

CORE1-5

TOUCHED BY DARKNESS

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING
FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

BY TRAVIS R. WOODALL

REVIEWED BY PIETER SLEIJPEN

PLAYTESTED BY BILL BENHAM, CPJ, ROY THALMAN, PETER WILLIAMS,
KEVIN COX

The eyes of the young behold the world in ways different than those of adults, but a child claiming to be chased by creatures of the night can alarm even the most steadfast soul. But between the Church of Shar and the Night Knives, the people of Saerloon have reason to fear the night. And uncommon is the soul in Saerloon that has not been touched by darkness. A *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure set in Sembia for characters levels 4-7.

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

This game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without permission of Wizards of the Coast. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 SYSTEM license, please visit www.wizards.com/d20.

This is an official RPGA® play document. To find out more about the RPGA and to learn more on how you can sanction and run DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game events of all sizes, visit our website at www.rpga.com.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, D&D REWARDS, RPGA, *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual* are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. in the US and other countries. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental. © 2008 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

For rules questions specific to this document email rpgasanctioning@wizards.com.

RPGA[®] SANCTIONED PLAY

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

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

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First, it is an official game, tracked under your play history. Second, players and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the RPGA REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth four (4) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31 2011.

To learn more about RPGA event sanctioning and RPGA REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.rpga.com.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

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

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

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your Senior GM directly after play.

READING MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

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

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

played within 3.5 - 4 hours; try to be very aware of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.

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

In short, being the DM for a *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure isn't about following every word on the page; it's about creating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. A great deal of good information on being a DM for a D&D game can be found in Chapters 1-2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

APPROPRIATE CHARACTER LEVELS

This adventure is designed for player characters (PCs) levels 4 - 7. Characters that fall outside of the level range may not participate in the adventure. Make certain to check the levels of the PCs before beginning play to ensure that they are the proper level.

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

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

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

FAILING TO DEFEAT AN ENCOUNTER

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

CHARACTER DEATH

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

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

MILESTONES

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

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The faith of Shar has an attraction to embittered people who have suffered indignities or emotional hardships they would love to forget. All too often the faithful of Shar cause this pain to potential converts in an attempt to win them over.

One such cult has decided to work on people, who in their eyes are less than faithful to Shar within Sembia, by targeting their children. They kidnap a child, making it appear it died in an accident (preferably one that appears to have been caused by somebody who cannot be harmed by law). The child is transported to monasteries of the Dark Moon for proper training and members of the cult approach the parents to offer help and comfort while subtly steering them into the loving embrace of Shar.

For some time they have been able to operate undetected, but the group responsible for the latest kidnapping have been careless, and their charge managed to escape. The fear of discovery has made them desperate. Even though the government of Sembia is under the firm control of the church of Shar, a plot like this would most certainly harm that control if it became public and the faithful of Shar are unforgiving to those that fail.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

The PCs are in Saerloon in Sembia, having just been paid for completing their latest minor job - the details of which are up to the players.

Read the following to the players:

It's been a grueling job, but your payday has finally come, and you find yourself in a tavern in the lower district of Saerloon, a port city in the nation of Sembia with a pocket full of coin. The name of the tavern isn't blatantly obvious, but the signpost above the door holds a macabre caricature of a severed, bloodied foot wrapped in what appears to be silken bandages.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

Two weeks before the first encounter, a child was kidnapped by a cult of Shar. The girl was being held temporarily in an abandoned warehouse awaiting transport to a monastery dedicated to Shar to the north. She managed to escape her captors the morning of the day that the adventure begins, and has been tracked by kir-lanan minions of that same cult ever since. They are hot on her trail and about to reclaim her, when she happens across the PCs.

Regardless of whether the Sharran acquire the escapee, a group of kir-lanan circle in the night sky above. They have been given orders to slay any spectators. The cultists cannot risk anyone being witness to what is happening.

Finding the girl's parents is not difficult. She was taken from her home less than two weeks ago. Convincing them that the child is real and the PCs were not involved in the abduction proves to be a bit trickier.

The PCs are then faced with tracking the thugs back to their sanctum. The pressure is on the Sharrans. They have little time to destroy evidence linking the Church to the kidnappings, and they have decided to pin the atrocities on a local thieves' guild, the Night Knives.

Whether or not the cultists are successful depends upon the PCs finding their hideout in time and stopping them from perpetrating their heinous crimes again in the future.

ENCOUNTER 1: DINNER INTERRUPTED

SETUP

Important NPCs:

Thestra (female human Sharran teacher)

Clete (male human Sharran aide)

The tavern is a rundown establishment known for its cheap fare. The following may be paraphrased or introduced as players ask:

- There are a number of poorly maintained tables and chairs. They appear barely able to support the weight of the cheap and battered dinnerware placed upon it.
- Sparsely spaced oil lamps and two large braziers flanking wide stairs provide just enough light for the servers to do their job.
- A long bar along the wall is manned by a rather muscular female half-elf named Velas.
- The fare is modest, if not cheap.
- The air is thick with pipe and lamp smoke.
- A wooden door in the rear of the common room leads to a kitchen, and a pair of staircases lead to the rooms above.
- The PCs' former employer just gave them their pay, 10 gp each, and he has offered them a drink, which is of remarkably better quality than what is usually served in this drinking hole.

Read the following:

You look down and see a young girl peering up at you. Her eyes are wide in fear and sweat courses down her face as she pants in exhaustion. Her clothes are simple, and extremely dirty; as if she had recently crawled through a sewer pipe. "Please help me," she cries, "They're after me! I'm being chased by monsters!"

Allow the PCs to have a few words with the child (see below for what she knows), before the door opens and two more people enter, obviously looking for somebody. The girl is thoroughly filthy, and looks like she's spent the night in a sewer, but she appears well fed and in otherwise good condition.

Suddenly, the door to the tavern opens, and two people cautiously enter; an older man and a young woman both dressed in simple, dark clothing.

Spying the girl, the woman exclaims, "We've been looking all over town for you, young lady. Your mother

is worried sick about you! She'd die of shame if she saw you in the state you're in!"

The girl is obviously afraid of the two new arrivals and cowers behind one of the larger PCs. The two aren't notably intimidating, a burly older man and a stern-faced young woman. They are garbed in fine, black clothing. They first attempt to enlist the PCs' aid in securing the girl. Their skill in deceit (+11 Bluff) is often more convincing than the young girl's skill in telling the truth.

They relate the following:

- The girl is a child of a wealthy widow in town, and that they, her servants, have been charged with returning her.
- The girl ran away from home two days ago.
- Her father died when she was young, and she has been 'unstable' ever since.
- She has a reputation as a teller of tall tales and a troublemaker.
- Her name is Lucina.
- If the PCs insist on escorting the girl home with them, the Sharrans refuse. If the PCs continue to insist, the two cultists leave to 'fetch the Watch'.
- They are both Sharrans, worshippers of Shar, but so is everybody who wants to be somebody in Sembia.

If talking fails, they threaten to call the Watch, leaving to fetch them if the PCs call their Bluff. If provoked or attacked, they depart as quickly as possible.

The girl, spins a different story, and states the following:

- She was abducted a few days ago by scary winged monsters.
- She has spent that time in the presence of these 'monsters' and their masters.
- The masters teach her about Shar.
- She is whipped frequently and then healed.
- Her name is Estrela.

Regardless of whether or not the PCs relinquish the child, the thugs depart.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends when the PCs hand over the girl or refuse. Regardless of the answer, the Sharrans depart, leaving the kir-lanan in Encounter 2 to take care of the PCs.

TREASURE

The PCs get 10 gp each for the simple job they recently finished.

ENCOUNTER 2: CHECK, PLEASE!

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 4 / 6 (700 / 1000 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures:

2 Kir-Lanan Darklasher (D)

2 Kir-Lanan Wing (S)

If the PCs are outside when the Sharrans depart, Estrela remains inside, requiring the PCs to return. In either case, after the cultists leave (or die) and the PCs return inside, read the following:

No sooner than the unwelcome dinner guests depart the tavern and the door shuts, than the sound of splintering wood fills the common room, and chunks of wood fall from the rafters above. Customers bolt upright from their chairs in surprise, scanning the room in terror. Suddenly, thin, wispy tendrils of darkness descend from above; wrapping themselves around their targets and as they scream in horror, drag them into the waiting darkness of the rafters above. Just as suddenly as the assault began, it ends. Or so it seems...

