

# ADVENTURES OF THE AVOWED



8 NEW ADVENTURES WITH MAPS, NPCs, AND MORE IN THIS  
COMPANION SUPPLEMENT FOR CANDLEKEEP MYSTERIES









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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Adventures of the Avowed, a collection of adventures designed to supplement Mysteries of Candlekeep with further opportunities for discovery. While each adventure included within is set in the Sword Coast and affiliated in some way with the famous library fortress, each can easily be readapted to fit the setting of your choice. We've also included in this book a selection of story-rich NPCs that Dungeon Masters can use to add life to Candlekeep and provide their players with allies, enemies, and expanded opportunities for adventure.

## What's in the Book

Inside this book, Dungeon Masters will find adventures designed for the span of levels between tiers 1 and 2 (1st-level to 8th-level). Each adventure is accompanied by a map suitable for VTT play and is designed to be completed in either one or two sessions of 2 to 4 hours in length.

## General Notes

DMs will need the Dungeon Master's Guide (denoted as DMG), Xanathar's Guide to Everything (denoted as XGtE) the Monster Manual (denoted as MM), Volo's Guide to Monsters (denoted as VGtM), and Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes (denoted as MToF) to run all of these adventures exactly as written, though should feel free to replace references where necessary to suit their needs. Creature statistics are **bolded** and can be found within either the MM, VGtM, or MToF. Items that are *italicized* are found in the DMG or XGtE. Stat blocks are included for creatures not found in any of these books and are noted in Appendix A. Maps for each adventure can be found within the text. Separate map files suitable for VTT are included in the download package with this book. Standalone NPCs outside the scope of the adventures are provided in the "Seekers of Candlekeep" section, and may be

used by DMs as they see fit to flesh out the library fortress or wherever else, as necessary.

Boxed text like this present descriptions meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players. These are just prompts and may be used or not at the DM's discretion.

# CREDITS

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# LUCK OF THE DRAW

*Luck of the Draw* is an adventure for **three to five characters of 1st to 2nd level** and is optimized for a party of **four 1st-level characters**. Characters who complete this adventure should earn enough experience to reach level 2. A mysterious thief is using a magic sketchbook to steal treasures from Baldur's Gate nobles and museums. The encounters in this adventure will be challenging for level 1 characters and a bit easier for those at level 2.

## Background

A thief is terrorizing Baldur's Gate with a magic sketchbook that brings art to life. Called the "Ghost Thief" by locals because of how he seems to walk through walls, he has amassed a large haul of stolen valuables. The Hall of Wonders has recently received a new holy relic of Gond, and despite the security in place, they are worried the artifact is the thief's next target.

## About the Sketchbook

Kalazar Softwind was both a renowned artist and an esteemed mage who dwelt in Waterdeep centuries ago. An eccentric creator—even for a gnome—his magnum opus came in combining his life's passions of art and the arcane, culminating in creating his sketchbook. Imbued with the ability to tap into the feywild and summon fey to turn whatever was drawn into its pages into reality, the book became a powerful tool in the hands of an accomplished artist such as Softwind.

The famous artist mysteriously disappeared one day, and his sketchbook was thought lost forever, until his great-grandson found it tucked into an old desk within a secret drawer. While not as renowned of an artist as his ancestor, Bilrick Softwind was quick enough to realize the power he now held in his hands. He began using the sketchbook to steal from other artists and nobles that he believes to have slighted him.

## About Bilrick Softwind

Bilrick is an entitled 25-year-old gnome who has been leeching off his family's name his entire adult life. He squandered his inheritance to the point where his family cut him off completely. Living in Baldur's Gate has provided him an opportunity to try his hand at living up to his family name's artistic heritage but has ended up being a disaster. After wearing out the welcome in the nobles' homes that opened their doors to him, he now lives in a tiny apartment with castaway furniture taken out of long-forgotten storage—where he stumbled upon *Kalazar's Sketchbook* (see Appendix B: New Magic Items) in an old desk.

Using the sketchbook's power, Bilrick has taken to stealing all sorts of art and objects from those nobles who now shun him. His greed and delight in his successes lead him to attempt the Hall of Wonders' relic. He has already scoped out the Hall previously and is not in attendance when the adventurers do their tour of the facility (see "Before the Heist.")





## Getting the Quest

Gerald Filbeth (LN male gnome **acolyte**), an amiable young Artificer of the High House of Wonders—a temple dedicated to Gond in Baldur's Gate—approaches the adventurers with a proposition. He explains that the Hall of Wonders has a new artifact to be displayed to the public tomorrow, and he worries it is the next target of the infamous Ghost Thief. The hall does not fear him entering their secure vault in the High House, but the relic is more vulnerable while out on display in the Hall.

He believes that thinking outside the box and hiring adventurers will be the only way to stop such a thief. Gerald offers a substantial reward if the party can protect the relic and reminds them that Entar Silvershield of the Council of Four has also posted a reward for anyone who captures the thief.

## The Hall of Wonders

Built to honor Gond, the god of craft, smithing, and inventiveness, the Hall of Wonders showcases the marvelous inventions and creations constructed in his name. Sitting opposite the House of Wonders in the Upper City square, it is open to the public for only a few silver pieces. Thick stone columns surround the blocky building, and the large bronze entrance doors are the only known way in or out.

### General Features

The Hall of Wonders has these general features unless otherwise noted in the descriptions below:

**Ceilings, Floors, and Walls.** The hall is split into two levels with 20 feet separation between them and another 20 feet to the ceiling. The floors and walls are wood panels covering 2-foot-thick stone blocks. Tiny cogs and wheels are carved into the wooden surfaces and woven into the carpets and rugs. There are no windows on the lower floor and very few on the second.

**Doors.** All doors in the display hall are solid iron with mechanical locks built into them, and each has the symbol of Gond in its center of—a large many-toothed white cog that slowly turns clockwise. Someone proficient with thieves' tools who

succeeds a DC 20 Dexterity check can unlock them. Each door has an AC of 19, 20 hit points, and immunity to psychic and poison damage.

**Lights.** The display hall is well lit by sconces enchanted with continual flame spells.

**Displays.** All of the art and objects in the hall are related to invention and construction to honor Gond. Bits and pieces of machinery, cogs, wheels, and even an ancient iron spring are proudly displayed in glass cases; a steam dragon even hangs from the ceiling by twisted iron cables. All of the objects are precious and considered priceless relics to the Gondar—any theft or damage will result in having a powerful faction after the one responsible.

## Before the Heist

Once the adventurers reach the Hall of Wonders, read the following aloud:

The Hall of Wonders is a resplendent building of marble columns and intricate carvings. Not just a museum, but a holy site dedicated to Gond, the god of invention and crafting. His symbol—a white cog slowly rotating—can be seen everywhere, as if the building itself was a great machine.

There is a line of locals waiting patiently for their turn to walk through the large pair of burnished bronze doors watched over by wary guards. Hustling through them now is the diminutive figure of Gerald, the Gondar Artificer, a smile on his face as he eagerly waves a greeting. "Hail and well met, adventurers!" he calls out before tripping on the hem of his saffron robe; his cheeks flush as he adjusts the tools in his sash and hurries over.

Gerald invites the adventurers to come to the Hall during the day and takes them on a facility tour (see "Keyed Locations"). He gives them each a bronze medallion shaped like a cog to identify them to the posted guards and let them wander where they will. As he presents the tour, he also answers any questions the party may have about the Hall of Wonders or the Ghost Thief. He knows the following pieces of useful information:





- The artifact is a hammer used in the construction of the very first Halruaan airship.
- Some have heard but not seen the thief; he seems to vanish into thin air, and walls are no hindrance to him.
- Faint smells of flowers and fruit seem to linger after the thief strikes.
- One guard swore he saw a giant ape right before a burglary that disappeared into thin air. Another claims to have been attacked by a lion—he even had claw wounds—but nobody else saw or heard the animal.

The Hall is currently full of diverse people, including scholars, regular townsfolk, and many artists who are sketching the various machines and objects. The adventurers may spot some particularly interesting-looking characters if they succeed a Wisdom (Perception) check:

- **DC 12:** Amity Crewe is a feisty 60-year-old female human grandmother with very long, curled, dyed blue hair, brown eyes, and smooth golden skin. She shows extreme interest in the Halruaan Hammer and keeps circling the display for a better look. What she's not willing to admit is her eyesight is failing, and she just can't see as well as she used to.
- **DC 15:** Frederick Duststone is a wizened 56-year-old male half-orc monk with long, wavy, golden hair shaved on the left side and green eyes. He comes from the remote Monastery of the Yellow Rose high in the Earthspur Mountains in Damara. His wide-eyed wonder at the exhibits is almost child-like, and he is excitedly peering at everything intently.
- **DC 18:** Serelath is a silent, 40-year-old female albino lizardwoman assassin for the Order of the Black Flame. She has red eyes and rugged, ghostly, white scales. She is in the Hall tailing her current target, Frederick Duststone.

Once the tour is complete and the Hall is emptied,

only the adventurers will remain within the building while the guards remain outside. Gerald uses a scroll to activate a *glyph of warding* (Spell Save DC 18, set to Spell Glyph *sleep* at 1st level) spell under the display case holding the Halruaan Hammer and wishes the party goodnight.

The adventurers must decide how they would like to stand guard in the main hall before the heist begins. They will have roughly 2 hours once the general populace leaves the building to prepare. Once they are ready, proceed to “The Heist.”

## Keyed Locations

The following descriptions correspond to the keyed locations on the provided maps of the Hall:

### I. Main Hall

This massive display chamber holds most of the Hall of Wonders' most sacred and valuable relics. Rows of display cases line the room in neat and orderly rows, filled with objects ranging from mundane locks and clocks to the more extraordinary mechanical devices whose function is not easily discerned by the uninitiated.

The Halruaan Hammer is on display in a thick glass case in the center of the hall. Blue silk ropes cordon off a clear 5-foot space around the hammer, and a guard keeps onlookers safely back.

### Ia. Ticket Office

The door to this room is locked (see “General Features”), and the ticket window is shuttered with iron panels barred from the inside.

This small room is empty except for a comfortable-looking chair, an iron lockbox, and a small shelf of books. A glance at the titles reveals that someone has a penchant for risqué romance stories involving drow and gnomes.

**Treasure: Petty Cash.** The earnings of the day have already been removed, but 20 sp is still loose in the iron lockbox. Someone proficient with thieves' tools can open the box with a successful DC 12 Dexterity check. Gerald and the Hall guards will confront the adventurers if they take anything from this room.













## 1b. Gift Shop Exit

Both the door to this room and the door leading outside are locked (see “General Features”). Replicas, sketches, and toy versions of the attractions are here for sale. Patrons must pass through this shop before exiting the building.

**Treasure: Toys & Petty Cash.** All of the objects in the gift shop together are worth 50 gp to a collector and collectively weigh 200 pounds. A lockbox containing 5 gp is hidden in a cupboard and can be found with an active search and a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Someone proficient with thieves’ tools can open the box with a successful DC 12 Dexterity check. Gerald and the Hall guards will confront any theft from this room.

## 2. Upper Hall

The upper hall holds more rows of display cases similar to the main chamber. Some of the lesser-known creations of more obscure inventors are displayed here. While most patrons’ attention is on the Halruaan Hammer below, many visitors are still perusing the objects here.

## 3. Chapel

The altar in this chapel is an overly large anvil surrounded by spinning cogs without a visible power source. Workbenches line the walls—one worships Gond through action, not words. They are covered in pieces of machinery being restored.

**Blessing of Gond.** Anyone who places a weapon or piece of armor they made with their own hands upon the altar with a prayer spoken to Gond, they earn the Blessing of Gond and gain advantage on their next attack, ability, or save roll. An adventurer may earn this blessing once per week.

## 4. Artificer’s Office

The door to this room is locked (see “General Features”). Stacks of schematics, blueprints, and books pack this room to the point of bursting. The rest of the Hall is neat and orderly, but chaos rules in this room and buries Gerald’s desk with papers. The ticking of a dozen different clocks—none of

which are in sync—fills the space with constant noise.

**Treasure: Schematic & Gems.** A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check and an active search of the books will uncover a schematic for a windup mechanical raven that is worth 500 gp. An active search of Gerald’s desk and a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check will notice that a small box is propping up one of the desk’s broken legs. Inside is a collection of ten small rubies worth 10 gp each. Gerald’s office is so chaotic that he will not notice anything missing if taken from this room.



## The Heist

Bilrick uses the sketchbook’s power to create a giant raven that flies him under cover of darkness onto the Hall of Wonders’ roof. He then makes a tiger that starts to run around the outside of the Hall, inciting the guards and distracting them from the building. His final step is to create a hole in the ceiling and a rope that lets him climb down into the chapel (area 3). While he repeats the process above the Halruaan Hammer, he notices the adventurers downstairs, and the heist truly begins.

**Encounter: Bilrick Softwind.** The rogue artist (use a **bandit** stat block, but Bilrick only carries a dagger that he uses to sharpen his pencils) will initiate combat by sending a trio of **mini t-rex** (see Appendix A: New Monsters) after the adventurers. He will then create a rope to climb down and snag the Hammer. If an adventurer hits the rope (AC 14, 0 hit points) or Bilrick, he will fall on top of the display case, grab the hammer, and leap towards the stairs, initiating a chase back to his point of entry. He injures his foot in the fall, which halves his speed. Whenever the party gets too close, he quickly sketches in the book and creates a new animal for them to fight. Roll 1d4 and consult the Sketch Encounter Table to determine what they encounter.





## Sketch Encounter Table

1d4	ENCOUNTER
1	ONE <b>BROWN BEAR</b>
2	FOUR <b>BANDITS</b>
3	TWO <b>GIANT FROGS</b>
4	ONE <b>BRASS DRAGON WYRMING</b>

If the adventurers can catch up to Bilrick, he breaks down in tears and begs for his life. He will surrender the book and willingly lets them take him into custody.

## Aftermath

If the adventurers defeat Bilrick and save the Halruaan Hammer, Gerald and the other Gondar hail them as heroes. They pay the agreed-upon sum and even pay for the adventurers' lodging for the next month at the Blade and Stars, a high-quality inn known for its gourmet food. If Bilrick was taken alive, the city watch comes to take him into custody, ending the Ghost Thief's short career with imprisonment. One of Candlekeep's famous Avowed monks will visit the party, showing an interest in the sketchbook.

If Bilrick manages to escape, he takes his ill-gotten wealth and is never heard from again. The Gondar are quite upset with the party and demand they hunt down Bilrick and retrieve the Hammer. Having such a wealthy and powerful sect angry with them will not bode well for these adventurers.





# CHAOS AT THE CONFECTIONERY

*Chaos at the Confectionery* is an adventure for **three to six characters of 1st to 2nd level**, optimized for a party of **four 1st-level characters**. After one of the pastry chefs at the Candlekeep Confectionery discovered a dusty recipe book deep in the bowels of the fortress, a small army of culinary creations has come to life and taken over the bakery. Certainly, the Avowed cannot stand for this disruption. What better opportunity for a group of adventurers to ingratiate themselves with their amiable hosts? If the party can slay the Biscotti Boys and their cake golem leader, they'll be certain to enjoy the fruits (or sweets) of their labor.

## Background

Marcella Berylaxe (CG female dwarf **commoner**) was intrigued when the dusty, leather-bound tome she found deep in the library titled "Playful Pastries" promised recipes not only delicious, but faintly magical: cake pops that made one belch bubbles, jelly beans that turned one's toes different colors, or self-replicating macarons ("cook one batch and you're set for life"). Similar types of creations were not unheard of, especially at Candlekeep, but confections that required no magical components because the recipe book itself was magical was an opportunity that demanded investigation.

Unfortunately for Marcella, the book had been hidden deep within Candlekeep for a reason—the author, a mage by the name of Elagron Winks, made a fundamental and devastating miscalculation with his magic when drafting the tome. For reasons unknown and unforeseen, all creations from the book eventually come to life. If that was not concerning enough, the animated pastries bear intense hostilities towards their creator.

By the time the pastries animated, Marcella had cooked so many of them that they were able to take over the Confectionery, forcing her and her staff to take shelter in the Confectionery's privy. One of the bakers managed to escape and has sent word of the disruption to the monks. The monks, somewhat amused by this delightful commotion, have advised

that this task be left to some of the adventurers staying within the keep, so as to provide them a chance to prove their worth.

## Getting the Quest

While in Candlekeep, the adventurers are approached by a young-looking halfling named Dandal, wearing a cook's jacket and an apron. The halfling is almost completely covered in flour, as if he had been standing in front of a pantry when a bomb went off. He takes a few moments to catch his breath before hurriedly explaining to the characters:

"Adventurers, yes?! Bit of an urgent situation here, and the monks have suggested we delegate this task to you folk. The, uh, the baked goods have come alive and it's caused a bit of a ruckus down at the Confectionery. Marcella and the rest of 'em are still inside. They should be safely hidden in the pantry for now, but we obviously need to make haste. One of the cakes is waving around a knife and we don't want to dilly-dally. Follow me, I'll explain on the way!"

As the characters follow Dandal towards the Candlekeep Confectionery, he can provide them with the following information that further explains the situation:

- Marcella and the staff had been working on baking a number of recipes from an old book she had found deep within the library.
- Suddenly, a number of the baked goods came to life and started causing a ruckus, becoming hostile towards the staff.
- Marcella and two other staff members are hiding in the privy. Dandal made a break for it to warn the Avowed, who delegated the task of cleanup to the group of adventurers.
- Inside the bakery is some sort of "cake golem", as well as a gang of cookies calling themselves the "Biscotti Boys". There are likely others but the chaos makes a full accounting difficult.





# The Candlekeep Confectionery

The Candlekeep Confectionery is a modest bakery nestled within the hallways of Candlekeep. Unless otherwise stated, its features are described as follows:

## General Features

**Ceilings, Floors, and Walls.** The bakery is constructed out of the same stone that composes Candlekeep. Ceilings are 10 feet high and the bakery's walls are 1 foot thick.

**Doors.** Doors are constructed of cherry wood, with thick bronze door handles and intricately patterned engravings. They are unlocked.

**Blistering Heat.** The cake golem and the Biscotti Boys have magically turned the bakery's ovens up to an exceedingly high temperature. As a result, the bakery is stuffy and uncomfortably hot. Each time a character enters a room in the bakery for the first time, they must succeed on a DC 8 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion.

**Wafting Aroma.** The interior of the bakery smells of freshly-baked bread with a hint of powdered sugar.

When the characters arrive outside the bakery, read aloud the following:

A storefront with a sign bearing the words "Candlekeep Confectionery" above a woodcut of a fresh-baked pie stands before you. Its front window appears to be almost completely covered in flour from the inside, obstructing any view into the bakery's interior. Flour-dusted footsteps lead away from the pair of double doors in its façade.

Dandal refuses to enter the bakery with the party, promising to provide them with "moral support" from the outside. The following locations are keyed to the provided map of the bakery.

## I. Presentation Area

When the characters enter the bakery, read aloud the following:

The chaos inside the Confectionery is immediately apparent. The presentation area is in complete disarray; three display tables arranged vertically in the middle of the room as well as the shelves that line the walls have had much of their pastries smashed or toppled onto the floor, and the walls and ceiling are spattered with flour and icing sugar. Doors exit to the north and east. Flying through the air hurling flour at each other from small sacks are three squirrel-sized, humanoid-shaped cookie people, with almond-depicted facial features.

**Encounter: Biscotti Boys.** The three cookie people are the **Biscotti Boys** (see Appendix A: New Monsters), magically animated creatures constructed from almond biscotti. As the party enters the room, the Biscotti Boys cease their shenanigans and immediately turn towards the characters. One of the cookie people bellows a battle cry: "Biscotti Boys! Get 'em!" The Biscotti Boys attack, fighting until they are destroyed.

**Treasure: Delicious Enhancements.** Roughly half of the pastries in this room remain intact, the others have been crushed, smashed, or smeared over the walls. A single shelf on the west wall looks to have remained unscathed. A placard above it reads "Delicious Enhancements". The danishes on the shelf are arranged into six vertical rows of three each. The rows are labelled from left to right: "Brawn", "Agility", "Fortitude", "Brains", "Insight" and "Charm". A character who eats a danish gains a +2 bonus to the corresponding ability score for a duration of 1 hour. A character cannot benefit from more than one danish in a 24-hour period.

## 2. Baking Kitchen

**Encounter: Cookie Dough Elemental.** The **Biscotti Boy** and his mount immediately notice and attack any characters that enter the room. "If you can't handle the heat," he yells, "then get outta the kitchen!" The Biscotti Boy and the cookie dough





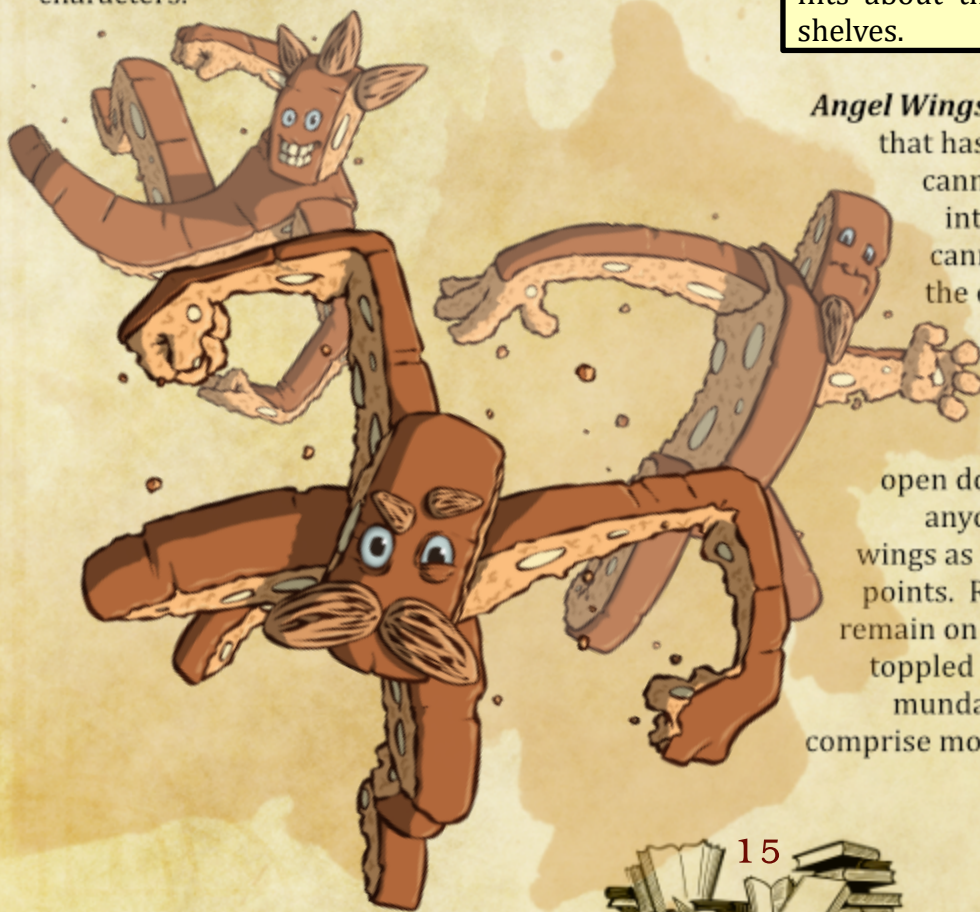




elemental fight until they are destroyed. The cookie dough elemental uses **ochre jelly** statistics, though its hit points have been reduced to 25.

