievery +9	
<b>Str</b> 12 (+3) <b>Dex</b> 17 (+5) <b>Wis</b> 11 (+2)	
<b>Con</b> 13 (+3) <b>Int</b> 10 (+2) <b>Cha</b> 12 (+3)	
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, mace, 4 daggers	

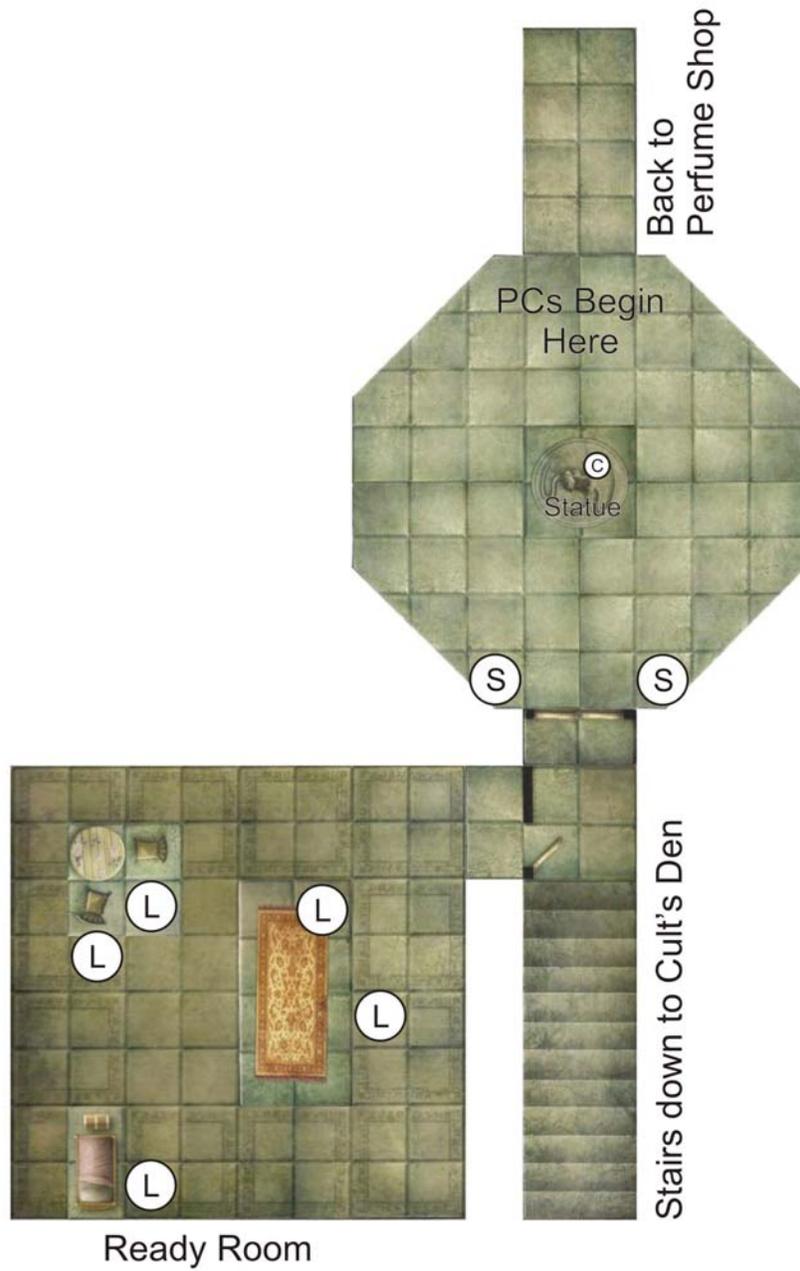
Perfumed Lackey	Level 4 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 44
<b>Initiative</b> +0 <b>Senses</b> Perception +0	
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 16, <b>Reflex</b> 14, <b>Will</b> 14	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Short sword</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+9 vs. AC; 6 damage.	
<b>Mob Rule</b>	
A perfumed lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other perfumed lackeys are within 5 squares of it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Str</b> 14 (+4) <b>Dex</b> 10 (+2) <b>Wis</b> 10 (+2)	
<b>Con</b> 12 (+3) <b>Int</b> 9 (+1) <b>Cha</b> 10 (+2)	
<b>Equipment</b> short sword	

Clay Scout	Level 4 Lurker
Small natural animate (construct, homunculus)	XP 175
<b>Initiative</b> +7 <b>Senses</b> Perception +6; darkvision	
<b>HP</b> 43; <b>Bloodied</b> 21	
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 15, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 17	
<b>Speed</b> 4; fly 3 (clumsy)	
m <b>Bite</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Poison</b>	
+5 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage, and the homunculus makes a secondary attack against the same target.	
Secondary attack	
+2 vs. Fortitude; the target is slowed (save ends)	
R <b>Mind Touch</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Psychic</b>	
Range 10; +7 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 5 psychic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).	
<b>Guard Object</b>	
The clay scout gains a +4 bonus to attack rolls against targets adjacent to or carrying its guarded object.	
<b>Limited Invisibility</b> ♦ <b>Illusion</b>	
The clay scout is invisible to dazed creatures.	
<b>Redirect</b> (immediate interrupt; when targeted by a melee or a ranged attack; at-will)	
The clay scout makes an attack against the attacker; +4 vs. Will; the triggering attack targets a creature adjacent to the clay scout instead (as chosen by the clay scout).	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> -	
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +9	
<b>Str</b> 10 (+2) <b>Dex</b> 15 (+4) <b>Wis</b> 10 (+2)	
<b>Con</b> 13 (+3) <b>Int</b> 10 (+2) <b>Cha</b> 16 (+5)	

# ENCOUNTER 7: THE PERFUMED GUARDS MAP

## Tile Sets Needed

DT7 Fane of Foraotten Gods x1



## ENCOUNTER 8: THE LURE OF FLAME

### SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 2/4, COMPLEXITY 2 (250/350 XP)

#### SETUP

Once past the sentries, the party enters the fire cult's den. Read or paraphrase the following:

*From the sentry post, you descend a flight of stairs and pass through a thick door. Beyond the door is a den of iniquity in the middle of a massive debauched revel. Revelers lounge torpidly on divans, sampling an astonishing variety of drinks and dishes. The air is thick with incense smoke and cloying perfume. Somewhere a musician is coaxing a lethargic melody from a theorbo.*

*A young woman walks by and hands you a drink. "I'm glad you could join us," she says. "Better late than never."*

The room has four exits. One is the entrance the PCs came through and two others go to other sentry points with guards at them (that ignore the PCs if they're coming from the den). The final exit leads deeper into the cult's lair, but is blocked by a wall of fire, preventing the PCs from going through it at this time. Attempts to do so burn the PC badly and cost a healing surge.

Since the sentries did not warn anyone about the party, the revelers assume they are here for the fête. The PCs have an excellent opportunity to speak with the cultists to learn some of their secrets.

Many of those inside the cult's den seem to be listless wanderers, those hoping for a better life, or simple hedonists. Most don't really know what's going on or simply do not care. However, characters can find people who know more.

#### SKILL CHALLENGE

**Goal:** To stay hidden among the revelers while learning about the cult.

**Complexity:** 2 (6 successes before 3 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Arcana, Bluff, Diplomacy, Endurance, Intimidate, Religion, Streetwise

**Supporting Skills:** Insight, Perception, Thievery

**Victory:** The PCs are successful at remaining hidden among the revelers and gain some sympathy from them.

**Defeat:** The revelers suspect that the PCs are not part of the fire cult. They turn on the PCs in Encounter 9.

The skill descriptions are deliberately left extremely vague. The characters must interact with the cultists through role-playing in order to make the appropriate roll.

#### Arcana DC 15/17 (2 maximum)

A character can impress the reveler with knowledge of Arcana fire topics. Many of the revelers display a fascination with fire.

#### Bluff DC 15/17 (2 maximum)

A character can spin lies to gain the good will of a reveler.

#### Diplomacy DC 15/17 (2 maximum)

A character can interact in a friendly manner with a reveler.

