

BREAKING POINT

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

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When shopping for weapons the smith suddenly bursts into tears. Somebody captured his wife's soul and is using it to extort money and weapons from the poor smith. He has nothing more to give, and unless you help him everything is lost. A *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure set in Impiltur for characters levels 4-7.

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

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Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA event 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.

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PREPARING FOR PLAY

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

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

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

It is not easy to survive in the corrupt and dangerous cities of Impiltur. Even the rich are not save from the deprivations of the various demon cults and free roaming demons that plague the area.

One recent victim is the weapon smith Sergor Marsk. Those who have played *IMPI1-1 Alone* met him since he is the uncle of Kara the girl the PCs escorted into New Sarshel. When his wife, Tarana, died a few months ago after a drawn out disease, he was grief struck. Just when he more or less recovered, his wife appeared in his dreams. Her soul had been captured and for her release Sergor had to provide both gold and weapons to her captor. At first Sergor believed it to be a trick, but the specter told things only his wife knew and the images of his wife's tortured soul soon convinced him to comply.

At first the demands were reasonable and had it staid it that way, Sergor would have remained silent. After all, paying protection money and bribes is part of life in Impiltur and this was hardly different. The extortionist, whose identity remains a secret, became greedy, asking more and more. Now at the brink of bankruptcy, Sergor is desperate. He loves his wife, but he knows that even she would not want him to ruin his life, especially now that he has to take care of his cousin as well. So when a group of adventurers enters his shop, he finally breaks out in tears, the stress having gotten to him. Will the PCs refuse to help?

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

For whatever reason the PCs find them selves shopping for weapons in New Sarshel, most likely while preparing for a foray into the demon invested country. The weapon smith Sergor Marsk, perhaps known to some of the PCs, comes highly recommended and it is here where the adventure starts.

The weapon smith Sergor Marsk came highly recommended as one of the best and most knowledgeable weapon smiths in the city. It is strange though that for somebody so well known in what should be a booming business in an area like Impiltur seems to be doing so badly. His shop is low on stock, and there is hardly any furniture present. He himself has bedraggled look about him, both due to his worn clothing, pale sweaty skin, unkempt hair and nervous behavior.

Before you can even ask him something, he suddenly drops to his knees and starts to sob. "You are adventurers, aren't you? Please... you must help me... or... I me and my wife are doomed..." There is something disconcerting about a broad-shouldered muscled middle-aged man sobbing...

DM'S INTRODUCTION

Before the start of the adventure, check whether the PCs played *IMPI1-1 Alone* before and whether or not they gained any story awards. PCs who earned *IMPI1 Favor of Sergor Marsk* have helped him before, which should change the Player's Introduction above as well as his behavior towards the PCs in Encounter 1. Those with *IMPI2 Favor Halder* might contact the halfling for help, which he provides as discussed in Encounter 1.

Sergor Marsk needs the party's help to end an extortion racket. He begs the PCs to stake out the next extortion hand-over, situated in the graveyard where Sergor Marsk's wife is buried. Whether the PCs fight, interrogate or chase the thugs, they should glean enough information to learn the location of the extortionists' den. Along the way, they are be held up at a city checkpoint, and passing the check point is a skill challenge where the party can bluff, intimidate, bribe or otherwise slip by the guard in the middle of the night. At the den, they encounter the leader of a cult who has been collecting the extortion money and battle with his demonic ally and his evil minions. They recover some of Sergor's wealth, as well as discover items and money hoarded by the cult. They also discover a clue concerning another level of the conspiracy.

The adventure begins a Major Quest to free the soul of Tarana Marsk.

ENCOUNTER 1: A PLEA FOR HELP

SETUP

Important NPCs:

Sergor Marsk, male human weapon-smith.

Sergor Marsk confides in the characters, and asks them for help with his problem. The goal here is to get the characters to agree to stake out the next hand-off.

The burly man drops his eyes in resignation, and waves the characters into a small side room. He closes the door carefully, pulls the blinds fully together, ushers them to sit around a small table, and leans towards them in a conspiratorial fashion. "I need to trust someone. I have decided to trust you. I will tell you my troubles."

Relate the following throughout the conversation, and remember, he really needs the help of the PCs, but there is very little he can offer as a reward and he still has some pride left.