The baking kitchen is a mess—baker's tables are askew, cooling racks have been knocked over, and mixing bowls and other baking utensils litter the floor. At the north end of the room are two stone ovens, one of which shakes and rumbles violently, its iron door clanging against the stone. Flour and scraps of dough are everywhere. Multiple doors exit to the east, one of which is ajar. Amidst the mess, a Biscotti Boy sits atop a six-foot-high amalgam of dough and chocolate chips, riding it around the room like some sort of pastry cowboy.

**Hazard: Rumbling Oven.** The western oven in the kitchen shakes violently, vibrating the wall behind it. If a character opens the oven door, any characters within 5 feet of the door must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or take 3 (1d6) acid damage as a bubbling pot of jam violently erupts, spewing molten jam out into the kitchen. A jam jelly (use **gray ooze** statistics) then emerges from the oven, indiscriminately attacking characters.



### 3. Utility Room

This room looks to have remained relatively untouched by the bedlam that has struck the rest of the Confectionery. Three large wash tubs line the south wall. A wardrobe and sacks of dirtied clothes are pushed up against the north wall. In the room's southwest corner, two wooden chests are cracked open and covered in a thin layer of ice.

The chests serve as the Confectionery's freezers and are enchanted with a magical effect that keeps them ice-cold at all times. The use of *detect magic* reveals an aura of abjuration magic around the chests. Inside the chests are ingredients and frozen desserts such as ice cream, sherbet, and cakes. The wardrobe contains nothing but cooks' uniforms and spare clothing.

### 4. Pantry

This pantry looks to have been turned upside down. Shelves are knocked over, and wet and dry ingredients have mixed onto the floor to create a moist sludge. A pastry in the shape of a butterfly flits about the room, bumping into walls and shelves.

**Angel Wings.** The pastry is an angel wing butterfly that has gotten itself stuck in the pantry and cannot easily find its way out. Roughly as intelligent as a real butterfly, the pastry cannot speak and is non-hostile towards the characters. Characters with a passive Insight of 10 or higher realize that the pastry is trying to escape the pantry. If a member of the party guides the pastry towards the open door, the angel wing butterfly showers anyone in its path with icy sugar from its wings as it leaves, which restores 5 (1d10) hit points. Roughly half of the items in this room remain on the shelves, the other half have been toppled or knocked over. The ingredients are mundane; different flours, sugars, and eggs comprise most of what can be found in the pantry.



## 5. Office

Three overturned desks have spilled their contents onto the floor of this room, covering it in loose papers and spilled ink. The upholstery of the chairs has been ripped and torn, and bookshelves are askew along the walls. A menacing-looking construct that appears to be made of red velvet cake wields a large chef's knife near a door in the southeast corner of the room.

**Encounter: Cake Construct.** The cake golem has spent the last few minutes trying to break down the door to the privy where Marcella Berylaxe and the other bakers are hiding, so that it can retrieve the recipe book and use it to create more pastries. When it notices the characters, it flashes them a nasty snarl, displaying its fondant teeth. The cake construct fights until it is destroyed. It uses **animated armor** statistics, with the following modifications:

- Its AC is 15.
- It wields a knife; its slam attack is replaced by a slash attack that deals 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.
- When the construct remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a red velvet layer cake.

The desks and bookshelves in the office contain recipe books, inventory records, shopping lists, and other documentation necessary for the function of the Confectionery.

## 6. Privy

Upon closer inspection, the door to the privy is cracked and splintered in the middle, suggesting that the party has arrived in the nick of time. If the door is still closed after the cake golem has been destroyed, the voice of Marcella calls out from the privy, "Ah? Who's there? They've finally sent for us? Taken your damn sweet time with it, didn't ya? We're comin' out!"

When the door to the privy is opened, read aloud:

An oil painting of an old gnome in a chef uniform hangs on the wall of this otherwise bare privy. A single bench with a hole in its middle lines the south wall. The tile floor is polished to a shine.

Marcella is a tough but ultimately kind and good-hearted dwarf. She gives the characters a bit of a hard time about how long they took to rescue her and her staff, but she makes clear that she is very grateful and that in the end, there was no harm done. She clutches the recipe book in her hands; a thick leather-bound tome that smells faintly of brown sugar.



## Aftermath

After the cake golem and the other animated pastries have been dealt with, the ovens quickly return to normal temperatures. After the bakery gets cleaned up, Marcella vows to bring the recipe book to one of the mages within Candlekeep so that they can work together on possibly repairing its magic. If the characters offer to help Marcella and her staff clean up the bakery unprompted, she rewards them with 100 gp for their troubles. Dandal sends word to the Avowed that the adventurers have taken care of business at the Confectionery. Having now proven their mettle, the adventurers may soon find that the Avowed are eager to present them with further opportunities for adventure.



# THE CURSED LIBRARY

*The Cursed Library* is an adventure for **three to six characters of 3rd to 4th level**, optimized for a party of **four 3rd level characters**. A cursed book held in a forgotten wing of the library is summoning demons made of ink. The demons have captured two of the Avowed, and the curse threatens to spread to the rest of the library. The Avowed want this taken care of quickly and quietly as not to disturb their other guests. This adventure will be difficult for adventurers without silvered weapons.

## Background

Candlekeep holds many libraries within its hallowed halls and winding corridors. Most of them are well-tread and regularly visited by the keep's guests. There are more than a few that have grown dark and dusty from their lack of use. One wing of the library has not been visited in decades, and the Avowed decided it is time for cleaning and maintenance. The monks who entered found a nightmare waiting for them; a curse has affected the books and created demons made from the ink within each tome.

## About the Curse

Azhur Berne was an elven demonologist who spent his considerably long life studying the Abyss. He spent his days writing the definitive compendium containing all of his extensive knowledge entitled "The Abyssal Compendium" and terrorizing the local populace by unleashing demonic horrors upon them. Azhur's dabbling with demons eventually cost him his life at the hands of a party of adventurers who used his book to gain entry into Candlekeep. The monks appraised the tome and found it worthy, but the monks missed the hidden curse within the arcane writings — a piece of Azhur's evil soul embedded inside.

They filed the book away within the library, and as time passed, that wing became less and less frequented. The evil trapped within the book spread from book to book, infecting each one and

using the power of the words to give life to demons made from the ink inside each one. Azhur's soul is currently working to take over the body of a monk that entered the library.

## Getting the Quest

During a visit to Candlekeep, the adventurers are approached by a young, nervous monk named Nicolaus (LN male human **acolyte**). While wringing his pale, ink-stained hands, the terrified monk haltingly explains the situation and begs them to rescue his fellow monks and defeat the demons infesting the old library wing. He does not wish to alarm the other guests of the keep and asks them to please keep the situation to themselves for now. Nicolaus promises a reward and quietly but eagerly hustles them through corridors and down into a less maintained section of the keep. He stops at a closed ironbound mahogany door with the sigil of a castle emblazoned over a flame carved into it and nervously gestures for them to continue. "Save Kellyn and Darrel! Protect the keep, and please try not to harm the books!" he says before unlocking the door and quickly stepping aside.

## THE CURSED LIBRARY

The library sits in a long-forgotten section of Candlekeep that has been gathering dust and cobwebs for decades. The ink demons have been building their strength by feeding off the books' power and biding their time in the darkness.

## General Features

The cursed library has the following features unless otherwise noted in the area description:

**Ceilings, Floors, and Walls.** The library's floors are partly carpeted, and creatures gain a +5 bonus to Dexterity (Stealth) checks when sneaking on it. Bookcases line the walls from floor to ceiling, with many of the books scattered across the floor, and some rooms are covered in sticky ink; these areas are considered difficult terrain. The ceilings of the





library are 15 feet high throughout.

**Doors.** Doors are constructed of mahogany wood bound in iron and have the sigil of a castle emblazoned over a flame carved into the center of each.

**Illumination.** The library is lit by wall sconces enchanted with *continual flame* spells.

**Ink Demons.** The demons in the library are solid black versions of the fiends from the Abyss, as noted in the encounter descriptions. They gain advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks when attempting to hide in shadows. They are not affected by difficult terrain created by ink.

## Keyed Locations

The following descriptions correspond to the locations keyed on the provided map:

### 1. Lower Hall

The door to the library opens into a scene of chaos. Shredded bits of paper fill the air as books fly across the room, thrown by some invisible force. The walls are lined with empty bookcases, and broken tables and chairs are scattered across the floor. There are multiple 3-foot tall lumps of what appear to be creatures made out of ink shuffling among the falling papers. They start to lumber their way towards the sound of the opening door.

**Encounter: Welcoming Party.** There is an ink **imp** and four ink **manes** tearing apart this room. The ink imp is invisible and will spend each round will invisible, filling the air with torn pages around a single adventurer who must succeed a DC 12 Dexterity check or gain disadvantage on attack rolls for that round. The ink imp will attack the adventurers directly once two of the ink manes have been defeated or if its invisibility is broken by taking damage.

### 2. Upper Hall

A cart full of books sits at the top of the ramp to this area with an invisible ink **imp** waiting to push it



down. Once an adventurer reaches the middle of the ramp, everyone on the ramp must roll for initiative, including the cart, which rolls with a +4 bonus. On its turn, the cart moves forward 30 feet in a straight line. The cart can move through creatures' spaces, and creatures can move through its space, treating it as difficult terrain. Whenever the cart enters a creature's space or a creature enters its space while it's rolling, that creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The ink imp will stay invisible and retreat into the room.







Once the adventurers reach the upper hall, read the following aloud:

Unlike the lower hall, this area is eerily peaceful, with every book still in place along the walls and every table and chair intact. At first glance, the area appears to be serene and calm — until a burst of guttural laughter rumbles from out of the shadows. A piece of darkness peels itself out of a corner and forms into a 7-foot tall demon with a writhing mass on its chin, gripping a glaive made of shiny ink.

**Encounter: The Lieutenant.** An ink **bearded devil** slinks out of the shadows, greeting the adventurers in Infernal and thanking them for coming to give it some entertainment. If anyone responds, it will engage in banter briefly before attacking. The ink imp will remain invisible and attempt to sneak behind the party and attack.

**Treasure: Satchel.** Anyone searching the bookcases who succeeds a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check will find a small satchel tucked behind a row of books that contains a *potion of healing*, 25 sp, and a note that reads “D., Take this for the pain and go buy yourself some gloves! We can’t have your paper cuts bleeding all over the books! ~ P.”

### 3. Private Reading Room

This room’s secret door is disguised as a bookshelf and can be discovered by someone actively searching who succeeds a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The overly worn spine of the book entitled “Stories of the Lamp” can be determined to open the door by someone who succeeds a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check. The door is stuck and requires a successful DC 15 Strength check to open.

Once the adventurers open the secret door, read the following aloud:

The bookcase swings inward, releasing a cloud of dust trapped in the doorframe, and revealing a tiny room that is eerily silent. In the center sits a

small table holding a stack of books covered in a thick layer of dust. A skeleton dressed in tattered robes hunches in a chair behind the table.

**Quiet, Please.** This room is under the effects of a permanent *silence* spell.

**Treasure: Journal & Ring.** A search of the table uncovers the journal of Abernathy, a former monk of the Avowed whose skeleton now sits at the table. The journal details how he tricked the other monks into thinking he was visiting family but instead came down to this old library to spend time reading in the quietest place possible. Unfortunately, the door became stuck, and he was trapped with no one knowing he was down here.

Abernathy was wearing a *ring of mind shielding* when he died, and his soul resides within it. A true curmudgeon in life, his death has not mellowed him in the slightest, and he will take every opportunity to ridicule the wearer of the ring. He can be convinced to move on to the Afterlife with a successful DC 20 Charisma check with a failure resulting in a one-month wait period before the check can be attempted again.

### 4. Reading Room

This room’s floor is buried under shredded books and a layer of down stuffing torn from chairs. The body of an Avowed monk hunches up against a wall with a rictus of horror etched across his bloody face. An ink demon stands above it, repeatedly hitting it in the head with a hefty tome while another pair of ink demons are clawing at the closed door to the south.

**Encounter: Ink Demons.** An ink **mane** is beating on the Avowed corpse while two ink **quasits** are clawing at the door to area 5. They can be surprised if the adventurers are stealthy.

Once the ink demons are defeated, a voice will call out through the door to the south.

### 5. Foyer

The door to this room is being held shut by the monk Kellyn (LG male human **acolyte**). After the ink demons in area 4 are defeated, he will call out





and ask if it's safe to come out now, rushing out to meet them when they confirm. Heavyset and panting from the effort of holding the door closed, Kellyn will clasp the hands of the adventurers in his sweaty grip, thanking them profusely. He shakily points to the exit to the south and chokes out, "Something has Darrel... it... it's changing him". He bolts for the door as soon as he knows it is safe.

Once the adventurers enter the room, read the following aloud:

The once lush carpet that covers the floor is now sticky from ribbons of ink snaking through it. The walls and ceiling drip with the black substance, shimmering in the wall sconces' magical light. The doors to the south sit slightly ajar, and ink lines are pouring out of the crack along with a pulsing green light. A series of hoarse screams can be heard coming through the door.

## 6. Librarian's Office

Every surface in this room is covered in sticky ink that is pulsing as if from a heartbeat. An oily slick desk sits against one wall with a large tome opened upon it with a sickly green light emanating from it. Standing behind it is the remaining Avowed monk, his entire body covered up to his neck in encroaching ink. His terrified eyes reach across the room as his ragged screams come to an end due to the ink reaching his mouth. His body convulses as the ink fills him completely and the body morphs into a spiky demonic form. The green light fades from the book as the newly formed ink demon breathes in deeply. It chuckles to itself as it admires its claws before looking over with a toothy grin.

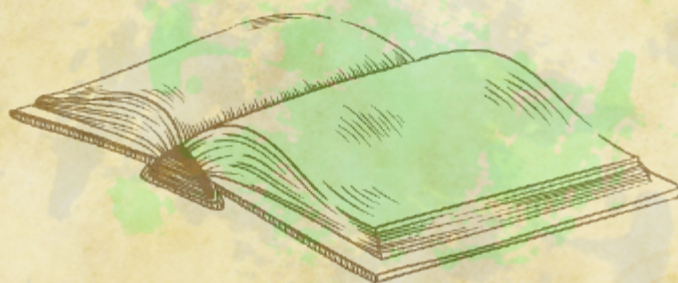
**Encounter: The Final Piece.** The ink **barbed devil** has the last piece of Azhur Berne's soul embedded into him. He can speak Common and happily engages the adventurers in conversation and brag about his return after embedding his soul into his great work. However, he will quickly get bored of talking and initiate combat.

**Treasure: The Compendium.** The tome on the desk is "The Abyssal Compendium." Azhur's soul is now detached completely, but the book still holds immense power. Anyone reading from the tome can cast *summon lesser demon* once per day (see XgtE p. 166 ) without the need for components. Each use of the compendium will require the user to succeed a DC 12 + (number of times the user has used the compendium) Intelligence saving throw or suffer the effects of short-term madness (see DMG p. 258). After three failed saves, the effects become cumulative to long-term and then to indefinite.

## Aftermath

Once Azhur has been defeated and the Compendium secured by the Avowed, Nicholas will thank the adventurers profusely. The monks mourn the loss of their brethren but are grateful for the party keeping Candlekeep safe from the cursed book's spread. They determine to lock the Compendium in a more secure location. They give each of the adventurers a magic item from their stores as a reward (roll or select from Magic Item Table B on p. 133 of the DMG).

If the adventurers found the *ring of mind shielding* with Abernathy's soul still inside, the Avowed are shocked; some of the older monks knew Abernathy but thought that he abandoned Candlekeep over twenty years ago. They let the adventurers keep the ring, and if Abernathy's soul has not moved on, he may have some unfinished business that the adventurers could help him resolve





# THE BOOK OF FAIRY TALES

*The Book of Fairy Tales* is an adventure for **three to six characters of 3rd to 4th level** and is optimized for a party of **four 3rd-level characters**. A book of fairy tales hides a pocket dimension full of characters from the stories it holds. A young girl is being held captive by the Dark King, who now rules the realm. The girl's noble family has requested the Avowed assist to handle the situation quietly.

## Background

"The Book of Fairy Tales" was lost to history much like its author, the wizard Maerlyn, one of the seven apprentices of the Mad Mage Halastar Blackcloak. Supposedly created as a gift to a young family member, the Book is a portal to a pocket dimension full of magically constructed fairy tales for the child to play with. The Book was passed through many hands over the centuries until its power was forgotten. It eventually made its way to Baldur's Gate and into the possession of Raymund, the youngest son of the Ravensshade family.

Raymund discovered the hidden powers of the Book and took to hiding in the fairy tale realm to escape his real-world responsibilities. Raymund was a cruel child and began to subjugate the fairy tale creatures, crowning himself King of the Realm. He decided never to leave the Realm, and his family came to believe he had run away.

Many years later, Raymund's grandniece Amabel Ravensshade stumbled upon the book in an old storage room of the Ravensshade manse. She figured out its power, entered the fairy tale realm, and was promptly taken captive by Raymund. Now Amabel is missing, trapped in the Fairy Tale Realm, and her family is frantically trying to find her.

## Getting the Quest

The Avowed quietly send word to the adventurers that they need their assistance in a sensitive matter. The young monk they send leads them through the back door of a large manor in Baldur's Gate and quickly hustles them into a small private room. An adventurer who succeeds a DC 12 Intelligence

(History) check will recognize this as the Ravensshade estate, and anyone with the Noble background succeeds automatically.

The room is empty except for an elderly Avowed monk staring gravely at a small book sitting on a table. Master Reader Avidicus (NG male human **mage**) introduces himself and thanks them for coming at such short notice. He explains that the family involved wishes to keep the matter from reaching the public's ears due to the situation's sensitive nature.

"This book is a portal of some kind—we do not know where it leads—and a little girl named Amabel is somewhere on the other side. We implore you to step through and bring her back safely. Her family is offering a very substantial reward for your success. Will you rescue the child?"

If the adventures accept, Avidicus will have them open the book and read aloud a passage:

*"Take me on a journey, little book,  
Onward and upward, the children all say,  
We want to go and have a look,  
At the land of cheer and play!"*

A shower of sparks flickers around the party, blinding them momentarily, and they find themselves in another world.

## THE ENCHANTED FOREST

The realm created by the wizard Maerlyn is a pocket dimension that is not part of any normal plane of existence. While the creatures and people inside the realm look, act, and believe themselves to be real, they are only magical constructs bound to the domain and cannot exist outside of it. The locals do not age, and if they die, the realm reincarnates them 24 hours later.

The Enchanted Forest covers the entire realm, with Castle Darkspire in the center. The Forest was once a shimmering place of magic and wonder, but it's now a dark and dangerous place. King Raymund's malevolence has infected the entire realm, and it now reflects his nature.





## Entering the Realm

Once the adventurers enter the Enchanted Forest, read aloud the following:

The sparks of light begin to fade from sight and reveal that the room has vanished to be replaced by a tree-lined clearing. A vine-covered archway sits atop a cracked stone dais upon which you stand. Storm clouds roil overhead, and the air is filled with static as if lightning will strike at any moment.

**Encounter: Knights of the Round.** King Raymund anticipated that someone might follow Amabel and sent his Silent Knights of the Round Table (use the **animated armor** stat block) to guard the entrance. There is one Knight for every adventurer in the party. The Knights do not speak, and they try to knock out the adventurers and carry them to the King.

If the Knights succeed in grappling all the characters or have knocked half the party unconscious, Little Red (CG female human **werewolf**; see “Roleplaying Red”) will step in to assist. Otherwise, she will greet the adventurers after the Knights are defeated. She recognizes them for the heroes they are and begs them to fight the Evil King.

### ROLEPLAYING RED

Little Red Riding Hood is a precocious child whose grim demeanor is unsettling in one so young. Red is wearing a hooded blood-red cloak with a golden wolf's head brooch, wields a carved spear, and is hiding a secret—she is also a werewolf known as the Big Bad Wolf. Red spends her days lurking in the Enchanted Forest, away from King Raymund's controlling reach. Her spear is the only thing that stands between him and the small band of forest denizens that she protects. She knows the following information:

Forest's creatures—he kills them for pleasure.

- Amabel is being held captive in Castle Darkspire along with Red's grandmother and other prisoners.
- King Raymund has a crown that allows him to control the creatures and people of the Enchanted Forest as long as he can see them—Red is hiding in the forest to prevent him from gaining control of her.
- The path to the Castle is fraught with danger, but she can guide them there.



- King Raymund has been in power for over 50 years and loves to torture the Enchanted



## Traveling to Castle Darkspire

The adventurers can stumble across many different encounters as they traverse the path towards the castle. Pick two from the list below or roll 1d6 twice and consult the Forest Encounters table below to determine what they stumble across:

### Forest Encounter Table

1d6	ENCOUNTER
1	A flock of seven <b>giant ravens</b> (see Appendix A: New Monsters) descend and attack.
2	A pirate ship sails overhead through the sky and over the treetops. A battle between the pirates and a ragtag group of flying young boys led by an elf dressed in green rages on the deck.
3	A huntsman ( <b>veteran</b> ) and his hounds (two <b>mastiffs</b> ) ambush the party and target Little Red. This encounter may force Red to reveal her alter-ego as the Big Bad Wolf.
4	Three ugly women (LE human <b>commoners</b> ) are laughing and whipping a pretty young woman (LG human <b>noble</b> ) down the road—forcing her to walk with broken glass in her feet.
5	A young boy (CG human <b>commoner</b> ) runs across the path covered in bloody scratches and wearing only a loincloth. A raging <b>black bear</b> chases after him.
6	A pair of horses gallop down the pathway dragging a barrel behind them. A goose is painted on the barrel, and nails are hammered into it from the outside. Inside the barrel is the shredded corpse of a young girl.