#### Endurance DC 10/13 (2 maximum)

A character can win over friends by demonstrating ability to withstand heat from an open flame or participating in the excesses of the bacchanalia.

#### Intimidate -/- (0 successes)

The revelers dislike anyone that ruins their fun at the party. Use of this skill automatically results in a failure as the reveler wanders off.

#### Insight DC 10/13 (0 successes, 1 maximum)

A character can get a feel for the emotions of the revelers. It reveals that Intimidate will not be of value here.

#### Insight DC 10/13 (0 successes, no maximum)

A character can grant a +2 circumstance bonus to the next primary skill check, but only once with each cultist.

#### Perception DC 10/13 (0 successes, no maximum)

A character notices reveler who needs a new drink. This information, along with a fresh drink, grants a +2 circumstance bonus to one primary skill check.

#### Perception DC 15/17 (0 successes, 1 maximum)

A character notices that the revelers wear gold pendants shaped to look like a flame. They all look alike. This opens up the Thievery option below.

#### Religion DC 15/17 (2 maximum)

A character can impress a reveler with knowledge of the symbolism of fire.

#### Streetwise DC 15/17 (2 maximum)

A character can work the room to gain confidence of a reveler.

#### **Thievery DC 15/17 (0 successes, 1 maximum)**

If the party notices the pendants of Reborn Flame from the Perception check, a character can steal one from a reveler. Display of a pendant grants a character a +2 circumstance bonus to one primary skill check.

Below are examples of cultists who will talk to party. Feel free to make up your own, but give them varied motivations to be part of the cult.

**Bellanka Petrou:** An adolescent girl with long hair that falls in ringlets, Bellanka is the daughter of Kallos (who the party may have met in Encounter 1). She lives on the Bayside with her parents and two younger siblings. She met Bazamarl in the city and found him fascinating. When he offered her excitement and adventure, she followed after him without a second thought.

Bellanka has only been here two days. She has not seen a sacrifice to the Firebird, but she believes it must be fascinating. There are so many interesting people here and things to do. She speaks of Bazamarl in a hushed hero-worshipping tone.

**Ekaterini Lekkas:** A heavy-set young woman with a strong chin and sunken eyes, Ekaterini is the reveler who greets the party at the door. She is the daughter of one of the smaller noble families in Sambral and is constantly criticized by her mother, causing her to be in a state of near-constant rebellion. She is sure her mother would hate her involvement in the cult.

As one of the first recruits to the Cult of Reborn Flame, she sees herself as the hostess for these revels and welcomes newcomers. She takes offense easily, storming off at the slightest insult. She enjoys watching the sacrifices to the Firebird as it is someone else getting hurt instead of her.

**Garachi Vel'Anova:** A large muscled, bald-headed man with a deep sailors tan, Garachi holds a grand drink in one hand while he arm wrestles with the other. His dashing smile is only overpowered by the vast tattoo of a flame that covers his shirtless back. While Garachi is a member of the Cult of the Reborn Flame, he has seen a number of in his sea travels and is not as naïve as many of the other revelers.

Should a PC with the In Slumber Remain Quest Card approach him and say *"The cleansing flame thrives during even the coldest night,"* and then ask him when the next conflagration of souls will occur, he realizes something is amiss. He replies that *"In the age*

*of twilight was the keep built that only those who travel from the beyond the stars can open. If you truly seek the conflagration, you will need to ask such a traveler."* Garachi then downs his drink and leaves the den before things go poorly.

**Perantris Vasco:** A skinny man with overly large eyes and an attempt at facial hair, Perantris is the source of the music in the cultist's den. He is playing a theorbo (a plucked string instrument that looks like a long-necked lute a produces a deep rich tune). He is hoping to find his muse that will inspire him to become one of the greatest musicians ever.

Perantris joined the cult a few months ago and loves the indulgent freedom he receives. The intoxicated crowd loves his music and heaps him with praise. He has written more songs in the past two months than he has in the rest of his life. If people must die to create an atmosphere for his art to flourish, then that's a sacrifice he's willing for other people to make.

**Tordarr:** A lithe dragonborn with a lazy look, Tordarr is the older brother of Sheth (who the PCs may have met in Encounter 1). Tordarr was a member of a bravo troupe and still dresses the part with flamboyant clothes. He has watched his father scrap and sweat to make a living, and he wants none of it.

Tordarr fell in with the cult about two weeks ago. He enjoys the near constant parties, especially all the different incenses that are available. He spends hours inhaling the mildly intoxicating vapors and having inane conversations with the other revelers. He knows the wicked heart of Bazamarl and the sacrifices, but as long as the incense keeps coming that's someone else's problem and he does not care.

**Zagreus Dosse:** A good-looking man who is exquisitely dressed, Zagreus is a friend of the tailor Hesione (whom PCs may have met in Encounter 1). Always a listless wanderer, Zagreus joined the cult about a month ago. He admires the conviction of Bazamarl and the other cultists as he could never muster much passion about anything.

Zagreus has been part of the Cult of Reborn Flame for a bit over a month. He hoped that a fire cult would kindle a passion for life, but it has not. He knows that the Bazamarl sacrifices kidnapped victims to the Firebird. In fact, he is toying with letting the Firebird take him just to feel something.

## **ENDING THE ENCOUNTER**

**Success:** With each success in the skill challenge, a reveler tells the party one piece of information.

- The name of the cult is the Cult of Reborn Flame. The revelers are not sure why.
- The leader of the cult in Sambral is Bazamarl, a powerful man who can walk through flames without harm.
- Bazamarl throws these wondrous parties for members to enjoy the sights, smells, and feel of flame. There is a party almost every night.
- Only Bazamarl can invite people into the cult. He is very selective, but no one knows what his criteria is.
- Those who do not meet Bazamarl's strict requirements are given to the firebird - a magnificent creature composed completely out of flame.
- Bazamarl was sent here from his superiors in forsaken and immensely boring Ramekho.

Before the PCs have an opportunity to do more with this information, the chime rings, summoning all the revelers to the Fire Pit.

**Failure:** If the PCs fail the skill challenge, the revelers are suspicious of the party, but the chime rings before anything becomes of it. However, the character suffers consequences in Encounter 9.

#### EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 250/350 xp for remaining hidden among the revelers while learning about the cult.

#### TREASURE

As they wander about the cult's den, the PCs can find a ritual book containing *detect secret doors* and *magic circle*.

# ENCOUNTER 9: THE FIRE PIT

## ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/5 (750/1000 XP)

### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

#### 1 Firebird (F)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

#### 1 Firebird (level 5) (F)

Once the PCs have succeeded or failed the skill challenge, read or paraphrase the following:

*A chime interrupts the decadence of the fire cult's den. All ears pick up as a series of distinct metallic notes puncture the air. A murmur of excitement spreads through the crowd as the revelers follow the sound deeper into the den.*

The other cultists encourage the characters to follow them to the Fire Pit where they will see something truly miraculous.

### THE SACRIFICE

*The crowd gathers on a horseshoe-shaped ledge overlooking a wide pit about 20 feet deep. The sand-covered floor is spiked with three thick stone poles, set with hooks. The ledge borders the pit on three sides. On the fourth side, there is a gaping hole in the wall, about 10 feet across, leading to a larger cave beyond. There is something alive in there, but you can't see what it is from this angle. Heat radiates from the opening in oppressive waves, and light ripples on the wall.*

If the PCs ask the cultists what is about to happen, they are told that the fire is about to consume the offerings. The cultists seem genuinely excited, promising the PCs a magnificent show.

*The crowd parts, and perfumed cultists like the ones you met at the entrance force three hooded and shackled people down the stairs to the pit. The cultists loop the chain of the shackles over the hook in the pole and strip off the hoods so that the sacrifices can see their doom. One of the sacrifices lolls her head in a drugged stupor, her body sliding from one form to another.*

If the PCs move to free the prisoners at this point, none of the cultists stop them. The cultists leading the sacrifices down to the pit are Perfumed Lackeys. They stay out of the PCs' way, expecting the firebird to take care of the interlopers. If they are attacked, they flee. Once all the PCs are down in the Fire Pit (or it looks like no more are coming down to the pit), the Firebird emerges and attacks.

