

MASQUERADE

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING* *FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

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A risky plan may have placed a suspicious noble's only daughter in danger, forcing the desperate man to plead for help from outsiders. But political intrigue is not the only game in Impiltur, nor is it the most dangerous: A *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure set in Impiltur for characters levels 4-7.

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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Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA event, or you received it from your organizer. To play this adventure and receive rewards for it, you must sanction it as part of an RPGA event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

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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 4 - 7. 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

The Fraternity of Tharos has begun to step up operations within Impiltur, and their bold moves and frightening successes are causing even the nobility to second-guess their own safety—and their own colleagues. Lord

Gultenov of Lyrabar recently came to suspect Lord Bronlin of New Sarshel to be in league with the cult, but he could not find a way to prove his suspicions—until his daughter Salma came to him with the perfect plan. She hoped her father was wrong, but since Bronlin had shown interest in her, she offered to accept Bronlin's advances and become a spy within his inner circle. Gultenov rejected the scheme, but Salma was persistent, hoping to either clear Bronlin or strike a blow to the cult that threatened her homeland. Reluctantly, Gultenov agreed to his daughter's scheme, and Salma became the new Lady Bronlin.

At first the plan worked well; Salma sent regular coded messages to her father detailing all she had uncovered. But about a month ago, Gultenov stopped receiving correspondence from Salma, while constant reports from Bronlin continued to arrive with their accustomed punctuality. Gultenov fears the scheme has been uncovered and Salma's activities are revealed. He is desperate to get Salma back, and asked the halfling, Haldar, if he knew of any adventurers who might help him.

What Lord Gultenov and his daughter did not count on is that Bronlin is indeed thoroughly corrupt and needed sacrifices to power a ritual that he was working on at his country home. His courting of Salma was a ruse to begin with to allow him to bring in what he has interpreted as an innocent to be the final sacrifice in the ritual. Bronlin believes that if he completes this ritual he gains great power from a demonic patron, which would allow him to advance in the Fraternity and within the political climates of Impiltur.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

The goal of this adventure is to discover the fate of Lord Gultenov's daughter, Salma, and rescue her if possible. In the process, the PCs discover a sect of the Fraternity of Tharos. This sect has taken over Bronlin's country estate with the intent of activating an old demonic artifact using Salma as the final sacrifice.

You should make a note of which PCs have the **IMPI04 Favor of van Deesbrock** story reward from **IMPI1-2** before starting play as this is important to events in Encounter 1 below. PCs earned this favor by rescuing the noble van Deesbrock from a dire fate at the hand of the lord's younger brother.

Encounter 1: The PCs meet Lord Gultenov and learn of his concerns for Salma and his suspicions about Bronlin.

Encounter 2: The PCs meet up with travelers on the road who describe the perils ahead. The PCs are presented with conflicting information and have the

option of selecting which tales they believe and which people they trust.

Encounter 3: The PCs attempt to gain entry into the estate and gather evidence without rousing suspicion while passing by the gate guards, examining the manor, and speaking with Lord Bronlin.

Encounter 4: Encounter 4 presents two options based on the outcome of the skill challenge: On skill challenge success, the PCs search the premises and discover a group of cultists posing as manor guards. The PCs have the chance to overhear information and have the option of avoiding combat with the cultists if they are not detected as they listen in.

On skill challenge failure, the PCs are ambushed by cultists posing as manor guards.

Encounter 5: The PCs chase the cultists through a hedge maze on the estate hoping to stop a sacrificial ritual taking place in the center of the maze.

Encounter 6: Combat with the cultists in the center of the hedge maze. The cultists must be defeated within a specified number of rounds, or the ritual is completed, resulting in Salma's death.

Encounter 7: If the PCs elected to ignore the cultists in Encounter 4a, they are ambushed by those cultists after the PCs defeat Encounter 5.

Encounter 8: The PCs return to Gultenov with the results of their mission.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

The PCs start in Lyrabar. They might be relaxing after their last adventure or running an errand for their friend Haldar (a halfling who runs a mercantile shop for adventurers with his father in New Sarshel). They may even be here due to their recent association with the Luminous Society if they played *IMPI1-5 How to Hunt a Demon* and had a favorable outcome with that organization. In any case, they are contacted by a young page boy and invited to Lord Gultenov's home to discuss a job at some point during their visit to the city.

Even PCs who may have had dealings with Lord van Deesbrock in the past should realize that it is strange for a noble to meet directly with adventurers of their moderate fame. This may lead PCs to suspect how irregular this meeting is, and that is fine.

PCs who ask around town before hand might discover that Lord Gultenov's daughter Salma was recently wed to a Lord Bronlin. This seemed odd to most people as his daughter had been pushing off the advances of Lord Bronlin for months before their sudden courtship and marriage. Rumors abound about how the young Lady Salma has ceased sending letters to

her father while Lord Bronlin continues to send punctual correspondences to him.

Once the PCs have chosen to accept any invitation they receive, you should read or paraphrase the following to the players:

Lord Gultenov seeks the aid of adventurers and insists on meeting each group personally. Your group has been deemed worthy by the noble, and you find yourself waiting in his well-appointed office.

It is not long before Lord Gultenov sweeps into the room, his dark hair peppered with white, his face carved with deep lines of worry. With barely a glance in your direction, he says, "There is no time to lose, so I will get right to the point. I have lost contact with my only daughter, Salma, who was recently wedded to Lord Bronlin. I have heard of cultists being seen around his estate, yet he does not give notice of them in any of his reports. I fear for my daughter's safety, and I beg you to find her and bring her back home."

ENCOUNTER 1: FIRST IMPRESSIONS

SETUP

Important NPCs:

Lord Gultenov, human nobleman (Bluff +8, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +6).

The PCs have been summoned by Lord Gultenov to his manor in Lyrabar with the intent to hire them to travel to Bronlin's wilderness estate to verify that his daughter is healthy and happy. Gultenov is anxious and fears the worst, so he comes off as brusque and impatient. He is also attempting to hide that he allowed his only daughter to spy on Bronlin, and guilt over what may have befallen her as a result of the scheme causes Gultenov to become angered if the PCs ask too many questions.

If any of the players have the **IMPI04 Favor of van Deesbrock** story reward, Gultenov mentions the PCs were recommended specifically by a fellow noble family as trustworthy and honorable in an attempt to get the PCs to accept the mission quickly. Otherwise, Gultenov states Haldar the halfling suggested them as worthy candidates for the job.

PCs who have the **IMPI04 Favor of van Deesbrock** story reward may be loaned the two magic items obtained in Encounter 8 for successful completion of the adventure: a *vengeful weapon* +1 and a *strongheart weapon* +2. There is only one of each weapon available, so the PCs will have to decide who will use them during the adventure.

The following picks up immediately where the Player Intro left off. Read or paraphrase the following:

"I am prepared to pay each of you a generous amount for your efforts. I will give you half now and the rest when you return with my daughter," Lord Gultenov intones as he tosses a small bag onto his desk. The familiar clank of coins sounds from the leather pouch.

He picks up an ornately wrapped box and hands it to the PCs, saying, "You are to give this to Salma, and only Salma. You must wait for her to open the package and listen carefully to her response. If she says 'My father is so thoughtful,' that is a signal that she is in danger. You must do all in your power to get her to safety.

"Now, I am sure you have questions. Make them brief. The safe return of my daughter is your only goal, and the sooner you are on your way, the better."

Gultenov divulges the following information:

- Gultenov lies at first, claiming the marriage was to shore up an alliance between his house and Bronlin's. If his bluff is detected, he will grudgingly admit to "other circumstances" surrounding the marriage.
- Shortly after the wedding, Bronlin and Salma left to vacation at his estate in the wilds outside Lyrabar, but they have remained long past the scheduled return.
- It is unusual for a noble to maintain an estate outside the safety of the city walls, but Bronlin said he did so in an attempt to reclaim a small part of the wilderness from the bandits and demons. This won him praise from many of his fellow nobles, but Gultenov was suspicious.
- Salma has been writing regularly to her father. Her last letter mentioned possible cultists near the estate, but she felt safe within the manor's walls, and Bronlin ordered extra security.
- Gultenov does not readily admit that he suspects Bronlin's involvement in the Fraternity of Tharos. He may mention vague rumors from travelers that tell of cultists in the area around Bronlin's estate if pressed on his suspicions about Bronlin.
- If pressed he admits that Salma has been spying on Bronlin for her father; her letters are coded reports on affairs and activities her husband is engaged in, though so far she has uncovered nothing suspicious or troubling.
- Gultenov fears his daughter's subterfuge has been uncovered and she is in danger. He does not want it known that Salma was spying, so he has hired adventurers to check on her, rather than rely on his house guards.
- Lord Bronlin's estate is two days journey outside of New Sarshel.
- He offers 60 / 100 gp to each adventurer for performance of this task; half now and half upon completion.

Throughout the scene, Gultenov should bring up the "Favor of van Deesbrock" if applicable in a diplomatic attempt to stop the PCs from further questioning. Gultenov remains civil, but is visibly angered and agitated if the PCs continue to interrogate him and force him to reveal his hand in Salma's spying activities or if they attempt to haggle for more gold. He shows the PCs a portrait of Salma (a striking woman with dark-hair and ice-blue eyes) and provides the PCs with instructions on how to reach Bronlin's estate, taking the most well-known and well-traveled route. He also says that the gift

serves as the cover story explaining why the PCs have traveled to the estate—they have been hired to deliver it to her because regular couriers are ill-prepared to deal with the dangers presented in the wilderness.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the players are satisfied with their questioning of Gultenov, proceed to Encounter 2.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

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

TREASURE

The PCs each receive 30/50 gold each as advance payment for accepting the mission to find and rescue Salma.

ENCOUNTER 2: WELL MET

SETUP

Jerrica: imposing human female mercenary (Intimidate +4, Bluff +7)

Mattaus: human male elderly peasant

This is a role-playing encounter. The PCs have a chance to discover a safe shortcut to Bronlin's estate. The trip would normally take two full days, but if PCs speak with Mattaus, they can arrive at the estate a little before noon on the second day with his shortcut.

After a little over a half day of travel, the PCs run into a small merchant caravan on its way to Lyrabar. One of the caravan guards, Jerrica, speaks with the PCs and describes the dangers seen during her travel from New Sarshel. She warns them of tricks the bandits are known to employ in the hopes of ensnaring victims. Jerrica's information is slightly exaggerated, as to make her seem all the more menacing and brave. Jerrica only traveled the main trade route between New Sarshel and Lyrabar, which was safe. The caravan never strayed from the route, nor approached Bronlin's lands, which lie about 3 miles inland.

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

As you move further from the city limits, scattered fields and settlements give way to the gently rolling hills and thickets of trees that dot the landscape. This peaceful setting is in stark contrast to the distress and tension etched on the faces of the few travelers you've met along the way. As you approach a small merchant caravan, one of the mercenaries hired to escort the wagons eyes you warily, her hand resting uneasily on the pommel of her sword.