## Castle Darkspire

The shining center of the Enchanted Forest, Castle Lightspire used to be the fairy tale realm's beacon. The Fairy Tale King would rule fairly and wisely, princes and princesses would fall in love and have grand adventures, and the creatures of the forest were always welcome. Those days came to an abrupt end once Raymund Ravenshade crowned himself king and used the crown's power to bend the realm to his will.

Now the once white and shimmering walls of the castle are blackened and choked with thorny vines. The once festive air has turned thick with malice, and the dreamlike atmosphere has turned into a nightmare. Much of the castle has fallen into disrepair, and entire sections have collapsed completely. The namesake spires once glimmered, but now only a single spire remains—a broken charred tooth that pierces the sky and gives Castle Darkspire its current moniker.

King Raymund spends most of his time in the dungeon amusing himself with torture, and he has locked Amabel up in the remaining spire. Once the adventurers reach the castle, read the following aloud:

A nightmare castle sits at the end of the roadway ahead, just past the treeline. Shattered towers lie collapsed and blackened as if by a great fire, and thorny vines choke the walls. Little Red stops and stares at the castle with a grim look. "This is where we part ways," she says with a pointed look. "I cannot risk falling under King Raymund's spell and becoming your enemy. Free my grandmother, and I will see her safely away into the Forest."

### General Features

The following features are prominent throughout Castle Darkspire unless otherwise noted:

**Ceilings, Floors, and Walls.** The ceilings are 15 feet high throughout, and the entire castle is made from tightly mortared stone blocks.

**Doors.** Doors are constructed of black wood bound in iron and look as if charred by a fire. Each door has an AC of 15, 10 hit points, and is immune









to poison and psychic damage. Locked doors can be opened by someone proficient with thieves' tools who succeeds a DC 15 Dexterity check. Stuck doors can be opened with a successful DC 15 Strength check.

**Lights.** All areas are brightly lit by *continual flame* spells cast on sconces throughout the castle that gives off bright light.

**Climbing the Spire.** Attempting to climb the walls up to the top of the 50-foot-high tower will result in the climber taking 7 (2d6) piercing damage from the thorns per 10 feet climbed. Each time this damage is taken, the climber must succeed a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 hour.

## Keyed Locations

The following descriptions correspond to the keyed locations on the provided map of Castle Darkspire:

### I. Castle Courtyard

A creaking drawbridge leads over what used to be a moat and into the castle. The castle gates stand wide open, vines hanging from the stone archway of the entrance.

**Hazard: Vine Whips.** Anyone who walks through the doorway must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 7 (2d6) piercing damage and is restrained by the thorny vines that reach out to grab them. The vines will let go and die once 1 point of slashing damage is dealt to them.

### Ia. Stables

The stables are empty except for a few piles of dirty straw. Anyone actively searching the stables who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a mousehole and a faint light coming from inside it. Peering into the hole reveals a tiny home complete with a little fireplace and a mouse in a robe reading a book by its light. The mouse shakes its fist at whoever is looking into his home and squeaks dire threats towards them. It gets up and slams shut a door that closes off the mousehole.



## 2. Hall of Mirrors

Mirrors of all shapes and sizes line the walls of this room. Each mirror acts as a window to a different part of the Enchanted Forest instead of showing reflections.

Here are a few scenes that the adventures can notice:

- A young girl sits on a stool weeping, her tears falling onto the two bloody stumps where her hands should be.
- A cat wearing a pair of black leather boots is sitting at a table and using a fork and knife to eat a bloody mouse.
- A fox and a wolf are arguing about something (they cannot be heard) over the corpse of a lamb.
- A red-haired mermaid sits in an underwater castle weeping tears of blood—her eyes are gouged out.
- An older woman hums to herself as she stokes the fire in an oven in which a little boy and girl are being roasted alive.

An adventurer actively searching through the reflections can make a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice that one of the mirrors shows a room (area 7) with a small girl sitting next to a young woman with impossibly long hair. The description that the First Reader Avidicus gave of Amabel matches the young girl's description.





### 3. Guard Room

The door to this room from area 2 is locked (see “General Features”). When the adventurers enter this room, read the following aloud:

Paintings of past kings and queens of the fairy tale realm hang on the walls of this chamber. Someone has slashed them to ribbons, splashed paint, or drawn ridiculous faces on each of them. Four suits of armor painted all over in a childlike style stand in the corners.

**Encounter: Knights.** The four suits of armor (use the **orc** stat block with an AC of 18 and no ability to speak) are enchanted to protect the castle from intruders.

### 4. Trophy Display Hall

Once the adventurers enter this room, read the following aloud:

Frescoes depicting great hunts by past Kings and Queens cover this entire room, and the ceiling is painted to resemble the arching branches of the Enchanted Forest. Display cases lining the walls hold bows and arrows with plaques describing their previous owners’ accomplishments. The stuffed heads of deer, tigers, bears, and other fantastic animals are proudly displayed.

**Not Quite Dead.** The stuffed heads in this room were once magically enchanted to tell the story of the hunt in which they were taken. Simply walking up to the head would make it magically come alive and deliver its tale. That magic has been corrupted to the point that walking up to them now still makes them come alive momentarily, but now they only scream in perpetual terror.

**Treasure: The Huntsman’s Bow.** An adventurer actively searching the display cabinets who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check will notice that one of the bows is much simpler in style than the ornate royal bows. The plaque in front of it simply reads: *The Huntsman’s Bow* (see Appendix B: New Magic Items).

### 5. Dining Hall

Once the adventurers enter this room, read the following aloud:

A large dining table filled with plates of delicious smelling food sits displayed before a roaring fireplace. Stacks of juicy roast boar, venison, cakes, pies, and many other delicacies fill the table. The feast is fit for a king, but the seats are empty, and not a soul is in sight.

**King’s Feast.** Anyone who partakes in the roast boar feast will restore 4d4+4 hit points; they cannot benefit from this effect again for 24 hours. Once finished, the plates and cups are swept away by *unseen servants* permanently enchanted to the castle to prepare and clean up after the King’s Feast.

### 6. Kitchen

Once the adventurers enter this room, read the following aloud:

The smells and sounds of a highly functional kitchen assault the senses as the door to this room swings open. Richly scented steam comes from boiling pots on the stove, and sinks filled with bubbles have plates being scrubbed above them by invisible hands. A large boar is tied up in one corner of the room. It struggles against the rope bindings and grunts around an apple shoved into its mouth. Standing above it is a chef in a white coat and hat, hefting a large maul.

**Encounter: The Second Pig.** The cook is a **wereboar** that will fly into a rage at having his kitchen disturbed. He has been charmed by the *King’s Crown* (see Appendix B: New Magic Items) and commanded by King Raymund to kill and prepare his two brothers for the King’s Feast in area 5.

**The Third Pig.** The bound boar is a **wereboar** named Boramir who explains the horror he has had to endure for decades. King Raymund did not use his power on Boramir to keep his fear fresh as his brother killed him—Raymund claims it made the meat taste better. Boramir tells the party that a little





girl is held in the tower in the next room together with Rapunzel. He warns them that the King completely enthalls her, but if they use the passphrase, “Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your golden hair!” she will respond. He hastily leaves the castle as fast as he can.

## 7. Reflection Pool

Once the adventurers enter this room, read the following aloud:

This tower’s roof has collapsed, and storm clouds are churning in the sky above. Fat droplets of rain slip down inside the tower and form a pool at the tower’s bottom. Standing in the center of this pool is a malformed creature of dark fur, claws, and fangs. Its yellow eyes look towards the sound of the opening door, and its maw opens wide in a howl.

**Encounter: The Hunter.** The Huntsman (a **werewolf** without a spear and who stays in hybrid form) is Little Red’s father, charmed by the *King’s Crown*, and guard dog to the King’s Chamber. After decades of enduring the King’s horrors, he has lost all sense of his humanity, and the wolf has taken him over completely.

## 8. The King’s Chamber

Once the adventurers enter this room, read the following aloud:

The King’s room is filled with a mismatched assortment of high luxury items and childrens toys. A four-poster bed of solid gold is piled high with stuffed animals, and a mahogany desk with gold fillet trim is covered in finger-painted canvases. A black and white cat sits on a pillow and swishes its tail angrily at being woken up.

The cat is the former King who was polymorphed into his current form and made into Raymund’s pet. A *detect magic* spell will determine that the cat is enspelled with a transmutation aura. A *dispel magic* spell will break the polymorph and revert the king to his usual physical self—a naked, slightly

overweight, and balding elderly human male. He has been a cat for so long that he has lost his ability to speak and will run away awkwardly on all fours, intent on escaping the castle.

**Puzzle Box.** A casual search of the room reveals a wooden chest hidden under the bed. The puzzle box can be opened with a DC 20 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check, and someone proficient with a gaming set will gain advantage on the check. The box can be broken open with a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check without damaging the treasure inside.

Inside the puzzle box is a journal written in colored pencil and a *spell scroll of dispel magic*. The first thing anyone reading the journal will notice is that the handwriting and grammar appear to be that of a young child. It reveals that “King Raymund” is Raymund Ravenshade. Raymund hated his life as the forgotten son and found his escape in “The Book of Fairy Tales.” An adventurer who succeeds a DC 12 Intelligence (History) check will recognize the name as the missing youngest son of Cornelius Ravenshade, former patriarch of the family, who vanished 50 years ago. Anyone with the Noble background succeeds on this check automatically.

**Secret Panel.** A hidden panel in a bookshelf on the wall can be found with an active search and a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Behind it is an ornate key with a magical shimmer to it—the original master key to Castle Lightspire, which King Raymund has a copy of in area 10. This master key can unlock the door to area 10 and the prison cells in area 9.





## 9. Dungeon

Once the adventurers enter this room, read the following aloud:

The stone stairs wind down deeper under the castle; the air grows colder and wetter the further down you go. As you descend, a faint shuffling sound can be heard in the distance, growing louder with each downward step. The staircase ends at a short hallway with cells with iron bars on opposing walls. The shuffling noise is now loud and clear and coming from the cell at the end of the row.

**Prisoners.** There are five cells in total in the castle dungeon, and four of them are occupied. The doors to the cells are locked and can be opened with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check by someone proficient with thieves' tools, with the key that King Raymund has in area 7, or with the master key found in area 8. Here is who is currently occupying the cells:

- There are seven filthy dwarves chained to the walls of one cell who are badly beaten and on the verge of dying. The fresh corpse of a young human female sits in the center of the cell with an apple shoved into her mouth. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Medicine) check will determine she died from poison. Anyone eating the apple will take 14 (4d6) poison damage and become poisoned for 1 hour.
- Byron, a male human **commoner**, is in a cell at the end of the row and dancing while wearing a pair of ruby red slippers. His shuffling feet are blistered and ragged—blood soaks through the shoes' cloth and traces patterns on the cell floor. The shoes are enchanted with a permanent *irresistible dance* spell, and they can only be removed by casting a *dispel magic* spell that destroys them.
- Grandma Rose, an elderly female human **werewolf**, is in her cell corner, patiently sitting in the dark. Her strength of will and personality is apparent with only a brief introduction. She is patient and understanding if the adventurers are not able to release her right away and

encourages them to defeat King Raymund ("That evil child must be stopped.")

- Coral, a young female human **commoner**, sits in a cell with a pile of straw and a spinning wheel, mindlessly trying to spin the straw through the wheel. Her fingers are bloody, and bone is showing through the skin. Her mind is broken, and she mumbles the word "Rumpelstiltskin" repeatedly under her breath, barely audible.

## 10. Rapunzel's Tower

The door to this area is locked with an *arcane lock* spell, and a key that can unlock it can be found in area 8. Once the adventurers enter this room, read the following aloud:

This tower is the only remaining spire still standing in the castle. It is hollowed out except for a platform near the top that sits 50 feet above the ground. A trapdoor is inset near the center of the platform.

**Getting up the Tower.** An adventurer without climbing gear can climb the tower walls with a successful DC 20 Strength check, which can be made at advantage if using climbing gear. If the passphrase "Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your golden hair!" is yelled, the trapdoor opens, and 50 feet of hair comes tumbling down and can be climbed with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check. Any failed check while climbing results in taking 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage from falling halfway up.

**Encounter: The Dark King.** The evil **King Raymund** (see section "The Dark King") is here with Lancelot (**knight**) and **Rapunzel** (see Appendix A: New Monsters). Raymund will stamp his feet and pout like a child and declare the adventurers are ruining all his fun. He screeches at Lancelot to "make their insides their outsides" while Rapunzel uses her Hair Tendrils to limit the party's actions. Raymund does not fight directly and relies on Rapunzel and his *King's Crown* to keep him safe.

Once Rapunzel and Lancelot are defeated, Raymund will surrender completely. If he is knocked unconscious or killed, or the crown is





removed from his brow, the crown's power will be terminated, and all charmed denizens will regain control of themselves. Amabel can be found bound and gagged in a chest pushed into a corner of the room. She is terrified and thankful to be rescued.

**Treasure: Master Key.** King Raymund has a copy of the master key that will unlock the doors to the prison cells in area 9.

## THE DARK KING

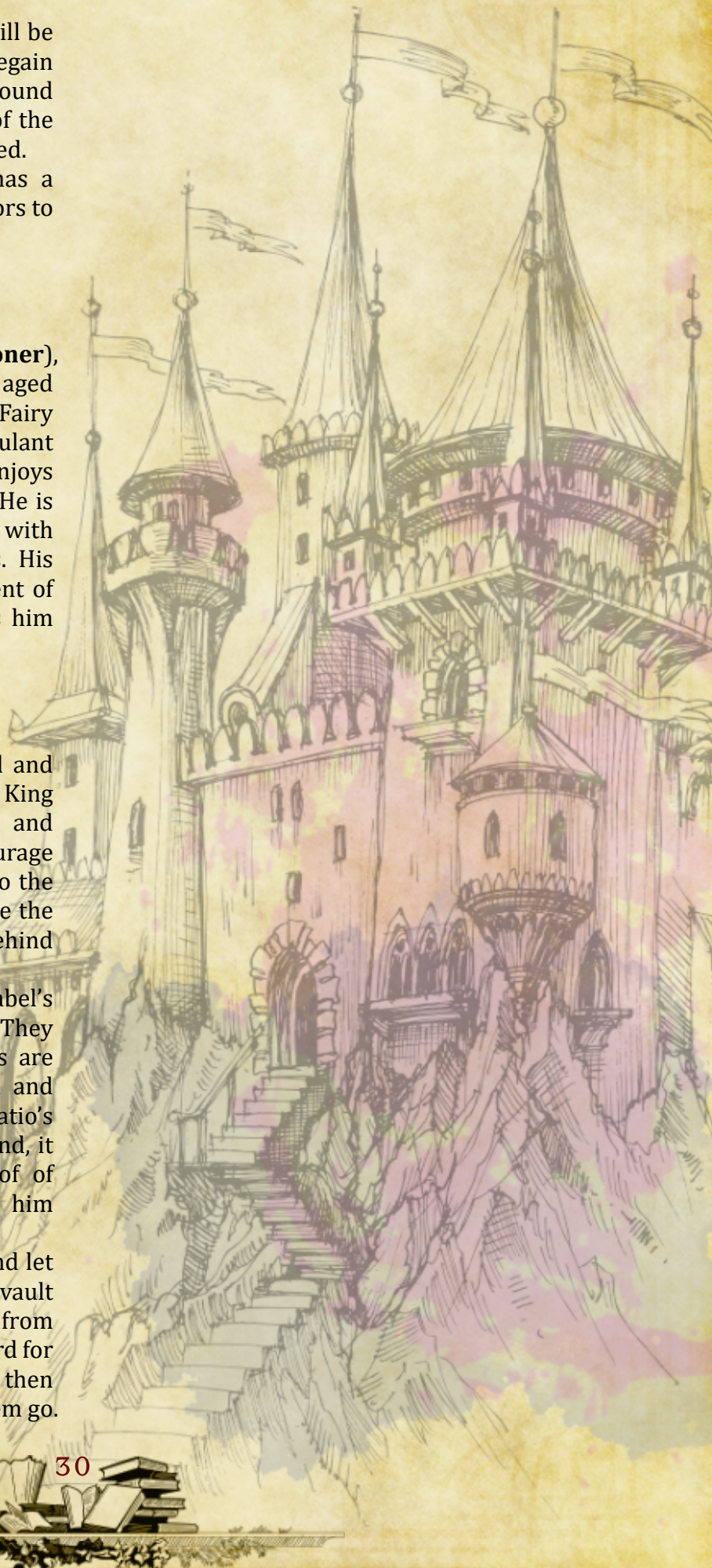
King Raymund (CE male human **commoner**), unlike the denizens of the fairy tale realm, has aged all 50 years he has been inside "The Book of Fairy Tales." However, he emotionally remains a petulant and psychopathic 10-year-old boy who enjoys inflicting horrifying atrocities on his victims. He is now a shrunken and wrinkled older man with madness shining from his overly wide eyes. His *King's Crown* allows him to charm any resident of the fairy tale realm he can see and protects him from attacks.

## Aftermath

If the adventurers manage to rescue Amabel and save the fairy tale realm from the evil King Raymund's clutches, the locals will rejoice and praise them as heroes. Little Red and an entourage of fairy tale personas will escort them back to the gates leading to the material plane. They leave the realm with the ringing sound of cheers behind them.

First Reader Avidicus is waiting with Amabel's mother, Annabelle, and her father, Horatio. They share a tearful embrace, and profuse thanks are given all around. If Raymund was captured and brought back alive, he is recognized as Horatio's long-lost uncle. If Raymund's journal was found, it could be given to the Ravenshades as proof of Raymund's past. They promise to see him adequately punished for his behavior.

The Ravenshades are true to their word and let the adventurers take an item each from their vault (either allow the adventurers to roll or choose from Magic Item table B - see p. 144 DMG) as a reward for rescuing their daughter. The Ravenshades will then hustle them out the back door, eager to see them go.





# MANUSCRIPT OF THE DARK CROW

*Manuscript of the Dark Crow* is an adventure for **three to six characters of 3rd to 4th level**, optimized for a party of **four 3rd-level characters**. A couple of Avowed monks go missing after venturing into the Cloak Wood for rare dyes, having stumbled into a portal to the Feywild and then being abducted by Darklings loyal to Dubh Catha, the Dark Crow. The Darklings are forcing one of the monks to produce an illuminated manuscript in worship to Dubh Catha. Can the adventurers follow the monks into the Feywild and brave the Gloam Chapel's perversions, or will they become unwilling instruments of the unseelie fey?

## Background

Two tendays ago, Avowed monks Thaddius Goodwe and Robern Freyny set off from Candlekeep and into the Cloak Wood, where they sought to source ingredients that could be used for dyes and colored inks, such as rare insects or plants. Robern is a talented illustrator, and his work has been featured in numerous illuminated manuscripts to various deities, from Mystra to Mieliki. Such an excursion for art supplies is not uncommon, and the monks traveled with sending stones to keep a line of communication open back to Candlekeep. But a tenday after their departure, Thaddius and Robern have fallen silent. The rest of the Avowed have grown seriously concerned.

The sages and Avowed of Candlekeep know that portals to the other planes can be found within the Cloak Wood. Though these portals were not a planned feature of the expedition of Thaddius and Robern, the Avowed fear one may be involved, given that the traveling monks were well-equipped to handle the more mundane threats of the forest. They do not know it yet, but it is exactly as the Avowed fear: Thaddius and Robern were kidnapped by darklings and dragged into the Feywild, where they were taken to a Gloam Chapel—one of many unholy edifices to Dubh Catha, an unseelie lord. Thaddius has already been tortured and killed by the dark fey, while Robern is being held captive and

forced to work on an illuminated manuscript in worship to the Dark Crow. If Robern is not rescued in time, the fey may dispose of him once he has completed the manuscript.

## Getting the Quest

While in Candlekeep, the party is approached by Illiminora Raganis (CG female human **mage**), one of the eight Grand Readers of Candlekeep. Illiminora looks to be in her mid-fifties, with a mildly creased face and thick, square-framed glasses that sit high on her nose. She wears her jet-black hair in a tight bun atop her head and speaks with clear enunciation and a calming voice. She explains:

I have been meaning to speak with you. The time has come to send a party after Thaddius and Robern, two of the Avowed who ventured into the Cloak Wood and have been silent now for a tenday. Your capabilities are evident, and so I speak for Candlekeep when I say that the library would be exceedingly grateful for your cooperation in this matter. I am sure we can make it worth your while. Shall we discuss?

Illiminora explains the reasoning behind the original expedition and offers any other information she can to the party about the nature of the Cloak Wood and its portals. She tells the characters that their search within the Cloak Wood should begin at Godwin's Grove, a particular area of fertile ground within the forest where rarer insects and vegetation can be found in abundance. She also provides the party with physical descriptions of Thaddius and Robern: Thaddius is a stocky, muscled man with a bald head in his mid-forties, while Robern is wiry, with a crooked nose, and wears his black hair in a high ponytail. With her final parting words, Illiminora suggests that any portals they find in the area are likely worth investigating—Thaddius and Robern are unlikely to have vanished due to other factors. Illiminora promises the party 250 gp for any information they





can acquire on the monks' whereabouts, with further compensation promised if the party can rescue the monks or bring back their remains, if necessary.