Pause for effect, and read:

One by one, bodies begin raining down from the shadows above, falling heavily upon the floor, tables, and other patrons; their twisted, lifeless forms mangled and thoroughly dead.

If the girl is still with the party, read the following:

The young girl, obviously quite scared and now taking refuge under a table, has a brief moment of lucidity; and looking up, says simply, "They're here!"

PCs staring into the rafters can see dark form moving in the shadows above, but are unable to make out details or numbers.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

This area has a few important features.

Illumination: The common room is dimly lit. The ceiling, while high, is more or less cloaked in darkness, from a combination of the tavern's dim light and pipe and lamp smoke.

Floor: Despite the furniture, the floor is even and stable. However, for the first two rounds of combat, treat the entire inn as difficult terrain due to the abundance of patrons.

Furniture: The PCs may take cover beneath the tables (indicated by brown circles on the encounter map) from the kir-lanans' initial attacks. However, unless small sized, they must be prone to gain any benefit. The tables provide superior cover against attacks from above. If an attack with a body against a PC misses, the thrown body destroys the table and the cover bonus it provides.

Rafters: On the map broken white lines depict the rafters. Due to poor lighting and smoke, any creature in the rafters is considered to have total concealment from those on the floor. The same does not hold true in reverse. Light from the ground does not negate this concealment. Light from the rafters, however, does. The smoke still provides normal concealment.

The rafters from which the kir-lanans attack are 15 feet from the floor. A PC may make a DC 20 (or DC 15 in a corner) Athletics check from a point where the rafters and the walls intersect to climb up. The PCs could also jump on a table and then try to reach a rafter as per the standard jump rules. The rafters are wide enough not to require an Acrobatics check to maneuver.

TACTICS

The party begins combat at the table labeled "P" on the map. The darklashers each immobilize a patron with *tendrils* and *reel* them up into the rafters then drop them onto the PCs (+8 vs. Reflex for 1d6 + 4 damage and target knocked prone), while the shadowmongers delay. Provided no PCs move up into the rafters (see rafters, above), they continue this for as long as there are patrons in the room. During this time, the shadowmongers move to get near a PC, and then use their *mobile melee attack* ability to attack, and retreat back into the rafters without provoking an opportunity attack.

Once the PCs move into the rafters, the darklashers use their *grab* and *reel* abilities to either pull the PCs into positions where the shadowmongers can flank them or, if no such positions are available, simply to pull the PCs off the rafters to fall to the floor below. If pulled in such a manner, the PC is entitled to a saving throw to avoid falling. If that saving throw fails, they suffer 1d10 damage and are knocked prone. This may be reduced as normal by the use of the Acrobatics skill.

If the no PCs move up into the rafters by the time all the other patrons are gone, the Darklashers use their *grab* and *reel* ability to pull PCs up and drop them 10 feet to the floor below. PCs dropped in this manner

suffer 1d10 points of damage (they are released before being pulled completely into the rafters).

If the girl is still with the PCs, she hides in the kitchen until combat is over. The kir-lanan take her once the PCs have been knocked out of commission. If the combat doesn't seem likely to end in their favor, one of the darklashers attempts to take the girl, while the other kir-lanan fend off the party.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one kir-lanan wing.

Six PCs: Add one kir-lanan wing.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends when all enemies have been defeated. A successful DC 15 Arcana check identifies them as kir-lanan; monstrous beings devoted to Shar.

If the PCs elect to proceed directly to tracking the Sharran to their hideout, proceed to Encounter 4, awarding a +1 bonus to all skill checks made during the skill challenge.

However, if the PCs didn't relinquish Estrela, she adamantly refuses to go with the PCs and either needs to be left with someone else or taken along by force. The innkeeper flat out refuses to take her; the girl has caused enough trouble so far. However, if the PCs acquire a room at another inn, she is taken from there after the PCs leave, in which case, they find her along with the other children in Encounter 6. She attempts to run away if forced with the prospect of having to accompany the PCs to the Sharran Sanctum.

If the PCs still have Estrela and want to help her find her home first, proceed to Encounter 3.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

For defeating the kir-lanan, each PC earns 140 / 200 experience points.

TREASURE

The kir-lanan carry no treasure.

ENCOUNTER 2: CHECK, PLEASE! STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Kir-Lanan Darklasher		Level 4 Controller	
Medium shadow humanoid		XP 175	
Initiative +5		Senses Perception +12; low-light vision	
HP 52; Bloodied 26; see also <i>necrotic healing</i>			
AC 19; Fortitude 17, Reflex 17, Will 15			
Vulnerable 5 radiant			
Speed 5, fly 8			
m Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic			
+9 vs. AC; 1d4 + 5 damage plus 1d4 necrotic damage.			
M Tendrils Rake (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic			
Reach 5; +8 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 damage plus 1d4 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened and immobilized (save ends both).			
M Reel (minor; at-will; immobilized target only)			
+8 vs. Fortitude; target is pulled 5 squares.			
R Enfeebling Ray (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Necrotic			
+9 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 3 necrotic damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty on attack rolls (save ends).			
Necrotic Healing (immediate reaction; when damaged by a necrotic attack; encounter) ♦ Healing			
The kir-lanan darklasher heals 13 hit points.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Kir-lanan	
Skills Stealth +10			
Str 9 (+1)	Dex 16 (+5)	Wis 20 (+7)	
Con 12 (+3)	Int 10 (+2)	Cha 12 (+3)	

Kir-Lanan Wing		Level 4 Skirmisher	
Medium shadow humanoid		XP 175	
Initiative +7		Senses Perception +6; low-light vision	
HP 52; Bloodied 26; see also <i>necrotic healing</i>			
AC 19; Fortitude 17, Reflex 17, Will 15			
Vulnerable 5 radiant			
Speed 5, fly 8 see also <i>mobile melee attack</i>			
m Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic			
+10 vs. AC; 1d4 + 5 damage plus 1d4 necrotic damage.			
M Mobile Melee Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic			
While flying, a kir-lanan wing may move half its speed and make one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The kir-lanan wing doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target.			
R Enfeebling Ray (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Necrotic			
+8 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 3 necrotic damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty on attack rolls (save ends).			
Combat Advantage			
The kir-lanan wing deals an extra 1d6 damage on attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.			
Necrotic Healing (immediate reaction; when damaged by a necrotic attack; encounter) ♦ Healing			
The kir-lanan wing heals 13 hit points.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common	
Skills Stealth +8			
Str 20 (+7)	Dex 16 (+5)	Wis 9 (+1)	
Con 12 (+3)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 12 (+3)	

ENCOUNTER 2: CHECK, PLEASE! STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Kir-Lanan Darklasher (Level 6)		Level 6 Controller	
Medium shadow humanoid		XP 250	
Initiative +6		Senses Perception +11; low-light vision	
HP 68; Bloodied 34; see also <i>necrotic healing</i>			
AC 21; Fortitude 19, Reflex 19, Will 17			
Vulnerable 5 radiant			
Speed 5, fly 8 see also <i>mobile melee attack</i>			
m Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic			
+11 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage plus 1d4 necrotic damage.			
M (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic			
Reach 5; +8 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 5 damage plus 1d4 necrotic damage plus 1d4 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened and immobilized (save ends both).			
M Reel (minor; at-will; immobilized target only)			
+10 vs. Fortitude; target is pulled 5 squares.			
R Enfeebling Ray (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Necrotic			
+11 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 necrotic damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty on attack rolls (save ends).			
Necrotic Healing (immediate reaction; when damaged by a necrotic attack; encounter) ♦ Healing			
The kir-lanan darklasher heals 17 hit points.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Kir-lanan	
Skills Stealth +11			
Str 9 (+2)	Dex 16 (+6)	Wis 20 (+8)	
Con 12 (+4)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 12 (+4)	