Well-armed and armored, this dark-haired woman is all muscle, and all business. Her deep green eyes study you closely to determine if you are friend or foe.

Jerrica either calls out to the PCs or responds to their greeting with the following:

Jerrica is not one to miss an opportunity to brag, so if the PCs do not stop to talk to her, she further calls to them with warnings of her knowledge of the lands and the demons prowling the area. You should feel free to add any flavor to this you feel is appropriate to try and get the PCs to stop and talk to Jerrica. If the PCs still ignore her, go to "Mattaus."

If the PCs talk to her, Jerrica offers the following:

- Jerrica introduces herself as the leader of the mercenary group hired to guard the three-wagon caravan from New Sarshel. (True.)

- She indicates the trip was a perilous one, fraught with danger at every turn. (Exaggeration. There was potential for trouble, but none was encountered.)
- She claims there were roaming bands of bandits seen along the way, some accompanied by demons. (Lie. None were seen along the route, but she has heard of them attacking caravans in the past.)
- She proudly boasts that she and her guards scared off all attackers, keeping the caravan safe against seemingly insurmountable odds. (Exaggeration. If inspected, the wagons show no signs of an attack. Jerrica is implying her presence deterred bandits from even trying.)
- Jerrica informs the PCs that a favored tactic of the thieves is to pretend to be a traveler in need of assistance and then lead well-meaning citizens who stop to offer aid into a trap. (Jerrica believes this to be true.)
- She urges the PCs to be cautious in their travels, to stay to the main roads and to make haste through the wilderness, stopping for nothing and no one.

Jerrica firmly believes her own rhetoric that she is a mighty mercenary and her imposing presence scared off any would-be attackers lurking in the area, but a successful Insight roll against her Bluff reveals she was padding her tale a bit for effect. If called on her claims, she leaves in a huff. Otherwise, Jerrica bids the PCs farewell after their brief conversation and rushes to catch up with the caravan.

MATTAUS

Just before dark on the same day, the PCs find Mattaus and his broken cart near a thick stand of trees. The old man is harmless, but the scene is suspiciously similar to the warning the PCs may have received from Jerrica regarding false travelers in need.

Further into the hills, you round a bend and come across an old man struggling to repair a broken wheel on his cart. He is positioned to the side of the road, close to a dense thicket of trees. He gives up and stands on shaky legs. He brushes off his patched tunic, and then runs a weathered, wrinkled hand through his silver hair.

As the PCs approach, he turns to them and calls them out for help. A DC 10 Insight check tells the PCs that Mattaus appears honest in his request and has no hostile intent.

If the PCs choose to ignore him, go to the end of the encounter.

If the PCs decide to attack Mattaus, they automatically hit him and the old man dies instantly. If they search his belongings, they find nothing. Go to the end of the encounter.

If the PCs decide to stop and help, they automatically make the simple repair to the cart. They also receive the story reward **IMPI13 An Old Man's Thanks**. Mattaus chats with the PCs while they are fixing his cart to learn where they are headed. The old man is curious and somewhat forceful in his questioning and tells them the following:

- He recently saw a group of shadowy figures on the road near Lord Bronlin's estate.
- He is an old trader who occasionally comes across something unique, but has been put on hard times by younger merchants, forcing him to travel farther to find a larger variety of different items to keep his livelihood.
- He was on his way to Lyrabar for his monthly supply trip, and often travels near Bronlin's lands. This was the first time he saw anyone suspicious in the area.
- He was moving as quickly as he could from the group when his cart began to fall apart.
- He believes the group to be of the Fraternity of Tharos based on their manner of dress.
- Mattaus apologizes for having nothing to pay the PCs right now, but offers the promise of giving them "a good deal" on any of his wares.
- Mattaus heard transferring from the Bronlin Estate before the robed figures chased him away.
- As the robed figures were giving up the chase, Mattaus heard them say something about that keeping anyone from interfering with the ceremony for one more night.
- Mattaus gives the PCs directions to Bronlin's estate that differ from those provided by Lord Gultenov. Mattaus insists this is a safe shortcut that saves valuable travel time, plus bypasses the suspicious group he saw on the main road near the estate.

All Insight rolls on his information simply tell the PCs that they detect no deception in the old man. Once the PCs are finished fixing his cart and chatting, Mattaus thanks the PCs and wishes them luck before hurrying away towards the city with his newly repaired cart.

The PCs have the option of believing Mattaus and following his shortcut directions or continuing on their

original route. Allow the players to debate whether or not the old man is to be trusted: his information not only contradicts the route given by Gultenov, but represents the exact situation Jerrica warned against. Once the players have reached a decision, go to the "Ending the Encounter" section below.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs stopped to help Mattaus and took his shortcut, they arrive safely at Bronlin's estate ahead of schedule armed with knowledge about strange goings on at the Bronlin estate which may help them when dealing with Bronlin. The PCs are awarded 1 success for the skill challenge in Encounter.

Go to Encounter 3 when the players are ready.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

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

TREASURE

There is no treasure found in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 3: DON'T MIND Us...

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 5/7, COMPLEXITY 2 (400/600 XP)

SETUP

The PCs arrive at Bronlin's estate around noon to mid-afternoon on a pleasant sunny day. There are no outward signs of trouble or visible evidence that there is any threat to—or from—the manor. The road leads to a secured gate guarded by two armored men.

Bronlin's estate looms large over the barren fields surrounding it. Things seem calm and there is no sign of trouble as you approach the formidable walls that protect the lord's manor. At the gate, you are stopped by two guards who straighten to attention and watch you closely.

This challenge takes place in three stages: talking to the gate guards; examining the manor while waiting for Lord Bronlin; and speaking with Bronlin himself. If the PCs helped Mattaus and took his advice, they begin the skill challenge with 1 success already granted.

Goal: The PCs must convince the guards they are nothing but hired couriers, gather clues that something is amiss, and converse with Lord Bronlin without rousing suspicion.

Complexity: 2 (6 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Arcana, Bluff, Diplomacy, History, Insight, Intimidate, Perception, Stealth

Victory: The PCs convince Bronlin and his staff that they are just there to deliver a gift to Salma. They also realize something is very wrong at the manor and know Bronlin is not to be trusted. This allows the PCs to avoid an ambush.

Defeat: The PCs do not fool Bronlin and are ambushed by his cultist guards.

Only one player can assist on any skill roll. All skill rolls produce one success or failure.

- Scene 1 allows for up to one success or failure
- Scene 2 allows for up to three successes or failures
- Scene 3 allows for up to two success or failures

SCENE 1—AT THE GATE

When the PCs approach the gate, the guards come to attention and gruffly ask them to state their business. This scene is limited to two skill rolls, but only one skill roll (a Bluff check) applies for success or failure. Each PC must make this Bluff check. If half or more succeed it counts as 1 success towards the skill challenge.

The guards are dressed in the livery of House Bronlin with a black tabard and an errant griffin emblazoned across the front and back. They each carry a halberd and a longsword as well as shields. Their manner is gruff and impatient as they hate being stuck on “guard” duty while the other cultists are inside preparing for the final stage of the ceremony.

Go to Scene 2 after the players make the necessary skill check.

Bluff DC 13/14 (1 maximum success)

Success: The PCs convince the guards they are nothing but hired hands sent to deliver a gift to Salma. **Failure:** The guards are not buying it, and their manner indicates this, but they allow the PCs to continue talking.

Diplomacy DC 13/14 (0 successes)

Success: The PC makes small talk with the guards about the weather and general information that a typical courier might know. This has the effect of lulling the suspicions of the guards and gives a +2 to the next Bluff check.

The Diplomacy check can be also used to calm down the guards and reverse an initial failure on Bluff and allow the PCs to try the Bluff check again, but only once.

Perception DC 13/14 (0 successes)

The PCs notice the guards' armor does not fit properly nor are they holding their weapons correctly, as if they are not accustomed to them. This adds a +2 to the next Diplomacy check only and does not count as a success on its own.

SCENE 2—WAITING GAME

Whether the guards believe the PCs does not matter; after making 1 skill check, one of the guards escorts the PCs to a waiting room inside the manor.

Read or paraphrase the following:

After listening to you, the guards look at each other, and then nod. One of them opens the gate and asks you to follow, escorting you through the gardens past a fanciful hedge maze. At the main house's entry you are turned over to a servant who leads you to a grandiose waiting

room just inside the manor house and are asked to wait there as Lord Bronlin will be with them shortly. The servant then stands quietly near the door.

The PCs find themselves gathered in an elegantly decorated room. A library and writing desk sit in a corner, tapestries and paintings adorn the walls, and a large marble fireplace has a number of delicate vases displayed on its mantle. The paintings depict landscapes and several portraits of the Bronlin family. The current lord's portrait hangs above the fireplace, his smiling face and deep blue eyes overlooking the room.

Both the servant and the guard are disguised cultists attempting to project an air of normalcy at the manor. The servant appears meek and accommodating unless the PCs attempt anything overt, such as openly searching the room. The servant then becomes stern and asks the PCs to stop or he will fetch the guard. If the PCs do not listen to him, the servant quickly exits the room. The players incur a failure towards the challenge and cannot attempt any more skill checks in this scene. Go to Scene 3.

Once the players have scored 3 successes, don't show any interest in investigating the room or reach the limit of three failures, go to "Ending the Scene."

Arcana DC 13/14 (1 maximum success)

The PC scans for traces of demonic power and confirm there is dark energy present, but the PC cannot pinpoint where it is coming from. Besides not detecting anything, failure means that the servant recognizes what the PC does which rouses their suspicion.

Diplomacy or Intimidate DC 17/18 (1 maximum success; 1 maximum)

Success: The PC asks/demands information from the servant, who cowers in front of her. He tells you all is as it should be at the estate, Lord Bronlin is a very busy man, and Lady Salma is "indisposed." This unlocks the Insight skill for use in the skill challenge. Failure: The servant politely refuses to talk or scoffs at the PC's bravado and cautions the PCs they will be asked to leave if you cannot mind your manners.

Diplomacy DC 13/14 (0 successes; 1 maximum check)

By chatting with the servant the PC eases his suspicions. While the check does not grant a success towards the skill challenge, it can be used to remove 1 failure rolled during this scene.

History DC 13/14 (1 maximum success)

Success: The PC studies the artwork on the walls and realizes one of the landscapes depicts the ancient

fortress of Dun-Tharos in the Dunwood (a fortress commonly associated with demons) and not all the persons in the family portraits have an appearance indicating common ancestry.

Insight DC 13/14 (1 maximum success)

After successfully intimidating the servant, the PCs can attempt to discern if the man is telling the truth. Success: The PCs realize the servant is carefully selecting his words to give the impression things are as expected at the manor. Failure: The PCs do not detect the servant is hiding something in his response.

Perception DC 13/14 (2 maximum successes)

The PCs notice the room is not as clean as expected; the vases do not have fresh flowers; the fireplace is sooty and has no firewood; the furniture is dusty. A second success reveals that the inkwell at the desk is dry and the lord's wax seal is missing.