## To Godwin's Grove

The Cloak Wood is a little more than a two-day trek from Candlekeep. Once the party reaches the edge of the wood, they are to follow Illiminora's instructions to find Godwin's Wood: travel four miles into the wood directly north from Hangman's Tree, which sits on its outskirts. Hangman's Tree is a thick, deciduous tree with a long branch that points eastward, draped in sinewy, rope-like vines that resemble nooses. When the characters venture into the wood, a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check is necessary to locate Godwin's Grove. For each failed check, roll a 1d4 and consult the random encounter table below to see what the party has stumbled across:

### Random Encounter Table

1d4	ENCOUNTER
1	A pack of six hungry <b>stirges</b> ambushes the party.
2	A tribe of 10 <b>vegepygmies</b> (VGtM, p. 196) and their <b>vegepygmy chief</b> (VGtM, p. 197) feasting on the corpse of a dead bear. The vegepygmies are non-hostile unless a character comes within 5 feet of their space.
3	A goblin's corpse is stuck to a tree, a knife having been driven through its skull. On the goblin's person is a leather purse with nothing but an oddly shaped stone inside it.
4	A <b>troll</b> has got its foot stuck in an old bear trap. If the party frees the troll, it rewards them with a treasure from its pouch: a fossilized turd in the shape of a bear.

When the party reaches Godwin's Grove, read aloud the following:

The dense, dark canopy ahead of you opens into a circular clearing, roughly 60 feet in diameter. The clearing buzzes with life at an intensity a level above the rest of the Cloak Wood—small, incandescent insects flutter about, and colorful mushrooms and other flora push upwards from the soil. The air smells like morning dew. In the eastern section of the clearing is a cold campfire and a canvas tent, its entrance flap fluttering lazily in the gentle breeze.

The tent belongs to Thaddius and Robern, though the two monks are nowhere in sight. Further examination of the campsite reveals two bedrolls and two explorer's packs inside the tent. A DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check (or 1 hour of dedicated searching) reveals no signs of a struggle, though there are footstep-like depressions in the ground that suggest as many as four humanoids walked westward from the tent to the edge of the clearing. The party can follow the footsteps just past the edge of the clearing, where they will find a burrow in the ground. Read aloud:

The footsteps lead west, just past the edge of the clearing and into the growth of the wood, where they end at a burrow in the ground. The burrow is quite large at over 4 feet in diameter, certainly large enough for a couple of monks to climb into. A soft purple light emanates from some unseen point within the burrow, bathing its walls in the glow of twilight.

Characters with a passive Perception of 12 or higher notice a torn piece of fabric stuck on an upturned root just a foot away from the burrow. Upon closer inspection, the material appears to be a piece of a cloak or other similar garment. It was left by Thaddius, who, along with Robern, followed two **darklings** into the burrow and through to the Feywild while under the effects of the charm





person spell.

**The Burrow.** The burrow is a portal to a specific region of the Feywild, where the unseelie fey loyal to Dubh Catha, the Dark Crow, hold great influence. A creature who crawls at least 5 feet into the burrow will find itself transported to the Feywild; another 5 feet or so will bring them to the surface of the alternate plane. A creature can use the burrow to freely travel back and forth between the Feywild and the Material Plane.

## Traveler on the Road

On the other side of the portal, the party will find themselves in a world that does not look too unlike the one they left. Read aloud:

You're still in the forest. Some forest, anyway. Probably no longer the Cloak Wood. It is much darker here, as the trees grow so close together and the canopy becomes so thick that almost all sunlight from above is prevented from reaching the forest floor, instead filtering through semi-translucent purple leaves within the canopy that bathe your surroundings in the glow of twilight. The air is unnaturally silent. A single dirt path snakes through the trees ahead. After a few moments, a humanoid figure approaches around the bend in the path before you.

**Pecan Toadblock.** The figure on the path is Pecan Toadblock (CN male satyr **bard** [VGtM p.211]), a traveling bard of the Feywild who is currently spending some time in nature to recharge his creative energies. He is outfitted with a walking stick, a flowing red cape, an adventurer's backpack, and a set of pipes carved from bone. As a bard, Pecan is always eager to meet new people, especially those with interesting stories to tell. He is more than willing to converse with the party, speaking quickly in a sing-song voice and making intense eye contact. If attacked or threatened by the party, Pecan uses his *cape of the mountebank* to disappear. Pecan freely shares the following information with the party:

- The party is in the Feywild, specifically a place known as the Thousand Acre Blackwood, where

the Dark Crow Dubh Catha and his adherents hold influence.

- The Dark Crow has eyes and ears everywhere.
- Pecan has spent the last few days in this area of the forest, taking in the sights and breathing in the aromas of the forest to inspire his songs.
- Pecan is acquainted with many of the Dark Crow's adherents but would not consider them friends. Or enemies.

Pecan in turn peppers the party with questions, asking them about where they came from and what brings them to the Feywild. A character with a passive Insight of 14 or higher may realize that Pecan knows more than he lets on. If the characters ask Pecan if he has seen or heard anything about two monks, he smiles coyly and not-so-subtly implies that he knows precisely where they are. Pecan explains that he is willing to share this information with the adventurers if they each share with him a sad memory from their past. The memory does not have to be especially traumatic; Pecan is seeking a particular feeling of melancholy. Pecan explains the songs he sings are often sad, and he needs inspiration for new material. Once the characters have each shared a sad memory with Pecan, he provides them with the following information:

- Two darklings charmed the monks and took them to a nearby Gloam Chapel: a temple in worship to Dubh Catha.
- One of the darklings told Pecan they were going to use one of the monks to illustrate a manuscript.
- The Gloam Chapel is about a mile northwest of their current location.
- The Gloam Chapel is defended, and the party should be aware that things will not always be as they seem.

Once Pecan has relayed this information to the characters, he uses his *cape of the mountebank* to abruptly disappear, enjoying the thrill of leaving his "audience" hanging.





## To the Chapel

If the characters received directions to the chapel from Pecan, they can arrive at the chapel within a half hour without issue. If the characters did not receive directions from Pecan, they are faced with the difficult task of tracking the monks on their own. Faint footsteps in the dirt path near the burrow can be tracked back to the Gloam Chapel with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check. This check can be repeated as necessary. Each failed check results in an hour of searching. Each failed check of 5 or more results in the manifestation of four shadows from the trees that surround and attack the party, fighting until they are destroyed.

**The Thousand Acre Blackwood.** The Thousand Acre Blackwood resembles forests on the Material Plane, with some key differences. Leaves on the trees are semi-translucent and a pale purple rather than green. Trees are close together, and the canopy is so thick that one cannot see the sky from the forest floor, shrouding the wood in twilight. Shadows appear to dance and move in one's peripheral vision. Small, glowing bugs native to the Feywild flutter through the air. Sound travels only half as far as it would on the Material Plane. While traveling through the Blackwood, the party may notice or encounter any of the following sights and sounds:

- Shadows are moving through the trees.
- Distant, echoing giggling with no discernable source.
- Plants that sprout, flower, and die in front of them in a matter of moments.
- Roots that animate and grasp at ankles and must be pulled loose.
- Small streams that flow uphill.



## The Gloam Chapel

The Gloam Chapels are a physical manifestation of the Dark Crow's influence over the Thousand Acre Blackwood, and are as much living magical entities as they are structures. Unless otherwise stated, the Gloam Chapel's features are described as follows:

**Ceilings, Floors, and Walls.** The main structure of the Gloam Chapel is composed of many trees that have irregularly grown into and around each other to form its edifice. Roots run together to create the floors, and unnatural trunks align to create walls over 2 feet thick. Tree canopies tangle with each other 15 feet in the air to form a sturdy ceiling.

**Doors.** Doors are manifested from ebony hardwood, with door handles of shining silver. They have AC 15 and 12 hit points. Locked doors can be opened with a successful DC 13 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

**Lights.** The interior of the Gloam Chapel is shrouded in the dim light of twilight. Magical torches on the walls burn softly with purple *continual flame*.

When the characters arrive in front of the Gloam Chapel, read aloud the following:

The woods begin to part as a looming structure takes shape in the shadows. Upon further inspection, its windowless edifice looks to have been formed from numerous trees having grown together in irregular shapes and patterns, creating walls from their trunks and a ceiling from their canopies, suggesting an inherently magical nature. Wooden steps rise to a set of double doors fitted with handles of shining silver that appear to have text carved into their surface.

## Keyed Locations

The following locations are keyed to the provided map of the Gloam Chapel:

### 1. Foyer

The doors to the chapel are locked and inscribed with the following words, which magically appear





1 SQUARE = 5 FEET





in whatever language is best understood by their reader:

*When brightest, I am darkest.  
When darkest, I am gone.  
When I am gone forever, so are you.*

To unlock the doors, the correct answer to this riddle must be provided. The answer is "my shadow" or simply "shadow." If the party cannot answer the riddle, they can gain access to the chapel by lockpicking or breaking down the door, though doing so prompts a retaliation from the chapel. Characters within 30 feet of the door when it is broken down or lockpicked must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, taking 12 (3d8) psychic damage on a failed save, or half that amount on a successful one. If the party answers the riddle correctly, the doors to the chapel swing open. When the doors open (regardless of method), each of the party members' shadows detach from their bodies and begin to move on their own, lingering in the immediate surroundings for a few moments before moving through the doors and into the open foyer. Read aloud:

The doors to the temple open into a semi-circular foyer. Multiple oil portraits of various persons and creatures hang on the walls, though specific facial features are difficult to make out in the dim light. An incense burner on a tree trunk in the middle of the room fills the air with the scent of lavender. Your shadows move on their own ahead of you, disappearing right through a second set of double doors at the north end of the room.

**Manufactured Greeting.** When the party first enters the room, they are greeted by a deep, scratchy voice that seems to be coming from one of the portraits. "Praise be to Dubh Catha, the Dark Crow," it says. "Black blessings upon you". The portrait then falls silent. The portrait depicts a darkling in black robes heavily embroidered with silver and has been enchanted with the magic mouth spell and subtle illusion magic to greet visitors to the chapel. A small plaque beneath the portrait reads: "Arbelladon Caiqirelle, 347nd Dark

Vicar."

The other portraits on the walls depict various persons, mostly darklings, but also a satyr and a couple of elves. Each portrait bears a plaque inscribed with a name. In the middle of the south wall is a larger plaque that reads "Friends of the Dark Crow."

## 2. Artifact Room

This room is filled with gold, silver, precious gems, and artifacts that glint in the light. Shelves on the walls and pedestals around the room ensure that the treasure is prominently and meticulously displayed, as if you were in an art gallery or a trophy room. In the very middle of the chamber is an ornate, bedazzled chest with a heavy-looking iron lock on its front. Doors exit to the north and east.

The darkling adherents to Dubh Catha retain a fondness for the beauty of art and treasure. The items have been collected over many years of theft, deal-making, and murder. Many of the items in this room are art pieces, including items such as:

- A bust of an unseelie lord made of solid gold weighing over 150 pounds.
- Ornately crafted jewelry such as brooches, earrings, and necklaces.
- A dagger made entirely from magically tempered silver, including the hilt.

**Hazard: Treasure.** In total, there is over 1500 gp worth of treasure in this room. A character attempting to remove any treasure from the room must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, taking 4 (1d8) psychic damage on a failed save and being compelled to return any treasure they are carrying to its proper place.

**Hazard: Ornate Chest.** The words inscribed on the chest are Elvish and read "A gift greater than works physical—fear." The chest is an old gift to the darklings from an unseelie lord and contains the literal essence of fear from various creatures. The use of detect magic reveals an aura of enchantment magic around the chest. The chest is locked, requiring a DC 12 Dexterity check using thieves'





tools or a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to open. If opened, the room is immediately filled with the sounds of a thousand persons and creatures screaming at once. The creature closest to the chest when it is opened is subjected to the phantasmal force spell (save DC 14). The screaming continues unabated while the phantasmal force effect will trigger every 12 seconds, directed at new creatures within the room if the previous target is already affected until the chest is closed again.

**North Doors.** The doors at the end of the northern hallway that extends from this room are used for parishioners to enter the main worship chamber. As there is no worship service currently scheduled, these doors are sealed with the equivalent of an arcane lock spell.

### 3. Dining Room

The hallway before you extends into a decorated dining room, with a large mahogany table and eight velvet high-back chairs in its center. The table is loaded with food; roast duck, baked vegetables, and fresh bread are piled high atop its surface. Oil paintings hang on the walls, and a large hearth crackles in the west wall. An ornate, wooden chandelier holding dozens of candles hangs above the room. Seated at the table in the middle of their meal are four grey-skinned humanoid creatures, accompanied by your shadows which left your sides earlier. Doors exit to the north, east, and southwest.

**Encounter: Darkling Clergy.** The creatures seated at the table are four **darklings** (VGtM, p. 134); Dubh Catha adherents and clergy of the Gloam Chapel. If the characters manage to sneak up on them, they can overhear a conversation in Sylvan, where the darklings are discussing how "Kasula will deal with the guests." The characters' shadows are being manipulated by the magic of the Gloam Chapel—Kasula will use the shadows against the characters when the time is right. When the darklings notice the characters they attack, fighting viciously until they are destroyed. If combat breaks out, the characters' shadows retreat by phasing through the doors to the north.

**Treasure: Silverware.** The cutlery on the dining

table is made from pure silver, delicately shaped into intricate floral patterns. The entire set of cutlery is worth 200 gp.

### 4. Kitchen

This kitchen is bustling with activity—animated objects fly around the room performing various tasks. A broom sweeps the floor, tongs, and knives cut into a duck breast and prepare dessert on a central countertop, and disembodied mage hands go in and out of the cupboards that line the walls. A bubbling pot hangs in a hearth in the south wall.

Fey magics propel these animated objects and mage hands, which help maintain the chapel and prepare food for its clergy. The cupboards hold mundane ingredients and supplies. If the characters are exceedingly disruptive towards the animated objects, they swarm the characters and attack, in the form of four Tiny objects summoned by the animated objects spell.

### 5. Robing Room

Six beds line the east wall of this room. Two wardrobes with intricately carved doors are pushed up against the north and south walls. A silver candelabra rests on a tree trunk in the middle of the room. Nailed to the wall above the beds in two horizontal lines are sixteen crow skulls. Doors exit to the west, north, and south.

The crow skulls formerly belonged to each of the previous "royal crows" of the Gloam Chapel. Each Gloam Chapel hosts one living crow at all times that serves to symbolize the oversight of Dubh Catha. When the crow dies, its skull is collected from the body and kept in the chapel in memory. The wardrobes in the room hold the black, silver-embroidered vestments of the clergy.

**Treasure.** There are six extra robes in this room. Each robe is worth 15 gp. The candelabra in the middle of the room is worth 50 gp.





## 6. Interrogation Chamber

This rectangular chamber is mostly bare, save for the four humanoid skeletons shackled to the walls of the room. Shackled to the wall in the southeast corner of the room is a bald, stocky man in dirtied robes. He looks up towards you, his face frozen in fear. "Please," he exclaims, "you have to help me!"

This room is where Kellem, Kasula, and the other darklings keep and interrogate prisoners when necessary. Hanging on a nail in the wall is a keyring with four keys on it.

**Encounter: Illusion of Thaddius.** As Robern is the talented illustrator, the darklings had no use for Thaddius and tortured him in the chapel for a time before ultimately killing him. His current form is an illusion manifested from the magic of the chapel, though his corpse remains shackled to the wall as a **zombie**. If the characters try to communicate with the illusion, it says little, continually pleading for freedom and exclaiming "please, I'm hurt." If a character comes within five feet of the illusion, it fades, revealing its true form as a zombie which immediately attacks, though it remains restrained by the shackles. It fights until it is destroyed. Thaddius's shackles can be unlocked with the keyring on the wall.

## 7. Study

Rows of shelves cluttered with vials, paint pots, documents, and other supplies line the walls of this room. An L-shaped ebony wood desk occupies the northeast corner, and is covered in open paint pots, quills, and loose sheets of paper and parchment. Hunched over the desk in a high-back chair with their back turned towards you is a humanoid figure with a black ponytail.

**Robern Freyny.** The figure seated at the desk is Robern Freyny (LG male human **martial arts adept** [VGtM p. 216]) who, in a traumatized and sleep-deprived haze, continues to work diligently on the illuminated manuscript and does not immediately notice the characters. Splayed out in front of him is a thick, leather-bound tome that he

is currently pressing gold leaf into. When the characters confront Robern, he initially believes them to be an illusion and is hesitant to interact with them. After some persistence from the party, he comes to his senses and begins to realize he is being rescued. He can share the following information with the characters:

- The darklings are led by a Dark Vicar named Kasula, who put him and Thaddius under a spell at their camp, confiscated their sending stone, and dragged them here.
- Thaddius was killed after a few days, while Robern has been forced to sleep in the study and work on the illuminated manuscript to Dubh Catha for twenty hours a day.
- The chapel itself is magical, and Robern cannot be sure if anything he sees is real.

Robern is weak and tired (he has 20 hit points remaining), but if he receives at least 10 hit points worth of healing, he agrees to join the party in any combat necessary to escape the chapel.

**Treasure: Gold Leaf.** The shelves in this room contain numerous different types of paints, dyes, and tools and materials that would be used by an artist to illustrate a manuscript, including multiple sheets of gold leaf worth a cumulative 30 gp.

## 8. Worship Chamber

An effigy of cracked stone in the shape of an eight-foot-tall, hooded, faceless figure with outstretched wings dominates this chamber. Behind the effigy, the north wall of the chamber has been painted in a spiraling pattern with gold that glints in the light. Six wooden pews fill the middle of the room. A brazier in front of the effigy burns brightly with purple flame. A robed humanoid figure with its back towards you tends to the flame in the brazier.

**Encounter: Dark Vicar Kasula.** The figure tending to the flame in the brazier is Dark Vicar Kasula, who has been waiting for the characters to arrive at the worship chamber so that he may properly greet them. If given the chance, Kasula will turn towards the characters, flash them a toothy





grin, and speak coldly, "Black blessings upon you. Welcome to the Gloam Chapel. I am eager to meet the rest of you." As Kasula speaks, the **shadows** of the characters will manifest out of the walls and stand beside him. Kasula is willing (and even eager) to converse with the characters if given the chance, asking them how they've enjoyed the chapel so far and what they think of the Dark Crow. He freely explains his need for Robern to complete an illuminated manuscript in worship to Dubh Catha, and clarifies that the characters' shadows are manipulated by the influence of Dubh Catha while inside the Gloam Chapel. Kasula is witty and charming, and twirls a wand around in his lanky fingers while he talks. If Kasula is immediately attacked, he fights viciously and is joined by the characters' shadows regardless. He cannot be surprised. Kasula is a **darkling elder** (VgtM p. 134) with 40 hit points who wields a *wand of fear*.

**Making a Deal.** Kasula would prefer not to fight to the death. If reduced to a quarter of his points or fewer, Kasula will attempt to make a deal with the characters, offering them a blessing from the Dark Crow in exchange for his life. If the characters agree, they are each granted permanent darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. If a character already has darkvision, the blessing increases its range by 60 feet. The deal is protected by unseelie fey magics; should the characters attempt to kill Kasula immediately after making the deal, each character must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 12 (3d8) psychic damage on a failed save and becoming permanently blinded.

**Reconnecting with Shadow.** When one of the characters' shadows is destroyed in combat, its manipulation ends and it returns to its associated character. A character reduced to 0 hit points by its own shadow immediately dies, as its body evaporates into nothingness.

## MAKING A BREAK FOR IT

It is possible the characters will locate Robern before confronting Kasula and immediately attempt to flee the temple. As Kasula is already aware of their presence, he and the Gloam Chapel will do everything in their power to stop them. Roots will grow quickly over the chapel's main doors to prevent escape, and Kasula and the shadows will greet the characters in the foyer (or elsewhere, at DM discretion). Once Kasula has been dealt with, the magic of the temple fades enough for the characters to leave.

## Aftermath

If the characters have slain or made a deal with Kasula, they can flee the Gloam Chapel and return to the burrow portal without much trouble. Before leaving, Robern suggests that the party bring back Thaddius' body for a proper burial. If the party has the means to recover Thaddius's body, Illiminora and the rest of the Avowed compensate the party an additional 100 gp and promise that the facilities of Candlekeep are available to them whenever they would like. As for Robern, he is tired, and a bit banged up, but will ultimately make a speedy, fulsome recovery.





# KING ADAM'S CASTLE

*King Adam's Castle* is an adventure for **three to six characters of 5th to 6th level**, optimized for a party of **four 5th-level characters**. An old book summons a magical palace demiplane when it is opened, complete with magically created simulacra and self-contained, simulated micro-adventures perfectly fit for entertaining young children. However, the book has been damaged, and the demiplane it summons has become twisted and warped, causing one of the simulacra to gain a higher awareness of its reality. Can the adventurers brave the castle that has seemingly appeared out of nowhere, and will they reckon with what it means to be truly "alive"?

## Background

Avius Birdsfoot, a late Great Reader of Candlekeep and rumored confidant of the famous mage Mordenkainen, had always wanted to provide the very best for his son, Adam. A brilliant mage in his own right and inspired by the pop-out books that so delighted his young child, Avius set about understanding and building upon the Mordenkainen's Magnificent Mansion spell to create something wholly new and ground-breaking. After a few years of research and testing, Avius was able to create a magical book that, when opened, summoned a palace demiplane. But that was only the beginning—Avius had worked extensively to fill the palace with simulacra that his son would engage with. The simulacra operated on set "scripts" etched into the book by Avius. A gallant knight would challenge his son Adam to an honorable duel, the staff wizard would need Adam's help brewing the perfect potion. The knight would always lose, and Adam always knew just what to add to make the potion perfect. For a child, it was heaven. Avius told the other sages of Candlekeep about his creation, but they spoke strongly against it and advised him to keep it secret due to its dangerous implications.

Adam grew up, and Avius no longer had much reason to work on the book. He packed it away into

a secret compartment in his home in Baldur's Gate and eventually forgot about it. Decades later, long after both Avius and Adam had passed, a house fire consumed most of Avius's former residence, which had long since changed owners. A member of the clean-up crew found the strange looking book, partially damaged by the fire, and sold it to an auction in Baldur's Gate for a few silver pieces due to its strange magical markings. Weeks later, the book was purchased at auction for 7 gp by a man named Omar Glint, a budding wizard who figured he might be able to extract something useful from the mysterious text. After a few days of study, Omar came to understand the purpose of the text despite its damage, and decided to put it to the test. He traveled into the wilderness outside Baldur's Gate to give himself some privacy, opened the book, bellowed the command word, and stepped inside the magical doors it summoned.