Kir-Lanan Wing (Level 6)		Level 6 Skirmisher	
Medium shadow humanoid		XP 250	
Initiative +8		Senses Perception +7; low-light vision	
HP 68; Bloodied 34; see also <i>necrotic healing</i>			
AC 21; Fortitude 19, Reflex 19, Will 17			
Vulnerable 5 radiant			
Speed 5, fly 8 see also <i>mobile melee attack</i>			
m Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic			
+12 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage plus 1d4 necrotic damage.			
M Mobile Melee Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic			
While flying, a kir-lanan wing may move half its speed and make one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The kir-lanan wing doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target.			
R Enfeebling Ray (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Necrotic			
+10 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 necrotic damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty on attack rolls (save ends).			
Combat Advantage			
The kir-lanan wing deals an extra 1d6 damage on attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.			
Necrotic Healing (immediate reaction; when damaged by a necrotic attack; encounter) ♦ Healing			
The kir-lanan wing heals 17 hit points.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common	
Skills Stealth +8			
Str 20 (+7)	Dex 16 (+5)	Wis 9 (+1)	
Con 12 (+3)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 12 (+3)	

ENCOUNTER 2: CHECK, PLEASE! MAP

ARCANE CORRIDORS

Stairs / Bookshelf 4x2 x2

DIRE TOMBS

Wood Doors / Broken Jar 2x1 x2

Stairs with Cauldrons / Webs in Hall 8x2 x1

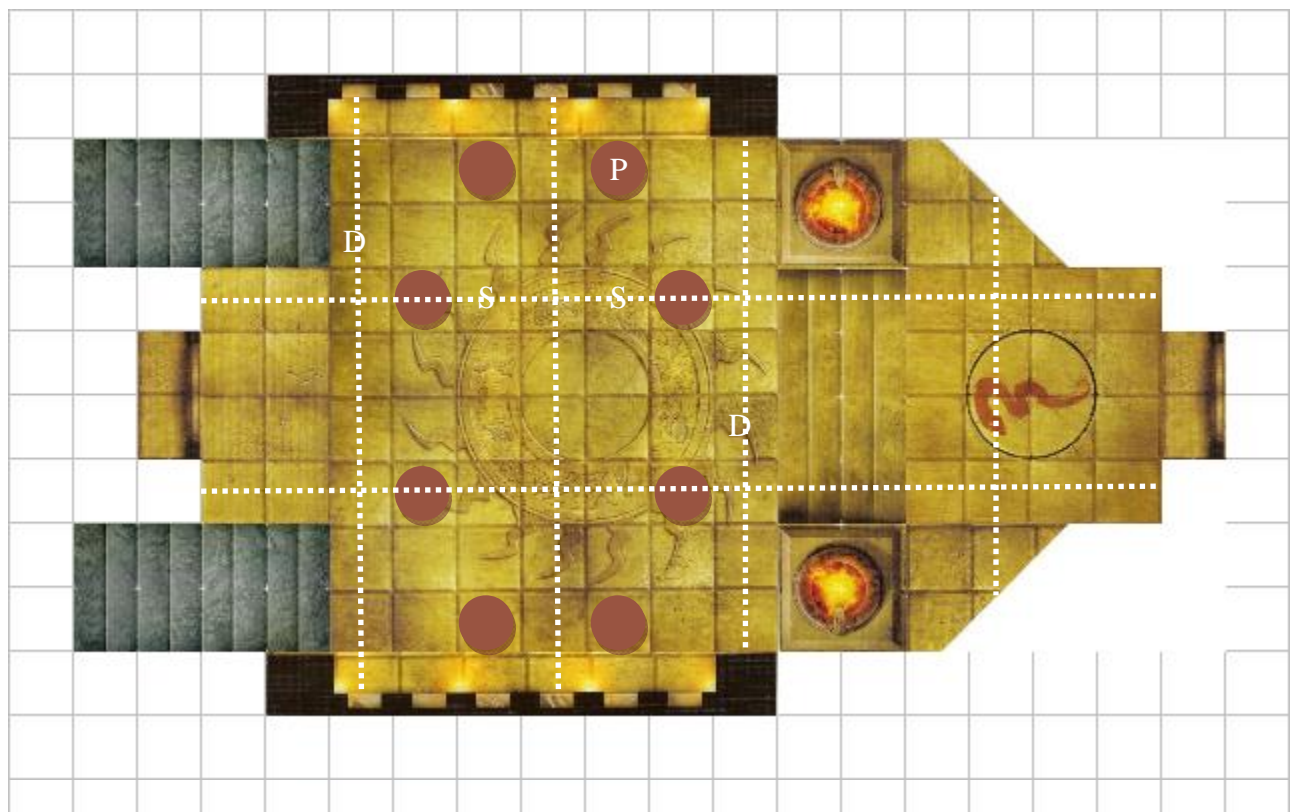
Shelves / Hall 8x2 x2

Hall / Hall w/Pillars 8x3 x1

Snake Sigil / Intersection 4x4 x1

Corner / Runes 5x5 x2

Throne Room / Sun Room 8x8 x1



ENCOUNTER 3: WHAT'S YOUR NAME, LITTLE GIRL?

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 3 / 5, COMPLEXITY 2 (300 / 400 XP)

SETUP

Number of Successes: 6

Number of Failures: 3

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight

Important NPCs:

Stedd Tallweaver (male human, father Estrela)

Tasli Tallweaver (female human, mother Estrela)

If the party still has the girl with them, they may now speak to her. She is pretty shaken, but once the kir-lanan are slain, she calms down and becomes lucid.

Estrela is above all a young girl, and acts accordingly. Her answers are short, curt and naïve, considering what she has recently endured. Below are details that she can provide the PCs.

- Her name is Estrela, and she was taken from her parents approximately two weeks ago.
- She was kept in a 'dark place' while waiting to be smuggled out of the city.
- She was not the only child being held, but was the only one who managed to escape.
- She doesn't know precisely what a kir-lanan is, but relates that they serve the 'Teachers'. She believes them to be made of the shadows and darkness, and knows that there are more of them at the Teachers' hideout.
- She managed to escape only a few hours ago, and was aware that she was possibly being followed. She realized that her pursuers were closing in and ran into the first building she saw, namely the tavern the PCs are in.
- She doesn't know precisely who the humans that followed her are, only that they serve the Teachers.
- The Teachers are humans, as far as she can tell. They command the monsters that took her.
- The Teachers taught her about bad, dark things. About the night and not to fear it, but to embrace it. They taught her how to lie and keep secrets.
- She isn't sure where exactly she was kept; only that it was dark and was somewhat damp. She

escaped at night and was in quite a hurry, so retracing her steps won't be possible.

- She does not want to help the PCs locate the Teachers. She would much prefer to go home.

SKILL CHALLENGE

The PCs must return Estrela to her parents. This proves to be more difficult than you would think, however. The parents have accepted the fact that their daughter is dead, and are hesitant to believe the PCs. They want someone to pay for the pain they've suffered over the last couple weeks.

SCENE 1

The child winds through the streets of Saerloon, and before long, pauses before an impressive manor. She runs to the door and knocks loudly on it, yelling, "Mommy! Daddy!"

A light flickers to life in an upstairs window, and a pair of footsteps can be heard moving quickly through the home.

The door clicks loudly and swings open to reveal a middle-aged couple; still in their nightclothes and rubbing sleep from their eyes.

Their gaze fall onto Estrela and they fall back a step, as if seeing a ghost.

- Estrela's father, Stedd Tallweaver, is a well-off merchant who specializes in textiles.
- They have no servants (which contradicts the claims of Thestra and Clete in Encounter 1).
- The parents thought their daughter died and they are not only instantly distrustful of the PCs, they are also apprehensive to believe that the girl is their daughter. Tasli, the mother, is quickest to believe the girl is her daughter.
- Their daughter came up missing while the family visited the fishmonger in the Docks District. A load of crates had fallen nearby, with most of them falling into the bay. After the accident, Estrela was nowhere to be found.
- Two days after Estrela went missing the Watch visited the parents, and told them that her body had washed up on the shore in the Docks District. They identified the body personally.
- Since that time, the body has been cremated. People who have assisted and counseled them in their time of mourning.
- The counselors, to their knowledge, were Sharrans.

Insight (DC 16 / 17): It is clear that the parents are suspicious of the girl claiming to be her daughter, but still want to believe it really is her. Success also reveals that the parents are on the verge of calling the Watch, and trying to bully them might not be the best idea.

The first successful use of Insight opens up the use of the Arcana skill (the parents suggest that the girl is disguised with an illusion), Nature skill (the parents suggest that the girl is some sort of shapechanger) or Religion skill (the girl is undead).

Arcana/Nature/Religion (DC 12 / 13): Depending on the skill used the PC can offer some facts that would prove that the girl is neither disguised, a shapechanger or some kind of undead. For example illusions and shapechangers show itself if something on her body is removed and taken away it reverts to its true form. Undead do not have a heart beat, nor do they breath.