Stealth or Bluff DC 13/14 (0 maximum successes)

Each PC may make a Stealth or Bluff check to perform tasks that might draw attention like the Arcana and Perception checks; if successful, they gain a +2 to the applicable skill check.

ENDING THE SCENE

Once the PCs score three successes or have stopped investigating, go to Scene 3.

If the PCs reach three failures during this scene, read or paraphrase the following:

Without warning the door swings open and Lord Bronlin glides into the room, a handful of attendants on his heels. The servant who had been watching you whispers to him, and then exits the room when he is dismissed.

Bronlin turns to you, smiling, and says "I understand you have a package for my wife? Thank you for braving the wilderness to bring it to her. I will make sure you are all rewarded for your service. My apologies for making this brief, but I have matters to attend to. Wait here for Lady Salma, she will be along shortly." With that Bronlin and his entourage exit, leaving you alone in the room.

Go to "Ending the Encounter."

SCENE 3—M'LORD?

This scene takes place in the same waiting room and follows immediately after the events of Scene 2.

Without warning the door swings open and Lord Bronlin glides into the room, a handful of attendants on his heels. The young man's dark hair and eyes stand out sharply against his pale complexion. "My apologies for the delay, I understand you have a package for my wife?" he says as he looks you over. "She is just returned from a shopping trip in New Sarshel and is very tired from the travel. She wishes not to be disturbed, so if you would give the box to me, I will make sure she gets it."

The PCs should recall Gultenov's instructions to hand the box only to Salma, so they must diplomatically argue with this with Lord Bronlin.

If time permits, you may try some role-play here with Lord Bronlin who may ask how the trip was for the PCs as they try to dissuade him from taking the box himself. For the PCs, this may seem like small talk, but Lord Bronlin is trying to allay suspicions about himself by inquiring about the dangers of the area and also trying to determine how best he might make the PCs "disappear" if necessary later.

Bluff DC 13/14 (1 maximum success)

Success: Your story on why you must hand the gift to Salma personally does not cause Bronlin to suspect your true motive. **Failure:** Bronlin appears amused at your attempt to lie to him.

Diplomacy DC 13/14 (2 maximum successes)

Success: You politely explain that you must give the gift to Salma per Gultenov's instructions. **Failure:** Bronlin appears offended and scowls.

Insight DC 18/19 (2 maximum successes)

Success: You detect Bronlin is not honest regarding Salma. You also sense he is hiding something and wants to be rid of you. Lord Bronlin sounds sincere in all that he says about Salma.

Perception DC 13/14 (2 maximum successes)

Success: You realize Bronlin's appearance is changed from the handsome man in his portrait. You also note there is fresh mud on his boots that matches the mud on the boots of his attendants.

ENDING THE SCENE

When the players finish this scene, regardless of success or failure for the challenge, Bronlin excuses himself. Either he believes the PCs and wants to get away to start the ritual, or is attempting to hide that he has caught on to them. Either way, he makes a civil apology and gives the impression he respects the PCs determination to

follow Gultenov's instructions. Read or paraphrase the following:

Lord Bronlin sighs and says, "Very well—I suppose I cannot fault you for following Lord Gultenov's orders. Wait here for Lady Salma; she will be along shortly. Now, if you will excuse me, I have matters to attend to." With that Bronlin and his entourage exit, leaving you alone in the room.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Success: Bronlin and his staff are not aware the PCs have ulterior motives, but the PCs have determined things are not right on the estate. Bronlin and his staff are too much in a hurry to deal with the PCs right now, especially since they do not appear to be much of a threat. Of course, if they do sit back and do nothing, Lord Bronlin is expecting to kill them later on regardless. Go to Encounter 4 and use the normal set-up in Encounter 4 without the ambush by the guards.

Failure: The PCs have failed to convince Bronlin and his staff that they are only dropping off a gift from Gultenov. Bronlin is alerted to the danger the PCs pose and to the fact that Gultenov is onto him. Go to Encounter 4 and use the set-up with the ambush by the guards.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs receive 80 / 120 XP each for successfully infiltrating Bronlin's manor without raising suspicion.

TREASURE

The PCs find a ritual book of Fool's Gold and a ritual book of Create Campsite on the bookshelf in the room.

ENCOUNTER 4: HALL MONITORS

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/6 (775/1250 XP)

SETUP

Low tier encounter creatures:

- 1 cult mage (Ormust, human illusionist) (I)
- 2 human bowman lackey (level 5) (B)
- 1 human cultist archer (level 2) (A)
- 3 frost hound (level 2) (F)

High tier encounter creatures:

- 1 cult mage (Ormust, human illusionist) (level 5)(I)
- 2 human bowman lackey (level 7) (B)
- 1 human cultist archer (A)
- 3 frost hound (level 6) (F)

For this encounter, refer to Ormust, human illusionist as a cult mage.

This encounter has two set-ups depending on whether the PCs succeeded in the skill challenge in Encounter 3 or not.

If the PCs **failed** the skill challenge, a group of guards are sent to “escort” the PCs to see Salma, which is actually a set-up for ambushing the PCs in a nearby hall as they are being escorted out.

After a few minutes, the door opens and a guard asks you to follow him. He tells you Lady Salma is ready to receive you and begins to escort you down the hall.

The guard is leading them into an ambush in the large room at the end of the hall. Because the PCs were not successful in their ruse as hired couriers, the cultists are granted a surprise round. If the PCs attack the lone guard as he escorts them, he runs the short distance to the end of the hall to the room where the rest of his cohorts are waiting. The cultists are not granted a surprise round in this case. Use the

If the PCs were **successful** in the skill challenge, they are let in the sitting room where it should become increasingly obvious that she is not coming, possibly compelling the PCs to exit the room and explore.

Given what the PCs uncovered during the skill challenge, they should be suspicious of Bronlin and come to the conclusion that they should not actually sit around as he requested. If the PCs do not immediately attempt to leave the room, encourage them with clues such as mentioning the strange quiet in the manor

instead of the expected bustle of servants, and let them know time is dragging on with no signs of Lady Salma. If the PCs insist on waiting in the room, proceed with the ambush version of this encounter to draw the PCs out.

If the PCs decide to leave, they discover they have been locked in. A simple DC 15 Thievery check unlocks the door, but the locks are old and rusty, so it is whether loud when opened without the appropriate key. Out in the hall, the PCs see a connecting hall and door leading outside to their left, and down a ways to their right they see a group of guards looking through a large window to the gardens. The guards are speaking, but the words are indistinct except for this one phrase: **“I hope the ritual works. Those unexpected guests forced us to start it now.”**

If the players decide to avoid the guards and take the hall and door, go to “Ending the Encounter.”

If the players decide to try to listen in on the guards, a successful Stealth check against the guards’ passive Perceptions gets them close enough to hear the following:

- “They better come get us when the ritual begins. I don’t want to sit here guarding our ‘guests’ and miss out.”
- “I know Bronlin doesn’t want his secret out, but I think we should have gotten rid of them.”
- “Maybe we can use them as target practice for the power the demon grants us.”
- “Too bad we ran out of servants to sacrifice, but the last couple and Lady Salma are a fitting offer to our demon masters.”

If the PCs avoided detection, they have the option of attacking the guards or turning back and going through the other door in the hall in order to find and stop the ritual. If they choose this option, go to “Ending the Encounter.” If the PCs failed the Stealth roll or decide to fight, continue with the combat. Successful Stealth rolls grant the PCs a surprise round.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The hall and room are brightly lit by the large windows on the far wall.

Pillars and Statues: Squares that have a dark circle (pillar) or a statue count as blocking terrain.

Cisterns: The cisterns are for decoration only—they do not cause fire damage. They count as blocking terrain but do not provide cover.

Carpets: The carpets have been rigged with a light coating of oil beneath them. Anyone who moves across the carpets risks falling prone. A DC 20 Acrobatics check allows the person moving across the carpet to

avoid falling, but his movement ends at that point. After that, the carpets can be moved across at half speed with no further checks or at normal speed with a DC 15 Acrobatics check.

TACTICS

None of the creatures in this encounter use lethal damage against the PCs. The cultists want to save them as target practice for the powers they get from the ritual and order the frost hounds to cease their attack when the PCs fall.

The mage hangs back and uses the pillars and statues as cover while making ranged attacks. He attempts to cast *phantom chasm* on the PCs while they are still in the entryway of the room, placing the burst where it does not affect his allies.

The frost hounds maintain close melee positioning to take advantage of *frost shield* aura and *icy spikes*. The hounds attempt to corral the PCs and hold them in a tightly packed area to allow easier targeting on the group by the mage.

The cultist archer and bowman lackeys coordinate their attacks, targeting the same PC and maintaining the 5-square spacing to gain the archer's +2 bonus to allies.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one frost hound.

Six PCs: Add one frost hound.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

There are three possible outcomes to this encounter.

If the players did not engage the cultist guards in combat, read or paraphrase the following:

Rather than lose time in a needless fight, you decide to try your chances with the other door in the hall. Along the way you glance through a large picture window to the gardens, where you see a figure in black and red robes vanishing into the hedge maze.

The door leads to the outside gardens, putting the PCs in position for Encounter 5. This option sets up the possible ambush in Encounter 7. Should the PCs defeat the cult; this same group of guards ambush the PCs at the end of that fight.

If the PCs fought the cultist guards:

Success: The PCs defeat the small group of guards left to watch over them and make sure they do not interfere with the ritual. If any of the cultists are

interrogated, they divulge that the ritual takes place now, Lady Salma is the final offering to be sacrificed for the ritual, and Lord Bronlin did not want to tip off the PCs to his involvement with the cult. They can also reveal the some details about the maze (see Encounter 5).

Failure: The PCs are defeated by the cultist guards and awaken bound and gagged, and locked in the same room as before. Allow the players to role-play how they free themselves. Once outside the room, they discover they have been left unguarded. A quick search of the hall finds their gear piled behind a statue. At this point, the adventure is over for the PCs. They can investigate the manor house and all they find is that the hedge is frozen and the closer to the center they get, the colder it gets. When they arrive at the center of the hedge maze, they find Salma's frozen corpse shattered into a few large pieces. Go to Encounter 8 if this is the case.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 155 / 250 XP each for defeating the guards.

TREASURE

The PCs find *rebuking armor* +2, *skald's armor* +2 and a *throwing shield* (level 6) (low-tier only) on display, which they are free to take after defeating the guards.