Once inside, Omar knew immediately that things were not as they should be. The damage to the book had warped the demiplane: rooms were irregularly shaped, doors led to nowhere, and the simulacra inside acted very strange and hostile. And then he met Damien, the court jester. Damien, through the damage to the book, had become aware of his reality. He suddenly remembered the countless times he had performed the same routine to Adam's delight. He became aware of the world outside the demiplane. He recognized Omar as an outsider—and he was furious. He subdued Omar and took him to the throne room to interrogate him about the nature of the outside world. If the party does not intervene, Omar's fate will rest in Damien's hands. But where does Damien's fate rest?

## Getting the Quest

While in Candlekeep, the party is approached by Bori Magralei (LG nonbinary elf **illusionist** [VGtM p. 214]), a Master Reader and a prominent tutor of the scribes and acolytes of the library fortress. Bori is a reserved and relentlessly curious elf, with hair





shaved close to their head and their face adorned with piercings and jewelry. Bori tends to clasp their hands together when they talk and pace back and forth slightly. Bori explains:

I've got a job for you folks, if you're willing. It might be different than what you're used to. I've reason to believe that an old, very valuable text that was thought to be lost for decades has recently turned up. Scouts report that a set of double doors to nowhere has appeared in the wilderness outside of Baldur's Gate. If my instincts are correct, someone has used the book. Written by the late Avius Birdfoot, it summons a demiplane when its command word is spoken. These doors are a portal. We'd like you to travel through it and investigate.

Bori clarifies that the door in the woods bears the inscription "King Adam's Castle," all but confirming that it has been summoned by the book, despite the fact that they have no knowledge of how it ended up there. Bori can tell the party about the book's history up until it was forgotten by Avius in Baldur's Gate, as they are familiar with the subsequent texts that have been written about it at Candlekeep by Avowed sages and scholars who sought to understand and potentially reverse-engineer its construction. Bori further explains that the book remains within the demiplane once its command word is spoken, and so the book must be retrieved before the demiplane can be closed. They tell the party that they can find the doors some five miles south of Baldur's Gate, a few hundred feet east of the Coast Way, tucked into the treeline. As per Bori's understanding, the doors can only be opened by a specific knocking pattern: two long knocks followed by three quick ones. Bori would like the party to retrieve the book and return it to its rightful place at Candlekeep, and is willing to compensate the party 500 gp for its recovery.

## The Doors

The party should be able to follow the Coast Way north from Candlekeep and find the doors on the outskirts of Baldur's Gate with minimal issue. When the characters spot the doors, read aloud:

A pair of iron-banded double doors stand amidst the trees, apparently leading to nowhere. Carved onto one side of the doors are the words "King Adam's Castle" in a calligraphic font.

The doors are invulnerable to any damage and cannot be moved or opened any way other than the knocking pattern outlined by Bori. When a character raps their fist against the door with two long knocks followed by three quick knocks, the doors begin to open. Read aloud:

The sound of a heavy hatch being lifted reverberates through the air as the heavy doors begin to open inward. Beyond, you can see an irregularly shaped castle courtyard bathed in dazzling sunlight. The sounds of chirping birds and the smell of roasting meat filter through the portal.

Once opened, the doors remain so for one minute before closing again. The doors cannot be opened from the inside. To leave the demiplane, the party will have to locate the book and speak its command word.

## King Adam's Castle

King Adam's Castle is a mysterious demiplane that has been warped by the fire damage to the book that summons it. Unless otherwise stated, its features are described as follows:

**Ceilings, Floors, and Walls.** The castle is constructed of grey stone, though its features have been warped by damage to the book. Ceilings are typically 30 feet high, and walls are typically two feet thick, though the warping of the demiplane has caused the ceilings to dip irregularly and nonsensically and the walls to shift into odd angles. The structure of the castle is invulnerable to all damage.

**Doors.** Doors are made from oak reinforced with iron bands. Though sometimes warped into their frames, they open easily. They are unlocked.

**Lights.** The interior of the castle is well-lit by wall-mounted torches lit with the *continual flame* spell.









**Flame Illusions.** Random objects or features of the castle appear to suddenly become engulfed with flames, which burn for 1d4 rounds before disappearing. These flames produce no heat and cause no damage.

## Keyed Locations

The following locations are keyed to the provided map of King Adam's Castle.

### I. Courtyard

When the characters step through the portal and into the courtyard, read aloud:

The castle walls that surround this courtyard are oddly-shaped and bend at sharp angles, suggesting an impossible architecture like no castle you have seen before. To the northwest of the courtyard, an apple tree is engulfed in roaring flames. The stables can be seen to the northeast. In the centre of the courtyard, a rickety picket fence forms a dueling ground. An armored knight stands in the middle of the grounds beside a boy who looks to be in his late teens. "Your Majesties!" the knight calls out. "I humbly request a duel!"

Doors in the castle's walls exit to the west and north.

**Encounter: Gallant Knight.** Regardless of what response the party gives the knight, he begins to approach the characters with his sword drawn. "Squire! Attend me!" he shouts, as the boy beside him draws his own weapon. Normally, the knight would be sure to lose the duel and admit this defeat, but the damage to the book causes the knight to fight to the death alongside his squire. "Apologies, your Majesties," he offers through the swings of his sword. If the party attempts to incapacitate and interrogate either the knight or the squire, they stick to their magically-coded scripts and attempt to challenge their "Majesties" to another duel. The knight uses **gladiator** statistics, while the squire uses **knight** statistics.

**Treasure: Burning Tree.** The apple tree in the courtyard has been affected by the damage to the

book and is engulfed in flames, though the flames produce no heat and cause no damage. Hanging from the tree are five apples. Use of detect magic reveals an aura of transmutation magic surrounding each of the apples. Each apple, when consumed, functions as a *potion of healing*.

### 2. Stables

When the characters approach the stables, read aloud:

The two stalls of this stable are occupied by two horse-sized chickens, which rustle about restlessly in their confines. Adjacent to the stables are a row of six chicken coops, each one occupied by a chicken-sized horse.

The horses and the chickens have been swapped by the damage to the book, but are otherwise unbothered by their conditions. If released from their pens, the animals wander aimlessly about the courtyard.

**Treasure: Golden Egg.** Inside one of the chicken's stalls is an egg of solid gold laid by the chicken. The egg is worth 200 gp, but can only be taken outside of the demiplane if the entire book is destroyed (see "Destroying the Book", p. 47). Otherwise, it disappears when the characters leave the demiplane.

### 3. Dining Room

A feast has been elegantly laid onto a large mahogany table in the center of this dining room: rolls, a whole turkey, mashed potatoes, sweetbread, pies, and roasted vegetables—all of it heavily blackened and burned. A mahogany high-backed chair engraved with the name "Adam" is positioned at the head of the table. Six other chairs are arranged around the table. Doors exit to the north and south.

If the characters attempt to eat any of the food, it immediately crumbles to ash once it enters their mouths. Adam would occasionally join the other characters of the castle for a meal at this table, where they would engage the young boy in simple,





mostly scripted conversations as they followed their magically coded routines.

## 4. Kitchen

Characters who listen at the door to this room and succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check can hear the sounds of shuffling feet and someone muttering to themselves incoherently. If called out to, the person in the room does not respond. When the characters open the door, read aloud:

A dwarf in a chef's hat and cooking apron paces around this kitchen muttering to herself, completely engulfed in flames but seemingly unbothered by this fact. Neither the dwarf's skin nor clothes show any signs of being burned. The floor and countertops are a mess of unprepared vegetables scattered about. The oven against the south wall is open and has been filled with neatly organized ingredients and utensils, as if it were a pantry.

**Pacing Chef.** The dwarf is another simulacrum whose functioning has been disrupted by the damage to the book. The dwarf mutters the phrases "a little more sugar" and "musn't be late for dinnertime" over and over again while pacing around the room in flames. The dwarf does not respond to any questioning or other attempts to grab her attention. If restrained by the party, she makes every attempt to keep pacing around the room, entirely unaware of her circumstances and surroundings. The party can attempt to douse the flames that engulf the dwarf, which will momentarily shake her from her stupor, at which point she looks directly at a party member, smiles, and says "please get me out of here" before promptly falling permanently into a catatonic state.

**Heated Cupboard.** Characters with a passive Perception of 16 or higher can feel heat coming from one of the cupboards in the wall. If the cupboard is opened, a powerful heat radiates outward from it, as if from an oven. It is empty inside. The damage to the book has caused the functions of the oven and the cupboard to swap.



## 5. Wizard's Study

When the characters enter this room, read aloud:

A worried looking man with a long white beard and a pointy blue hat stares over a bubbling cauldron in the middle of the room. Irregularly shaped bookshelves line the oddly angled walls, and multiple desks and shelving units are littered with notes, bottled potions, and raw ingredients.

The potions in this room are little more than colored water; the structure of the demiplane is not complex enough to produce its own potions or magical items. All the books in this chamber are filled with nothing but blank pages.

**Encounter: Confused Wizard.** The man in this room is a wizard simulacrum named Melvin. Like the other characters in the demiplane, damage to the book has modified his behaviour. When the characters enter the room, Melvin quickly becomes anxious and agitated, and laments that he has misplaced the "perfect potion" that he had just finished brewing. He says that he cannot find it despite searching his entire study for it, and that now he is trying to produce the potion again, but has forgotten the final crucial ingredient. Melvin cannot answer any questions about the demiplane and remains singularly focused on his potion problem.

If he is not calmed by the characters, Melvin (use **evoker** [VGtM, p. 214] statistics) grows increasingly agitated and attacks, opening with a **fireball** spell and fighting to the death. Melvin can be calmed through one of two methods:

- Characters who search the study for Melvin's potion and succeed on a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check locate the lost potion: a bulbous vial of blue liquid underneath one of the desks, which they can return to Melvin.
- Characters may convince Melvin that any one of the ingredients in his study is the final crucial ingredient he needs to replicate the potion with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. For the purposes of the simulation, the





specific ingredient is irrelevant; all that matters is that Melvin believes it is the correct one.

If Melvin has been calmed by the characters, he falls into a repeating sequence of stirring the cauldron and chattering happily to himself about his creation. He acknowledges the characters as "your Majesties" and exclaims that he is very busy if they prod him with further questions.

**Treasure: Key to the Throne Room.** Characters who succeed on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check while searching for Melvin's lost potion find a heavy iron key tucked between two books on a shelf. This is the key to the throne room of the castle, where Damien is interrogating Omar. Refer to the "Retrieving the Key" section on page 46.

## 6. Chapel

Light filters through colorful stained-glass windows to create vibrant fractals on the floor of this chapel. In the north end of the chamber, a statue depicting a large crystal ball with many monstrous eyes stands before two simple stone pews.

Doors exit to the east and west of this chamber. Characters who succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom (Religion) or a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check recognize the statue as the symbol of Savras, god of diviners and truth-speakers. The statue is enchanted with a magic mouth spell. When a character sits on a pew in front of the statue, the words "Blessings upon you, Adam" reverberate outwards from it.

## 7. Lounge

This entire lounge is consumed by flames that lick at the walls and furniture. An ornate sofa, a decorated coffee table, a pedal harp, and numerous bookshelves fill the room. Despite their intensity, the flames give off no heat and nothing in the room actually appears to be burning.

Doors exit to the west and south. Adam used to sit

on the couch while his father Avius read him fairytales in this room. Damage to the book has engulfed the room in flames that burn ceaselessly.

**Treasure: Lost Luckstone.** Characters who search this room and succeed on a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check find a small chunk of polished agate between the couch cushions of the sofa. The agate is a *stone of good luck* that Adam lost in the demiplane decades ago. As the stone is not a product of the demiplane, it can be taken outside of the demiplane by the characters.

## 8. Armory

Racks of weapons line the walls of this armory. A grindstone and a child-sized suit of armor sit near the west wall. In the middle of the room are two training dummies made of straw. A stone staircase descends to the south.

The weapons are of fine quality but are otherwise mundane. The suit of armor is plate and magically resizes to fit its wearer, and was used by Adam long ago in his duels with the knight in the courtyard. The weapons and suit of armor can only be taken outside of the demiplane if the book is destroyed (see "Destroying the Book", p. 47). Otherwise, they disappear when the characters leave the demiplane.

## 9. Dungeon

Two suits of armor with swords and shields flank the heavy iron door to this room.

**Encounter: Dungeon Guards.** The suits are **helmed horrors**, which attack the party after a character comes within five feet of the door. They fight until they are destroyed.

**Treasure: Keyring.** Clasped to the of one of the helmed horrors is a keyring with two keys on it. These keys unlock the door to the dungeon as well as the manacles of the steward restrained inside.





The door to this room is locked. When the characters enter, read aloud:

This dungeon is dank and dimly lit by a single, barely flickering torch on the south wall. Manacled to the west wall is a white-furred wererat wearing a striped jerkin and a frilled ruff. He immediately looks up at you with a wide smile. "Your Majesties!" he exclaims. "Just in the nick of time!"

**Encounter: Stuart the Steward.** The manacled wererat is Stuart, the castle steward, who was locked in the dungeon by Damien for interrupting the jester's interrogating of Omar. Damage to the book has allowed Stuart to recognize that things are not as they should be, but he is not truly aware of his reality like Damien is. Stuart asks the characters to release him and asks for their help, freely sharing the following information:

- Stuart was locked in the dungeon by Damien, the court jester.
- Damien is treating one of the other majesties unkindly; he has taken his majesty to the throne room, locked the door, and is pestering his majesty with nonsensical questions.
- Stuart thinks the majesties should check in on the majesty being pestered by Damien.
- Stuart knows of a back-up key to the throne room hidden in Melvin's study. He can take the characters there.

Damage to the book has altered the pathway to the throne room, which is now hidden inside the demiplane. If the characters take note of the layout of the castle and ask Stuart where the throne room is, he confusingly explains that it can be accessed through the door in the courtyard once they retrieve the key.

## RETRIEVING THE KEY

Stuart can take the characters to Melvin's study, where he will immediately retrieve the key from between a pair of books on one of the shelves. If Melvin is still alive, he and Stuart share scripted pleasantries. The moment the key is picked up by

either Stuart or a party member, a loud, heavy grinding sound is heard coming from the courtyard. When the characters return to the courtyard, read aloud:

A marble staircase has sprouted from the grounds of the courtyard and rises to a single, elaborately engraved door that hangs in the air and appears to lead to nowhere.

## 10. Throne Room

Stuart will not follow the party into the throne room; he explains that Damien scares him and that the party can check in on "his majesty" without him. When the characters climb the stairs and enter the throne room using the key, read aloud:

The door opens into a spectacularly decorated chamber—colored banners hang on the walls, light filters in through stained glass, and a vibrant red carpet extends from your feet towards an iron and gold throne mounted atop a stone dais. Bound to the throne is a fatigued looking man in simple robes. Standing in front of him is another man in a court jester costume, his hands holding an open book.

**Encounter: Damien.** Damien (LE male assassin), the court jester, immediately turns towards the party and looks at them with a penetrating gaze that suggests a consciousness not present in the other characters of the castle. "Outsiders," he says, "...I'm quite eager to speak with you." Damien has a bit of a crazed look in his eyes, and speaks with a wit, confidence, and enthusiasm fitting for his role in the castle. Omar quickly tries to plead for help when he notices the adventurers, but Damien will promptly cast a silence spell centered on Omar to put a stop to this. If the party has not yet attacked Damien, he will freely share the following information with the party:

- Damien, unlike the other characters of the castle, has become aware of his reality and aware of the "world beyond."
- He has become aware of an existence where he was bound to perform the same crooked





routines, over and over again, for the entertainment of a child.

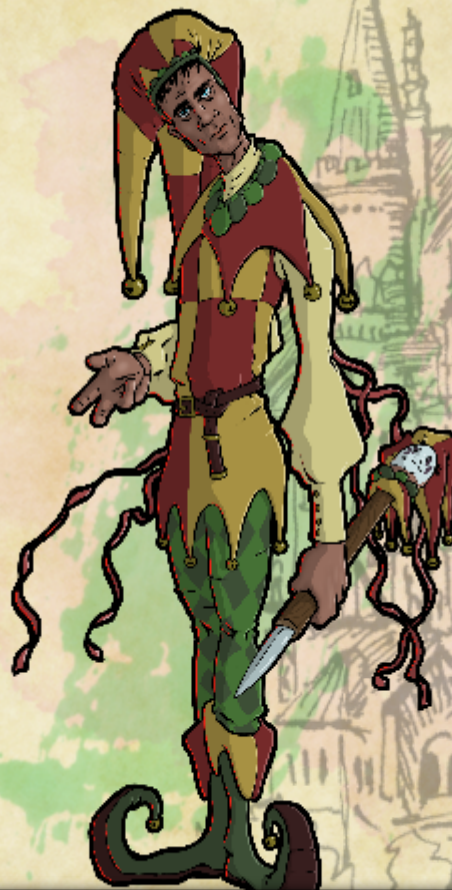
- He has been interrogating Omar and studying the book non-stop for the past few days, learning everything he can about the outside world and the nature of the demiplane he exists within.
- He believes that, due to the coincidental damage to the book, he can be released from his simulated existence and walk free as a "real man" if the right pages of the book are destroyed.
- He will not allow the characters to take the book from him and doom him to an eternity of imprisonment.
- The characters can either help him to destroy the book appropriately, leave the castle, or face his wrath.

how sure the party is, as he would prefer anything to his current imprisonment. If the characters destroy the book entirely, the demiplane closes, ejecting all non-simulated creatures, while all original characters and objects of the demiplane are wiped permanently from existence. Any objects native to the demiplane being carried by the party when the book is entirely destroyed remain in existence.

If the party opposes Damien, he fights to the death. Whether the party decides to cooperate with Damien or not, they can choose to either recover or destroy the book.

**Recovering the Book.** A character who studies the book for a period of at least five minutes can quickly locate its command word. By speaking the book's command word as the book is closed, all non-simulated creatures exit the demiplane within 30 feet of the area where they entered it. Any simulacra or objects killed or damaged while the demiplane was open are returned to their "original" states (though still affected by the book's damage).

**Destroying the Book.** If the characters agree to help Damien, he further explains that he believes particular pages of the book must be ripped out before the book is closed to ensure his freedom. A character who studies the book for a period of at least one hour and succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check can correctly determine that Damien's "source" page as well as all other pages where he is referenced must be ripped out for him to successfully exit the demiplane when the book is closed. Characters who fail this check can still attempt to free Damien by destroying certain pages, though there is a fifty percent chance that Damien is instead destroyed forever as his references in the book become fundamentally incomplete. Damien is willing to take any chance at freedom regardless of

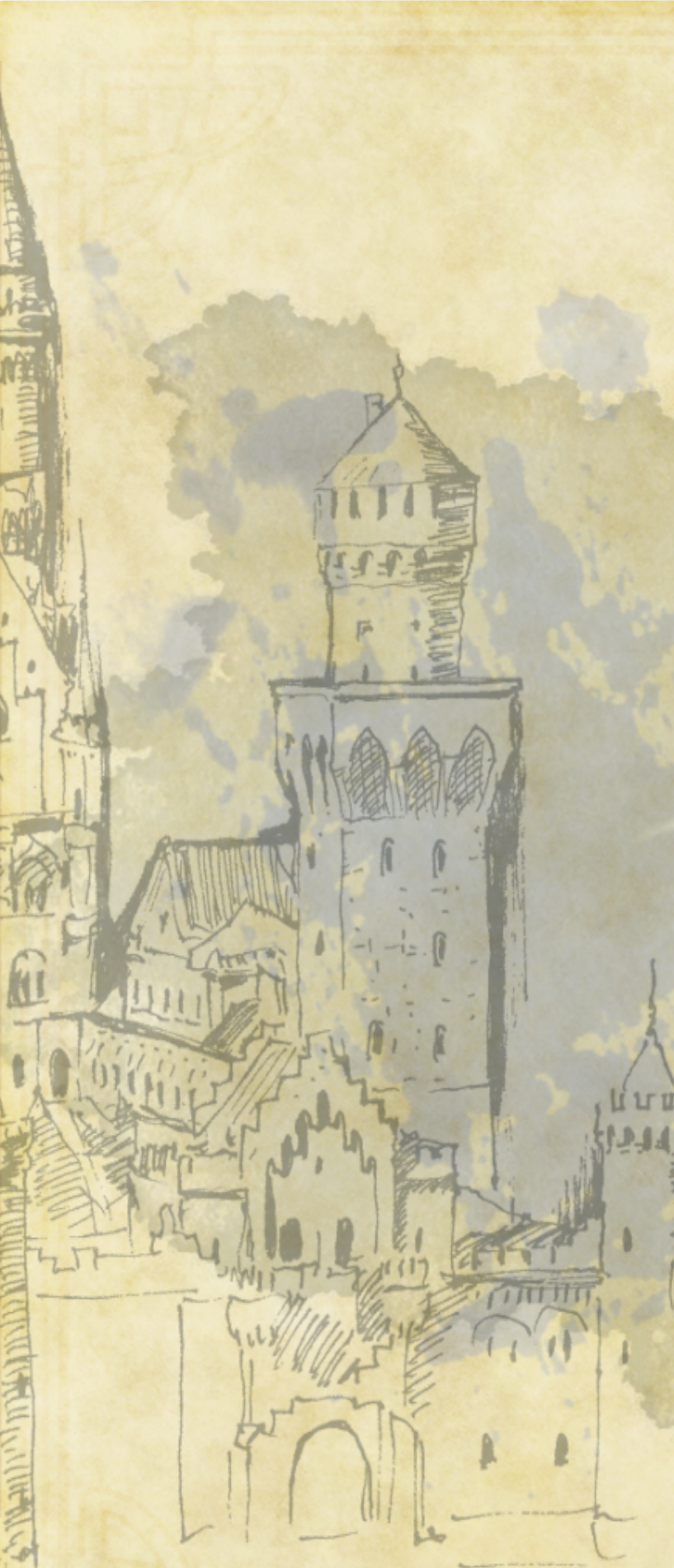


#### Can other simulacra be freed?

As written, Damien is the only simulacrum within the demiplane that has achieved full consciousness and an awareness of his reality. Because of the nature of the magic of the demiplane, this means that he is the only simulacrum that has the potential to exist outside of the castle. If the party attempts to rip out the pages of the other simulacra in an attempt to free them from the demiplane, their forms will temporarily appear outside of the demiplane when it closes before quickly disintegrating into thousands of tiny ice shards that eventually melt and evaporate.