Each of these three skills can only be used once in such fashion. Success provides a +2 bonus to the next Diplomacy check made during the skill challenge. Failure proves a -2 penalty on the next check, as the parents merely switch to some other monster or are convinced the PCs were ready for these eventualities.

Intimidate (n/a): The parents are visibly upset, and tolerate no bullying. Any attempts to intimidate them automatically fail.

Diplomacy (DC 16 / 17): A tried and true approach is to massage the parents' delicate situation. Through a manner of their choosing, the PC manages to say precisely what the parents want to hear.

Bluff/Diplomacy (DC 20 / 21): PCs might guess that Sharrans kidnapped Estrela and faked her death to drive the parents into the arms of Shar. If the PCs admit this is speculation they use Diplomacy, otherwise they use Bluff. The parents are not particular loyal Sharrans, but even they are resistant to belief this sacrilege.

Three successes indicate that the parents believe Estrela to be their daughter, but turn their ire to the PCs, believing that they may have had something to do with the 'accident'.

If the PCs attempt to use intimidate on the parents, they refuse to believe that Estrela is their daughter, leaving the PCs to find an alternative arrangements for the girl, assuming that they make it out of Scene 2 intact.

SCENE 2

If the PCs manage to convince the parents that Estrela is her daughter, read the following:

“Was it you?” the father cries out in agony, “What if you that took our little girl away from us? She may be back, but that does not answer all of our questions. Perhaps the Watch will be able to get the answers out of you! Guards, guards!”

If the PCs fail to convince them that Estrela is hers, or if they attempt to use intimidate, read the following:

“How dare you?” the mother exclaims, tears streaming down her face, “I’m not sure what you’re attempting to accomplish by parading this macabre imposter before us, but perhaps the Watch will be able to find out! Guards, guards!”

The parents effectively summon the Watch, which arrives in 5 minutes. It is up to the PCs to convince the parents to whistle a different tune once the Watch shows up. This reflects itself in the PCs either being detained by the Watch and eventually released or enlisting the Watch's aid in Encounter 4.

Diplomacy (DC 16 / 17): The PCs ensure that they only are you not the perpetrators of the crime, but they will devote yourself to finding out who is.

Insight (13 / 14): The parents are angry and looking for a scapegoat, to put it plainly. They want a face to blame all of their pain on. This grants a +2 bonus to the next Diplomacy check made in the Skill Challenge.

Bluff (DC 15 / 17): The PC spins a tale about knowing who the real culprit is, but just needs the parents to call of the guard so they can pursue whatever false lead they present.

Intimidate (n/a): As before, the parents are too distraught to be intimidated. Any attempts automatically fail, and if used in Scene 2, the skill challenge automatically ends in a failure.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The Watch arrives regardless of the PCs success or failure. However, their performance determines what happens next. Regardless of success or failure, either the parents, Estrela or the Watch asks the PCs to find the culprits behind Estrela's kidnapping and find evidence those people were indeed involved. This starts a minor quest.

The PCs are able to flee before the Watch arrives, effectively circumventing Scene 2, but this counts as failing the skill challenge. Likewise, they may also attack the guard when they arrive. There is no need for combat, but each PC loses two healing surges

during the scuffle. In either case, because the Watch is actively searching for them, the party suffers a -2 penalty on all skill checks made during Encounter 4.

Full Success: If the PCs succeed at both Scene 1 and Scene 2, the parents both thank the PCs for their aid and apologize for their own conduct. The PCs also manage to enlist the Watch's limited assistance with their search to find the real kidnappers. They receive a +2 bonus on all skill checks made during Encounter 4, as the Watch works hard to flush out the real culprits. This counts as a success for the Encounter.

Partial Success: If the PCs fail at Scene 1 and succeed at Scene 2, they must either take Estrela with them to the proceeding Encounters, or find alternative arrangements for her. This may be difficult to do, as the neighbors have all heard the commotion and the innkeeper refuses to provide her shelter for fear that additional kir-lanan show up to try and take her again. This counts as a failure for the Encounter.

If the PCs succeed at Scene 1 and fail at Scene 2, the Watch arrives and attempts to arrest the party. They are escorted to the town's jail, and roughed up for about a half hour before the party is finally able to convince them. This is reflected by the loss of two healing surges by each member of the party. This counts as a failure for the Encounter. Due to the lost time the PCs suffer a -2 penalty on all skill checks in Encounter 3.

Estrela is not pleased about the prospect of accompanying the party to find the kidnappers' hideout, and adamantly refuse, even going so far as to run away as detailed in Encounter 2, if presented with no other option.

Full Failure: If the PCs fail both at scene 1 and scene 2 both negative effects mentioned under partial success above take place.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 60 / 80 experience points each for defusing the situation before the Watch arrives.

TREASURE

If the PCs convince the parents of their Estrela's identity and their own innocence, they are rewarded with a *cloak of distortion* +1. They also give the PCs 30 / 40 gold pieces each in various art objects (i.e., candlesticks, flatware, or whatever else they could grab in their haste to reward the PCs).

ENCOUNTER 4: HOT ON THE TRAIL

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 4 / 6, COMPLEXITY 2 (350 / 500 XP)

SETUP

Number of Successes: 6

Number of Failures: 3

Primary Skills: Streetwise, Perception, Intimidate, Athletics

SKILL CHALLENGE

The PCs engage in a skill challenge to try and locate the Sharran hideout before the Sharrans are given the chance to hide their activities.

The players might ask questions about the environment; describe the town's streets so that they understand how they can use their skills. If the PCs split up, describe the environment for each group of characters separately. Keep the action flowing, making sure you remind them that time is of the essence.

The following scenes are provided as examples. Feel free to customize them based on what the PCs do, and give hints to the PCs about what skills might be useful if they're having trouble deciding what to do.

SCENE 1

You've got a fairly limited basis of information to use to find where the Teachers have been hiding the children. The hideout could be anywhere in the city, so now it's time to narrow the search. The streets are busy, considering how late it is. Drunken revelers mix it up with shady looking people, and even the shopkeepers are peddling their wares to make a penny or two.

Streetwise (DC 17 / 18): Rumor has it that a rogue cell of Night Knives has employed kir-lanan to do their dirty work, but that hasn't been proven yet. These have been seen in the docks late at night.

Intimidate (DC 13 / 14): The PC strong-arms a small-time, local thug and he tells you that the abandoned warehouses in the Docks District get occasional visitors that match the description provided by the PCs. On a failure, a PC bites off more than he can chew, and the thug's buddies step out of the tavern they were visiting. The PC takes a minor beating and loses a healing surge.

CORE1-5 Touched by Darkness

Nature (DC 17 / 18): The mud on Estrela's clothing contains algae that are commonly found at the docks.

Once the party has figured out that the Docks is the likely place where the Sharran have holed up, proceed to Scene 2.

SCENE 2

Having learned that the kidnappers are likely hiding in the Docks, you head downtown. The air is thick with the smell of salt and fish, and the salty sea air has taken its toll on the rotting, ramshackle buildings nearby. Only a few people mill about; some appearing quite busy while others sit in squalor waiting for a handout.

Streetwise (DC 17 / 18): Night Knives in the Docks? A small-time cutpurse says he saw some seedy-looking folks coming in and out of a couple of warehouses on the northern end of the Docks, but can't recall which. On a failure, the cutpurse takes advantage of the slip up and mugs the PC, causing the PC to lose a healing surge. Streetwise also helps in remembering where the good locations for such a hideout would be.

Perception (DC 17 / 18): The PCs sneak up on a few warehouses, and steal a peek in the dingy windows. They mostly see an occasional vagrant sleeping off the drink or pickpocket sorting through his latest score, but nothing extraordinary. Still, it helps in the search and they gain a success. On a failure, the PC leans too heavily on a rotted wall, and alerts the cutpurses inside to his presence. The PC must immediately succeed on a DC 21 / 23 Diplomacy or Intimidate check or get roughed up, losing a healing surge and one success in the skill challenge.

If the PCs are reaching the end of the skill challenge, they can also come across a sewage drain in which they find the recent tracks of a small girl. There are only a few suitable buildings nearby.