- His wife Tarana passed away 6 months ago after a drawn out illness. She was never strong. He lacked the money and influence for a magical ritual to remove the affliction. The priests of Ilmater assured him it was a natural disease.
- Three months ago, Tarana came to him in his dreams. She was torment. She told him she was help prisoner in a plane, and that she had been told she would not be released until Sergor met her captor's demands. She said they would know if I went to the authorities, that only if I followed their instructions she would be free.
- His wife said things only she would know. They even knew the size of my fortune - and some of the specific items I owned.
- Sergor has made 3 sizable payouts so far, as demanded. He has very little left now, and the demands continue, but now he doubts his wife will ever be freed.
- There has been a payout once per month. At each payout he had to leave a certain sum, both in coin and weapons, in a secluded location. The first was at an abandoned warehouse near the Drop (old coastline Sea of Fallen Stars). The second at what is known as Lover's Lane, a path just outside the city limits with a lovely view over the city and the sea. The third drop was at the Broken Monument, a damaged statue commemorating the victory of a

now-forgotten general over the hobgoblins of the Earthfast Mountains centuries ago.

- He never staid to watch who would collect the items, neither did he return except once at Lover's Lane. He went back the next day. It had rained the day he left the money, and when he returned he saw wheel tracks in the dirt. He also once observed the carriage, a black one with no recognizable symbols. It looked expensive, and what little he saw of the occupant suggested a man of substance.
- As far as he knows he has no enemies capable of a deed such as this.
- He must leave 500 gold at the grave of his dead wife tonight. That is why he is asking for help. He wants the PCs to catch the swine and find a way to set his wife free - to end this once and for all.
- He cannot offer much as a reward except for one remaining magical weapon that he acquired from the city guard. The guards had gained it from a raid on a group of cultists. It is a *lifedrinker weapon +1 / lifedrinker weapon +2* decorated with all kinds of leering demonic faces. Sergor only gives it to the PCs in advance when one PC has story award IMPI1.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The PCs may wish to visit previous drop points to search for clues - they may do so, but you can point out that the next hand-over is tonight, and it is already near dusk - they have perhaps 2 hours before nightfall.

TREASURE

At low-level the PCs can gain a *lifedrinker weapon +1* and at high-level a *lifedrinker weapon +2*.

VISITING HALDAR

If a PC with the **Favor of Haldar** visits Haldar, he offers them assistance in the form of specialized equipment on loan. The PC may borrow any piece of mundane unlimited use equipment from the PHB for the duration of the adventure.

ENCOUNTER 2: AT THE MIDNIGHT HOUR

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3 / 6 (750 / 1300 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures.

2 hobgoblin soldiers (S)

2 hobgoblin archers (A)

1 hobgoblin warcaster (W)

1 hobgoblin grunt (M) (does not fight at low level)

The party has time to set themselves up “in ambush” or as they desire. They can make any preparations they see fit. You can incorporate those preparations into the battle as you judge best. Let the party know that anything too obvious or ambitious in terms of digging or tree chopping attracts the attentions of the guards and maintenance staff.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

The graveyard is quiet and shady, and a little overgrown. The reduced staff has focused more on security than maintenance, and the lush foliage presses in from all around.

Tarana's grave is in a secluded spot several twists and turns from the main entrance. Mature trees surround the area of perhaps a dozen graves. One is fresh dug and gaping open. The gravel road runs past and under an arbor where flowering vines arch over the road, before opening into an area where carriages can turn around and return.

- Two characters could be concealed in the fresh dug grave.
- The arbor supports up to 150 lbs.
- There are two guards posted at the main entrance, some 200 squares along a winding path from the grave, at a gate that is locked at night. They will question people behaving suspiciously, but are quickly satisfied even with the most outrageous lies. They insist nothing bad happens at the graveyard, but if pressed, admit that they have no idea if anything happens during the night and they like to keep it that way.

- There are no patrols at night (in the day, maintenance workers can be encountered anywhere from time to time).
- As the encounter begins, a DC 20 Perception check reveals a second carriage waiting just outside the cemetery, as the first one enters and approaches.
- The cemetery is surrounded by a 10 feet high crumbling stone wall overgrown with ivy. No building nearby provides a good view on the graveyard, and there are countless ways to sneak inside without drawing attention.
- There is a small square at the main entrance. Located at the square is a quiet tavern, Quiet Time, that caters to visitors of the graveyard. The people living near the graveyard are a suspicious lot, who keep their shutters and doors closed during the night. They don't want to know what is going on, and they do not allow PCs to hide inside their house. They might be poor, but they are scared of drawing the wrong kind of attention. If pressed, they admit all kinds of things happen at the graveyard all the time, though not anything loud recently.
- A search of the graveyard reveals that many parts are abandoned. Some of the abandoned crypts show signs of use during rituals, none recent though.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: By midnight, there is a partial moon. Characters with low-light vision see normally, to others, creatures in the area have concealment - causing -2 to melee and ranged attack rolls.