**Omar.** If given any chance to speak before the key decision is made, Omar advises against freeing Damien, cautioning that the unforeseen consequences of such an act could be disastrous, as the magic of the book is so clearly unstable. Omar can tell the party how he came into possession of the book, explaining its damage in a house fire and his purchase of the book at an auction in Baldur's Gate. He would prefer that the party not destroy the book as he would like to keep it despite the misadventure, though he will allow the party to purchase it from him for a price of 150 gp if they explain that it has been requested by the Avowed of Candlekeep.

## Aftermath

If the party has decided to help free Damien and was successful in their attempt, he exits the demiplane with the party, thanks them genuinely, breathes in the fresh air, and asks for directions towards the nearest settlement. What happens next with Damien is left to DM discretion. If the party decided to help free Damien but was unsuccessful in their attempt, he simply disappears along with the rest of the demiplane when it closes. The Avowed of Candlekeep are initially frustrated with the party if they destroy the book, but can be convinced that it was the right decision with a successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Either way, the loss of the book does not permanently damage the party's reputation with Candlekeep.

If the party instead chooses to simply recover the book and return it to Candlekeep, the Avowed happily compensate the party with the agreed upon reward, plus the additional 150 gp price they paid to Omar, if necessary. If the party advises the Avowed about Damien's situation inside the demiplane, the Avowed promise to study the book and learn everything they can from it within the safe environment of the library fortress.



# THE KEY OF FAITH

*The Key of Faith* is an adventure for **three to five characters of 5th to 6th level** and is optimized for a party of **four 5th-level characters**. Characters who complete this adventure should earn enough experience to reach a quarter of the way to 6th level. The journal of a Companion of the Silver Strings may lead to a holy relic that is priceless to the Avowed of Candlekeep. The encounters in this adventure will be challenging for 5th-level characters and a bit easier for those at 6th level. Clerics, Paladins, and characters with silvered weapons will be most effective in this adventure.

## Background

*The Key of Faith* is a powerful relic of Oghma, the god of knowledge and invention. No one truly knows the full extent of its powers, for there are few who have held it in their hands. All that is known is that it vanishes from its owner's possession once it has completed its purpose, to be found once more hidden within a new dungeon for an adventurer to find.

The Avowed of Candlekeep are devotees of all gods of knowledge, including Oghma, and the quest for the *Key* is a holy one for them. Any hint or mention of it will stir excitement in the heart of even the most stoic of the monks. This excitement is rivaled only by their hatred of the followers of the tyrannical god of oppression, Bane.

Since time untold, the Oghmanytes and Bannites have been at war with one another. One side seeks to shine the light of knowledge for all to see, and the other attempts to suppress that knowledge and keep its subjects in the dark forever.

The Avowed of Candlekeep have recently come to possess the journal of a bard named Galvenor. A member of the Companions of the Silver String—fellow devotees of Oghma—the bard and his adventuring party sought to cleanse a cursed Bannite crypt of its undead residents. While the ultimate fate of the bard is unknown, the journal ends with a single phrase hastily scrawled in blood: “The Key of Faith lies within!”

## About the Companions

A group of bards dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge, the Companions of the Silver String willingly risk their lives in service to Oghma. Traveling across the Realms and delving into the deepest dungeons, these heroes seek out lost lore and fight valiantly against the church's enemies.

The Companions have chapter houses throughout Faerûn and frequently work with the monks of Candlekeep in seeking out lost tomes to bring back to the library. They are always on the lookout for any information that may lead to the location of the *Key of Faith* and they are known for proudly displaying Oghma's symbol: a silver scroll on a chain.

## Getting the Quest

This adventure kicks off in the city of Baldur's Gate, just to the north of Candlekeep. The adventurers receive a missive from Master Reader Avidicus sealed with the keep's sigil of a castle emblazoned over a flame, asking them to meet in the Elfsong Tavern one stormy evening.

Read the following aloud once the party is ready:

Rain is dancing on the rooftop as the occasional crack of lightning brightens the tavern's common room. The subsequent booms of thunder do not seem to bother most of the Elfsong Tavern's patrons, but your hooded table companion flinches slightly every time the room shakes. His ink-stained fingers flip through the beaten leather journal splayed out on the table before him, eagerly searching for a particular passage. “Ah yes, here it is! This is why I need your assistance, adventurers!” he exclaims, pointing to a line written in dried blood.

Master Reader Avidicus (NG male human **mage**) may already be known to the adventurers if they managed to rescue Amabel in the adventure “The





Book of Fairy Tales.” If they have not yet met, he will formally introduce himself to the party and explain that he has heard of their adventuring exploits and wishes to hire them for a quest.

The journal Avidicus holds is that of Galvenor, a presumed deceased bard of the Companions of the Silver String. The bard mysteriously vanished along with his adventuring colleagues months ago, and his journal eventually made its way to Candlekeep. The pilgrim who brought it to the Avowed claimed he found it on the roadside and recognized Oghma’s silver scroll etched into its cover.

The monk offers the adventurers a substantial reward of 1,000 gp if they agree to accompany him to the Bannite crypt to determine if the *Key of Faith* genuinely lies within. Avidicus warns them that while he is an accomplished mage, he is a librarian and will not participate in combat.

## ROLEPLAYING AVIDICUS

A gentle man and a wise scholar, Avidicus is more at home in the library than on the road. He spends every free moment engrossed in writing everything he hears, sees, and smells in his journal. While his spells are more useful for a Candlekeep librarian than delving into a dungeon, he is a font of knowledge that the adventurers can tap into at any time. Throughout this adventure, Avidicus will stay as far from combat as he can, though he may need some protection.

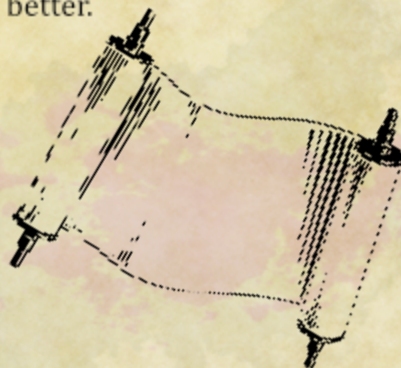
# The Bannite Crypt

The Church of Bane is one of the strongest and most organized churches of the evil deities. The tyrannical god espouses absolute strength and dominance over his followers in all aspects; they belong to him even in death.

This particular Bannite crypt is all that remains of a monastery hidden in the foothills of the Cloud Peak Mountains, some eighty miles south of Candlekeep and on the border to Amn. The main building is an overgrown husk from an Oghmanyte purge many decades ago. However, the attackers missed the crypt’s hidden entrance, and the power trapped within has grown more powerful with each passing day.

Galvenor and his three companions caught wind of the crypt and returned to finish the job—and failed miserably. Killed off one by one, the adventurers succumbed to the dark powers, becoming the new guardians of the crypt. Their souls trapped within their rotting corpses, they are now puppets for Bane to play with for his amusement.

Bane put things in motion so that someone would find Galvenor’s journal, using it as bait to draw in more Oghmanytes for his new puppets to slay. He knew that even a hint of the *Key of Faith* would draw them into his trap, and having them killed at the hands of their former comrades makes it all the better.



## Reaching the Crypt

The journey from Baldur’s Gate to the crypt’s location as laid out in Galvenor’s journal will take the party roughly three days of travel along the southern trade road. The characters can take this time to learn more about Oghma, the ongoing struggles with Bane, and the quest for the *Key of Faith* (see Background). Avidicus can also impart the following information that he gleaned from Galvenor’s journal:

- Three adventurers named Erlik, Kelvin, and Helana all traveled with Galvenor.
- The four were like family after traveling the Sword Coast together for over six years.
- They learned about the crypt after reports of a banshee haunting the ruined church circulated among the locals.
- Galvenor wrote the last entry the morning they headed out to the crypt, and someone scrawled the last line in blood across a single page.





The party reaches the Bannite Monastery ruins just as the sun sets into the Sea of Swords. The shadows of the Cloud Peak Mountains begin to lengthen, and they must decide whether to camp for the night or enter the crypt. The entrance is an excavated hole where the altar of the monastery used to be. The flagstones lay scattered around it, and a flight of stone steps leads down into darkness. A character who succeeds a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check will notice the stones have been pushed aside from below.

**Encounter: No Rest for the Living.** If the adventurers decide to make camp, Lady Whitefinger—the **banshee** from area 5 (see Keyed Locations)—terrorizes them in the middle of the night by singing a haunting song as she rises from the ground in the campsite. She will use her Horrifying Visage ability before returning to the tomb to await them below.

## General Features

The Bannite Crypt has these general features unless otherwise noted in the descriptions of the keyed locations:

**Ceilings, Floors, and Walls.** The crypt is constructed of cracked stone blocks and mortar caked in dirt and cobwebs. The ceilings are 10 feet high throughout. Some tomb areas have collapsed over time, and the rubble creates spots of difficult terrain, as noted on the accompanying map and in the keyed location description.

**Doors.** All doors in the crypt are stone slabs set on iron pins, and each has the symbol of Bane in the center of them—an upright black right hand clenched in a fist. Anyone proficient with thieves' tools who succeeds on a DC 20 Dexterity check can unlock a locked door. Each door has an AC of 17, 18 hit points, and immunity to psychic and poison damage.

**Lights.** There are no light sources within the crypt, and the descriptions in the keyed locations assume the adventurers are carrying light sources or have enhanced vision.

**Sense of Despair.** The crypt has an altar that is cursed with an ever-present sense of despair falling onto anyone who enters it. After each hour spent in the tomb, a creature must make a Wisdom saving

throw with a DC of 12 + the number of hours spent in the tomb, with a failure resulting in gaining 1 level of exhaustion as an overpowering sense of dread and doom begins to descend on them. This curse has no effect on undead or constructs.

**A Haunting Melody.** As the party progresses further into the crypt, they will begin to hear a haunting melody that seems to come from everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Galvenor plays this music on his lute while trapped within the hidden chamber with the Dark Altar. When the adventurers engage in combat, the tone changes from mournful to energetic, providing a soundtrack to the battle.

## Keyed Locations

The following descriptions correspond to the keyed locations on the provided maps of the Crypt:

### I. Entrance

The cracked stone staircase leads down into a cold chamber filled with a damp, rotting stench that's wafting from an open well in the center of the room. An ornately carved stone door with the fist of Bane etched upon it stares angrily from other side of the well. A low groaning sound echoes through the chamber, but it's impossible to tell where it's coming from.

Jagged metal and broken bones sit in the sludge 10 feet down at the bottom of the 10-foot-wide well, and a fresh, eyeless, rotting corpse stares upwards.

The ornately carved stone door is out of place in the otherwise simple chamber. Deeply engraved scrollwork decorates the frame, and the black fist of Bane stands proudly displayed on the keystone.

**Trap: The Voice of Doom.** A *glyph of warding* (spell save DC 16, set to Spell Glyph to cast *thunderwave* at 1st level) is on the door. Anyone falling into the well from the pushback will take 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall and 3 (1d6) piercing damage from the objects in the well. They must also succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for one hour.

**Treasure: Down the Well.** The corpse in the





well is that of a solo adventurer who recently stumbled their way into the crypt. Their waterproofed backpack is still attached to them, and it holds an explorer's pack of gear, including a pouch with 23 gp and a silver medallion with the symbol of a flaming fist.

## 2. Side Altar

A crumbling onyx altar covered in a fungal growth sits in the center of the room, with a black-bladed battleaxe hovering a foot above it. Tendrils of green smoke pour off the top of the altar, obscuring the floor of the room. Clusters of mushrooms cover the walls and ceiling, filling the air with the scent of earth and rot.

The altar is enchanted to generate the green smoke until someone takes the axe from it. Any spell that would dissipate the smoke (such as *gust of wind*) will awaken the violet fungus momentarily (see Encounter: Violent Fungi) before the altar produces more smoke to sedate them.

**Treasure: Cursed Axe.** The cursed *berserker axe* has twin blades of black steel with silver skull patterns etched into the edges. The handle is wrapped in black leather, capped with an iron spike. Once someone picks it up, the altar stops producing the green smoke, and the violet fungi it was suppressing awaken.

**Encounter: Violent Fungi.** Four **violet fungi** use their False Appearance ability to blend in with the other fungi. The green smoke of the altar keeps them dormant, and they awaken once it dissipates.

## 3. Chapel

The doors creak open with a groan like a tortured soul, providing vocals for a haunting melody that echoes from the depths of the tomb. Circular seating is sunken into the floor surrounding a long-dead firepit. Ragged tapestries hang from the ceiling, the black hand of Bane still visible through the rips and tears.

**Encounter: The Lovers.** In life, Erlik and Kelvin were lovers and accomplished warriors who strode through life with song, laughter, and blades in hand.

In death, they are now **wights** bound in service to Bane. They still work together, taunting their victims, their once joyful laughter now maniacal cackles as the green flames filling their eye sockets blaze brightly. Once the wights die their final death, those flames dim slightly before bursting into a golden light above each corpse. The two lights will dance around each other before finally exploding into a shower of sparks and fading.

**Treasure: Coin Purse.** A coin purse containing 50 gp and a simple gold ring (10 gp) can be found on one of the corpses. An engraving inside the ring reads, "Kelvin, in thy breast my heart doth rest ~ Erlik."

## 4. Antechamber

The remains of shattered stone benches and statues lay crumbling under a thick layer of grime and dirt. A steady stream of filthy water drips down one corner of the room, pooling slightly before being soaked into the thin film of vegetation. The temperature in this room is close to freezing.

**Hazard: Mold.** A 10-foot-square patch of floor is covered in **frost mold**. This mold feeds on heat, and the temperature in a 20-foot radius from it is noticeably colder, often to the point of freezing. Any creature that comes within ten feet of it must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) cold damage on a failure or half as much damage on a successful save. The frost mold will rapidly expand toward any heat source, but any type of cold damage instantly destroys it.

**Treasure: Onyx Statue.** Beneath the frost mold is a perfectly intact onyx statue of Bane's gauntleted fist worth 500 gp to a collector. Avidicus will express extreme disdain to anyone who wants to keep the figure, insisting on destroying the vile thing. Anyone keeping the statue of Bane in their possession during a long rest will be cursed. They suffer horrible nightmares, awaken with no benefits from the rest, and gain a level of exhaustion that can only be removed with a *greater restoration* spell or similar magic. They will not benefit from a long rest even if not in possession of the statue until a *remove curse* spell is cast on them—any attempt





at a long rest before removing the curse results in gaining a level of exhaustion.

## 5. Preparation Chamber

Bane's gauntleted fist rises from a water basin set in this chamber's western wall with filthy brown water gushing from between the clenched fingers. The crash of water mixes with a lilting female soprano voice's soft vocalization of a haunting melody that matches the music heard throughout the crypt.

**Encounter: Lady Whitefinger.** Previously used to prepare bodies to be laid to rest, this room is now the lair of Lady Whitefinger, a **banshee** who haunts these crypts. A cruel elven woman in life, the banshee delights in torturing her victims. Decades ago, she pitted two young lovers against each other and wound up as the victim in a double murder-suicide committed by one of them. The two suitors are also here, now **ghasts** submerged in the water basin with the Lady's skeletal remains. She delightfully engages in conversation with anyone who initiates it. Her answers to all questions are cryptic and obtuse; she never gives a straight answer to anything. She eventually grows bored of the conversation and uses her Wail ability, and the ghasts will leap to her defense from beneath the waters. She both entices and taunts the party as she attacks them, sweetly asking them to join her in death one moment and screeching in a rage that they will "never find the Key!" the next.

**Treasure: The Lady's Dowry.** Lady Whitefinger's skeleton lies at the bottom of the water basin with an extravagant gold and ruby necklace worth 250 gp around its neck.

## 6. Embalmer's Chamber

**Trap: Flooding Pit.** There is a 10-foot deep locking pit trap (see DMG p. 122) in the hallway separating areas 5 and 6, as noted on the provided map. Anyone stepping onto the trap must succeed a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or fall into the pit, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall with the door snapping shut and locking. The pit fills with a foot of water draining from the basin in

area 5 every 10 seconds. Adventurers can break open the stone trapdoor, which uses the door statistics as outlined in General Features.

When the adventurers enter the room for the first time, read the following aloud.

A rusted metal table sits in the center of the room with a cloth partially draped over it, and old blood stains cover both. The air is rank with the smell of rot and mold; dust hangs thick in the air from the roots that have pushed their way through cracks in the ceiling.

**Treasure: Stolen Stash & Key.** A small iron key that unlocks the door from area 4 to 8 sits on the metal table. An active search and a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a false panel in the north wall. Inside is a small iron lockbox that can be unlocked by someone proficient in thieves' tools who succeeds on a DC 12 Dexterity check or broken open with a DC 18 Strength check. Inside is a collection of junk jewelry, six loose gold teeth (1 gp each), a pearl necklace (100 gp), 78 gp, 134 sp, and 322 cp.

## 7. Side Tomb

Tomb markers hang in rows along the walls of this chamber, each one listing a high-ranking priest of the Church of Bane. An imposing statue of a hooded figure wielding a scythe held at the ready stands ominously against one wall as if guarding the tombs.

**Trap: Death's Hand.** A pressure plate sits in front of the statue and is found with a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Putting more than 10 pounds of pressure on the plate will trigger the trap, causing the scythe in the statue's hands to make a melee attack against the character with a +6 attack bonus and causing 4 (1d8) slashing damage on a hit. The trap resets itself once the weight is removed from the pressure plate and can be disabled by jamming an iron spike under the plate.





## 8. Main Tomb

The large double doors to this room from area 4 are locked (see General Features), and the key is in area 6.

Wide steps lead down into a massive chamber filled with stone columns and rows of sarcophagi. A balcony overlooks the crypt with ragged black tapestries hanging from it like broken teeth. The music strumming through the tomb is loudest here, amplified by the high ceiling.

Nooks and crannies line the chamber walls filled with mostly intact stone coffins, and empty iron candelabras gather dust and spider webs in the spaces between large ornate columns. The ceiling is 30 feet high, and the balcony sits 20 feet up on the southern wall.

**Encounter: The Ranger.** In life, Helana cut a dashing figure, as quick with her sharp wit as she was with her blades. From an early age, she learned to handle a bow better than any other in her small village in Trollbark Forest. She no longer can feel the wind in her hair or smell the earth after a rainstorm; she is now a cold, emotionless **wight** forced to serve Bane's will. Helana sits on the balcony ledge, waiting for the party to enter the room before addressing them. She asks them, "What business do you have here among the dead? Are you looking to join them?" She will respond cryptically to all questions without giving any straight answers. Any mention of the *Key of Faith* will cause her spine to go rigid, and she cryptically responds, "The Bard is the Key." before drawing her *Oathbow* and attacking. If defeated, a soft wind rushes through the crypt carrying the smell of wet leaves and earth as her soul is set free from its corpse prison.

Once combat starts, two **specters** phase out of stone coffins on either side of the room, and two **ghasts** will clamber out of their hiding places in the stairwells leading up to the balcony.

**Treasure: A Beloved Bow.** After defeating Helana, her *Oathbow* can be taken from her corpse. Her old adventuring backpack sits on the balcony, filled with all of the gear of a dungeoneer's pack. A

small sketchbook is tucked into one pocket of the pack, filled with pencil drawings of animals and nature scenes and worth 20 gp to an art collector.

**Secret Door.** An active search and a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check, or listening to the music and making a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check uncovers a false sarcophagus lid that opens to reveal the hallway leading to area 9. The lid has the statistics of a door as outlined in General Features. The music instantly stops once the path is revealed and does not start back up again.

## 9 - The Dark Altar

The hallway leading to this area is dimly lit by the *dancing lights* spell Galvenor cast in the room. Once the adventurers enter the chamber, read the following aloud:

Brightly colored flames dance in midair, casting dancing shadows across the chamber. The air is noticeably colder, and a melancholic sense of dread emanates from a large onyx altar that dominates the far wall. Broad carpeted steps lead up to the altar as if it were a monument, and standing there as if it were a stage is a dashing figure in leather armor, a short cape, and a wide-brimmed feather hat obscuring its face.

A melodious voice calls out, "Welcome, friends!" as the hat tilts up to reveal a skeleton's grin beneath it. Its eyes flare with green flames as it spreads its hands in welcome, "I've been expecting you..."

The onyx altar is the source of the sense of despair that permeates the crypt. Galvenor has been staying near it as inspiration for his music, even though it does not affect him. Casting a *remove curse* spell on the altar will remove the effect and cause the altar to crack in half before crumbling to dust.

**Encounter: The Bard.** The figure is Galvenor (**Risen Minstrel** - See Appendix A: New Monsters), and true to bardic form, he is a flashy and verbose scoundrel that not even death could change. Unlike the other tenants of the crypt, Galvenor is honest (if





long-winded) in answering questions posed to him. He will tell the woeful tale of his and his friends' demise at the hands of the very undead they now find themselves among. The minstrel takes his time with his stories, repeatedly saying how much he has missed a live audience (among other undead puns) and overall relishing the attention. Eventually, he regretfully informs them that the *Key of Faith* is not here; it was just a ruse to get them to come to the crypt where he now has to kill them all in the name of his new master, Bane. He elaborately bows and flourishes his hat before snapping his fingers to kill the *dancing lights* spell. Four **shadows** then begin to spiral out around him from the altar.

## GALVENOR TACTICS

Galvenor uses his spells to control and limit the adventurers' movements and abilities. He targets those adventures that he feels present the most risk to him first. The minstrel is a gentleman the entire time, complimenting the party when they succeed at something and apologetic when they fail or he harms them in some way. He sings a song of dashing bravado throughout the battle and admits he takes no pleasure in their deaths, but he does what he must do. If he is defeated, a single pure note strums through the air that vibrates through each adventurer; Milil, the god of music, comes to guide Galvenor's soul in a blinding flash of light and sound.

**Treasure: The Bard's Lute.** Leaning against the altar is Galvenor's lute, an *Instrument of the Bards: Doss Lute*. The body is built from rich mahogany with a fingerboard made of ebony, and Galvenor's name is tastefully etched in small, flowing gold script on the back.