Athletics (DC 17 / 18): Climb up on the roof for a better view. The PC manages to scramble to the roof of a nearby building and is able to see many buildings at once. The PC may make an immediate DC 21 / 23 Perception check to notice a dark, winged shape fly into a hole in the roof of a nearby warehouse; granting a success in the process. On a failure, the PC falls through the roof of the building, twisting his ankle and losing a healing surge.

RUMORS

The list of rumors below can be used to spice up this encounter:

- “Strange things have been seen around Saerloon lately. Winged shadows take to the sky at night.”
- “The town has always seen its share of bad folk, but word is that there are some unregistered ships headed north out of the harbor.”
- “If I were an disreputable man, I’d work out of the docks. The Watch doesn’t go down there much, and there are loads of abandoned warehouses.”
- “There have been quite a handful of deadly accidents in the Docks some of them involving children. I’d avoid that place if I were you. Cheap labor if you ask me.”
- “Good thing the church is around, they’ve been really busy consoling those who have lost loved ones in the recent accidents.”
- “The new Lord Governor, Haelia Johannes, is either a fanatic Sharran or she tries to impress her superiors, because she has come down particular hard on none-Sharran religions. She should spend her time more on hunting down those criminals from the Night Knife gang. Those thugs are a real problem if you ask me.”

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Whether or not the PCs succeed at the challenge, they eventually find the hideout. What's important is whether they got there in time to prevent the Sharrans from destroying things tying their activities to Shar and planting things incriminating the Night Knives.

Success: The Sharrans are caught more or less unaware. While this does not alter the encounters, the cultists are not successful in disguising themselves or their operation as those of the Night Knives. The PCs are then able to find correspondence between the hideout and a ranking member of the Church of Shar.

Failure: The Sharrans are successful in their preparations granting them minor bonuses at the start of the fights. In addition, the clothing they wear is that of the Night Knives and all information linking the Sharran Church to the kidnappings is destroyed. This has no impact on the encounter, but makes it easier for the Sharran to resume their insidious activities in the future.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 70 / 100 experience points each for locating the hideout in time.

TREASURE

No treasure is earned in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 5: THE BOY ON THE DOCKS

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 4 / 7 (875 / 1500 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creature:
Lurg (L)

Depending on party's performance in the skill challenge, the Sharran may or may not have had time to prepare for their arrival. This manifests in the following ways:

- Any evidence tying the Sharran Church is destroyed and false information incriminating the Night Knives is planted.
- The remaining "students" are rounded up and locked in the rear room of the Sanctum.
- Lurg is ready for the PCs arrival, gaining a +5 bonus on his Stealth and Perception check.
- Note that Lurg has low-light vision despite the fact that he is a human: a gift from Shar.

Regardless of how much time the Sharran have to prepare, read the following:

Even amid the squalor of the docks, this ramshackle warehouse looks run-down. Thick grime coats the windows, making any attempts to see inside quite difficult. It is dark inside, and the air that emanates from within is cool and clean.

A blast of cool, dry air greets you as you enter the warehouse. Tall stacks of crates and boxes in otherwise very good condition litter the floor and line the walls, looming like mountains over the valleys of bare floor between them. A single oil lamp swings from the rafters; its shadows moving like dark creatures of ill intent.

Lurg is hiding amongst the crates, alert for any uninvited guests. Check surprise as normal.

After his initial attack, he moves around the crates, and engages. Read the following:

An immense brute of a man walks slowly around the corner, his tattered black robes taut around his

massive, barrel chest. He cracks his knuckles loudly and grins broadly.

"I break you," he mutters and extends his slab-like hands to attack.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

This area has a few important features.

Illumination: At night, the main room of the warehouse is poorly lit. A DC 18 Perception check locates a fully fueled (albeit, unlit) lantern on a nearby crate. If the PCs find the warehouse during the day, there is enough daylight entering from the whole in the roof to provide dim light throughout the room. Regardless of how well lit the room is, a plethora of shadows cast by the crates create numerous dark areas.

Floor: Despite the appearance of the warehouse's exterior, the inside is remarkably well maintained. The floor is generally free of clutter and does not impede movement.

Furnishings: The only furniture is a small desk in the office (see Exits, below).

Crates: There are a large number of crates filled with all manner of trade goods. In their haste to hide them, the crates were stacked rather haphazardly. They are piled almost to the ceiling, and, for the most part, appear to be quite sturdy. The crates are not considered a hard corner, and may be moved around diagonally. These crates block the windows.

The crates 'attack' any PC entering the square they contain (+7 / +9 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 / 1d6 + 5 damage and knocked prone). Once the crates have attacked a PC, the square is safe to enter, but is considered difficult terrain. However, due to the sheer number of crates in each square, they still provide cover. Any PC entering a square containing crates may attempt a DC 18 Athletics check to safely enter the square and scale the crates. Failure causes the crates to attack normally.

Rafters: PCs that have successfully climbed atop the crates may use the ropes hanging from the ceiling as part of movement or a charge. Making a swinging charge provides an additional +1 to hit with the attack made.

Exits: While not readily visible from the entrance, there is a small (10 ft. x 10 ft. office in the northeastern corner. There is a small desk and what appears to be a fairly innocuous ledger in its drawer. The ledger more or less catalogues a large number of harmless, albeit illegally obtained, trade goods (cloth, spices, etc.). A search of the crates confirms this. In the

floor of this small room is a 5 ft. x 5 ft.' trapdoor. The trapdoor is unlocked, and it is not trapped.

TACTICS

Lurg is hiding at the point marked "L" on the map. He readies his action until the first PC reaches the spot marked X, at which point he pushes over the stack of crates he is hiding behind, causing the crates to attack that player's square. He then moves back around the stack of crates and adjacent to the trapped PC, expends an action point and uses his *bear hug* and *hurl* ability on that PC, throwing them into the unstable crates (or PCs if no such crates are in range).

If the party advances too far without entering the square labeled X, he simply moves around the crates and engages as normal. He uses his attacks to push PCs into the crates; triggering them each time he does so. When he is close to getting bloodied, he voluntarily places himself adjacent to as many PCs as possible so as to use his *raging flail* ability more effectively.

He tries to remain in melee range of casters/ranged strikers as much as possible, though he does not wantonly provoke opportunity attacks to do so, though he gladly provokes an opportunity attack for the chance to *hurl* a PC.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Reduce Lurg's hit points by 53 / 77.

Six PCs: Increase Lurg's hit points by 53 / 77.

Ending the Encounter

Once Lurg is dead, the party can proceed down into the Sharran Sanctum via the trapdoor (unlocked, untrapped) in the office.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs each receive 175 / 300 experience points for defeating Lurg.

TREASURE

If the PCs search the warehouse, they find crates of trade goods and a small pallet of old blankets and straw. Hidden amongst the debris are a *lifedrinker weapon +1* and an *orb of sanguinary repercussion +1* as well as 20 / 40 gold pieces per PC in silver and copper pieces as well as various tradegoods.

Encounter 5: The Boy on the Docks Statistics (Low Level)

Lurg the Brawler		Level 4 Solo Brute
Medium natural humanoid (human)		XP 1000
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +3; low-light vision	
HP 264; Bloodied 132		
AC 18; Fortitude 22, Reflex 16, Will 18		
Saving Throws +5		
Speed 6		
Action Point 2		
m Brute Slam (standard; at-will)		
+8 vs. AC; 2d8 + 4 damage and the target is pushed 1 square.		
M One-Two Punch (standard; at-will)		
Lurg makes two brute slam attacks, If Lurg hits a single target with both brute slams the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone, otherwise the target is pushed 1 square.		
M Bear Hug (standard; recharge 5-6)		
+6 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 4 damage and the target is grabbed (see <i>hurl</i>).		
C Raging Flail (immediate reaction; when first bloodied)		
Burst 1; Lurg makes a brute slam attack against all targets in area.		
R Hurl (minor; at-will; grabbed target only)		
Ranged 3; 1d6 + 4 damage and target is slid 3 squares and knocked prone.		
Secondary attack: +6 vs. Reflex; target thrown into secondary target. On hit, secondary target takes 1d6 + 4 damage is knocked prone.		
M Murderous Frenzy		
Lurg gains 1 action point the first time he reduces a foe to 0 hit points in an encounter.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common
Skills Athletics +11, Stealth +7		
Str 20 (+7)	Dex 15 (+4)	Wis 12 (+3)
Con 16 (+5)	Int 8 (+1)	Cha 6 (+0)