*Movement from inside the cave attracts your attention. A bird composed entirely out of flame clambers to the cave mouth. It spreads its wings and screams in eager hunger. The temperature soars and your eardrums ache.*

Unless the PCs interfere, the firebird is content to consume the three sacrifices chained to the poles. The crowd stomps their feet and claps their hand in a rhythmic beat as the three offerings are consumed and the creature returns to its lair. If the party challenges the Firebird's right to the offerings, it attacks them.

During the fight, the intoxicated crowd cheers on the firebird. If the PCs failed the skill challenge in Encounter 8, then the crowd takes a more active hand in assisting the firebird.

If the party does nothing during to stop the Firebird from consuming the sacrifices, a runner comes in shouting that the sentries have been killed and the cult has intruders. The cultists immediately identify the PCs as intruders, and the Firebird attacks them. The crowd throws Ember Moss into the fire pit as if the party failed Encounter 8. In addition, cultists run forward as needed to offer themselves as a willing sacrifice to the Firebird's Feed the Flames ability.

### PARTY AS SACRIFICE

If the party was captured and did not join the Peerless Champions' troupe, they are brought to the Fire Pit where they are bound to the poles (two to a pole). The cultists think it is amusing to give the party false hope by allowing them to keep their weapons and gear. The PCs can break out of their chains as described in sacrifices below.

### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Ember Moss:** If the party failed the skill challenge in Encounter 8, at the end of each round the audience tosses perfumed-drenched Ember Moss into the pit. The Ember Moss ignites, creating a 10 ft. square of flame. Place the square under a random PC. The burning moss does 5 points of damage. Also, anyone standing on the

Ember Moss takes an additional 5 points of fire damage from all fire attacks and takes a -4 penalty to saving throws to end ongoing fire damage. The Ember Moss burns out at the end of the next round (when the cultists toss in another pile on a random PC).

**Illumination:** The fire pit is brightly lit.

**Manacles:** The manacles are standard metal chains: AC 8, Ref 8, Fort 8, HP 30, immune to attacks that target Will. They can be unlocked by a successful DC 10/13 Thievery check.

**Poles:** The stone poles act as cover and blocking terrain.

**Sacrifices:** The sacrifices have been drugged and are unconscious. They can be roused with a successful DC 10/13 Heal check. Their shackles can be unhooked from the pole with a successful DC 10/13 Acrobatics check, broken with a successful DC 10/13 Athletics check, or unlocked with a successful DC 10/13 Thievery check. Iphimедра is the sacrifice furthest from the firebird's cave. If she is roused, she shapeshifts out of her shackles without needing a character to free her from the shackles. The sacrifices flee to the far corner of the fire pit and huddle there. If caught in an area of effect attack, consider each sacrifice to have 10 for all of their defenses and 5 hit points, with the exception of Iphimедра who has 15 for her defenses and 10 hit points.

**Soft Sand:** The soft sand covering the bottom of the fire pit counts as difficult terrain, costing 2 squares of movement. This does not affect flying creatures, like the Firebird.

**Stairs:** The stairs counts as difficult terrain, costing 2 squares of movement.

## TACTICS

As a solo creature, the Firebird should scare the party. Play this monster as nasty as you can. Its opening salvo should get their respect. The Firebird begins by moving to a position where it can use Gout of Flame to catch as many PCs as it possible. It then spends an action point and uses Tumbling Flame (again catching as many of the PCs as possible) to move to the center of the residual flames, forcing the PCs to enter the flames to fight it.

After the initial onslaught, the Firebird attacks with Firebird Fury, focusing all its attacks on one target, hoping to get a third attack. It uses its Fire Spray to damage low hit point ranged attackers.

The Firebird saves its second action point when it is bloodied. It uses Tumbling Flame to teleport next to one of the chained sacrifices. It then attacks the sacrifice with its Feeding the Flames attack. This attack automatically succeeds and kills the sacrifice.

As the combat wears on, the PCs are likely to become bloodied frequently, recharging its Feed the Flames ability. If given a chance, the Firebird works through all three of its sacrifices with this power. The Firebird target Iphimедра last of the three sacrifices.

If any of the PCs go unconscious and the Firebird has a recharged Feed the Flames, it attacks the unconscious PCs with the ability. Otherwise, it does not use this ability on the PCs, as it is not a strong attack.

A creature of rage and incessant hunger, the Firebird remains close to the ground where it can reach the PCs with its melee attacks.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

**Four PCs:** Decrease the firebird's hit points to 135/186.

**Six PCs:** Increase the firebird's hit points to 202/279.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

**Success:** If the party defeats the Firebird, the ravers panic and flee the den, revealing the leaders of the cult. This happens immediately without an opportunity for short rest. The final confrontation is addressed in Encounter 10.

**Failure:** If the PCs are defeated by the Firebird, their bodies are burned and thrown into the ocean. Fortunately for the PCs, Althea Mecatoris has their bones salvaged and has them raised from the dead. She also has their gear reclaimed from many of the pawn shops in Sambral. Naturally, the PCs owe her big, and she will remind them of that.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs receive 750/1000 xp for overcoming the monster.

## TREASURE

The players can find the Firebird's treasure hoard in its cave. The treasure consists of 75/125 gp and an *ironskin belt*.

## ENCOUNTER 9: THE FIRE PIT STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Firebird	Level 2 Solo Brute
Large elemental magical beast (Air, Fire)	XP 625
<b>Initiative</b> +2 <b>Senses</b> Perception +8; darkvision	
<b>Body Blaze</b> (Fire) aura 2; any creature that enters the aura or starts its turn within the aura takes 5 fire damage.	
<b>HP</b> 168; <b>Bloodied</b> 84	
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 18, <b>Reflex</b> 17, <b>Will</b> 14	
<b>Immune</b> fire	
<b>Saving Throws</b> +5	
<b>Speed</b> 6 (hover); see also Tumbling Flame	
<b>Action Points</b> 2	
<b>m Bite</b> (standard; at-will) ◆ <b>Fire</b>	
Reach 2; +5 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 fire damage.	
<b>M Firebird Fury</b> (standard; at-will) ◆ <b>Fire</b>	
The firebird makes two bite attacks. If both bites hit a single target, it makes a third bite attack against the same target.	
<b>C Tumbling Flame</b> (standard; encounter; recharges when first bloodied) ◆ <b>Fire, Teleport</b>	
Close blast 5; +3 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 3 fire damage and the target takes ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). Effect: The firebird teleports to any open space adjacent to the border of the blast's area.	
<b>R Fire Spray</b> (immediate reaction; when an enemy attacks the firebird with a ranged attack; at-will) ◆ <b>Fire</b>	
Ranged 20; targets the triggering enemy; +3 vs. Reflex; 1d6+1 fire damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the firebird's next turn.	
<b>M Feeding the Fire</b> (standard; recharges when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied; encounter) ◆ <b>Healing</b>	
Requires combat advantage; +3 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 5 fire damage and the target is weakened (save ends), and the firebird heals 42 hit points.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> Primordial
<b>Skills</b> Athletics +11	
<b>Str</b> 18 (+5)	<b>Dex</b> 10 (+1) <b>Wis</b> 12 (+2)
<b>Con</b> 18 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+1) <b>Cha</b> 8 (0)