ENCOUNTER 4: HALL MONITORS STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Ormurt, Human Illusionist	Level 4 Controller
Medium natural humanoid	XP 175
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +5	
HP 52; Bloodied 26	
AC 18; Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 16	
Speed 6	
m Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+4 vs. AC; 1d8 damage.	
R Illusory Ambush (standard; at-will) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic	
Ranged 10; +8 vs. Will; 1d6 + 4 psychic damage, and the target takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls until the end of the human illusionist's next turn.	
R Phantasmal Assault (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic	
Ranged 10; +8 vs. Will; 2d10 + 4 psychic damage. <i>Effect</i> The target takes ongoing 5 psychic damage and grants combat advantage to all of the human illusionist's allies (save ends both).	
A Grasping Shadows (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic	
Area burst 1 within 10; +8 vs. Will; 1d8 + 4 psychic damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the human illusionist's next turn. <i>Effect</i> Shadows writhe in the designated area and continue until the end of the human illusionist's next turn. Any creature that enters the area of grasping shadows takes 4 points of psychic damage and is slowed until the end of its next turn.	
A Phantom Chasm (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic	
Area burst 1 within 10; +8 vs. Will; 2d6 + 4 psychic damage, and the target is prone and immobilized until the end of its next turn. <i>Miss</i> The target is immobilized until the end of Ormurt's next turn.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Common	
Skills Arcana +11	
Str 10 (+2) Dex 14 (+4) Wis 17 (+5)	
Con 12 (+3) Int 18 (+6) Cha 12 (+3)	
Equipment robes, quarterstaff, orb	

Human Bowman Lackey (Level 5)	Level 5 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 50
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +3	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 17; Fortitude 15, Reflex 15, Will 13	
Speed 6	
m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 3 damage.	
r Bow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +10 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Mob Rule	
A human bowman lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least 2 other human bowman lackeys are within 5 squares of it.	
Alignment Any Languages Common	
Str 11 (+2) Dex 16 (+5) Wis 12 (+3)	
Con 14 (+4) Int 10 (+2) Cha 13 (+3)	
Equipment leather armor, club, longbow	

(Repaired version; original in compendium lacked both a range on the bow attack and a longbow.)

Frost Hound (Level 2)	Level 2 Soldier
Medium elemental beast (cold)	XP 125
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +9	
Frost Shield (Cold) aura 1; each creature that enters or begins its turn in the aura is slowed until the end of its turn.	
HP 40; Bloodied 20	
AC 19; Fortitude 16, Reflex 12, Will 13	
Resist 20 cold	
Speed 6	
m Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold	
+9 vs. AC; 1d8 damage plus 1d6 extra cold damage.	
C Icy Breath (standard; encounter) ♦ Cold	
Close burst 3; +8 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 1 cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).	
Icy Spikes (immediate interrupt, when an adjacent enemy attacks the frost hound's ally without also targeting the frost hound with the attack; at-will) ♦ Cold	
The target takes 5 ongoing cold damage (save ends).	
Alignment Unaligned Languages –	
Str 14 (+3) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 17 (+4)	
Con 16 (+4) Int 2 (–3) Cha 10 (+1)	

Human Cultist Archer (Level 2)	Level 2 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 125
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +8	
HP 32; Bloodied 16	
AC 16; Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12	
Speed 6	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+5 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
m Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the cultist archer grants an ally within 5 squares of it a +2 bonus to its next ranged attack against the same target.	
Cultist Hysteria (immediate reaction; when bloodied)	
The cultist archer gets an immediate saving throw against any ongoing effects it might be suffering.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common	
Str 14 (+3) Dex 19 (+5) Wis 10 (+1)	
Con 15 (+3) Int 11 (+1) Cha 14 (+3)	
Equipment arrow x 20, leather armor, longbow, longsword.	

Encounter 4: Hall Monitors Statistics (High Level)

Ormust, Human Illusionist (Level 5)	Level 5 Controller
Medium natural humanoid	XP 200
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +5	
HP 60; Bloodied 30	
AC 19; Fortitude 16, Reflex 18, Will 17	
Speed 6	
m Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+5 vs. AC; 1d8 damage.	
R Illusory Ambush (standard; at-will) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic	
Ranged 10; +9 vs. Will; 1d6 + 4 psychic damage, and the target takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls until the end of the human illusionist's next turn.	
R Phantasmal Assault (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic	
Ranged 10; +8 vs. Will; 2d10 + 4 psychic damage. <i>Effect</i> The target takes ongoing 5 psychic damage and grants combat advantage to all of the human illusionist's allies (save ends both).	
A Grasping Shadows (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic	
Area burst 1 within 10; +9 vs. Will; 1d8 + 4 psychic damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the human illusionist's next turn. <i>Effect</i> Shadows writhe in the designated area and continue until the end of the human illusionist's next turn. Any creature that enters the area of grasping shadows takes 4 points of psychic damage and is slowed until the end of its next turn.	
A Phantom Chasm (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic	
Area burst 1 within 10; +9 vs. Will; 2d6 + 4 psychic damage, and the target is prone and immobilized until the end of its next turn. <i>Miss</i> The target is immobilized until the end of Ormust's next turn.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Skills Arcana +11	
Str 10 (+2) Dex 14 (+4) Wis 17 (+5)	
Con 12 (+3) Int 18 (+6) Cha 12 (+3)	
Equipment robes, quarterstaff, orb	

Human Bowman Lackey	Level 7 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 75
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +4	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 19; Fortitude 17, Reflex 17, Will 15	
Speed 6	
m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+9 vs. AC; 4 damage.	
r Bow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +12 vs. AC; 6 damage.	
Mob Rule	
A human bowman lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least 2 other human bowman lackeys are within 5 squares of it.	
Alignment Any	Languages Common
Str 11 (+3) Dex 16 (+6) Wis 12 (+4)	
Con 14 (+5) Int 10 (+3) Cha 13 (+4)	
Equipment leather armor, club, longbow	

(Repaired version; original in compendium lacked both a range on the bow attack and a longbow.)

Human Cultist Archer	Level 3 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +8	
HP 38; Bloodied 19	
AC 16; Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12	
Speed 6	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
m Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the cultist archer grants an ally within 5 squares of it a +2 bonus to its next ranged attack against the same target.	
Cultist Hysteria (immediate reaction; when bloodied)	
The cultist archer gets an immediate saving throw against any ongoing effects it might be suffering.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Str 14 (+3) Dex 19 (+5) Wis 10 (+1)	
Con 15 (+3) Int 11 (+1) Cha 14 (+3)	
Equipment arrow x 20, leather armor, longbow, longsword.	

Frost Hound (Level 6)	Level 6 Soldier
Medium elemental beast (cold)	XP 250
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +11	
Frost Shield (Cold) aura 1; each creature that enters or begins its turn in the aura is slowed until the end of its turn.	
HP 72; Bloodied 36	
AC 23; Fortitude 20, Reflex 16, Will 17	
Resist 20 cold	
Speed 6	
m Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold	
+13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage plus 1d6 extra cold damage.	
C Icy Breath (standard; encounter) ♦ Cold	
Close burst 3; +12 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 3 cold damage, and the Target is immobilized (save ends).	
Icy Spikes (immediate interrupt, when an adjacent enemy attacks the frost hound's ally without also targeting the frost hound with the attack; at-will) ♦ Cold	
The target takes 5 ongoing cold damage (save ends).	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Str 14 (+5) Dex 14 (+5) Wis 17 (+6)	
Con 16 (+6) Int 2 (–1) Cha 10 (+3)	

ENCOUNTER 4: HALL MONITORS MAP (NO AMBUSH)

TILE SETS NEEDED

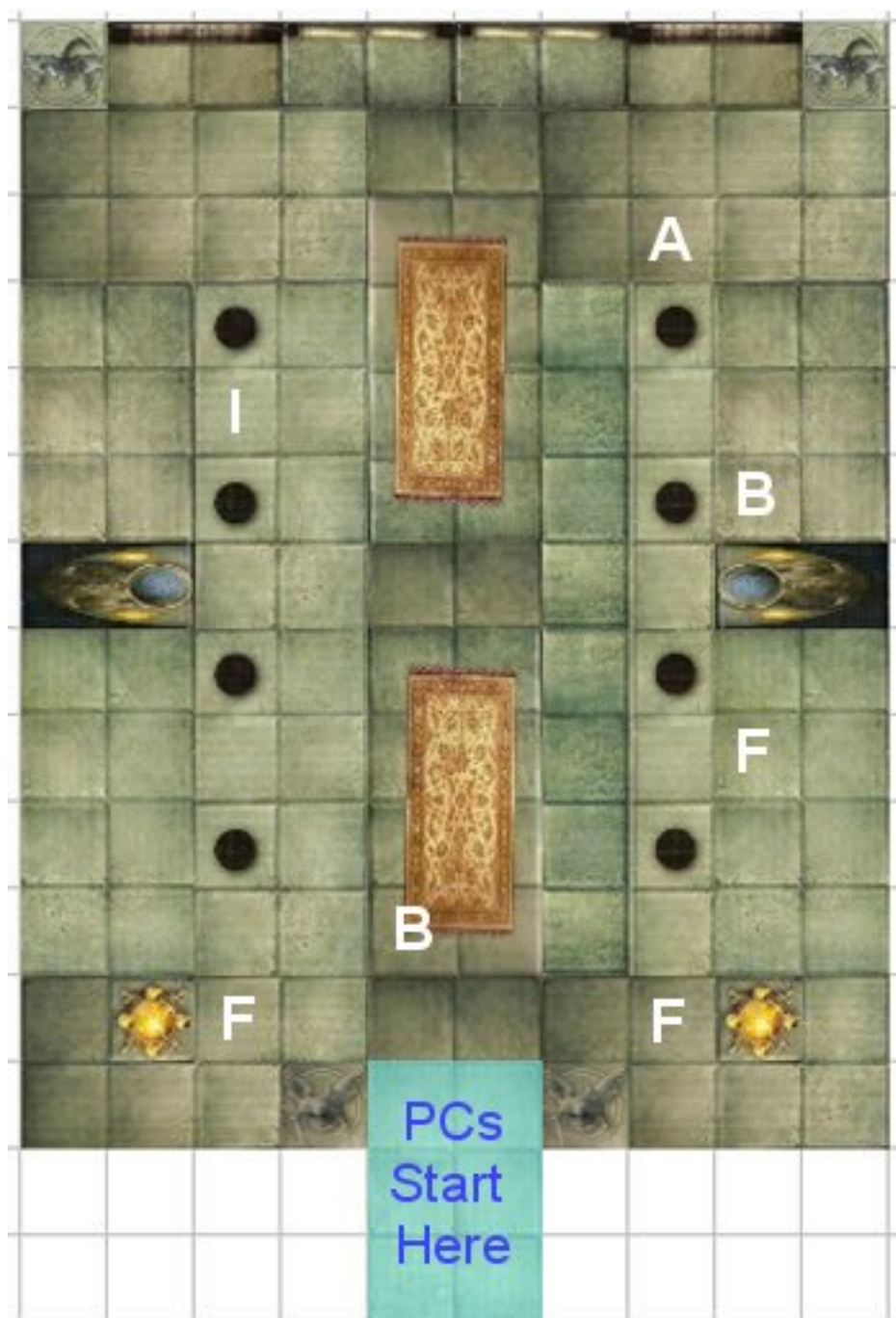
Fane of the Forgotten Gods x2



ENCOUNTER 4: HALL MONITORS MAP (AMBUSH SETUP)

TILE SETS NEEDED

Fane of the Forgotten Gods x2



ENCOUNTER 5: WHICH WAY?