Encounter 5: The Boy on the Docks Statistics (High Level)

Lurg the Brawler (Level 7)		Level 7 Solo Brute	
Medium natural humanoid (human)		XP 1500	
Initiative +5		Senses Perception +4; low-light vision	
HP 384; Bloodied 191			
AC 21; Fortitude 25, Reflex 19, Will 21			
Saving Throws +5			
Speed 6			
Action Point 2			
m Brute Slam (standard; at-will)			
+11 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage and the target is pushed 1 square.			
M One-Two Punch (standard; at-will)			
Lurg makes two brute slam attacks, If Lurg hits a single target with both brute slams the target is pushed 2 squares, and knocked prone otherwise the target is pushed 1 square.			
M Bear Hug (standard; recharge 5-6)			
+9 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 5 damage and the target is grabbed (see <i>hurl</i>).			
C Raging Flail (immediate reaction; when first bloodied)			
Burst 1; Lurg makes a brute slam attack against all targets in area.			
R Hurl (minor; at-will; grabbed target only)			
Ranged 3; 1d6 + 5 damage and target is slid 3 squares and knocked prone.			
Secondary attack: +9 vs. Reflex; target thrown into secondary target. On hit, secondary target takes 1d6 + 5 damage is knocked prone.			
M Murderous Frenzy			
Lurg gains 1 action point the first time he reduces a foe to 0 hit points in an encounter.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common	
Skills Athletics +14, Stealth +10			
Str 20 (+8)		Dex 15 (+5)	
Con 16 (+6)		Int 8 (+2)	
		Wis 12 (+4)	
		Cha 6 (+1)	

ENCOUNTER 5: BOYS ON THE DOCKS MAP

DUNGEON TILES

Tavern / Floor 8x10 X2

HIDDEN CRYPTS

Crypt / Floor 4x4 x1



ENCOUNTER 6: TOUCHED BY DARKNESS

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 7 / 10 (800 / 1100 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures:

Nightcloak Felomin (F)

4 Hobgoblin Grunts (T) (These are human cultists)

3 Kir-Lanan Wings (A)

If the PCs failed the skill challenge in Encounter 4, the cultists gain a +2 bonus on their initiative and Perception checks.

Even if they succeeded, the Sharran in the Sanctum are ready and waiting for them. When the PCs enter, read the following:

The narrow spiral staircase empties into a fair-sized natural cavern; its walls glistening with salt water. Sputtering torches set in the walls provide dim illumination to what would otherwise be a pitch-black cave.

If the PCs were successful in the skill challenge, the Sharran weren't able to destroy evidence in time. Read the following:

It is, for the most part, devoid of decoration, save for a finely woven tapestry depicting a featureless black disk hanging above a simple wooden desk set against the northern wall.

If the PCs failed the skill challenge, the Sharrans have managed to "clean up" and have planted evidence that would link the kidnappings to the Night Knives. Read the following:

It is Spartan in furnishings, with a desk and a detailed map of Saerloon, detailing trade routes, potential burglary targets and rival gang territory.

For both scenarios, finish with the following:

You can see a handful of dark-clad humanoids milling about the room. Apparently ready for you, they have shields drawn. As you enter, one of them darts off into a room to the east, and a moment later you hear a cold, rasping voice call out, "Stop them and leave none alive!"

Any PCs with a passive perception of DC 11 (the acoustics of the cavern lower the DC by 2) or higher can hear the faint sound of crying children (including Estrela if she was recaptured).

FEATURES OF THE AREA

This area has a few important features.

Illumination: Torches illuminate the room. These torches provide only dim light.

Floor: While wet from the humid air, the floor does not slow movement.

Ceiling: The ceiling in this space is 20 feet high.

Furnishings: The only real item of furniture in the cavern is a small wooden desk with a single chair. Depending on the PCs' performance in Encounter 4, the contents of the desk differs.

TACTICS

The thugs fiercely loyal to Nightcloak Felomin and willingly throw themselves in harm's way to protect him. And, in true minion fashion, the thugs form a defensive wall preventing the PCs from advancing too quickly. The wings remain in the second room, opening with their *enfeebling ray* ability from around the corners and using their *mobile melee attack* during subsequent rounds. Once the minions are down, they fall back to the second room with Felomin to protect him while engaging the PCs.

The wings remain between the thugs and Felomin, but not out of any sense of loyalty. Felomin is a cruel master, and if slain, any of the remaining Kir-lanan flee from the sanctum through the warehouse as best as they are able. In the meantime, they defend Felomin to the best of their ability; opening with their *enfeebling ray* ability, and using *mobile melee attack* to close with the PCs, attack and fall back behind the thugs.

Meanwhile, Felomin uses his *invisibility* ability and then spends his action point to cast *arc of darkness* (focusing on ranged attackers if none of cover). Once cast, he then peppers the party with his *eldritch blast*. He uses *invisibility* again once bloodied, and maneuvers to a position behind the front line. If all seems lost, he casts *cloud of darkness* and flees past the party (using *clever escape* if necessary and available) and out of the warehouse before the effect wears off.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one kir-lanan wing.

Six PCs: Add one kir-lanan wing.

Ending the Encounter

When the Sharrans are dead, the encounter ends, and the PCs are able to search the sanctum.

The party finds the evidence that has been described in the room description. If the Sharrans did not have the opportunity to destroy evidence, a DC 23 Perception check locates a parcel of items incriminating the Night Knives, along with Player Handout 1.

If the PCs succeeded at the skill challenge in Encounter 4, and slay Felomin, proceed to Conclusion A, below.

If the PCs failed at the skill challenge in Encounter 4, proceed to Conclusion B, regardless of whether or not Felomin survives.

If Estrela was recaptured, the PCs now have the option of moving on to Encounter 3.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

For defeating Felomin and his minions and finding someone to blame for the abductions, each PC receives 160 / 220 experience points.

TREASURE

The party finds the evidence that has been described in the room description.

If the PCs failed the skill challenge in Encounter 4, the desk contains letters and notes pertinent to the Night Knives; cargo manifests, ransom notes, threatening letters, etc.

If the PCs succeeded on the skill challenge, the desk contains a small Sharran prayer book, letters detailing the most recent shipments of kidnapped children, and Player Handout 1.

A suit of +1 *bloodthread cloth* (low-tier) or a suit of +2 *bloodthread cloth* (high tier) is also stowed in the desk as is 40 / 60 gold pieces per PC. There is also a ritual book with the rituals *dark light*.

CONCLUSION A

The PCs found the Sharran hideout. They also discovered not only that some of the ‘accidents’ weren’t accidents at all, but also who was behind them. While this information is widely renounced as lies and heresy by the Church of Shar if made public, it can, if used cautiously, certainly sow the seeds of distrust amongst the people of Saerloon.

If the PCs return the found children to Estrela’s parents (if they succeeded in the skill challenge of Encounter 3) or an orphanage outside Sembia (if they have no place for the children to go), the chosen guardians are surprised. They thank the PCs,

mentioning that more children died in Saerloon and perhaps in other places as well. They ask the PCs to keep their eyes open for any trace of these children. PCs who accept the mission gain the story award “Search for the Missing Children”.

CONCLUSION B

While the PCs find the Sanctum, the evidence points for the kidnappings points at the Night Knives. If presented with this information, Governess Haelia Johannes herself congratulates the PCs, but thereafter keeps a watchful eye to ensure that future meddling does not render any actual hints at the involvement of the Sharran cult.

If the PCs return the found children to Estrela’s parents (if they succeeded in the skill challenge of Encounter 3) or an orphanage outside Sembia (if they have no place for the children to go), the chosen guardians are surprised. They thank the PCs, mentioning that more children died in Saerloon and perhaps in other places as well. They ask the PCs to keep their eyes open for any trace of these children. PCs who accept the mission gain the story award “Search for the Missing Children”.