## ENCOUNTER 9: THE FIRE PIT STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

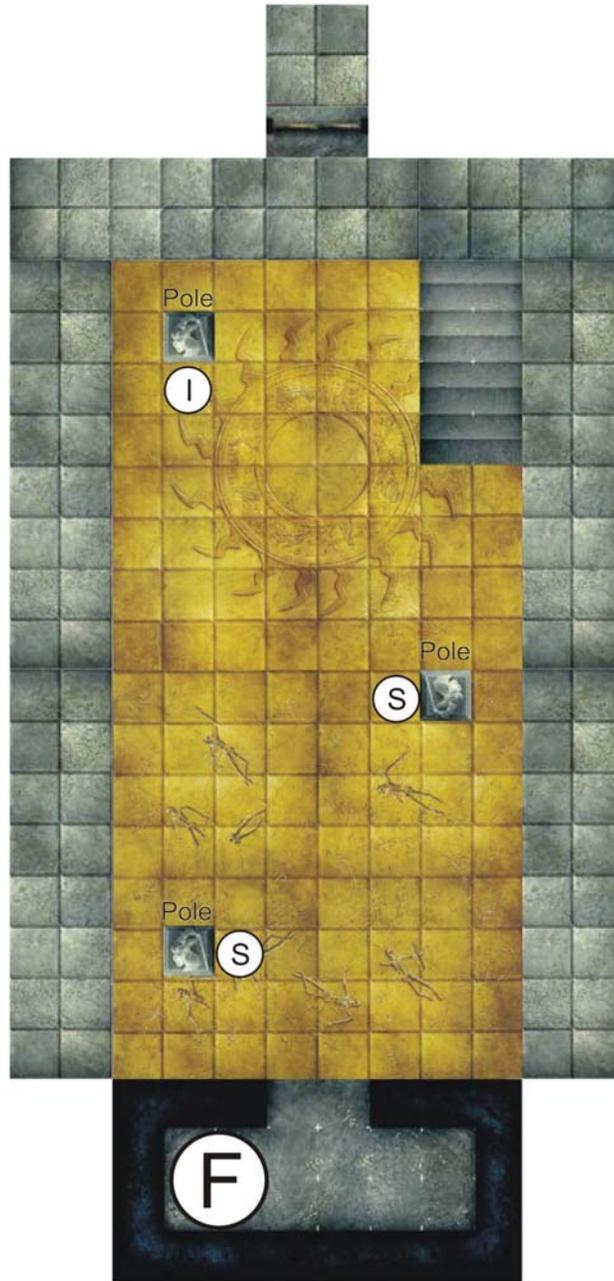
Firebird	Level 4 Solo Brute
Large elemental magical beast (Air, Fire) <span style="float: right;">XP 875</span>	
<b>Initiative</b> +2 <b>Senses</b> Perception +8; darkvision	
<b>Body Blaze</b> (Fire) aura 2; any creature that enters the aura or starts its turn within the aura takes 5 fire damage.	
<b>HP</b> 232; <b>Bloodied</b> 116	
<b>AC</b> 20; <b>Fortitude</b> 20, <b>Reflex</b> 19, <b>Will</b> 16	
<b>Immune</b> fire	
<b>Saving Throws</b> +5	
<b>Speed</b> 6 (hover); see also Tumbling Flame	
<b>Action Points</b> 2	
<b>m Bite</b> (standard; at-will) ◆ <b>Fire</b> Reach 2; +7 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 fire damage.	
<b>M Firebird Fury</b> (standard; at-will) ◆ <b>Fire</b> The firebird makes two bite attacks. If both bites hit a single target, it makes a third bite attack against the same target.	
<b>C Tumbling Flame</b> (standard; encounter; recharges when first bloodied) ◆ <b>Fire, Teleport</b> Close blast 5; +5 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 4 fire damage and the target takes ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). Effect: The firebird teleports to any open space adjacent to the border of the blast's area.	
<b>R Fire Spray</b> (immediate reaction; when an enemy attacks the firebird with a ranged attack; at-will) ◆ <b>Fire</b> Ranged 20; targets the triggering enemy; +5 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 2 damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the dragon's next turn.	
<b>M Feeding the Fire</b> (standard; recharges when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied; encounter) ◆ <b>Healing</b> Requires combat advantage; +5 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 6 fire damage and the target is weakened (save ends), and the firebird heals 58 hit points.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> Draconic, Primordial
<b>Skills</b> Athletics +12	
<b>Str</b> 18 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 10 (+2) <b>Wis</b> 12 (+3)
<b>Con</b> 18 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+2) <b>Cha</b> 8 (+1)

# ENCOUNTER 9: THE FIRE PIT

## Tile Sets Needed

DT1 Dungeon Tiles x1

DT6 Dire Tombs x1



## ENCOUNTER 10: SCION OF FIRE

### ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/5 (750/1000 XP)

#### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 Bazamarl (B)
- 2 Dragonborn Fireseekers (level 2) (D)
- 2 Human Firetenders (level 2) (H)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 Bazamarl (level 4) (B)
- 2 Dragonborn Fireseekers (level 4) (D)
- 2 Human Firetenders (level 4) (H)

As soon as the party finishes Encounter 9, read or paraphrase the following:

*As the firebird collapses to the ground, the revelers gasp in astonishment then panic. They fall over each other as they flee in all directions, desperate to get away.*

*Not everyone flees. In their wake stands what seems to be the leaders of the cult. One of them is bald-man with an oiled mustache and beard. He is holding a staff carved to look like a pillar of flame. He snarls at you. "Your suffering will know no bounds!"*

The man with the staff is Bazamarl, and he is livid that the party killed his elemental prize. He and his fellow cultists take advantage of the party's recent combat with the Firebird and attack as soon as they can fight their way through the crowd. However, during the commotion of freeing the captives and the crowd packing the exits, the PCs have had time for a short rest before Bazamarl and his cultists can reach the PCs.

If the PCs have rescued the sacrifices from Encounter 9, they are huddled in the corner as far away from where the Firebird was as possible. They are too weak and drugged to be effective help in this encounter.

#### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Doors:** The doors leading from the Fire Pit are open.

**Illumination:** The fire pit is brightly lit.

**Poles:** The poles act as cover and blocking terrain.

**Soft Sand:** The soft sand covering the bottom of the fire pit counts as difficult terrain, costing 2 squares of

movement. This does not affect flying creatures, like the firebird.

**Stairs:** The stairs count as difficult terrain, costing 2 squares of movement.

#### TACTICS

Most likely, the cult leaders begin the encounter with the high ground on the ledge and intend to keep to it. The Human Firetenders take up positions at the stairs. They use their reach and Powerful Strike to knock PCs prone and keep them from climbing the stairs.

The Dragonborn Fireseekers attack any character who makes it past the Human Firetenders. They move constantly to gain the benefit of their Skirmish and utilize their Overwhelming Strike early. They use their Dragon Breath to catch as many PCs as possible.

Bazamarl prefers to fight from a distance, using his Flaming Veil to damage and blind PCs. If forced into melee, he uses Radiance Unleashed to push threatening character(s) off the ledge and back into the pit. Characters that fall into the Fire Pit take 2d10 points of falling damage.

#### ESCAPING WITH THE SACRIFICES

The door that leads out of the Fire Pit is open. Characters can lead the sacrifices out the door (assuming they can get past the Human Firetenders) and escape the cultist's den. Bazamarl does not follow after the party. Instead, he packs his belongings and flees Sambral as quickly as possible.

#### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

**Four PCs:** Remove one of the Dragonborn Fireseekers.

**Six PCs:** Add another Dragonborn Fireseeker.

#### ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

**Success:** If the PCs are successful in defeating the leaders of the fire cult, choose one of the cultists that the PCs dealt with in Encounter 8. The characters see that person hiding in the back corner or down the hall, watching them and Bazamarl intently. A look of guilt and remorse comes over the person's face and the individual pulls off the gold pendant shaped like a flame, drop it on to the floor, and leaves the cultists' den.

**Failure:** If the PCs are defeated by the cult leaders, their bodies are burned and thrown into the ocean. Althea Mecatoris has them restored as described in Encounter 10.

### EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs receive 750/1,000 xp for defeating the cult leaders.

### TREASURE

In Bazamarl's belongings, the party finds his accumulated wealth of 100/150 gp including a *tome of arrest*.