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 5/7, COMPLEXITY 1 (200/300 XP)

SETUP

The PCs enter the hedge maze and attempt to locate the cultists and stop them before they kill Salma. PCs who for some reason have not gotten any clue about entering the maze, may hear the chanting towards the center of the maze or notice that there is frost starting to form on the hedges making up the maze. This should help put the PCs back on track.

As the PCs enter the area, read the following:

You enter the maze quickly, hoping to catch up to the cultists. Suddenly the tracks you were following split into several directions and you realize you are lost. You look around to get your bearings, but all the turns seem the same. Thick, thorny brush catches on your clothing as you try to find your way. You notice stonewalls beneath the hedges with strange runes engraved on them in various places.

The hedge maze is approximately 12-feet tall and comprised of knotted, twisted branches that are spiked and thorny. The brush gives way in various spots showing decorated stone underneath—the bushes are concealing walls that appear to be older than Bronlin's estate. The stone walls and dangerous thorny brush form an impenetrable barrier—no cutting through this maze. The only way through is to discover the pattern.

SKILL CHALLENGE

Goal: The PCs must navigate a complex hedge maze to locate the cultists.

Complexity: 1 (4 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Arcana, History, Nature, Perception, Religion.

Victory: The PCs find their way quickly through the maze, locating the cultists just as the ritual begins.

Defeat: The PCs stumble through the maze, lost. By the time they find the cultists, the ritual is underway.

Only one player can assist on any skill roll. If a player is creative with a skill not listed and you feel it is applicable, the player must make a DC 16/18 to succeed with that skill.

If a PC attempts to climb the hedges, the PC loses a healing surge due to the amount of damage the thorns inflict and falls back down to the same spot. This attempt does not generate a failure. If you choose, you can grant a Perception roll in this case at the DC 16/18 to determine if the PC was able to see enough to figure out which way to go next. This grants one success or failure. You can grant the same benefit to PCs who can fly for a short distance.

With each success, describe the maze as colder the closer the PCs get to the center. Mention withered foliage and frost appearing on the thorns, letting the PCs know something unnatural is happening.

Arcana DC 13/14 (unlimited)

Success: You can determine where the demonic energy is strongest, leading you on the right path. **Failure:** The demonic energy surrounds and confuses you, causing you to make several wrong turns. The players can attempt this skill as often as they want.

History DC 13/14 (1 maximum success)

Success: Your history lore allows you to recognize a section of the maze as following an ancient pattern, giving you clues on which way to go. **Failure:** There seems to be no pattern to the twists and turns of the maze.

Intimidate DC 17/18(1 maximum success)

If any cultists were left alive from Encounter 4, the PCs force the cultist to tell them the location of the ritual. It is taking place in the center of the hedge maze. The cultist also details minor clues of how to get through the maze.

Perception DC 13/14 (2 maximum successes)

Success: You notice smaller footprints mixed in with some of the tracks and realize these belong to Salma. By following her footprints, you move quickly towards the center of the maze. **Failure:** You lose the trail and make a wrong turn.

Religion DC 17/18 (trained only; unlimited)

Success: You recognize the designs on the stone beneath the hedges as symbols of several demons. You realize there is a pattern to the depictions that guide you through the maze. **Failure:** You misinterpret some of the symbols and lead the group astray for some time.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Success: The PCs navigate the maze losing little time and arrive at the center to find the cultists

preparing to begin the ritual. Their speed through the maze has given them 6 rounds to defeat the cultists before the ritual finishes with Salma's death.

Failure: The PCs stumble clumsily through the maze, eventually finding the way through almost by accident. The ritual is well underway, cutting short the amount of time the PCs have to stop it. The PCs have only 4 rounds to defeat the cultists before the ritual is completed with Salma's death.

Go immediately to Encounter 6 in both cases.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 40 / 60 XP each for navigating the maze.

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 6: STUCK IN THE MIDDLE

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 7/9 (1625*/2350* XP)

SETUP

Low tier encounter creatures:

- 3 human cultist archer (level 3) (A)
- 3 needlefang drake swarm (level 4) (D)
- 1 Lord Bronlin (dark moon monk) (B)
- 1 mystic cultist (C)
- 0 - 6 zombie rotters
- 1 Salma (S)

High tier encounter creatures:

- 2 human cultist archer (level 5) (A)
- 4 needlefang drake swarm (level 6) (D)
- 1 Lord Bronlin (dark moon monk) (level 9) (B)
- 1 mystic cultist (level 10) (C)
- 0 - 6 zombie rotters (level 5)
- 1 Salma (S)

The PCs arrive at the center of the maze and find a small number of Fraternity of Tharos members gathered for a ritual. The cultists appear to be in a hurry: they are rushing to get the ritual completed due to the arrival of the PCs, forcing them to perform the ritual well ahead of the original nighttime plan. Despite it being late afternoon the area is getting dark under gathering clouds, and there is a definite chill in the air. Frost covers the hedge walls, but not the ground.

If the PCs prevailed in the previous skill challenge, read or paraphrase the following:

You expertly make your way through the maze and find cultists dressed in red and black robes gathered around a circle of stones. In the center you see Salma dressed in a dark ceremonial gown, struggling against the chains that bind her to an obsidian altar. As Bronlin looks on, a priest takes his place near the altar and begins to chant, his words rushed. As he finishes the incantation, a wisp of silvery mist curls from Salma's body, rising to the clouds amassing overhead.

Due to their speed through the maze, the PCs arrive just as the ritual begins. They have a full **6 rounds** to stop the cultists before the ritual is completed and Salma is killed.

If the PCs failed the previous skill challenge, read:

You finally make it through the maze and find cultists in red and black robes chanting around a circle of stones. In the center you see Salma dressed in a dark ceremonial gown, her listless body bound by chains to an obsidian altar. As Bronlin looks on, a priest hovers over her, his arms held high. Suddenly, a wisp of silvery mist curls from Salma's body, rising to the clouds amassing overhead. The priest laughs.

Because the PCs got lost in the maze, they arrive after the ritual has begun. They have only **4 rounds** to stop the cultists before Salma is killed.

As the combat progresses, describe changes in the area at the beginning of each round. The area gets colder, ice forms on the brush and statues, and the clouds get darker. With each round, another wisp of Salma's life force escapes, feeding the cloud mass as it begins to swirl. She appears paler with each loss.

The PCs must stop Lord Bronlin and the cultists from completing the ritual within the allotted number of rounds or Salma dies and the ritual is completed. This limit does not apply to the drakes. If nothing but the drakes remain after the specified number of rounds, the ritual has been stopped and the PCs can take as long as needed to defeat the drakes. If the PCs do not defeat the drakes in this case, Salma is not rescued.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The area is brightly lit by torches.

Trees: Small trees provide concealment.

Rocks: The square with the rocks behind the circle counts as difficult terrain costing 2 movement.

Statues: Statues near the entrance count as blocking terrain and provide cover. The statues behind the ritual ring of stones are on 5-foot-tall pedestals requiring a DC 14/16 Athletics check to climb. They provide cover to any character that gets behind them.

Stone Circle: Squares containing the black marks indicate 10-foot tall columns. They are blocking terrain and provide cover. Squares that are colored gray represent the crossbeam held up by the columns. They are open underneath and can be occupied. Crossbeams are 10 feet above the ground and are unstable. A DC 20 Athletics check is required to climb onto a crossbeam, and a DC 15 Acrobatics check is required each round to remain on one.

Anyone standing next to one of these stones, which are an integral part of the ritual find cold based attacks on them or made by them altered. Anyone standing next to one of these columns takes extra +1d 6 damage from

cold based attacks. Anyone standing next to one of the columns and using a cold based attack on someone not near a column find the damage from his attack halved. The column is absorbing the attacks from near it and “demonic” powers reach out to increase any attacks on individuals near the stones.

Each stone also has one of Bronlin’s former true servants tied to it. One dies on each round of combat when the cultist performs his minor action for the ritual. A servant can be untied with a move action. Any servant who dies immediately becomes a zombie minion (see statistics below). The rope shatters, and the zombie acts immediately, charging the closest PC.

Altar: The altar is positioned on a platform in the center of the ring. The platform is about a foot off the ground. The altar counts as blocking terrain but does not provide cover. Salma is bound here and is subject to area effects that include the altar. The chains that bind her are locked and enchanted and cannot be removed until the cultists are defeated.

Salma is tied to the altar and can be hurt by area attacks that target the altar squares. Salma’s hit points and defenses should this occur are as follows: HP 37, AC 16, Fort 12, Ref 14, Will 12.

TACTICS

The cultists do not attack Salma; her slowly escaping life force is feeding the ritual. If Salma dies during combat, go to the end of the encounter.

The mystic cultist attempts to stay near the altar, but takes cover when needed. He is attempting to finish the ritual and must take a minor action over the altar on each round; stopping him from taking his minor action can add to the amount of time that the PCs have to save Salma. He casts *storm of the ocean lord* as soon and as often as possible.

Bronlin stays within 5 squares of the mystic cultist to protect. He casts *icy tentacle* as soon as possible and sustains it. Bronlin and the cultist are aware of the effects of the pillars.

The archers try to stay within 5 squares of allies to grant the +2 power bonus.

The drakes surround the PCs and maintain melee range to make use of their swarm attack aura.

The cultists and drakes fight to the death.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one needlefang drake swarm and one cultist human archer.

Six PCs: Add one needlefang drake swarm and one cultist human archer.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Regardless of the outcome of the fight, the cultists are drawn into a mysterious portal that opens above the altar. How this event is viewed, and whether Salma survives, depends on how the PCs fare. Regardless, any ordinary servant rescued, can tell more or less the same as Salma, although in less detail and they do not know anything private on Salma.

Success: If the PCs defeat the cultists, read or paraphrase the following:

As the last cultist falls, a thunderclap explodes around you. The clouds above the altar coalesce into a swirling purple portal. Tendrils of energy reach out and twist around Bronlin and the fallen robed figures, pulling them swiftly into the glowing opening. As the last cultist vanishes, the portal shrinks in on itself and disappears.

In the eerie calm that follows, the chains simply fall away from Salma, freeing her from the altar.

Once healed, Salma awakens and thanks the PCs profusely for her rescue and their timely intervention in thwarting Bronlin and his Fraternity of Tharos cultists. She offers the following information if asked:

- Bronlin found the demonic maze and altar years ago and was seduced by its promise of power. He built the estate to protect his secret.
- Shortly after arriving at the estate, she saw cultists brazenly walking around outside the walls. Bronlin hired extra security, but the new guards were actually cult members; it was all a plan to get them inside without suspicion.
- Salma and the servants were imprisoned once the cultists were established within the estate.
- One by one, the servants were sacrificed to the altar to recharge it, priming it for the ritual. The ritual required this to be done over a month-long process.
- Bronlin and the cultists were unsure of the origin of the altar, or the exact purpose of the ritual, which they found in the altar. They believed it would summon a powerful demon that would grant them abilities and powers.
- Salma believes the PCs interrupted the ritual, causing it to backfire on the cultists.