## Aftermath

If the adventurers manage to defeat Galvenor and clear the Bannite crypt of its undead residents and Avidicus survives, he will honor his pledge and pay them. Even though the *Key of Faith* was not here, he is happy they were able to free the souls of Galvenor and his friends. If Avidicus did not survive the ordeal, returning his body to Candlekeep results in the Avowed losing faith in the adventurers' ability,

and they will not seek their assistance in the future. The Companions of the Silver String will invite the adventurers to a feast they hold in honor of fallen comrades with food, wine, and, of course, lots of music. If the adventurers fell to the undead and failed their quest, Bane traps their souls in their corpses to join Galvenor and his companions in undeath forever. The journal is once again dropped on the trade road in hopes that it will draw more Oghmanytes to the crypt and their ultimate doom.





# REWRITTEN HISTORY

*Rewritten History* as an adventure for **three to six characters of 7th to 9th level**, optimized for a party of **four 8th level characters**. An isolated frost giant historian has borrowed a magical quill from Candlekeep, but fell silent when the time came to return it. Unbeknownst to the Avowed, he has been ambushed by his past associates who are in league with Stygian devils, and is being forced to rewrite the history of the Cloud Peaks, his home. Can the adventurers climb to the top of the Cloud Peaks and ultimately rescue a scholar imprisoned by fiends and frost giants in his own homestead, or will they be left out in the cold?

## Background

The frost giant sage Njellvald Gjeldolir always knew that the decision to abandon his clan would be one that he would have to reckon with for the rest of his life. The bonds of the Grimfrost clan were supposed to be permanent, as is custom for the frost giants. To decide to leave was unfathomable. But Njellvald could not stand for the infernal influence that had inserted itself into the clan's leadership. Ozzil, a bone devil emissary of Mammon, infernal lord of Minauros, had promised the Grimfrost clan power and influence beyond the scope of the Cloud Peaks in exchange for the eternal souls of their bloodline. The clan's leadership eagerly accepted, and it was then that Njellvald knew that it was time to leave his people. Though his honorable history among the clan saved him from the punishment of execution for desertion, he was formally excommunicated and told that his name and memory would be forever tarnished in the history to be written about the Grimfrost. But for Njellvald, his reputation and honor among his own people in his own homeland was a worthy sacrifice for his reputation and honor in the eyes of Annam the All-Father and the divine.

In the decades since his exile, Njellvald built a new reputation among non-giant peoples as a reputable sage, scholar, and historian of the Cloud Peaks; a frost giant unlike the others of the mountains, who so often resorted to violence and

brutality in their dealings with the smaller races. It was not uncommon for sages of nearby Candlekeep to meet with Njellvald, exchanging knowledge and secrets in a bond between giant and non-giant that so seldom existed in any other place or time in history. Nearing the end of his life, Njellvald sought to definitively document the history of the Cloud Peaks and the Grimfrost clan, so that record would exist of his own life and of his clan's transgressions. To do this, he was graciously lent an Engraving Quill on behalf of Candlekeep—a magical quill that could write just as easily on stone or any other material as it could on parchment. With this quill, Njellvald would have the time he needed to scribe into stone the saga he wanted to tell, promising to return it after a period of one year.

A year has come and gone, and Njellvald has not responded to communications from Candlekeep. The Avowed have grown worried that the frost giant outsider has ultimately betrayed them. But this is not so. The Grimfrost heard of Njellvald's plans through Mammon's spies. Not content simply to murder Njellvald or destroy his work, the clan and their infernal allies have raided Njellvald's homestead and are forcing him to use the quill to write the story they want told in a final punishment for Njellvald's abandonment of his blood. Now, the Avowed seek to send an adventuring party to the top of the Cloud Peaks in search of Njellvald and his homestead. But any who venture upwards will find much more than they bargained for.

## Getting the Quest

While in Candlekeep, the party is approached by Araghomri Wraithbranch (LG male dwarf **evoker** [VGtM, p. 214]), one of the eight Grand Readers of Candlekeep. Araghomri is a lively, middle-aged dwarf with fat rosy cheeks and thick orange hair which he braids into his beard. He wears a monocle over his left eye that is rimmed with gold and encrusted with rubies. Araghomri laughs easily and clears his throat often while he speaks. He explains:





"Oy, ragamuffins! Got a job fer ya. Fancy a hike? Our frost giant friend Njellvald owes us a quill. He was supposed to return it by now and he's ignoring us. I hope that old bastard's not fallen back to the ways of his people. Time to send a physical presence. He lives pretty high up in them there Cloud Peaks, so you'll 'afta bring yer coats."

Araghomri can briefly explain the history between Njellvald the frost giant and the sages of Candlekeep. He also clarifies that the quill in question, lent to the giant for a period of one year, is no ordinary quill, but a magical one that allows a scholar to write on any material as easily as if it were parchment. He says he knew that Njellvald wanted to "get some things written down" because he was "gettin' up there in age". "I suppose it's possible he's up an' died on us," he ponders. Araghomri tells the party that they can find Njellvald's homestead by taking the Trade Way south to Fang's Pass within the Cloud Peaks. When they run into "Ol' Marge", the skeletal remains of an abominable yeti, they must travel 6 miles straight west into the mountains to find the homestead. Araghomri offers the party 300 gp for the journey, with the promise of more if they find themselves dealing with anything "unfortunate".

## The Grimfrost Clan

The Grimfrost Clan are a group of frost giants that inhabit the Cloud Peaks. Their stronghold, known as the Black Glacier, rests upon the highest peak on the western side of the mountain range. Decades ago, Zurog, leader of the Grimfrost Clan, struck a deal with a bone devil emissary of Mammon named Rithik. In exchange for their eternal souls, members of the Grimfrost Clan were granted the use of fire magic as a means through which they could expand and exert their influence over the Cloud Peaks and beyond.

A Grimfrost giant uses frost giant statistics, with the following modifications:

- Its Charisma is 14.
- **New Trait: Innate Spellcasting.** The Grimfrost giant's spellcasting ability is Charisma. It can

innately cast the following spells (spell save DC 14, +5 to hit with spell attacks), requiring no components:

- Cantrips: *firebolt*, *create bonfire*
- 2/day each: *burning hands*, *flaming sphere*, *scorching ray*

## Into the Mountains

Once the characters have spoken with Araghomri and agreed to follow up on the quill, they must make their way to Njellvald's homestead in the Cloud Peaks. Taking the Trade Way south to Fang's Pass within the Cloud Peaks and then reaching the remains of Ol' Marge is fairly straightforward, but travelling to the homestead in the mountains from the skeletal remains will require some wayfinding. The path from Ol'Marge into the mountains is partially buried within the snow, and the party will have to make sure they don't end up drifting in the wrong direction. The party must make a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) check to find the homestead. For each failed attempt at this check, the party may stumble onto one of the wilderness encounters described below:

**Encounter: Owlbear Prey.** An **owlbear** runs directly across the path of the party, at first appearing as if it might be attacking them head on. In fact, it is fleeing from a **remorhaz** tunneling beneath the ice behind it. After a few moments, the remorhaz emerges from the ground in a spray of snow and grabs hold of the owlbear with its jaws. The remorhaz will attack the party if they remain within 30 feet of the owlbear for more than 1 round.

**Encounter: Wandering Ettin.** The party spots an **ettin** in the distance, wandering about in the snow. The ettin is checking rabbit traps that it laid earlier for any potential kills. The ettin fights only in self defense. If questioned by the party, it can explain that it saw a pair of frost giants head in the direction of Njellvald's homestead a few days ago. It did not engage the frost giants and does not know what their goals were. The ettin explains that it stays away from the frost giants generally, but that it is aware of "the magic giant in the mountain" (Njellvald).





**Encounter: Burned Corpses.** The party stumbles upon the corpses of two tribesmen in the snow who look to have died fairly recently, though little blood is evident. Their weapons lie on the ground beside them. A DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check of the bodies confirms extensive burn wounds to the faces and upper torsos. On one of the corpses is a leather pouch containing 7 gp as well as a small owl carved from soapstone. A DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the area reveals giant-size footprints in the surrounding snow, though recent precipitation has mostly buried them and they are impossible to track. The tribesmen were unfortunate victims of the Grimfrost Clan, as they unwittingly crossed the frost giants' path while the giants were on their way to Njellvald's homestead and were subsequently scorched to death by the giants' fire magic.

## Approaching the Homestead

Eventually, the characters will approach Njellvald's homestead. When they do, read aloud:

As you follow the trail through the mountains around a sharp bend, evidence of Njellvald's homestead comes into view. Some few hundred feet ahead of you, a winding stone pathway begins to climb sharply upwards towards a pair of huge stone doors built into a rising cliff face. Sitting between two stone pillars that mark the beginning of the path is a frost giant polishing a menacing axe with a scrap of fabric. Two much smaller, spiny, winged creatures are perched on each of the giant's shoulders.

**Encounter: Grimfrost Guard.** The **Grimfrost giant** is a member of the Grimfrost clan who has been assigned to guard the path to Njellvald's homestead while the others deal with Njellvald. He is accompanied by two **spined devils** perched on each of his shoulders. The spined devils are loyal to Ozzil and often mingle with the giants of the Grimfrost clan. Neither the frost giant nor the spined devils initially notice the party. If the characters attempt to converse with the frost giant, he does not immediately attack and is open to conversation due to his boredom. He can explain

the following information to the characters:

- He is a member of the Grimfrost clan, led by Zurog the Hellwhisperer, and that the "small ones" would be wise to fear him.
- The clan is paying a visit to their old friend Njellvald to "settle a score".
- Zurog has brought glory to the Grimfrost clan by harnessing the power of the Hells. Njellvald would be wise to understand this.

The spined devils eye the characters hungrily and whisper into the giant's ear about how the party is not to be underestimated and that their bones would make for good ornaments. The frost giant will not allow the characters to pass, and fights to the death if necessary. When the spined devils are reduced to half their hit points or fewer, they attempt to flee towards the homestead to warn the rest of the clan.

## Njellvald's Homestead

Njellvald occupies the former home of the late cloud giant oracle, Ixvir. The homestead was empty for two hundred years before Njellvald found it buried within the snow and cleared it out for himself. Unless otherwise stated, its features are described as follows:

**Ceilings, Floors, and Walls.** The homestead has been carved directly into the stone of a mountain within the Cloud Peaks. Walls and floors have been carved and polished into smooth, flat surfaces. Ceilings in the homestead are 40 feet high.

**Doors.** Doors are constructed of stone. They are each about 7 feet wide and 22 feet high. A Medium or smaller creature must succeed on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check to open any doors within the homestead due to their size and weight. Doors stay open if left that way.

**Lights.** The homestead is well-lit by *continual flame* torches mounted on the walls throughout.

The following areas are keyed to the provided map of Njellvald's homestead.





## 1. Bedroom

The door to this room is ajar. Inside there is a stone bed draped in sheepskins and an adjacent nightstand, atop which rests a giant magnifying glass. Bookshelves have been carved out of the surrounding walls.

**Encounter: Grimfrost Giant.** If he has not previously been alerted to a disturbance within the homestead, a Grimfrost giant is inside this room searching for any texts of particular interest. The giant attacks any intruders.

Njellvald sleeps in this room and does much of his reading here. Many of the books and texts in this room are humanoid-sized, as Njellvald has collected them over his years of communication with the mortal races. He uses the magnifying glass atop the nightstand to read them.

## 2. Livestock

The characters can hear the frantic bleating of goats from beyond the door to this room.

The bodies of numerous freshly-slaughtered goats lie inside a pen in the south end of this room—their blood seeps over much of the floor. Three goats pace frantically back and forth within the pen, bleating in terror. Feeding and water troughs line the west wall. A pair of double doors leads to the north.

**Encounter: Grimfrost Giant.** If he has not previously been alerted to a disturbance within the homestead, a **Grimfrost giant** is within the pen inside this room, slaughtering the remaining goats to spite Njellvald. The giant is accompanied by his **winter wolf** pet, which is tearing into one of the goat carcasses. The giant and the wolf attack any intruders.

**Panicked Goats.** If combat breaks out, the three **goats** will begin using their Charge ability in random directions in distress. The remaining goats can be calmed with a DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check.

## 3. Kitchen

The characters can hear rapid thudding footsteps and the sounds of whizzing spells from beyond the door to this room. When the characters enter, read aloud:

A frost giant lumbers around this kitchen and hurls firebolts towards a giant white owl that flies panicked around the room while a spined devil dances in delight. An iron cauldron has been knocked over beside a fire pit, spilling its contents over the floor. Cured meats hang from twine that extends from wall to wall just below the ceiling. Shelves hold various plants, herbs, spices, and other cooking ingredients and utensils.

**Encounter: Grimfrost Giant.** The **Grimfrost giant** in this room is taunting the owl, Njellvald's familiar, by deliberately missing it with firebolts by the narrowest of margins. When the characters enter the room, the giant and the **spined devil** immediately turn their attention towards the characters and attack. The **giant owl** will join the fray and fight alongside the characters, though the giant and the spined devil focus their attacks on the party.

**Njellvald's Familiar.** The **giant owl** is Njellvald's familiar and has the ability to speak Common and Giant through an *awaken* spell that was cast on it by Njellvald decades ago. If the characters manage to rescue it, it introduces itself as Kane and can offer the following information to the party:

- Njellvald was once a member of the Grimfrost clan, but left the clan permanently after they began fraternizing with devils.
- He ventured into the Cloud Peaks alone and came to find this place; the former home of the late cloud giant oracle, Ixvir.
- He borrowed the Engraving Quill to write his autobiography in the final years of his life.
- Zurog, leader of the Grimfrost clan, learned of this and now seeks to make Njellvald chronicle a different history of the clan, one that reflects well on Zurog's leadership and highlights





Njellvald's own failures.

- Zurog and a bone devil named Rithik are currently overseeing Njellvald in his sanctum.
- The door to the sanctum is behind the waterfall in the Reflecting Room. The command word to part the flow of the waterfall to reveal the door is "open" in Giant.

One of Kane's wings is injured after being hit by a firebolt, which can be mended if Kane receives at least 5 points of healing. Whether the party heals Kane or not, he would prefer to rest for the next while to regain his strength while the party deals with Zurog.

## 4. Reflecting Room

Six marble busts of various giants are organized around the perimeter of this circular room on stone pedestals. A waterfall emerges from the stone in the north wall and leads towards a circular pool in the center of the room before continuing to flow through a hole in the south wall near ground level. One of the busts has been smashed; its fragments surround its supporting pedestal.

The busts around the perimeter of the room depict famous cloud and storm giants from history, and each pedestal is inscribed with a relevant name. The bust that has been smashed reads: "Ebos Eisimr". A character who succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (History) check can recall that Ebos Eisimr was a prominent cloud giant jarl who opposed the frost giants of the Cloud Peaks during his reign of influence.

**Reflecting Pool.** The use of *detect magic* reveals an aura of divination magic that surrounds the pool. The pool is infused with the blessing of Amman, the All-Father, and was originally used by Ixvir to produce visions. Ixvir augmented the pool with his own divinatory abilities, though the pool itself remains revelatory for those who take their time with it. A character who spends a few moments staring into the pool and succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Religion) check is granted a vague, fleeting vision of their future that quickly fades from their memory. Characters who see this vision may choose

to reroll any future roll on a d20 and choose whichever result is higher. Once this effect is applied twice, the benefits of the vision expire. Characters can gain this benefit from the pool once every 24 hours.

**Waterfall.** The waterfall in the north end of the room conceals a secret door that leads to Njellvald's sanctum. While characters are free to walk through the waterfall to reach the secret door, the use of its command word "open" in Giant will part the flow of water for 6 seconds so that it can be passed without getting wet.

## 5. Sanctum

When the characters enter this room, read aloud:

The ceiling of this circular chamber climbs 80 feet high. Hundreds of shelves are carved into its walls, each holding books, scrolls, artifacts, and stone tablets. Towering stone ladders flank the walls. Seated at an ornately carved stone table in the middle of the room is an elderly frost giant, his wrists manacled and his head downcast as he works over a large slab of stone with a humanoid-sized quill. A dozen more stone slabs are stacked on the floor beside him. Standing over him is a grotesque, winged creature of bone and sinew, and a hulking frost giant, his face contorted into a cruel snarl which displays his gold-plated teeth.

**Encounter: Zurog and Rithik.** The figures standing over Njellvald as he works are Zurog, leader of the Grimfrost clan, and Rithik, a **bone devil**. The presence of the party amuses Zurog and Rithik, who do not immediately attack unless the party does. They are willing to engage in conversation, if only to taunt and threaten the characters. If the party explains that they have come for the quill, Zurog and Rithik say the party is free to take it after Njellvald has finished his writing with it, which should take three or four more days. Zurog has manacled Njellvald with a set of *silencing manacles* (see Appendix B: New Magic Items) provided to him by Rithik, which prevent Njellvald from using any magic. They are overseeing Njellvald as he writes an "alternative" history of his





life and the Grimfrost clan on the stone tablets present in the room, after which Zurog plans to slaughter Njellvald and take the tablets back with him to the Black Glacier, home of the Grimfrost clan. Njellvald is silent during any engagement between the party and Zurog, though he may join combat despite the fact that he cannot cast spells and can only make unarmed attacks with disadvantage. Zurog fights to the death, but Rithik will attempt to flee once he has been reduced to a quarter of his hit points or fewer.

Zurog uses frost giant statistics, with the following modifications:

- He has 161 hit points
- His Charisma is 16
- **New Trait: Innate Spellcasting.** Zurog's spellcasting ability is Charisma. He can innately cast the following spells (spell save DC 15, +6 to hit with spell attacks), requiring no components:

- Cantrips: firebolt, create bonfire
- 3/day each: burning hands, flaming sphere, scorching ray
- 1/day each: fireball, wall of fire

**Treasure: Zurog.** On Zurog's person is the key that unlocks the set of *silencing manacles* that bind Njellvald. The gold plating on his teeth can be scraped or pulled loose, and totals 300 gp in value. The rest of his belongings are mundane.

**Njellvald.** After Zurog and Rithik have been dealt with, Njellvald tells them that his manacles can be unlocked using the key on Zurog's person. He expresses deep gratitude for his rescue and explains that infernal spies of Mammon must somehow caught wind of his plans with the quill and relayed them to Zurog, eager to spread discord and grow their own influence. For their troubles, he gifts the party a silver horn of valhalla stored in his

sanctum that was originally bestowed to him by a northern tribe. He suspects that the party will get more use out of it than he will in the years to come, given his age. He explains that under normal circumstances he would have certainly completed his work and returned the quill to Candlekeep on time. He asks the party to advise Candlekeep that he needs another month with the quill to finish his work, if that is acceptable to the Avowed.

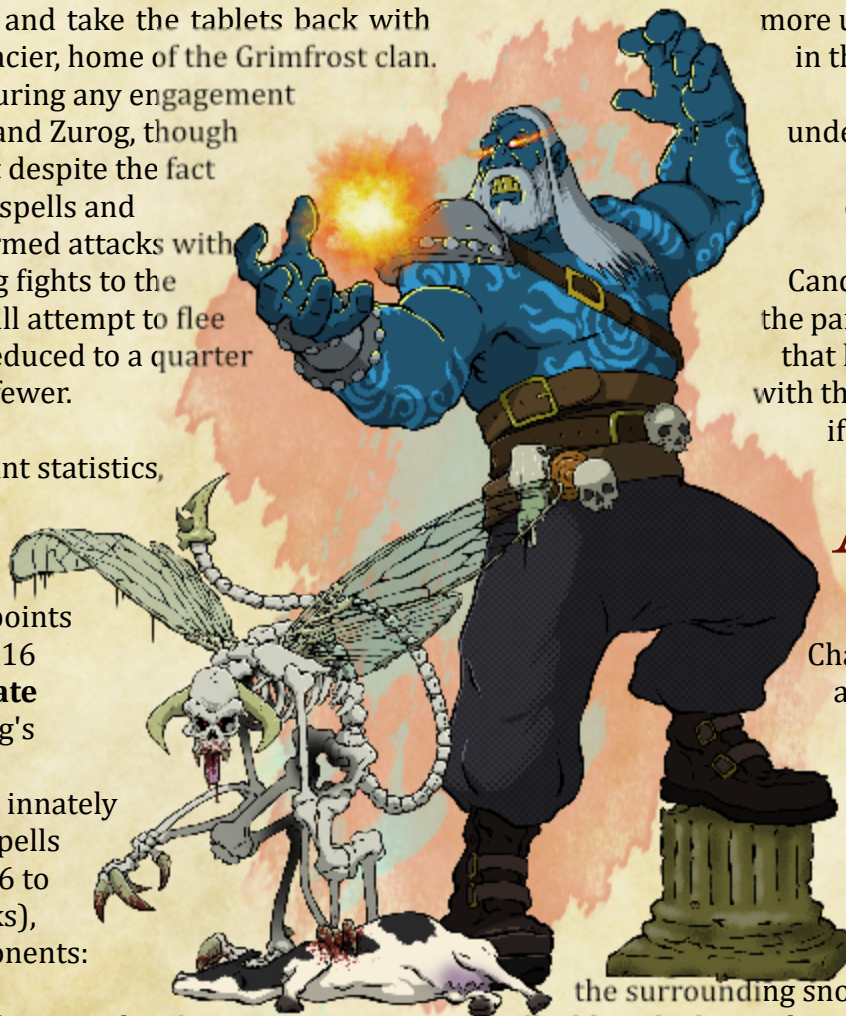
## Aftermath

Shortly after the Characters deal with Zurog and Rithik, Kane will join Njellvald in the sanctum and two will embrace.

Njellvald then must begin the tedious work of removing the bodies from his homestead and burying them in

the surrounding snow. If the characters help Njellvald with this task, it takes them a period of 3d8 hours to remove and bury all of the bodies. If the party sends word back to Candlekeep that Njellvald would like to keep the engraving quill for another month, the Avowed are more than happy to accommodate given the circumstances. When the party reconnects with Araghomri, he compensates them the originally agreed upon 300 gp as well as an additional 300 gp "inconvenience" fee for their handling of the Grimfrost clan.

Zurog's defeat may not spell the end for the Grimfrost clan. At DM discretion and depending on the circumstances of the campaign, the party may wish to travel to the Black Glacier and destroy the rest of the clan. Alternatively, the rest of the clan might hear word of the incident at Njellvald's homestead through infernal spies and begin to hatch a revenge plot against the party.