## ENCOUNTER 10: SCION OF FIRE STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Bazamarl, Cult Leader	Level 2 Elite Controller
Medium natural humanoid	
XP 250	
Initiative +2      Senses Perception +3	
HP 78; Bloodied 39	
AC 16; Fortitude 15, Reflex 15, Will 16	
Resist 5 fire	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Point 1	
m <b>Quarterstaff</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+8 vs AC; 1d8 + 1 damage.	
R <b>Flaming Veil</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Fire or Necrotic</b>	
Ranged 10/20; +6 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 3 fire or necrotic damage, and the target is blinded (save ends).	
R <b>Radiance Unleashed</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Fire or Necrotic</b>	
Close burst 2; +6 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 3 fire or necrotic damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and blinded until the end of the Bazamarl's next turn.	
<b>Body of Flame</b>	
Any creature that hits Bazamarl with a melee attack takes 3 points of fire damage.	
<b>Fire Master</b>	
Bazamarl 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	
Skills Nature +8, Religion +7	
Str 13 (+2)	Dex 12 (+2)      Wis 14 (+3)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 12 (+2)      Cha 18 (+5)
Equipment leather armor, quarterstaff	

Human Firetenders	Level 2 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	
XP 125	
Initiative +5      Senses Perception +6	
HP 39; Bloodied 19	
AC 17; Fortitude 15, Reflex 14, Will 13	
Speed 5	
m <b>Halberd</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Reach 2; +9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the human firetender's next turn.	
m <b>Powerful Strike</b> (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires halberd; reach 2; +9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and Target is knocked prone.	
R <b>Crossbow</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Ranged 15/30; +8 Armor Class; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
Alignment Evil      Languages Common	
Skills Streetwise	
Str 16 (+4)	Dex 14 (+3)      Wis 11 (+1)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 10 (+1)      Cha 12 (+2)
Equipment chainmail, halberd, crossbow, crossbow bolts (20)	

Dragonborn Fireseekers	Level 2 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	
XP 125	
Initiative +6      Senses Perception +2	
HP 38; Bloodied 19	
AC 16; Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 14	
Resist 5 fire	
Speed 6	
m <b>Battleaxe</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+7 vs. AC (+8 while bloodied); 1d10+4 damage.	
M <b>Overwhelming Strike</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires battleaxe; +7 vs. AC (+8 while bloodied); 1d10 + 4 damage, and the target grants combat advantage to the dragonborn fireseeker until the end of the fireseeker's next turn.	
C <b>Dragon Breath</b> (minor; encounter) ♦ <b>Fire</b>	
Close blast 3; +5 vs. Reflex (+6 while bloodied); 1d6 + 2 fire damage.	
<b>Dragonborn Fury</b> (only while bloodied)	
A dragonborn fireseeker gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.	
<b>Skirmish</b> +1d6	
If, on its turn, the dragonborn fireseeker ends its move at least 4 squares away from its starting point, it deals 1d6 extra damage with its melee attacks until the start of its next turn.	
<b>Tactical Withdraw</b> (immediate reaction, when first bloodied, encounter)	
The dragonborn fireseeker shifts 3 squares.	
Alignment Evil      Languages Common, Draconic	
Skills History +2, Intimidate +3	
Str 18 (+5)	Dex 16 (+4)      Wis 13 (+2)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 8 (0)      Cha 10 (+1)
Equipment leather armor, battleaxe	

## ENCOUNTER 10: SCION OF FIRE STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Bazamarl, Cult Leader	Level 4 Elite Controller
Medium natural humanoid	XP 350
<b>Initiative</b> +2 <b>Senses Perception</b> +4	
<b>HP</b> 110; <b>Bloodied</b> 55	
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 17, <b>Reflex</b> 17, <b>Will</b> 18	
<b>Resist</b> 5 fire	
<b>Saving Throws</b> +2	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
<b>Action Point</b> 1	
m <b>Quarterstaff</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+10 vs AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
R <b>Flaming Veil</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Fire</b>	
Ranged 10/20; +8 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 4 fire or necrotic damage, and the target is blinded (save ends).	
R <b>Radiance Unleashed</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Fire</b>	
Close burst 2; +8 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 4 fire or necrotic damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and blinded until the end of Bazamarl's next turn.	
<b>Body of Flame</b>	
Any creature that hits Bazamarl with a melee attack takes 3 points of fire damage.	
<b>Fire Master</b>	
Bazamarl 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.	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil <b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Skills</b> Nature +8, Religion +7	
<b>Str</b> 13 (+3) <b>Dex</b> 12 (+3) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+4)	
<b>Con</b> 15 (+4) <b>Int</b> 12 (+3) <b>Cha</b> 18 (+6)	
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, quarterstaff	

Human Firetender	Level 4 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid)	XP 175
<b>Initiative</b> +6 <b>Senses Perception</b> +6	
<b>HP</b> 63; <b>Bloodied</b> 31	
<b>AC</b> 19; <b>Fortitude</b> 17, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 15	
<b>Speed</b> 5	
m <b>Halberd</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Reach 2; +11 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the Human Firetender's next turn.	
m <b>Powerful Strike</b> (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires halberd; reach 2; +11 vs. AC; 1d10 + 8 damage, and Target is knocked prone.	
R <b>Crossbow</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Ranged 15/30; +10 Armor Class; 1d8 + 3 damage.	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil <b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Skills</b> Streetwise	
<b>Str</b> 16 (+5) <b>Dex</b> 14 (+4) <b>Wis</b> 11 (+2)	
<b>Con</b> 15 (+4) <b>Int</b> 10 (+2) <b>Cha</b> 12 (+3)	
<b>Equipment</b> chainmail, halberd, crossbow, crossbow bolts (20)	

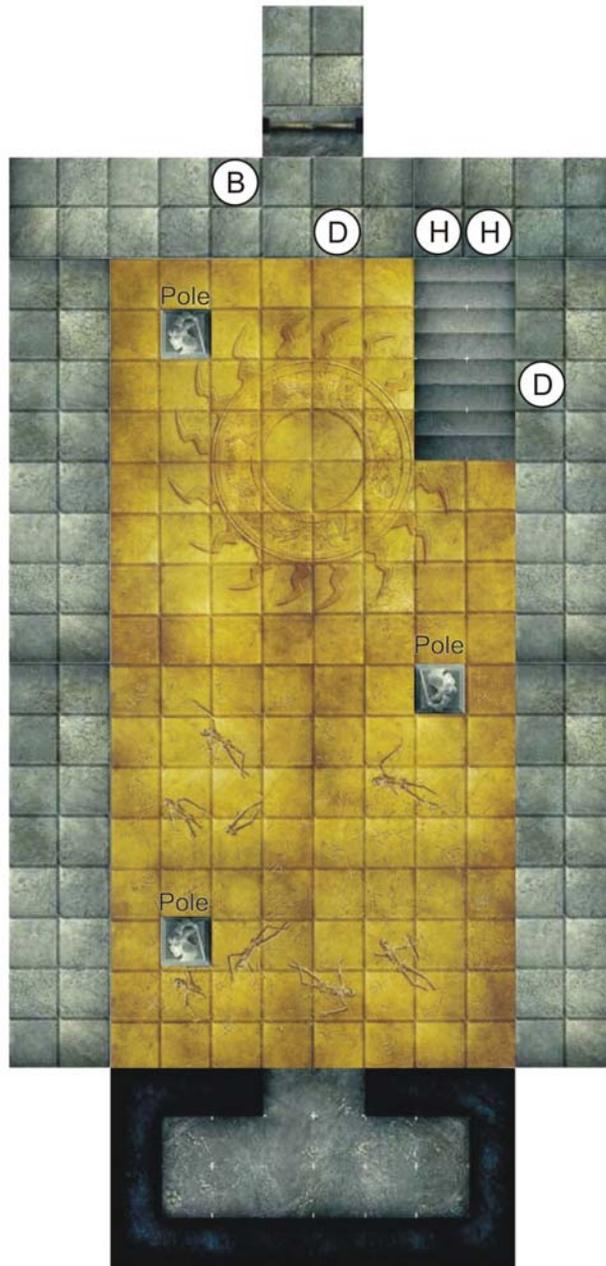
Dragonborn Fireseeker	Level 4 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 175
<b>Initiative</b> +7 <b>Senses Perception</b> +2	
<b>HP</b> 58; <b>Bloodied</b> 29	
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 15, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 16	
<b>Resist</b> 5 fire	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Battleaxe</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+9 vs. AC (+10 while bloodied); 1d10 + 5 damage.	
M <b>Overwhelming Strike</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires battleaxe; +9 vs. AC (+10 while bloodied); 1d10 + 5 damage, and the target grants combat advantage to the dragonborn fireseeker until the end of the fireseeker's next turn.	
C <b>Dragon Breath</b> (minor; encounter) ♦ <b>Fire</b>	
Close blast 3; +7 vs. Reflex (+8 while bloodied); 1d6 + 3 fire damage.	
<b>Dragonborn Fury</b> (only while bloodied)	
A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.	
<b>Skirmish</b> +1d6	
If, on its turn, the dragonborn fireseeker ends its move at least 4 squares away from its starting point, it deals 1d6 extra damage with its melee attacks until the start of its next turn.	
<b>Tactical Withdraw</b> (immediate reaction, when first bloodied, encounter)	
The dragonborn fireseeker shifts 3 squares.	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil <b>Languages</b> Common, Draconic	
<b>Skills</b> History +3, Intimidate +4	
<b>Str</b> 18 (+6) <b>Dex</b> 16 (+5) <b>Wis</b> 13 (+3)	
<b>Con</b> 14 (+4) <b>Int</b> 8 (+1) <b>Cha</b> 10 (+2)	
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, battleaxe	