Encounter 5: Touched by Darkness Stats (Low Level)

Hobgoblin Grunts		Level 3 Minion
Medium natural humanoid		XP 38
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +1; low-light vision	
HP 1: a missed attack never damages a minion.		
AC 17 (19 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>), Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 12		
Speed 6		
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+6 vs. AC; 5 damage.		
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin grunt suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)		
The hobgoblin grunt makes a saving throw against the triggering effect.		
Phalanx Soldier		
The hobgoblin grunt gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Athletics +6, History +1		
Str 18 (+4)	Dex 14 (+2)	Wis 13 (+1)
Con 15 (+2)	Int 10 (+0)	Cha 9 (-1)
Equipment leather armor, light shield, longsword		

Kir-Lanan Wing (Level 3)		Level 3 Skirmisher
Medium shadow humanoid		XP 150
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +6; low-light vision		
HP 44; Bloodied 22; see also <i>necrotic healing</i>		
AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 16, Will 14		
Vulnerable 5 radiant		
Speed 5, fly 8 see also <i>mobile melee attack</i>		
m Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic		
+9 vs. AC; 1d4 + 5 damage plus 1d4 necrotic damage.		
M Mobile Melee Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic		
While flying, a kir-lanan wing may move half its speed and make one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The kir-lanan wing doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target.		
R Enfeebling Ray (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Necrotic		
+7 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 3 necrotic damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty on attack rolls (save ends).		
Combat Advantage		
The kir-lanan wing deals an extra 1d6 damage on attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.		
Necrotic Healing (immediate reaction; when damaged by a necrotic attack; encounter) ♦ Healing		
The kir-lanan wing heals 11 hit points.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common
Skills Stealth +8		
Str 20 (+7)	Dex 16 (+5)	Wis 9 (+1)
Con 12 (+3)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 12 (+3)

Nightcloak Felomin		Level 4 Elite Artillery (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid (human)		XP 350
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +5; darkvision	
Deathless Fanaticism aura 5; Lower-level allies in the aura remain alive when reduced to 0 hit points. An affected creature dies at the end of its next turn if it is still at 0 hit points or below.		
HP 100; Bloodied 50		
AC 16; Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 20; +4 to all defenses against fear and charm effects		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 6		
Action Points 1		
m Staff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.		
r Eldritch Blast (standard; at-will)		
Ranged 20; +10 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 5 damage.		
R Arc of Darkness (standard; encounter) ♦ Necrotic		
Felomin makes a separate attack against 3 different targets:		
Ranged 10; +10 vs. Ref; 2d6 + 4 necrotic damage.		
C Cloud of Darkness (minor; encounter)		
Close burst 2; Felomin creates a cloud of darkness that remains in place until the end his next turn. The cloud blocks line of sight for all creatures except Felomin. Any creature entirely within the cloud (except Felomin) is blinded as long as it exists.		
Dark Escape (immediate reaction; when Felomin is hit by a melee attack; at-will)		
Felomin teleports 5 squares.		
Invisibility (minor; recharges when first bloodied)		
Felomin turns invisible until he attacks or until the end of his next turn.		
Mob Defense		
Felomin gains a +1 bonus to all defenses for each ally adjacent to him.		
Clever Escape (move; recharge 5-6)		
Felomin moves up to twice his speed. He can move only into squares that take it farther away from his enemies. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common
Skills Arcana +11, Bluff +12		
Str 12 (+3)	Dex 16 (+5)	Wis 14 (+4)
Con 15 (+4)	Int 14 (+4)	Cha 16 (+5)
Equipment Staff, leather armor.		

Encounter 5: Touched by Darkness Stats (High Level)

Hobgoblin Grunts (level 5)		Level 5 Minion
Medium natural humanoid		XP 50
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +2; low-light vision	
HP 1: a missed attack never damages a minion.		
AC 19 (21 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>), Fortitude 17, Reflex 15, Will 14		
Speed 6		
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+8 vs. AC; 6 damage.		
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin grunt suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)		
The hobgoblin grunt makes a saving throw against the triggering effect.		
Phalanx Soldier		
The hobgoblin grunt gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Athletics +7, History +2		
Str 18 (+5)	Dex 14 (+3)	Wis 13 (+2)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 10 (+1)	Cha 9 (+0)
Equipment leather armor, light shield, longsword		

Kir-Lanan Wing (Level 6)		Level 6 Skirmisher
Medium shadow humanoid		XP 250
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +7; low-light vision		
HP 60; Bloodied 30; see also <i>necrotic healing</i>		
AC 20; Fortitude 18, Reflex 18, Will 16		
Vulnerable 5 radiant		
Speed 5, fly 8 see also <i>mobile melee attack</i>		
m Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic		
+12 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage plus 1d4 necrotic damage.		
M Mobile Melee Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic		
While flying, a kir-lanan wing may move half its speed and make one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The kir-lanan wing doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target.		
R Enfeebling Ray (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Necrotic		
+10 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 necrotic damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty on attack rolls (save ends).		
Combat Advantage		
The kir-lanan wing deals an extra 1d6 damage on attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.		
Necrotic Healing (immediate reaction; when damaged by a necrotic attack; encounter) ♦ Healing		
The kir-lanan wing heals 15 hit points.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common
Skills Stealth +8		
Str 20 (+7)	Dex 16 (+5)	Wis 9 (+1)
Con 12 (+3)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 12 (+3)

Nightcloak Felomin (Level 6)		Level 6 Elite Artillery (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid (human)		XP 500
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +6; darkvision		
Deathless Fanaticism aura 5; Lower-level allies in the aura remain alive when reduced to 0 hit points. An affected creature dies at the end of its next turn if it is still at 0 hit points or below.		
HP 128; Bloodied 64		
AC 18; Fortitude 20, Reflex 18, Will 22; +4 to all defenses against fear and charm effects		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 6		
Action Points 1		
m Staff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+10 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.		
r Eldritch Blast (standard; at-will)		
Ranged 20; +12 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 damage.		
R Arc of Darkness (standard; encounter) ♦ Necrotic		
Felomin makes a separate attack against 3 different targets:		
Ranged 10; +12 vs. Ref; 2d6 + 5 necrotic damage.		
C Cloud of Darkness (minor; encounter)		
Close burst 2; Felomin creates a cloud of darkness that remains in place until the end his next turn. The cloud blocks line of sight for all creatures except Felomin. Any creature entirely within the cloud (except Felomin) is blinded as long as it exists.		
Dark Escape (immediate reaction; when Felomin is hit by a melee attack; encounter)		
Felomin teleports 5 squares.		
Invisibility (minor; recharges when first bloodied)		
Felomin turns invisible until he attacks or until the end of his next turn.		
Mob Defense		
Felomin gains a +1 bonus to all defenses for each ally adjacent to him.		
Clever Escape (move; recharge 5-6)		
Felomin moves up to twice his speed. He can move only into squares that take it farther away from his enemies. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common
Skills Arcana +12, Bluff +13		
Str 12 (+4)	Dex 16 (+6)	Wis 14 (+5)
Con 15 (+5)	Int 14 (+5)	Cha 16 (+6)
Equipment Staff, leather armor		