If the PCs did not engage the guards in Encounter 4, go to Encounter 7. If the PCs already fought them, go to Encounter 8.

Failure: If the cultists defeat the PCs, the PCs accidentally kill Salma during combat, or the PCs did not defeat the cultists within the allotted rounds, read or paraphrase the following:

Salma's body goes limp as the last silver wisp of her life force escapes. Suddenly, you hear a thunderclap explode around you. The clouds above the altar coalesce into a swirling purple portal. Tendrils of energy reach out and twist around Bronlin, Salma, and the robed figures, pulling them swiftly into the glowing opening. As the last cultist vanishes, an icy, briny wind bursts from the center of the swirling vortex. The outline of a grotesque figure is seen in the frosty air for a moment; it then fades and a blast of ice and water shoots across the sky freezing the topmost branches of the hedges. Then the portal shrinks in on itself and disappears.

With the cultists gone, the PCs are free to explore the estate once they are recovered. They find a small journal in Bronlin's handwriting. It reveals the following:

- Lord Bronlin found the altar and fooled his fellow nobles by building the estate around it.
- He was excited to get the ritual underway and shows no remorse for killing his servants. He is impatient the ritual calls for a month-long series of sacrifices to prime the altar.
- He purposely courted Salma to offer her as the final sacrifice for the ritual.

There is no mention of the purpose of the ritual, or how and when Bronlin became involved with the cult.

Go to Encounter 8 when the players are ready.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 325 / 470 XP each for defeating the cultists. * 50 xp is gained for the defeating the zombie rotters, or preventing them from appearing.

The PCs earn 20 / 30 Quest XP for stopping the ritual and saving Salma.

TREASURE

The PCs find 40 / 50 gp each and a *magic implement* +2 (it may be a wand, rod, staff, tome, orb, symbol, or totem) near the altar where the priest had been.

ENCOUNTER 6: STUCK IN THE MIDDLE STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Dark Moon Monk	Level 6 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 250
Initiative +10 Senses Perception +10	
HP 68; Bloodied 34	
AC 22; Fortitude 16, Reflex 20, Will 18	
Speed 7	
m Unarmed Strike (standard; at-will)	
+12 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.	
R Ghost Shuriken (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold or Necrotic	
Ranged 6/12; +10 vs. Reflex; 1d4 + 3 damage plus 1d4 psychic or cold damage (Bronlin's choice).	
R Shadow Tentacle (standard, sustain minor; encounter) ♦	
Conjuration , Necrotic	
Ranged 10; Bronlin conjures an icy tentacle in an unoccupied square within range, and the tentacle attacks adjacent creatures on Bronlin's turn; +10 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 3 necrotic damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape). The tentacle can grab only one target at a time, dealing 1d6 + 3 necrotic damage to the grabbed foe each round Bronlin sustains the grab. As a standard action, Bronlin can change the target and can move the tentacle up to 5 squares.	
M Gloom Fist (standard; recharge 4-6) ♦ Necrotic	
+12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 necrotic damage and is dazed (save ends both).	
M Dark Moon Strike (minor, encounter)	
The next time Bronlin hits with a melee attack, the attack is treated as a critical hit.	
Alignment Evil Languages Chondathan, Common	
Skills Acrobatics +13, Athletics +12, Stealth +13	
Str 18 (+7) Dex 20 (+8) Wis 14 (+5)	
Con 12 (+4) Int 10 (+3) Cha 16 (+6)	

Human Cultist Archer	Level 3 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +8	
HP 38; Bloodied 19	
AC 16; Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12	
Speed 6	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
m Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the cultist archer grants an ally within 5 squares of it a +2 bonus to its next ranged attack against the same target.	
Cultist Hysteria (immediate reaction; when bloodied)	
The cultist archer gets an immediate saving throw against any ongoing effects it might be suffering.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common	
Str 14 (+3) Dex 19 (+5) Wis 10 (+1)	
Con 15 (+3) Int 11 (+1) Cha 14 (+3)	
Equipment arrow x 20, leather armor, longbow, longsword.	

Needlefang Drake Swarm (Level 4)	Level 4 Soldier
Medium natural beast (reptile, swarm)	XP 175
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +8	
Swarm Attack aura 1; the needlefang drake swarm makes a basic attack as a free action against each enemy that begins its turn in the aura.	
HP 54; Bloodied 27	
AC 20; Fortitude 17, Reflex 19, Will 16	
Immune fear; Resist half damage from melee and ranged attacks;	
Vulnerable 5 against close and area attacks.	
Speed 7	
m Swarm of Teeth (standard; at-will)	
+10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage, or 2d10 + 5 damage against a prone target.	
M Pull Down (minor; at-will)	
+9 vs. Fortitude; the target is knocked prone.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages –	
Str 15 (+4) Dex 18 (+6) Wis 12 (+3)	
Con 14 (+4) Int 2 (–2) Cha 10 (+2)	

Mystic Cultist	Level 8 Controller
Medium natural humanoid	XP 350
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +7	
HP 88; Bloodied 44	
AC 22; Fortitude 19, Reflex 20, Will 21	
Speed 6	
m Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.	
r Dagon's Fang (standard; at-will)	
Ranged 10; +12 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 psychic damage.	
A Storm of the Ocean Lord (standard; recharge 4, 5, 6) ♦ Cold	
Area burst 2 within 10; +12 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 cold damage and The target is immobilized until the end of the cultist's next turn.	
C Ring of Terror (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves to an adjacent square; encounter) ♦ Fear	
Close burst 1, triggering enemy only; +12 vs. Will; push 4	
Alignment Chaotic Evil Languages Abyssal, Common	
Skills Religion +9	
Str 10 (+4) Dex 13 (+5) Wis 17 (+7)	
Con 16 (+7) Int 10 (+4) Cha 21 (+9)	

Zombie Rotter	Level 3 Minion
Medium natural animate (undead)	XP 38
Initiative –1 Senses Perception +0; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion	
AC 13; Fortitude 13, Reflex 9, Will 10	
Immune disease, poison	
Speed 4	
m Slam (standard; at-will)	
+6 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages –	
Str 14 (+3) Dex 6 (–1) Wis 8 (+0)	
Con 10 (+1) Int 1 (–4) Cha 3 (–3)	

ENCOUNTER 6: STUCK IN THE MIDDLE STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Dark Moon Monk (Level 9)	Level 9 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 400
Initiative +11 Senses Perception +11	
HP 92; Bloodied 46	
AC 25; Fortitude 19, Reflex 23, Will 21	
Speed 7	
m Unarmed Strike (standard; at-will)	
+15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage.	
R Ghost Shuriken (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold or Necrotic	
Ranged 6/12; +13 vs. Reflex; 1d4 + 4 damage plus 1d4 psychic or cold damage (Bronlin's choice).	
R Shadow Tentacle (standard, sustain minor; encounter) ♦	
Conjuration, Necrotic	
Ranged 10; Bronlin conjures an icy tentacle in an unoccupied square within range, and the tentacle attacks adjacent creatures on Bronlin's turn; +13 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 necrotic damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape). The tentacle can grab only one target at a time, dealing 1d6 + 4 necrotic damage to the grabbed foe each round Bronlin sustains the grab. As a standard action, Bronlin can change the target and can move the tentacle up to 5 squares.	
M Gloom Fist (standard; recharge 4-6) ♦ Necrotic	
+15 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 necrotic damage and is dazed (save ends both).	
M Dark Moon Strike (minor, encounter)	
The next time Bronlin hits with a melee attack, the attack is treated as a critical hit.	
Alignment Evil Languages Chondathan, Common	
Skills Acrobatics +14, Athletics +13, Stealth +14	
Str 18 (+8) Dex 20 (+9) Wis 14 (+6)	
Con 12 (+5) Int 10 (+4) Cha 16 (+7)	

Human Cultist Archer (Level 5)	Level 5 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 200
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +9	
HP 50; Bloodied 25	
AC 18; Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 14	
Speed 6	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.	
m Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +11 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage, and the cultist Archer grants an ally within 5 squares of it a +2 bonus to its next ranged attack against the same target.	
Cultist Hysteria (immediate reaction; when bloodied)	
The cultist archer gets an immediate saving throw against any ongoing effects it might be suffering.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common	
Str 14 (+4) Dex 19 (+6) Wis 10 (+2)	
Con 15 (+4) Int 11 (+2) Cha 14 (+4)	
Equipment arrow x 20, leather armor, longbow, longsword.	

Needlefang Drake Swarm (Level 6)	Level 6 Soldier
Medium natural beast (reptile, swarm)	XP 250
Initiative +9 Senses Perception +9	
Swarm Attack aura 1; the needlefang drake swarm makes a basic attack as a free action against each enemy that begins its turn in the aura.	
HP 70; Bloodied 35	
AC 22; Fortitude 19, Reflex 21, Will 18	
Immune fear; Resist half damage from melee and ranged attacks;	
Vulnerable 5 against close and area attacks.	
Speed 7	
m Swarm of Teeth (standard; at-will)	
+12 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, or 2d10 + 6 damage against a prone target.	
M Pull Down (minor; at-will)	
+11 vs. Fortitude; the target is knocked prone.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages –	
Str 15 (+5) Dex 18 (+7) Wis 12 (+4)	
Con 14 (+5) Int 2 (–1) Cha 10 (+3)	

Mystic Cultist (Level 10)	Level 10 Controller
Medium natural humanoid	XP 500
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +8	
HP 104; Bloodied 52	
AC 24; Fortitude 21, Reflex 22, Will 23	
Speed 6	
m Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage.	
r Dagon's Fang (standard; at-will)	
Ranged 10; +14 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 6 psychic damage.	
A Storm of the Ocean Lord (standard; recharge 4, 5, 6) ♦ Cold	
Area burst 2 within 10; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 6 cold damage and the target is immobilized until the end of the cultist's next turn.	
C Ring of Terror (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves to an adjacent square; encounter) ♦ Fear	
Close burst 1, triggering enemy only; +14 vs. Will; push 4	
Alignment Chaotic Evil Languages Abyssal, Common	
Skills Religion +10	
Str 10 (+5) Dex 13 (+6) Wis 17 (+8)	
Con 16 (+8) Int 10 (+5) Cha 21 (+10)	

Zombie Rotter (Level 5)	Level 5 Minion
Medium natural animate (undead)	XP 50
Initiative +0 Senses Perception +1; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion	
AC 15; Fortitude 15, Reflex 11, Will 12	
Immune disease, poison	
Speed 4	
m Slam (standard; at-will)	
+8 vs. AC; 6 damage.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages –	
Str 14 (+4) Dex 6 (+0) Wis 8 (+1)	
Con 10 (+2) Int 1 (–3) Cha 3 (–2)	

ENCOUNTER 6: STUCK IN THE MIDDLE MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Ruins of the Wild x2

Fane of the Forgotten Gods x2

Arcane Corridors x1



ENCOUNTER 7: NOT SO FAST!