# ENCOUNTER 10: SCION OF FIRE MAP

## Tile Sets Needed

DT1 Dungeon Tiles x1

DT6 Dire Tombs x1



## CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the characters captured Bazamarl and attempt to interrogate him, as soon as he is given a chance to speak, he speaks a word of power that causes fire to erupt from inside of him and consumes him over several horrifically painful seconds. A search of the Bazamarl's possessions turns up nothing of use.

When the characters interrogate the other cultists, they find that the hedonistic Sambrese cell of the Cult of the Reborn Flame knows very little about the cult outside of the city. None of the cultists know who is in the cult besides Bazmarl, but they do know he came to Sambral from Ramekho. Another voyage is ahead of the characters.

The following presumes that the party received the Favor of the Mecatoris. If this is not the case, the DM will have to adjust the read aloud text accordingly. When the party is ready to set sail for Ramekho, read the following:

*You are met at the pier by Davien Mecatoris who looks much better than the last time you saw him. He is still missing his eyebrows and hair, but he smiles widely as he greets you.*

*"A thousand thanks for your efforts against those flaming dastards. While my mother could not see you off, she has instructed me to put the Soaring Stingray at your disposal to take you where you need to go. You have done us a good turn. One we are not to forget."*

The Soaring Stingray will carry the party to Ramekho. In addition, each character receives the **MINI13 Favor of the Mecatoris** story object if they did not offend Davien's mother Althea. If the party snuck into his chamber without meeting her, they can still get the favor.

If the party rescued Iphimedra, read the following:

*Myrelas the Gallant and his troupe strut down the pier. On Myrelas' arm is Iphimedra in tight breeches and doublet with vented-sleeves. "My friends!" Myrelas cries out. "You again plunge into danger. I am in awe of your valor. When you return, you must come to the wedding." He gestures to Iphimedra, who adds, "It's good fortune to save the bride's life." The Peerless Champions draw their swords and salute you.*

The party receives **MINI14 Friendship of the Peerless Champions**. Davien is aghast that the party members are friends with Myrelas. He challenges Myrelas for the right to be friends with the party.

Myrelas accepts and the two clashing blades as the PCs depart.

*The sailors push the galley away from the pier and take to the oars. The groan of wood in the oarlocks mingles with the slap of water on wood. The Soaring Stingray slides across the Bay of Pearls, leaving behind resplendent Sambral, shining brighter than before thanks to your efforts. Ahead of you is Ramekho and the greater part of the cult that lurks there.*

The party is not the only ones on their way to Ramekho. One of the cultists from Encounter 8 escaped the destruction of the cult in Sambral and is traveling to that city to warn the cult of the PCs impending arrival.

The campaign against the Cult of Reborn Flame continues in *MINI1-3 Building the Pyre*.

## 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.

## IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

It is critical that you enter the PC rewards accurately on the tracking form, and ensure that the information is reported and entered online in a timely manner. While players can and should track their character's information on paper, the online information serves as an important backup and verification of play. Ask the players for their RPGA numbers and character numbers (usually a single digit) when you begin to fill out the tracking form.

## 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: Catching the Scent

75/105 XP

### Encounter 2: The Inquisitive's Apartment

25/35 XP

### Encounter 3: Bravado

100/150 XP

### Encounter 5: Burning Incense

25/35 XP

### Encounter 6: Foul Smells

100/140 XP

### Encounter 7: Perfumed Sentries

100/150 XP

### Encounter 8: The Lure of Flame

50/70 XP

### Encounter 9: The Fire Pit

150/200 XP

### Encounter 10: Scion of Fire

150/200 XP

### Total Possible Experience

775 / 1,095 XP

### Gold per PC

150 / 200 gp

(Encounter 2: 75/100 gp, Encounter 6: 25/50 gp, Encounter 7: 50/75 gp, Encounter 9: 75/100 gp, Encounter 10: 100/150 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 only one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure bundle. Mark the one-letter bundle ID on the tracking form next to any character that selects a 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, and ensure you enter the total amount of gold gained (minus any expenditures) online. 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:** *tome of arrest* (low-level only) (4th level; AP)  
Found in Encounter 10

**Bundle B:** *luckblade +1* (3rd level; AV)  
Found in Encounter 3

**Bundle C:** *magic implement +1* (1st level; PH)  
Found in Encounter 2

**Bundle D:** *chime of awakening* (4th level; AV)  
Found in Encounter 6

**Bundle E:** *bloodcut armor* +1 (4th level; PH)

Found in Encounter 7

**Bundle F:** *ironskin belt* (5th level; PH)

Found in Encounter 9

**Bundle G:** *vengeful weapon* +1 (high-level version only)

(5th level; AV)

Found in Encounter 3

**Bundle H:** Ritual book of *detect secret doors* and *magic circle*.

Found in Encounter 8

**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 healing plus 200 / 300 gp to their rewards from this adventure. The player should write the consumable gained on their adventure log. That character (and only that character) then receives the consumable plus the listed amount of gold (if any) instead of any other treasure bundle. Consumable items obtained in this fashion do not take up found magic item slots.

**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 their rewards from this adventure. That character (and only that character) receives more gold instead of any other treasure bundle.

## 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). Make sure to mark the story award codes next to each character that earned them on the tracking form.

### MINI13 Favor of the Mecatoris Family

Your efforts in defense of her son have attracted the favor of Althea Mecatoris and her powerful merchant House. Her wealth, numerous ships, and influence in the Windrise Ports make her a powerful ally.

### MINI14 Friendship of the Peerless Champions/Flashing Blades at Dusk

While in Sambral, you have befriended the bravo troupe known as the Peerless Champions. These hot-blooded swordsmen and their leader Myrelas may come to your

aid in the future. If you so choose, you may forsake the Peerless Champions and instead side with their rivals The Flashing Blades at Dusk, led by Davien Mecatoris. Circle the troupe you are allied with.

## ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

Mark the answers to the following adventure questions on the tracking form.

### 1. How much of the Cult of Reborn Flame did the PCs uncover in Sambral?

- The PCs never discovered the cult's den.
- The PCs found the cult's den but couldn't get past the Perfumed Sentries.
- The PCs found the cult's den but were slain by the Firebird.
- The PCs found the cult's den, but were slain by the Scion of Flame.
- The PCs found the cult's den and defeated the Firebird and the Scion of Flame.

### 2. How did the PCs handle the Peerless Champions?

- The PCs were defeated by the bravos.
- The PCs defeated the bravos but did not individually duel the Peerless Champions.
- The PCs defeated the bravos but declined to socialize with Myrelas.
- The PCs defeated the bravos, declined Myrelas' invitation to join the Peerless Champions.
- The PCs defeated the bravos and accepted Myrelas' invitation to join the Peerless Champions.