# SEEKERS OF THE AVOWED

## Agatha LeRarc

*N female human warlock of  
the great old one [VGtM, p. 220]*

### PROMISING WHISPERS

Even as a toddler, it was obvious to those around her that Agatha LeRarc was a soul born to tread a strange path. After her mother died in childbirth, she was left to be raised by the attendants of her father's keep; nannies and tutors chosen by the baron to ensure that his only heir would be ready to assume the many responsibilities that their title demanded. But despite their best efforts, the adults around her had difficulty connecting with Agatha. As she learned to talk, she spent more time babbling to the air in her nursery than to the many attendants charged to care for her, and when they could capture her attention, they found something hidden within her gaze to be deeply unsettling.

Despite any qualities that her nursemaids may have found wanting, Agatha grew into a young woman that her father was proud of. What she lacked in size and strength she more than made up for in intelligence and discernment, and the whispers that she so often spoke of didn't scare her father. In fact, they intrigued him quite a bit. Agatha heard many things echoing from the ether above them, murmurs and snatches of prophecies that were gifted to her ears from somewhere and something unknown. With war once again brewing with a neighboring barony, Agatha's father could not pass the opportunity to gain the upper hand on his opposition. So at the baron's urging, Agatha delved deeper into her connection to the eldritch force delivering these esoteric missives, seeking any information that they could acquire about their family's political enemies and rivals. As Agatha reached outward in search of knowledge, the whispering entities reached back in turn, providing tantalizing glimpses and forging an unbreakable bond with the young woman in the process.

But while she and her father were looking for security in insights from the void, the baron's enemies were working with much more material tools. One day after her session of communing with the unknown, Agatha exited her study to find her



father had been assassinated, his own blade shoved through his heart. With her father taken and his barony set to collapse into war, Agatha did the only thing that her instinct told her to do; listen to the whispers. And for once, their directives were mercifully clear. She was to take her father's sword and flee.



## SEEKING RETRIBUTION

It has been several years since Agatha fled her home and left her family's barony to be absorbed by their rivals. In that time, she has traveled the breadth of the Sword Coast, allowing the hushed voices of her patrons to guide her from quest to quest, gathering knowledge and power along the way and patiently waiting for the day that they tell her she is ready to seek her revenge. At the behest of her distant advisors, Agatha is currently within the vaulted halls of Candlekeep, covertly searching for a means of ingratiating herself to the Avowed within while under the guise of researching an expedition to Chondalwood.

### Agatha LeRarc

*"You believe in secrets? Your voice has carried farther than you will ever know. It's only a matter of time before it's found."*

**Mannerisms.** Agatha speaks slowly and deliberately in a monotone voice. She keeps her head slightly cocked, as though listening to something in the distance.

**Ideal.** She is a firm believer that all things worth having are worth waiting for and approaches life with a patience that is belied by her youth.

**Flaw.** She follows the whims and directives of her patrons without question, believing that they have her best interests in mind despite their unknowable intentions.

## Dravery Durmonde

*NE male tiefling transmuter [VGtM, p. 218]*

### A MIND FREED

Dravery Durmonde never felt out of place. Born to a family steeped in the wealth and respect that old bloodlines so often afford, why would he? Even as an obvious tiefling amongst a family of humans, his position was secure, both in the eyes of his proud parents and in the many cities where the Durmonde tendrils had weaved themselves throughout their prosperous generations. Dravery, as his uncles would often tease, was living proof that a family possessing both blood and means

were immune to the intolerance and ignorance of their lessers. And families as old as the ones he belonged to were sure to have powerful anomalies here and there. So Dravery grew strong and proud, well aware of the gilded pedestal he had been born too and only fleetingly thankful for what his family referred to as "the natural order of things".

While his mother's roots were in Baldur's Gate, his father's family was positioned mostly in Waterdeep. And since his were the wizarding footsteps that Dravery was gifted enough to follow, when it came time to attend a secondary school, he was sent to Eltorchul Academy. Although the academy was no longer the bastion of breeding that his grandfather had experienced, Dravery quickly found his footing and established himself among his peers, discovering a talent for transmutation that he buried himself in.





The young Durmonde learned many things while at Eltorchul and while traveling the noble circles of Waterdeep, but the most important lesson was one that he felt his family, and most of their equals, were inherently blind to. Legacy was certainly not immortality, and if anything were to be learned from the Eltorchul family themselves, it was that. The power held only by blood and title was inevitably going to decay, either through catastrophe or the changing zeitgeist. Some in Dravery's position might have found that realization daunting, but in this new truth, he found freedom. Instead of building an empire to hand to some unknown and distant heir, he would focus his talents and his power where they truly belonged. On himself.

After leaving the academy, Dravery threw himself into furthering his studies of transmutation, which is where he believed the secrets of true immortality lay. Unburdened by any issues of conscience or morality, Dravery pursued his arcane knowledge with cold aggression, gathering "willing" test subjects through bribery, coercion, and blackmail. After draining every resource that he could near Waterdeep without drawing the eyes of the Watchful Order, he took his research on the road.

## SEEKING IMMORTALITY

Dravery has slipped across Faerun like a mist, utilizing his family's vast network of connections to quickly install himself wherever he goes and leaving before anyone begins to investigate the particulars of his research or their aftermath. Thus far, he has been successful in keeping his name pristine and his darker secrets hidden from prying eyes. He is currently wrapping up his latest tendar in Candlekeep and is beginning his quest to locate an ancient tome of transmutation believed to be somewhere in the Valley of Lost Honor in Chult.

### Dravery Durmonde

*"Immortality is a complicated thing, but I can assure you, it's well worth the price others may have to pay for it."*

**Mannerisms.** Dravery enunciates very precisely and has a pleasing lilt to his voice. He speaks with his hands, gesturing fluidly while talking.

**Ideal.** He believes that some people are born better than others and that he was fortunate enough to be born inherently better than most.

**Flaw.** He is easily blinded by the pursuit of his singular goal.

## Kulliss Xans

*N male half-elf precognitive mage [GGR, p. 228]*

## SEIZED OPPORTUNITIES

It's said to be truly successful in Waterdeep one must be blessed with either very good sense or very good breeding. And despite his rather humble origins, Kulliss Xans suspected that he had both. He was raised at his mother's side in her tavern in the Southern Ward. A beautiful woman, her looks and charm had captured the attention of a passing elven lord on his way back to his home of Silvermoon. A few weeks after he continued on with his journey, Kulliss's mother discovered she was pregnant. Although the mysterious lord was the talk of the tavern staff on many a slow night, details on who his father really was continued to evade Kulliss. All that he had were his mother's stories, his half-elven features, and a single cufflink that the man had supposedly left behind.

As Kulliss grew, it was very obvious to those around him that he was lucky enough to inherit his mother's charm and wit as well as her ability to use both to get what he wanted from life. When he struck out on his own as a young man, he climbed through the competitive atmosphere of the Trades Wards as though he were born to the life of shrewd business rather than modest hospitality, making partnerships and lucrative land deals with uncanny timing and acumen. Both of which he could thank his unknown father for. As a child, Kulliss had realized he had the ability to divine small moments





based on the decisions of those around him. And the clairvoyance he had used as a parlor trick then was the driving force behind his business decisions now. He may not have been able to use his father's boons to peer into his own future, but he could certainly still use it to his advantage. And use it he did, striking before his competitors and aligning himself with those who would grow his assets by leaps and bounds. Kullis became widely known across Waterdeep as the man with the golden touch, but that notoriety and success came with a grim price.



disfigured. Not knowing who his assailants had been sent by and ashamed of the damage that he now carried on his body, Kullis retreated into his home and himself.

## SEEKING TRUE POWER

His sabbatical from public life and dealings was not, however, in vain. While his wounds and pride mended, Kullis came to a realization. There was only one form of true power in this world, and although he had been gifted with the spark of magic he had done little to grow that flame within himself. He decided to put everything in his life on hold and develop his raw talent into a force he could use to safeguard himself and bring his enemies to heel. Kullis is now within Candlekeep, searching for a quest that will allow him to grow his arcane capabilities in the same aggressive manner he developed his finances.

### Kulliss Xans

*"Your fate is not a finished tapestry, it's a collection of loose strings. One must be bold enough to reach out and weave their own story from the threads."*

**Mannerisms.** Kullis's voice is slightly raspy but still melodic. As he's thinking he often rolls his father's cufflink between his fingers.

**Ideal.** He believes that whether he was born to the title or not, his blood and talent make him a true lord.

**Flaw.** He's a man trying to outrun shame. The shame of his bastard background and now the shame of victimization at the hands of his assailants.

Although his wealth and renown were growing with each decision he made, so were the bitter rivals and enemies he was leaving in his wake. Enemies who did not take kindly to a bastard from the Southern Ward stepping on their toes. One night, on his way home from the opera, Kullis's carriage was intercepted and he was taken into the sewers of the city. He awoke the next day barely able to drag himself from the city's underbelly and badly





# Sierra Nath

*NG female human **champion** [VGtM, p. 212]*

## STOLEN BOAT, CAPTURED DREAM

Sierra Nath wanted more. Born to a kind and loving family in a fishing village just southwest of Daggerford, deep down in her bones, she knew that she was meant for something bigger. Or at the very least, something much more exciting. So on the cusp of her seventeenth birthday, no one was truly surprised to find that both she and a boat from the harbor were missing, though truth be told her family was slightly disappointed. A few days later, however, when word came down the coast that a teenage girl in a fishing boat had somehow sunk a pirate vessel and won the favor of a wealthy merchant, they all were understandably stunned.

The stories of how Sierra had accomplished such a monumental feat were many, each one more spectacular and unbelievable than the last. Sierra, of course, knew that it had more to do with a freak storm and a healthy dose of luck than any preternatural skill on her part, but she was a clever girl with a fisherman's instinct to trust her gut. And her gut told her that this was what she had been looking for. She used the merchant's goodwill and money to gain a proper vessel, which she christened the Eel's Tooth, and gathered together a crew to start her career in privateering. After the mythic tales that were circulating around her, people lined up to join her, and she chose an experienced group that she could learn from as she went. Sierra and the crew of the Eel's Tooth traveled up and down the Sword Coast for several years, stacking success upon success and chasing the prestige and recognition that they had developed a ravenous appetite for.

After a while, the hunting of pirates stopped being enough to slake Sierra's constant thirst for excitement and glory, and she and her crew began taking on more unique missions escorting traveling heroes through dangerous waters and even pursuing quests of their own. But no matter how treacherous the journey was or how insurmountable their odds may have seemed, Sierra and the Eel's Tooth continued their string of

victories, recovering treasures, rescuing lost vessels, and cementing their well-earned reputation among the seafaring folks of Faerun. But Sierra Nath was never one to stop pushing herself or to stop tempting fate, for that matter.



## SEEKING GREATER GLORY

Sierra's constant quest for bigger and better ways to test herself and her crew has led her to Candlekeep, which is well-known for launching countless groups of heroes on perilous quests for unimaginable glory. Exactly the sort of adventures that Sierra wants for herself and the Eel's Tooth. She's currently stationed at Candlekeep, waiting to be approached by anyone in need of a bold captain and crew who are flush with skill and luck and





### Sierra Nath

*"You go ahead and keep worrying and I'll keep making sure the bloody job gets done. How's that?"*

**Mannerisms.** Sierra curses frequently and with great relish. She smokes constantly and gets easily irritated when she's not able to.

**Ideal.** The only thing that matters to her is what stories will be told about her after she's gone. As far as she's concerned, that's real immortality.

**Flaw.** She's never failed and doesn't truly believe that she can, which leads her to take extraordinary risks.

## Warla Mendar

NG female human **war priest** [VGtM, p. 218]

### BORN AMONG BOOKS

For as long as Warla Mendar could remember, her life was bound to the written word. Long before she walked past the threshold of Candlekeep to secure her place within, she took her first struggling breaths between clustered rows of library shelves. The sisters and brothers of Deneir found the infant left swaddled and alone within their library the following day, but it had been the tomes who had bore silent witness to her entrance into the world, and she often thought to herself that perhaps that was when their bond had cemented itself. Despite her lack of true parents, Warla never anything less than blessed. The clergy of the small church to The First Scribe treated her as a communal ward and student, doting on her and mentoring her in their own unique ways. And the result, which came as a surprise to no one, was that Warla became not only a gifted thinker, but she came into her own as a true servant of Deneir herself.

Although she knew that her goals would lead her to Candlekeep from a young age, she also knew that there was much she wanted to discover and learn from the world before she started that phase of her life. So she left the embrace of her cloister and set out to pay her homage to Deneir as all of his clerics do; by documenting the many wonders that Toril had to offer. Warla's pilgrimage took her to

every corner of Faerun and left her passing in the company of a myriad of souls. Some she would accompany on full quests, laughing and fighting and mourning together as the moments came upon them, while others were no more than dinner conversations in roadside taverns or hushed goodnights in rundown inns. All were a part of her story, her personal gift to Deneir and her first tribute to Candlekeep when she would finally arrive on its steps some three decades after her travels began.



Warla started her time at Candlekeep in the same manner as the other potential acolytes, remaining humble even as her vast knowledge and celestial abilities became evident to those around her. When others joked that it seemed like she had been born for life in the library, she would only smile and agree. And when her less experienced peers asked her questions about her travels, she would regale them with what she had learned



during her time adventuring. It was not long, at least by how these things are measured, that Warla was given the title of master reader, a title that she felt fit her perfectly.

## SEEKING THE SEEKERS

Warla has enjoyed her position as master reader for many years now, mentoring scribes and training acolytes in much the same way she was when she was a child. Although her name often comes up when discussions of future ascensions arise, she does her best to wave them away. She enjoys the freedom her current position allows and prefers to spend her time developing her knowledge and spreading the word of The Scribe of Oghma to receptive ears when occasion allows. From her position in Candlekeep, Warla is looking for a group to travel beyond Faerun's borders to Kara-Tur, where she believes a sacred text of Deneir may be found.

### Warla Mendar

*"When I finally pass on from this plane to whatever adventure lies beyond it, my only regret will be the books have I left unread."*

**Mannerisms.** Although her voice and visage would lead some to believe otherwise, Warla is a warm and welcoming individual who smiles easily when talking with travelers.

**Ideal.** She believes that the thread of knowledge is what binds all life together, from the farthest reach of history to the palest glimmer of the future.

**Flaw.** She can not tolerate those that prey on ignorance and seek to stifle knowledge to their own benefit.

## Vowkeeper

*CG male goliath gladiator [MM, p. 346]*

## CHANGING NAMES

Life before the dice fell held little meaning for Vowkeeper. His heart told him that he wasn't born in the arenas of Calimshan, but like the other lost souls in his position, it was all that he could

remember. The days of his youth were spent training and traveling. Years of sweat and toil that culminated in a victory under his master's banner in a small arena just off the Trade Way. He was called Bloodspiller then. A hollow name for a hollow man, chosen by his master to emulate the titles of his people and evoke roars from a bloodthirsty crowd. Each time he stepped before them, Bloodspiller performed with a grim talent born of endless training and natural acuity. His victories stacked, as did his master's small notoriety among the other flesh peddlers and life stealers with whom he associated. And so Bloodspiller was rewarded with a new title; bodyguard.

From his position at his master's side, Bloodspiller ensured that he was safeguarded from the fate he most certainly deserved and found that life surrounded by his master's peers and betters was somehow more unsavory than the view he had been subjected to in the stables. Wealthy men and women, destitute of soul or morality wallowing in extravagance together. It was at one of these gatherings of vice that his master sat down to gamble and began to lose. Unaccustomed to the feeling and incensed by the foreigner currently trouncing him, Bloodspiller's master placed his most valuable asset in the pot. And so when the dice finally lay still, the gladiator found his life was now in the hands of a new man. To Bloodspiller's surprise, Geraldo Vaithan, as the foreigner was called, had no interest in owning anyone and freed him the moment he felt they were safe from his master's reach. The softspoken man even helped him choose a new name. Lifeholder, a free name for a free man, chosen by a friend.

Lifeholder traveled with Geraldo wherever the man led them, which was both far and wide given his role in the Harpers. At his side, Lifeholder found not only a reason to fight, but a reason to truly live, and their quests to thwart evil together served as a balm to his soul. It was on one such quest, while investigating increased activity of the Cult of Sebakar that the pair were attacked, and despite Lifeholder's best efforts, he lost the one life that was most important to him.







## SEEKING REDEMPTION

As Geraldo died, he made Lifeholder promise that he would continue their investigation, despite the goliath's objections that he lacked the brilliance of his companion. Geraldo left the world telling Lifeholder that he was able to do anything, and in turn, Lifeholder said goodbye swearing to continue his mission. He changed his own name this time, to Vowkeeper. A good name, for a good man. Vowkeeper has since made his way to Candlekeep, where he is searching for information on the cults of Chessenta, so that he may finish Geraldo's final mission.

### Vowkeeper

*"My friend had a saying. We all have our sorrows. The best way to fight them is to end them for others."*

**Mannerisms.** Vowkeeper speaks bluntly and in a deep, gravelly voice. He nods his head up and down while listening to others, even if he doesn't fully understand what they're saying.

**Ideal.** He believes that his bloody past has left him with many debts to the world and has decided to spend his life attempting to make amends for what he's done.

**Flaw.** Due to his past, he does not believe that he is a truly good individual, and is only able to see his own positive qualities when reflected by someone else.





# APPENDIX A: NEW MONSTERS

## BISCOTTI BOY

*Tiny construct, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 2 (1d4)

**Speed** 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +8

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

### Actions

**Almond Sliver.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 40/160 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

## MINI T-REX

*Small beast, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 13 (3d6 + 3)

**Speed** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	3 (-4)	9 (-1)	5 (-3)

**Senses** passive Perception 9

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Relentless** (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the Mini T-rex takes 7 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

### Actions

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

## GIANT RAVEN

*Medium beast, neutral*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)

**Speed** 5 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

**Skills** Perception +6, Stealth +5

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** Common, Giant Raven

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Flyby.** The Giant Raven doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

**Keen Hearing and Sight.** The Giant Raven has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.

**Shapechanger.** The Giant Raven can use its action to polymorph into a human boy or back into its proper form. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

### Actions

**Talons.** Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage.





## RAPUNZEL

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic good

Armor Class 11  
Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)  
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Senses passive Perception 10  
Languages Common  
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

**Living Hair.** Rapunzel can have up to four hair tendrils at a time. Each tendril can be attacked (AC 20; 10 hit points; immunity to poison and psychic damage). Destroying a tendril deals no damage to Rapunzel, who can extrude a replacement tendril on her next turn. A tendril can also be broken if a creature takes an action and succeeds on a DC 15 Strength check against it.

### Actions

**Multiattack.** Rapunzel makes two attacks with her hair tendrils.

**Hair Tendril.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 50 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and has disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, and Rapunzel can't use the same tendril on another target.

### Reactions

**Parry.** Rapunzel adds +4 to her AC against one melee attack that would hit her. To do so, Rapunzel must see the attacker and have an unused hair tendril.

## RISEN MINSTREL

Medium undead, neutral

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)  
Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)  
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Cha +7  
Skills Perception +4, Performance +7  
Damage Resistances necrotic, psychic  
Damage Immunities poison  
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, stunned  
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14  
Languages any languages it knew in life  
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

**Undead Fortitude.** If damage reduces the Minstrel to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the Minstrel drops to 1 hit point instead.

**Spellcasting.** The Minstrel is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The Minstrel has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *dancing lights*, *message*, *vicious mockery*  
1st level (4 slots): *bane*, *dissonant whispers*, *sleep*, *tasha's hideous laughter*  
2nd level (3 slots): *pyrotechnics*, *shatter*, *suggestion*  
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *fear*  
4th level (3 slots): *freedom of movement*, *hallucinatory terrain*  
5th level (1 slot): *dominate person*

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The Minstrel makes three rapier attacks, or two rapier and one hand crossbow attacks.

**Rapier.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

**Hand Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

**Haunting Melody.** The Minstrel begins to sing a haunting song that fills anyone who hears it with melancholy. All creatures within 30 feet of it that can hear the song must make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw. Creatures who are immune to the charmed condition have advantage on this save. On a failure, the creature is paralyzed with despair until the Minstrel deals damage to it, or until the end of the Minstrel's next turn. This melody has no effect on undead or constructs.





# APPENDIX B: NEW MAGIC ITEMS

## THE HUNTSMAN'S BOW

*Weapon (longbow), very rare*

This magical bow grants a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls you make with it, and you have advantage on attacks made against beasts.

While you wield *The Huntsman's Bow*, you gain darkvision out to a range of 120 feet.

## KALAZAR'S SKETCHBOOK

*wondrous item (book), very rare*

The famous artist and mage Kalazar created this thick book bound in soft leather and filled it with sketches of fantastical creatures and places. He imbued it with the power to cast the following spells at will without components by taking an action to draw within it:

*Conjure Animals* with the following changes:

- One beast of challenge rating 1 or lower
- Two beasts of challenge rating 1/2 or lower
- Three beasts of challenge rating 1/4 or lower
- Four beasts of challenge rating 1/8 or lower

*Conjure Object.* You can choose one inanimate, non-magical object that is part of your drawing and make that object real. You can do this on your turn as an action. The object remains real for 1 hour, until dismissed, or if the drawing is damaged by scribbling it out or crumpling the page. For example, you can create a bridge over a chasm or a door in a wall, use the object, and dismiss it to make it disappear.

Each use takes up a page of the sketchbook, (GM decides total number of pages). The appearance of the conjurations is directly affected by the skill of the artist. If the drawing is not of a high enough quality for the magic to recognize, the spell will fail, and the page is wasted. The artist must be proficient with Painter's Supplies and succeed a DC 12 Dexterity (Performance) check.

## KING'S CROWN

*Wondrous Item, legendary (requires attunement)*

While wearing this crown, you gain advantage on Wisdom-based saving throws and have an AC of 18.

**Royal Decree 3/day.** You gain the ability to cast *charm person* at will and the target has disadvantage on the saving throw. Locals of the pocket dimension known as the Fairy Tale Realm located in "The Book of Fairy Tales." automatically fail saving throws against this spell.

## SILENCING SHACKLES

*Adventuring gear (wondrous item)*

You can use an action to place these shackles on an Incapacitated creature. The shackles adjust to fit a creature of Small to Large size. In addition to serving as mundane Manacles, the manacles prevent a creature bound by them from casting any spells. You and any creature you designate when you use the shackles can use an action to remove them. Once every 30 days, the bound creature can make a DC 30 Strength (Athletics) check. On a success, the creature breaks free and destroys the shackles.