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/6 (775/1250 XP)

SETUP

Low tier encounter creatures:

- 1 cultist mage (Ormust, human illusionist) (I)
- 2 human bowman lackey (level 5) (B)
- 1 human cultist archer (level 2) (A)
- 3 frost hound (level 2) (F)
- 1 Salma (S)

High tier encounter creatures:

- 1 cultist mage (Ormust, human illusionist) (level 5) (I)
- 2 human bowman lackey (level 7) (B)
- 1 human cultist archer (A)
- 3 frost hound (level 6) (F)
- 1 Salma (S)

For this encounter, refer to Ormust, human illusionist as a cult mage.

This encounter takes place only if the PCs ignored the guards in Encounter 4 and succeeded against Bronlin and the cultists in Encounter 6. For any other conditions, skip this combat and go to Encounter 8.

After defeating Bronlin and stopping the ritual, the guards left in the manor house rush into the maze, alerted by the thunderclap and find the PCs recovering. Angered that the PCs ruined all their hard work and sensing they may be easier to handle after the fight with Bronlin, the guards position themselves for an ambush.

Encourage the PCs to take a short rest before continuing in order to heal and refresh encounter powers. Role-play that Salma requests a rest before starting the journey back to Lyrabar. If the PCs refuse, this could be a difficult fight.

This is a full ambush; the PCs are surprised if they failed to notice the guards approach - passive Perception versus the guards' Stealth checks. Depending on how bad off the party is after the fight with Bronlin and his cultists in the previous encounter, the DM may allow encounter powers to have been recovered or not at her discretion. The fight uses the same map as Encounter 6, but the PCs and Salma have regrouped. See the map for their starting positions.

When the adventurers are ready to leave and they did not detect the guards, read or paraphrase the following:

As you regroup and prepare to leave, you are ambushed by cultists hiding near the entrance to the center of the maze. You recognize them as the guards from the manor house.

If the PCs detected the guards, they are not surprised.

Soft rustling near the hedges alerts you to the presence of others. You look up and catch a glimpse of movement behind a statue near the entrance of the maze's center.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The area is brightly lit by sunlight.

Trees: Squares containing the small trees provide concealment.

Rocks: The square with the rocks behind the circle counts as difficult terrain costing 2 movement.

Statues: Statues near the entrance count as blocking terrain and provide cover. The statues behind the ritual ring of stones are on 5-foot-tall pedestals requiring a DC 14/16 Athletics checks to climb. They provide cover to any character that manages to get behind them.

Stone Circle: Squares containing the black marks indicate 10-foot tall columns. They are blocking terrain and provide cover. Squares that are colored gray represent the crossbeam held up by the columns. They are open underneath and can be occupied. Crossbeams are 10 feet above the ground and are unstable. A DC 20 Athletics check is required to climb onto a crossbeam, and a DC 15 Acrobatics check is required each round to remain on one.

Altar: The altar is positioned on a one-foot high platform. It counts as blocking terrain but does not provide cover.

TACTICS

If the mage wins initiative over the PCs or has a surprise round, he targets the PCs with *phantom chasm* while they are still gathered in the starting position.

The frost hounds maintain close melee positioning to take advantage of *frost shield* aura and *icy spikes*. They try to corral the PCs into a small area to aid the mage's targeting.

The cultist archer and bowman lackeys maintain distance and use terrain features for cover.

The cultists concentrate attacks on the PCs rather than Salma, but they can target her as a diversion.

Salma hides herself from harm, using her Stealth skill (+9) when she has the opportunity to become hidden from the cultists. Salma uses rocks and other

objects from the ground to attack with as a last resort. Salma's hit points and defenses should this occur are as follows: HP 37, AC 16, Fort 12, Ref 14, Will 12.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one frost hound.

Six PCs: Add one frost hound.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

There are three possible outcomes to this combat:

Partial Success: The PCs defeat the cultist guards, but Salma is killed in the fight. The PCs may return to Gultenov with her body in the hopes that she can be brought back with a Raise Dead ritual.

Full Success: The PCs defeat the cultist guards and Salma survives the fight.

Failure: The cultist guards defeat the PCs. There is no sign of the cultists or Salma when/if the PCs recover.

When the players are ready, go to Encounter 8.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 155 / 250 XP for defeating the cultists.

TREASURE

There is no treasure found in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 7: NOT SO FAST! STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Ormurt, Human Illusionist	Level 4 Controller
Medium natural humanoid	XP 175
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +5	
HP 52; Bloodied 26	
AC 18; Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 16	
Speed 6	
m Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+4 vs. AC; 1d8 damage.	
R Illusory Ambush (standard; at-will) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic	
Ranged 10; +8 vs. Will; 1d6 + 4 psychic damage, and the target takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls until the end of the human illusionist's next turn.	
R Phantasmal Assault (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic	
Ranged 10; +8 vs. Will; 2d10 + 4 psychic damage. <i>Effect</i> The target takes ongoing 5 psychic damage and grants combat advantage to all of the human illusionist's allies (save ends both).	
A Grasping Shadows (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic	
Area burst 1 within 10; +8 vs. Will; 1d8 + 4 psychic damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the human illusionist's next turn. <i>Effect</i> Shadows writhe in the designated area and continue until the end of the human illusionist's next turn. Any creature that enters the area of grasping shadows takes 4 points of psychic damage and is slowed until the end of its next turn.	
A Phantom Chasm (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic	
Area burst 1 within 10; +8 vs. Will; 2d6 + 4 psychic damage, and the target is prone and immobilized until the end of its next turn. <i>Miss</i> The target is immobilized until the end of Ormurt's next turn.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Common	
Skills Arcana +11	
Str 10 (+2) Dex 14 (+4) Wis 17 (+5)	
Con 12 (+3) Int 18 (+6) Cha 12 (+3)	
Equipment robes, quarterstaff, orb	

Human Bowman Lackey (Level 5)	Level 5 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 50
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +3	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 17; Fortitude 15, Reflex 15, Will 13	
Speed 6	
m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 3 damage.	
r Bow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +10 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Mob Rule	
A human bowman lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least 2 other human bowman lackeys are within 5 squares of it.	
Alignment Any Languages Common	
Str 11 (+2) Dex 16 (+5) Wis 12 (+3)	
Con 14 (+4) Int 10 (+2) Cha 13 (+3)	
Equipment leather armor, club, longbow	

(Repaired version; original in compendium lacked both a range on the bow attack and a longbow.)

Frost Hound (Level 2)	Level 2 Soldier
Medium elemental beast (cold)	XP 125
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +9	
Frost Shield (Cold) aura 1; each creature that enters or begins its turn in the aura is slowed until the end of its turn.	
HP 40; Bloodied 20	
AC 19; Fortitude 16, Reflex 12, Will 13	
Resist 20 cold	
Speed 6	
m Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold	
+9 vs. AC; 1d8 damage plus 1d6 extra cold damage.	
C Icy Breath (standard; encounter) ♦ Cold	
Close burst 3; +8 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 1 cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).	
Icy Spikes (immediate interrupt, when an adjacent enemy attacks the frost hound's ally without also targeting the frost hound with the attack; at-will) ♦ Cold	
The target takes 5 ongoing cold damage (save ends).	
Alignment Unaligned Languages –	
Str 14 (+3) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 17 (+4)	
Con 16 (+4) Int 2 (–3) Cha 10 (+1)	

Human Cultist Archer (Level 2)	Level 2 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 125
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +8	
HP 32; Bloodied 16	
AC 16; Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12	
Speed 6	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+5 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
m Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the cultist archer grants an ally within 5 squares of it a +2 bonus to its next ranged attack against the same target.	
Cultist Hysteria (immediate reaction; when bloodied)	
The cultist archer gets an immediate saving throw against any ongoing effects it might be suffering.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common	
Str 14 (+3) Dex 19 (+5) Wis 10 (+1)	
Con 15 (+3) Int 11 (+1) Cha 14 (+3)	
Equipment arrow x 20, leather armor, longbow, longsword.	

Encounter 7: Not So Fast! Statistics (High Level)

Ormust, Human Illusionist (Level 5)		Level 5 Controller
Medium natural humanoid		XP 200
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +5	
HP 60; Bloodied 30		
AC 19; Fortitude 16, Reflex 18, Will 17		
Speed 6		
m Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+5 vs. AC; 1d8 damage.		
R Illusory Ambush (standard; at-will) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic		
Ranged 10; +9 vs. Will; 1d6 + 4 psychic damage, and the target takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls until the end of the human illusionist's next turn.		
R Phantasmal Assault (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic		
Ranged 10; +8 vs. Will; 2d10 + 4 psychic damage. <i>Effect:</i> The target takes ongoing 5 psychic damage and grants combat advantage to all of the human illusionist's allies (save ends both).		
A Grasping Shadows (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic		
Area burst 1 within 10; +9 vs. Will; 1d8 + 4 psychic damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the human illusionist's next turn. <i>Effect:</i> Shadows writhe in the designated area and continue until the end of the human illusionist's next turn. Any creature that enters the area of grasping shadows takes 4 points of psychic damage and is slowed until the end of its next turn.		
A Phantom Chasm (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic		
Area burst 1 within 10; +9 vs. Will; 2d6 + 4 psychic damage, and the target is prone and immobilized until the end of its next turn. <i>Miss:</i> The target is immobilized until the end of Ormust's next turn.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common
Skills Arcana +11		
Str 10 (+2)	Dex 14 (+4)	Wis 17 (+5)
Con 12 (+3)	Int 18 (+6)	Cha 12 (+3)
Equipment robes, quarterstaff, orb		

Human Bowman Lackey		Level 7 Minion
Medium natural humanoid		XP 75
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +4	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		
AC 19; Fortitude 17, Reflex 17, Will 15		
Speed 6		
m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+9 vs. AC; 4 damage.		
r Bow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Ranged 20/40; +12 vs. AC; 6 damage.		
Mob Rule		
A human bowman lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least 2 other human bowman lackeys are within 5 squares of it.		
Alignment Any		Languages Common
Str 11 (+3)	Dex 16 (+6)	Wis 12 (+4)
Con 14 (+5)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 13 (+4)
Equipment leather armor, club, longbow		

(Repaired version; original in compendium lacked both a range on the bow attack and a longbow.)

Human Cultist Archer		Level 3 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid		XP 150
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +8	
HP 38; Bloodied 19		
AC 16; Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12		
Speed 6		
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.		
m Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Ranged 20/40; +9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the cultist archer grants an ally within 5 squares of it a +2 bonus to its next ranged attack against the same target.		
Cultist Hysteria (immediate reaction; when bloodied)		
The cultist archer gets an immediate saving throw against any ongoing effects it might be suffering.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 19 (+5)	Wis 10 (+1)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 11 (+1)	Cha 14 (+3)
Equipment arrow x 20, leather armor, longbow, longsword.		