### 3. How did the PCs interact with the Mecatoris?

- The PCs treated Davien Mecatoris well and received the Favor of the Mecatoris.
- The PCs treated Davien Mecatoris poorly and offended his mother Althea.
- The PCs snuck into Davien's room without dealing with Althea.
- The PCs never found the lead to Davien Mecatoris.

### 4. What was the fate of Iphimedra?

- The PCs never found the den of the Cult of Reborn Flame.
- The PCs let her burn without trying to rescue her.
- The PCs managed to rescue her from the firebird, but she died facing the Scion of Flame.
- The PCs rescued her from the Cult of Reborn Flame.

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

- a. Five stars - excellent (best possible rating)
- b. Four stars - very good
- c. Three stars - average
- d. Two stars - below average
- e. One star - really awful (worst possible rating)

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

- a. Five stars - excellent (best possible rating)
- b. Four stars - very good
- c. Three stars - average
- d. Two stars - below average
- e. One star - really awful (worst possible rating)

## NEW RULES

### Chime of Awakening

**Level:** 4

**Price:** 840 gp

**Wondrous Item**

**Power (Daily):** Standard Action. You set the chime of awakening to ring when a specific trigger occurs within 10 squares of it.

Example triggers include the presence of anyone other than you and your allies, the light of the sun touching the area, or the appearance of a specific character or type of creature. The chime rings in the minds of you and all allies within 10 squares of it. You and affected allies are instantly awoken (if asleep) and alert.

The chime of awakening can be fooled by creatures in disguise. It makes active Perception checks with a +10 modifier.

**Reference:** Adventurer's Vault.

### Luckblade

**Level:** 3

**Price:** 680 gp

**Weapon:** Heavy Blade, Light Blade

**Enhancement:** +1 attack rolls and damage rolls.

**Critical:** +1d8 damage

**Power (Daily):** Free Action. Reroll an attack roll you just made. Use the second result even if it's lower.

**Reference:** Adventurer's Vault.

### Tome of Arrest

**Level:** 4

**Price:** 840 gp

**Implement (Tome)**

**Enhancement:** +1 attack rolls and damage rolls

**Critical:** +1d8 force damage

**Property:** When you use a wizard power that immobilizes an enemy through this tome, that enemy also takes extra damage equal to your Constitution modifier.

**Power (Daily):** Free Action. Trigger: You use a wizard summoning power. Effect: Until the end of the encounter or until the summoned creature is dismissed, creatures that shift provoke opportunity attacks from the summoned creature when moving out of a square adjacent to the summoned creature.

**Reference:** Arcana Power.

### Vengeful Weapon

**Level:** 5

**Price:** 1,000 gp

**Weapon:** Any melee

**Enhancement:** +1 attack rolls and damage rolls.

**Critical:** +1d6 damage

**Power (Encounter):** Free Action. Use this power when an attack hits a bloodied ally within 10 squares of you. Gain a +2 power bonus to attack rolls and +1d10 on damage rolls against the attacker until the end of your next turn.

**Reference:** Adventurer's Vault.

# APPENDIX 1: SAMBRAL BACKGROUND

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

## SAMBRAL

**Population:** 24,750; twice that number live in numerous villages around the Bay of Pearls. The inhabitants of Sambral are mostly human, with a significant population dwarves and dragonborn. Because of Sambral's position as the closest port to Toril, travelers of all races pass through regularly.

**Government:** The city-state is ruled by the Twelve Lords - an oligarchic council. The Twelve appoint the Grand Marshal and the Grand Admiral and can dismiss them at any time.

**Defense:** The Sambrese Sentinels protect the city, keep peace on the streets, and act as marines. Led by the Grand Marshal, the Sentinels number nearly 1,000 and are based out of the Pearl Citadel. Sambral maintains a navy of four galleys, commanded by the Grand Admiral, which spends most of its time hunting down pirates.

**Inns:** The Golden Pearl (high quality and high prices), The Sleeping Titan (modest and clean), Homebound Breeze (sailor's flop house, cheap), and many more.

**Tavern:** The Rum Cask (also a temple to Valkur, caters to sailors), The Dragon Turtle (popular among the bravos), The Lost Vein (patronized by dwarves), the Broken Oar (dive), and many more.

**Supplies:** Bayside Market (for nautical gear), Gabran's Provisioners (mountain gear), High Rise Market.

**Temples:** Like most cities in Returned Abeir, organized religions are a new introduction since the Blue Breath of Change. Sambral hosts two temples, the Hall of Splendid Rapture (Sune) and Temple of Steel (Tempus), as well as two shrines, House of the Queen (Umberlee), and The Rum Cask (Valkur).

## SAMBRAL LORE

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

**History DC 10:** Sambral is known for its pearl industry, its perfumes, and its skilled blademasters. With the recent discovery of Toril to the east, Sambral has become the last port before making the dangerous crossing across the Trackless Sea to Faerûn, which has profited it greatly.

**History DC 10:** The Sambrese love scents as a way to stave off the stench of spoiled seafood and to give homage to the power of air. Both genders wear perfume and both potpourri and incense are common features in homes and businesses. The Sambrese greatly admire fashion with styles changing frequently. Both men and women use cosmetics, elaborate hair treatments, and dramatic clothing.

**History DC 15:** Sambral is laid out in terraces (called rises), connected to each other by myriad stairs. Carts are of little use in Sambral. Instead, mules or rope and pulleys move goods from one rise to another. The streets are paved with crushed oyster shells. The city's fortress, the Pearl Citadel, is famous for its soaring Nacre Tower.

**History DC 15:** The dwarves of Sambral have a not undeserved reputation as some of the best weaponsmiths in Returned Abeir. The blademasters of Sambral wield Sambrese steel almost exclusively and pay exorbitant fees to have their swords exquisitely decorated with precious metals and gems.

**History DC 20:** Sambral and the other Windrise Ports were long in thrall to a Dawn Titan called Achazar, which manifested as a swirling column of fire in Tarmalune. As the millennia wore on, Achazar moved less and less. The quiescent Dawn Titan hasn't stirred in decades, and the Windrise Ports have declared their independence.

**Nature DC 10:** In antiquity, Sambral was built on the Bay of Pearls, which is sheltered from the Great Sea by a long mountainous arm of land. Its waters are crystal clear and team with fish. The bay is shallow (often less than 100 feet) and is renowned for its pearl-making oysters. The sandy floor of the bay gleams with minerals washed down from the Windrise Mountains. The name of the bay either comes from the abundance of pearls found here or the iridescent bottom that is visible from the surface.

**Nature DC 15:** The nearby Windrise mountains hold significant ore deposits, including gold and high-quality iron. The Sambrese dwarves mine these mountains extensively. The closest mountain to Sambral is Achazar's Throne, which has a depression on its southern face beneath the peak that legend claims was used by Achazar.

**Nature DC 20:** A number of flowers in the Windrise mountains are known for their scented oils, such as lavender and rockrose. The flowers are used to form potpourri, burned as incense, or diluted with oils from the seeds of jadova shrubs and worn as perfume.

**Religion DC 10:** The clerics of Sune have a temple in Sambral. The worship of beauty appeals to the Sambrese, but Sune's unselfish nature is a challenge for them. Tempus also has a temple in Sambral, and the patron of warriors is popular among the bravos in the town.

**Religion DC 15:** The followers of Umberlee and Valkur have founded shrines in Sambral. The harsh nature of the Queen of the Deeps does not appeal to the Sambrese and her following is small. Valkur has gained worshippers among the fishermen and pearl divers.

**Streetwise DC 10:** Sambral is known for its bravos who roam the streets and stairs of the city in troupes. The troupes are often led by dangerous bladesters who teach their followers of their fighting style. These bravos are renowned for their florid speech, creative insults, and drawing steel. The troupes spend most of their time feuding with each other, attempting to gain prestige.