ENCOUNTER 5: TOUCHED BY DARKNESS MAP

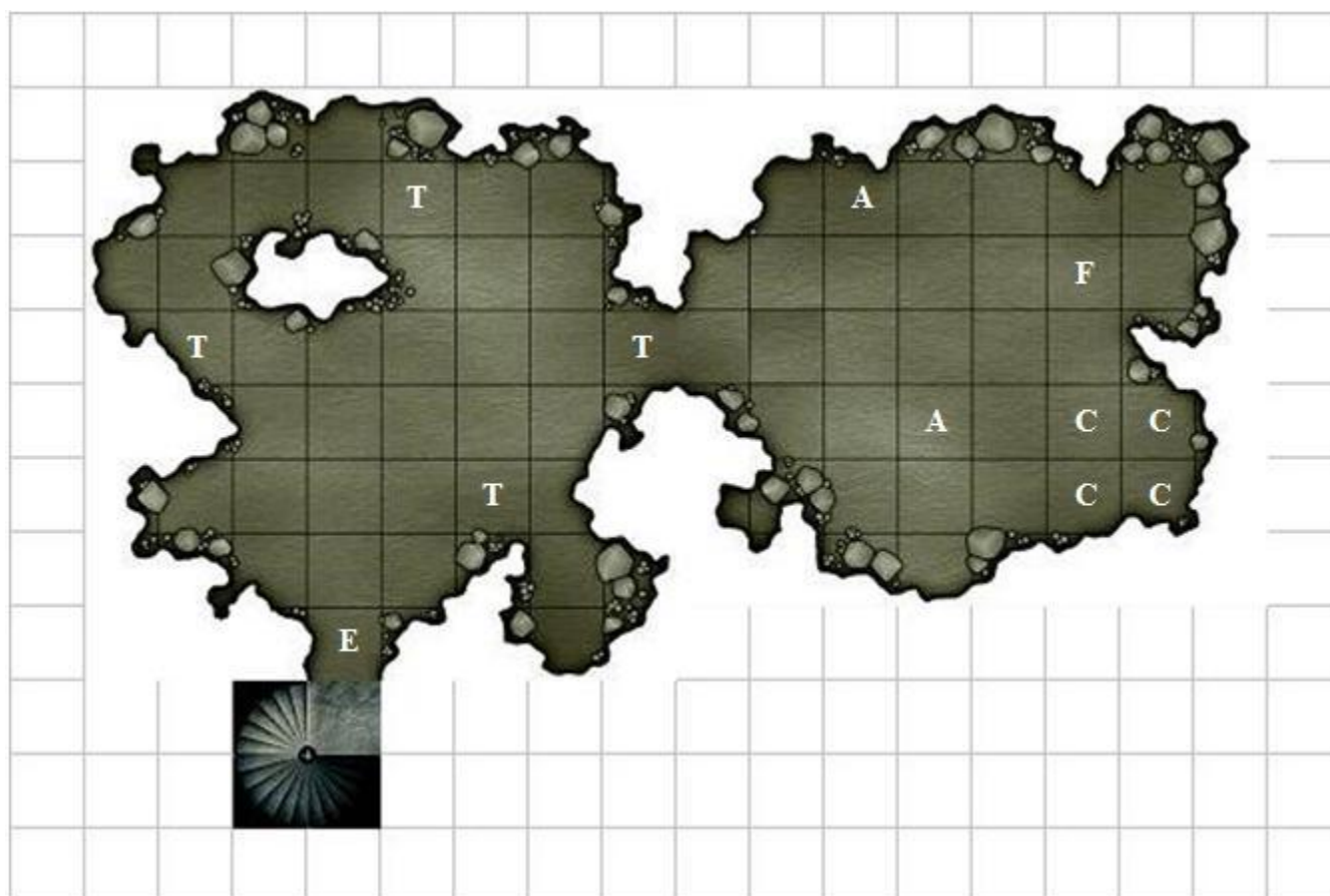
DUNGEON TILES

Spiral Stairs / Floor 2x2 x1

CAVE TILES

Big Cave 8x7 x1

Big Cave 8x8 x1



REWARDS SUMMARY

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

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

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

EXPERIENCE POINTS

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

Encounter 2: Check, Please!

140 / 200 XP

Encounter 3: What's Your Name Little Girl?

60 / 80 XP

Encounter 4: Hot on the Trail

70 / 100 XP

Encounter 5: The Boy on the Docks

175 / 300 XP

Encounter 6: Touched by Darkness

160 / 220 XP

Minor quest: Find culprits guilty plus evidence for kidnapping:

35 / 60 XP

Total Possible Experience

640 / 960 XP

TREASURE

Each PC receives treasure in the form of gold pieces as well as one share from a treasure bundle. The treasure bundle may give the PC more gold, a magic item, or some other item of value. Each player makes one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure bundle. Mark the one-letter bundle

ID on the tracking form next to any character that selects a bundle; note that it is possible (and likely) that some characters will not select a bundle for each session of play.

If characters buy or sell magic items or other gear during the adventure (or pay for services) add or subtract that amount from the total gold the PC receives at the end of the adventure. If a player selects an option that gives their character more gold, add that to the gold all characters receive, and ensure you enter the total amount of gold gained (minus any expenditures) online. You can have a negative number and enter that negative online. PCs receive 20% of a magic item's purchase price for any item they sell. If a player selects a magic weapon or suit of armor for their PC that is not specific on the type of item listed, they must select the exact item at the time they choose that bundle. For example, if a *duelist's weapon +1* is listed as a choice in a bundle, a player selects the form of the weapon amongst the choices possible for that magic item (light blades). If the player selects the item as a *+1 duelist's dagger*, the player writes that information down on the PC's adventure log and the item is forever after that specific weapon.

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

Gold Per PC

100 / 150 gp

(Encounter 1: 10 / 10 gp, Encounter 3: 30 / 40 gp, Encounter 5: 20 / 40 gp, Encounter 6: 40 / 60 gp)

EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING

Bundle A: *cloak of distortion +1* (level 4)

Found in Encounter 3

Bundle B: *+1 orb of sanguinary repercussions* (level 5)

Found in Encounter 5

Bundle C: *lifedrinker weapon +1* (level 5)

Found in Encounter 5

Bundle D: *+1 bloodthread armor* (low-level version only) (level 5)

Found in Encounter 6

Bundle E: *+2 bloodthread armor* (high-level version only) (level 9)

Found in Encounter 6

Bundle F: *ritual book of dark light*

Found in Encounter 6

Potion Plus Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add a *potion of healing* plus 75 / 200 gp to their total gold per PC. The player should write the potion gained on their adventure log.

More Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add 125 / 250 gp to their total gold per PC.

- b. They brought them to an orphanage in Sembia, or left them to behind to find their own way into life.
- c. They brought them to an orphanage outside Sembia.
- d. They brought them to a temple outside Sembia.

STORY AWARDS

Award these if the PC completes the condition for the award in the adventure. Pass out certificates to the players for their story awards. If a PC earns three awards, they may only have 2 of them and must pick which two they want before ending the session. Make sure to mark the story award codes next to each character that earned them on the tracking form.

CORE10 Search for the Missing Children

You rescued a group of children from a group of kidnappers who also faked the death of their victims to prevent people looking for the children. When you returned these children to a safe place, the guardians expressed concern that the group of kidnappers have been busy for much longer. You promised to keep your eyes open on your adventures and to free any such children you find. This starts a Major Quest.

1. Did the PCs surrender Estrela to the Sharrans?

- a. No.
- b. Yes.

2. Did the PCs manage to convince Estrela's parents that their daughter was alive and well?

- a. Yes.
- b. Yes, but they blamed the PCs for her kidnapping.
- c. No.

3. Did Felomin successfully manage to shift blame of the abductions to the Night Knives, or were the followers of Shar implicated.

- a. No.
- b. Yes.

4. What did the PCs do with the rescued children?

- a. They brought them to Estrela's parents.

NEW RULES

Cloak of Distortion

Level 4+

This cloak roils about you like the rippling air of a scorching desert.

Lvl 4	+1	840 gp	Lvl 19	+4	105,000 gp
Lvl 9	+2	4,200 gp	Lvl 24	+5	525,000 gp
Lvl 14	+3	21,000 gp	Lvl 29	+6	2,625,000 gp

Item Slot: Neck

Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, Will

Property: A ranged attack against you from more than 5 squares away takes a -5 penalty to the attack roll.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 151.

Ritual of Dark Light

An opaque ball of darkness forms in your hands, and a purple light shines forth from it, throwing everything around you into sharp relief.

Level: 4

Category: Exploration

Time: 1 minute

Duration: 1 day

Component Cost: 30 gp

Market Price: 150 gp

Key Skill: Arcana (no check)

You create a source of dim light that allows you and those around you to see without your being seen because of your light source.

The Dark Light ritual creates a ball of shadow that floats with you as you walk. It sheds dim light within 6 squares around it.

In its light you can see everything clearly. Only creatures within the light's radius can see the Dark Light ball or the dim light it creates. Vision within the Dark Light effect is in black-and-white, and color variations appear in shades of gray.

Reference: *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide*, page 143.

PLAYER HANDOUT 1

Night cloak Felomin:

You may be confused by the contents of this parcel, but permit me to assuage any uncertainty you might have.

It is imperative that the truth of our activities be known by none outside of our Faith. While our hold on this nation is strong, common knowledge of our recent dealings would prove ruinous for the Church.

Should the need arise, destroy all trappings of our faith, and replace them with the enclosed items. The Night Knives will make a convenient and convincing scapegoat, and I have grown tiresome of dealing with them. With the blame placed upon them, we will be free to resume our operations if interrupted. Also, I do not want you to treat the kir-lanan that I have sent as fodder. Their allegiance was hard-fought, and I'd not risk their loyalty solely because you don't want to stir your own tea.

Hopefully this will satisfy any questions you have, as I fully rely upon you to utilize your own cunning to fill any gaps that my instructions have not filled.

I know I needn't remind you to destroy this missive upon you reading it. Hopefully you are not so foolish as to neglect that yet again.

*Yours truly,
Your Dark Mother*