Frost Hound (Level 6)		Level 6 Soldier
Medium elemental beast (cold)		XP 250
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +11	
Frost Shield (Cold) aura 1; each creature that enters or begins its turn in the aura is slowed until the end of its turn.		
HP 72; Bloodied 36		
AC 23; Fortitude 20, Reflex 16, Will 17		
Resist 20 cold		
Speed 6		
m Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold		
+13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage plus 1d6 extra cold damage.		
C Icy Breath (standard; encounter) ♦ Cold		
Close burst 3; +12 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 3 cold damage, and the Target is immobilized (save ends).		
Icy Spikes (immediate interrupt, when an adjacent enemy attacks the frost hound's ally without also targeting the frost hound with the attack; at-will) ♦ Cold		
The target takes 5 ongoing cold damage (save ends).		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –
Str 14 (+5)	Dex 14 (+5)	Wis 17 (+6)
Con 16 (+6)	Int 2 (–1)	Cha 10 (+3)

ENCOUNTER 7: NOT SO FAST! MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Ruins of the Wild x2

Fane of the Forgotten Gods x2

Arcane Corridors x1



ENCOUNTER 8: FINAL REPORT

SETUP

Important NPCs:

Lord Gultenov, human nobleman (Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +6, Insight +8)

If the PCs failed to stop Lord Bronlin or did not save Salma, they may decide not to return to Gultenov. If this is the case, go to “Concluding the Adventure.”

If the PCs succeeded in stopping Bronlin and return with a healthy Salma, read or paraphrase the following:

Gultenov is overcome with emotion when he sees Salma. The father-daughter reunion might melt the heart of a fire giant if they had hearts. After making sure Salma is well, Lord Gultenov turns to you and joyfully exclaims, “There are no words to express my gratitude. The rest of the payment is nothing compared to my daughter. Here, take these as well in addition to my eternal thanks. You will always be a friend to the House of Gultenov.”

Gultenov readily pays the rest of the agreed upon sum, 30 / 50 gp, and also offers up a *vengeful weapon* +1 and a *strongheart weapon* +2. If the players attempt to get more gold out of him, Gultenov brushes them aside, asking for details of the adventure. Go to “Concluding the Adventure.”

If the PCs return without Salma, or with her body, read or paraphrase the following:

Gultenov rushes to greet you, his eyes full of hope. Slowly his expression darkens as he realizes Salma is not standing there with you. “Where is my daughter!” he shouts angrily. “Explain yourself to me! Where is she?!”

Gultenov is upset and not terribly pleased with the PCs. He refuses to pay the remainder of the gold and does not offer any other reward. Allow the players to role-play with Gultenov to try to convince him to pay up. The PCs can attempt to bluff Gultenov, show him the cultist robes and Bronlin’s journal (if they thought to take these items), and/or point out that Salma can be brought back with the proper ritual. If the PCs present a good enough case, or Gultenov does not detect they are lying through their teeth, he pays the rest of the gold, but no more. If Gultenov is not swayed or realizes the PCs are not being honest, he orders them removed from the premises with

a threat to jail them—or worse—should he ever see them again. Go to “Concluding the Adventure.”

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 20 / 30 Quest XP for safely returning Salma to Lyrabar.

TREASURE

Each PC receives 30 / 50 gp for returning Salma. They are also offered a *vengeful weapon* +1 and a *strongheart weapon* +2 as further reward.

If the PCs did not succeed in returning Salma alive, they receive no gold unless they successfully argue for it. They are **not** offered the magic items.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the PCs triumphed over Bronlin and the cult, and returned Salma safely to her father, Gultenov extends his endless thanks to the PCs. He offers them food and drinks and asks for all the information they have uncovered about Lord Bronlin. The PCs part on good terms with the House of Gultenov and receive the story reward **IMPI14 Lord Gultenov’s Gratitude**.

If the PCs were unable to return Salma alive and well, Gultenov is displeased with the PCs regardless of any accomplishments in dealing with Bronlin. He has them escorted from his property with the stern warning never to show themselves to him again.

If the PCs decided not to return to Gultenov, the noble is left wondering what happened to them, and thinking the worst. He seeks another adventuring company to try to rescue his daughter and keeps an eye and ear out for your group, determined to get answers should he ever find you again.

The fate of Lord Bronlin and his Fraternity of Tharos sect is unknown. No one can say with certainty where they were taken, and it is unclear if the portal that whisked them away was the true intent of the ritual, or if it was a consequence of the ritual being rushed before its time. Either way, the threat of Bronlin is removed from Impiltur...for now.

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 3: Don't Mind Us...

80 / 120 XP

Encounter 4: Hall Monitors*

155 / 250 XP

Encounter 5: Which Way?

40 / 60 XP

Encounter 6: Stuck In the Middle

325 / 470 XP

Encounter 7: Not So Fast!*

155 / 250 XP

Minor Quest: Saving Salma

40 / 60 XP

Total Possible Experience

640 / 960 XP

* The PCs either gain experience from Encounter 4 or 7 depending on their actions.

Gold per PC

100 / 150 gp

(Encounter 1: 30 / 50 gp, Encounter 5b: 40 / 50 gp, Encounter 7: 30 / 50 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: *magic implement +2** (level 6; any player resource)

Found in Encounter 6

Bundle B: *throwing shield** (level 6; *Adventurer's Vault*) (low-level version only)

Found in Encounter 4

Bundle C: ritual book of Fool's Gold* (level 3; *Arcane Power*) and ritual book of Create Campsite* (level 1; *Player's Handbook 2*)

Found in Encounter 3

Bundle D: *skald's armor +2** (level 8; *Player's Handbook 2*)

Found in Encounter 4

Bundle E: *rebuking armor* +2* (level 9; *Player's Handbook* 2) (high-level version only)

Found in Encounter 4

Bundle F: *vengeful weapon* +1* (level 5; *Adventurer's Vault*)

Found in Encounter 8

Bundle G: *strongheart weapon* +2* (level 8; *Adventurer's Vault*)

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 75 / 200 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 125 / 250 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.

IMPI13 An Old Man's Thanks

You didn't need to stop and help Mattaus fix his cart, but he is ever so grateful you did. While he had nothing more than kind words and advice to offer as payment, one never knows how much reward his friendship, and his promise to offer you a deal on any of his wares, may reap in the future.

IMPI14 Lord Gultenov's Gratitude

By stopping Bronlin, you have done Impiltur a great service. In doing so, you rescued Lord Gultenov's only

daughter, Salma, and he considers that the greater and more honorable act worthy of his favor. Being on such good terms with a noble house of Impiltur will no doubt bring fame, fortune—and more adventure—to your door.

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

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

1. Did the PCs help Mattaus?

- a. Yes, and they followed his shortcut.
- b. Yes, but they did not trust his shortcut.
- c. No, they did not stop to help him.
- d. They attacked and killed him.

2. Did the PCs stop the ritual in time?

- a. Yes, they defeated the cultists in the maze before the ritual was completed.
- b. No, the ritual was completed.

3. What is Salma's fate?

- a. She was saved and returned home alive.
- b. Her body was returned to Gultenov.
- c. She was killed in an ambush and her body left at the estate.
- d. She was killed and pulled into the ritual portal.
- e. She was taken by cultists after the PCs were defeated in an ambush.

4. What is Lord Gultenov's attitude towards the PCs?

- a. He is pleased they saved his daughter.
- b. He is unhappy, but was convinced to pay them.
- c. He kicked them out of his house without pay and a promise to jail them, or worse.
- d. He is confused that they never returned and is keeping a look out for them.

NEW RULES

Skald's Armor Level 8

Lvl 8 +2 3,400 gp

Armor: Leather, chain

Enhancement: AC

Property: You gain a +2 item bonus to Bluff checks and Diplomacy checks.

Power (Daily): Immediate Interrupt. *Trigger:* An enemy targets you with a melee attack. *Effect:* The triggering enemy instead targets a creature of your choice adjacent to you.

Reference: *Player's Handbook 2*, page 203

Rebuking Armor Level 9

Lvl 9 +2 4,200 gp

Armor: Chain

Enhancement: AC

Property: When you hit an enemy with any divine attack power, you gain a +1 bonus to all defenses against that enemy's attacks until the end of your next turn.

Reference: *Player's Handbook 2*, page 203

Vengeful Weapon Level 5

Lvl 5 +1 1,000 gp

Weapon: Any melee

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

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*, page 81

Strongheart Weapon Level 8

Lvl 8 +2 3,400 gp

Weapon: Any melee

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d8 damage per plus

Power (Encounter): Minor Action. Until the end of your next turn, you do not deal half damage while weakened.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 79

Create Campsite

Level: 1; **Component Cost:** 15 gp

Category: Exploration; **Market Price:** 50 gp

Time: 10 minutes; **Key Skill:** Nature

Duration: 8 hours

You summon hundreds of diminutive nature spirits to assemble a campsite in a 5-square radius around you. The spirits clear the area, set up tents, unroll bedrolls, gather water, and prepare a nourishing meal. They also conceal the campsite, with your Nature check result serving as the DC for Perception checks to notice the hidden camp.

The spirits utilize your and your allies' gear to make the campsite. If you and your allies lack the appropriate gear, the

spirits gather raw materials from the environment to make the campsite.

At the end of the ritual's duration, the spirits break down the campsite, pack up your gear, and restore the site to its original state, removing evidence that you and your allies camped there.

Reference: *Player's Handbook 2*, page 214

Fool's Gold

Level: 3; **Component Cost:** Varies

Category: Deception; **Market Price:** 125 gp

Time: 1 minute; **Key Skill:** Arcana

Duration: Special

You create an amount of illusory gold that vanishes after a certain amount of time. The gold looks, feels, and smells like real gold and weighs as much as real gold. You create an amount of false gold equal to the amount you spend as the ritual's component cost times a multiplier based on your Arcana check result. Your Arcana check result also determines how long the illusory gold exists. For example, if you expend 100 gp as the component cost and you achieve a result of 25 on your Arcana check, you create 1,000 gp worth of illusory gold that lasts for 4 hours.

Arcana Check Result	Duration/Multiplier
9 or lower	1 hour/x2 multiplier
10 – 19	2 hours/x5 multiplier
20 – 29	4 hours/x10 multiplier
30 – 39	8 hours/x20 multiplier
40 or higher	24 hours/x100 multiplier

Any creature can discern the true nature of the illusory gold by succeeding on a Perception check or Arcana check against a DC equal to your Arcana check result.

Reference: *Arcane Power*, page 155

Throwing Shield Level 6

Lvl 6 1,800 gp

Item Slot: Arms

Shield: Any

Power (At-Will): Standard Action. Make an attack: Ranged 10; Strength + 2 vs. AC; on a hit, the target takes 1d8 + Strength modifier damage. The shield automatically returns to your grip after the attack.

Power (Daily): Free Action. Use this power after you hit a target with this shield's ranged attack. The target is pushed 1 square.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 121.