**Streetwise DC 15:** Over the past several months, many people have gone missing in Sambral. The Sentinels are unable to find the cause. The bravos troupes are blaming each other, and many are patrolling the city at night. Passions are running high and the melees of the bravos are bloodier than ever before.

**Streetwise DC 25:** Rumors say that some of the Twelve Lords are Seekers of Scales. This secret society worships dragons to learn secrets of power and riches. Some of the Seekers actually wish to become dragons and ascend in power.

## City Districts

**The Bayside:** The Bayside is the second largest district of the city and includes the docks which are the lifeblood of the city. The Bayside is the home of the fishermen, pearl divers, sail makers, net weavers, and the Bayside market with its wide variety of seafood. The shrines to Valkur and Umberlee are located here, as is the Homebound Breeze, and the Broken Oar.

**The First Rise:** The dwarves make their homes on the inward side of the First Rise. Their houses are built into the side of the cliff as much as out of them. The cliffward side of the Rise is the home of many ship captains and those not wealthy enough to live on the Second Rise. The Lost Vein is located on the First Rise.

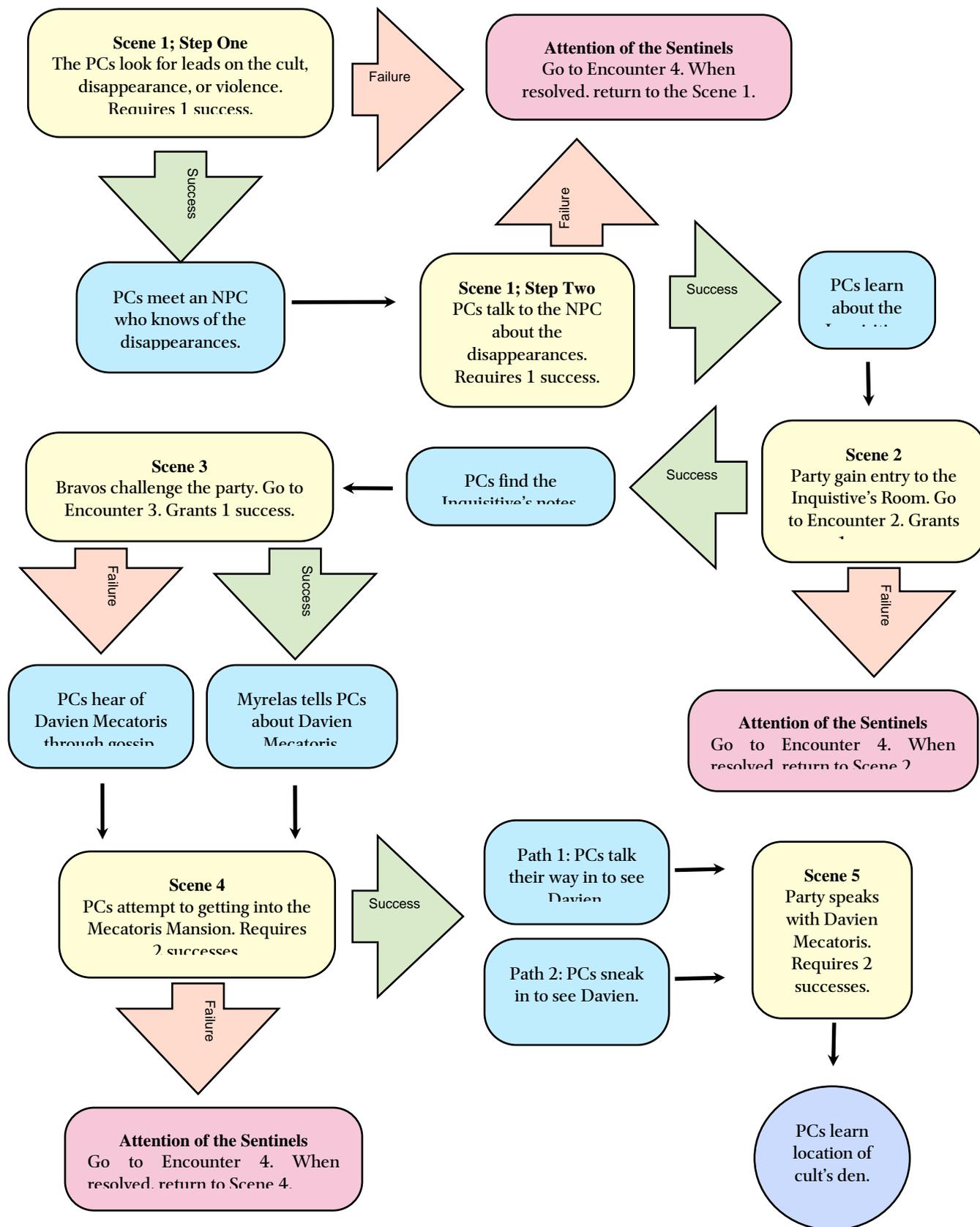
**The Second Rise:** The smallest district, the Second Rise is the home of the rich and industry appealing to the rich, such as the perfume makers and the fashion houses of Sambral. It is also the location of the opulent temple to Sune which offers a spectacular view of the bay and the Nacre Tower.

**The High Rise:** The largest and most diverse district in Sambral, the High Rise is the center of most commerce in Sambral. The three gates that allow landside entry into Sambral all enter the High Rise and the streets converge on the massive High Rise Market. Smoke billows up from the many forges of the weaponsmiths. The High Rise is the location of the temple to Tempus, the Dragon Turtle, the Golden Pearl, the Sleeping Titan, and Gabran's Provisioners.

**The Pearl Citadel:** Overlooking the harbor, the Pearl Citadel is a massive fortification and barracks that acts at the focal point of the military might of Sambral. The most striking feature of the citadel is the soaring Nacre Tower, built at the tip of the promontory and faces out over the sea. The tower was built millennia ago by the Dawn Titans and

built to their scale and is infused with their power to resist even the fiercest dragon attack. The surface of the tower is set with mother-of-pearl so that it gleams in iridescent beauty, especially at sunset.

## APPENDIX 2: CATCHING THE SCENT



# PLAYER HANDOUT 1

If you're reading this, then I'm most likely dead or being burned alive. Frankly, I'd prefer dead - less painful that way. I hope that you are following in my footsteps and investigating the disappearances. If you're one of those skunks who killed me and now looting my place, I bite my thumb at you. May your toenails all be ingrown, and may male-pattern baldness strike you early!

In this wallet you will find my journal and the transcripts of my interviews with friends and family of those who have disappeared. This is bad. Something is burning deep in Sambral, and it will consume us all if it's not stopped. Don't bother talking to the Sentinels. They're oddly inept on this. They might've been infiltrated.

According to my research, 37 people have vanished over the past two months. Whoever is taking them doesn't care about gender but has a preference for the young over the old. Every race except dwarves have disappeared. What gets me is that people vanish in broad daylight. Usually kidnapers work at night. So I believe that the kidnapers are luring people into their clutches.

I've got friends down in Bayside, and the divers have been coming up with odd bits of charred human and dragonborn bones. These started showing up shortly after people started vanishing. I don't think it's a coincidence. I haven't found enough to make 37 yet. Maybe the kidnapers don't burn them all; maybe I haven't found them all.

That's what I've got so far. I think my snooping has tipped them off. People are shadowing me around the city. May fortune favor you more than she did me.

Yours from beyond the grave. Spooky, huh?  
Enaridas Vardane

P.S.: If you want to take some of my mementos, help yourself. I'm not going to need them any more. I'd rather you have them than Cabrena, that hag of a landlady that runs this dump.

P.P.S.: Kick one of Cabrena's cats for me. The gray-and-white striped one. It keeps relieving itself in my boots.

## PLAYER HANDOUT 2

If you forgot the password, put the following in the bowl then ignite the brazier:

Use three times as much mint as jasmine.

Add the oil that you use the most of second.

Use one dram of jasmine. Use twice as much rose as the oil you add last. Add rose after you add the mint. Use twice as much lavender as rose. The end is mine.

Yes, I could have made it easier. Next time, remember the password.

-B