Terrain Features: Gravestones and trees provide cover. Shrubs provide concealment, and total concealment during the dark against opponents without low-light vision. The shrubs and dirt mound is difficult terrain (2x movement cost).

TACTICS

The carriage turns onto the stretch near Tarana's grave, and the two hobgoblin soldiers jump off and precede the carriage on foot. They are alert and scan the bushes systematically (making active perception checks). The grunt is the driver, who takes no part in the combat at low-level, but he defends himself or attempt to flee if possible. The warcaster remains inside the carriage enjoying superior cover, while the archers ride on the roof. Once combat begins, the soldiers attempt to grab the money and run, while the warcaster and archer harries the party and tries to slow them down.

The carriage runs non-stop past the grave and under the Arbor to attempt to turn around a roundabout provided for that purpose just beyond the graves, and pick up soldiers if they survive “on the run” and head for the gates. As soon as two enemies fall, the second carriage moves off. A DC 25 Perception check notices this happening (DC 20 if the party had previously spotted the second carriage).

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove a hobgoblin archer.

Six PCs: Add an extra hobgoblin soldier.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Ideally, the PCs defeat the gang. If they capture a member alive, proceed to the Interrogation option (3a) of the Skill Challenge. If they instead chase survivors in the carriage or on foot proceed to the chase scene (3b). Alternatively, they might decide to wait and follow in stealth. If so proceed to (3c).

If they do not capture an enemy, and either there are no enemy survivors or they do not follow the carriage, have one of the characters notice an oddity of the track of the carriage – a notch on the wheel makes a distinctive pattern in the dirt. Proceed to track the carriage in (3d).

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 150 / 260 experience points each for defeating the hobgoblins.

TREASURE

The hobgoblins carry a small amount of coin. Each PC gains 10 / 20 gp.

ENCOUNTER 2: AT THE MIDNIGHT HOUR STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Hobgoblin Soldier	Level 3 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +3; low-light vision	
HP 47; Bloodied 23	
AC 20 (22 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>); Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 16	
Speed 5	
m Flail (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, the target is marked and slowed until the end of the hobgoblin soldier's next turn.	
M formation Strike (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Requires flail; +7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the hobgoblin soldier shifts 1 square provided it ends in a space adjacent to another hobgoblin.	
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin soldier rolls a saving throw against the effect.	
Phalanx Soldier	
The hobgoblin soldier gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Athletics +10, History +8	
Str 19 (+5) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 14 (+3)	
Con 15 (+3) Int 11 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)	
Equipment scale armor, heavy shield, flail	

Hobgoblin Archer	Level 3 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +8; low-light vision	
HP 39; Bloodied 19	
AC 17; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 13	
Speed 6	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
r Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the hobgoblin archer grants an ally within 5 squares of it a +2 bonus to its next ranged attack against the same target.	
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin soldier rolls a saving throw against the effect.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Athletics +5, History +6	
Str 14 (+3) Dex 19 (+5) Wis 14 (+3)	
Con 15 (+3) Int 11 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)	
Equipment leather armor, longsword, longbow, quiver of 30 arrows	

Hobgoblin Warcaster	Level 3 Controller (Leader)
Hobgoblin Warcaster	Level 3 Controller (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +4; low-light vision	
HP 46; Bloodied 23	
AC 17; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 14	
Speed 6	
m Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage.	
M Shockstaff (standard; recharge 4-6) ♦ Lightning, Weapon	
Requires quarterstaff; +8 vs. AC; 2d10 + 4 lightning damage and the target is dazed until the end of the hobgoblin warcaster's next turn.	
R Force Lure (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Force	
Ranged 5; +7 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 4 force damage, and the target slides 3 squares.	
C Force Pulse (standard; recharge 6) ♦ Force	
Close blast 5; +7 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 4 force damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone. <i>Miss</i> : Half damage, and the target is neither pushed nor knocked prone.	
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin soldier rolls a saving throw against the effect.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Arcana +10, Athletics +4, History +12	
Str 13 (+2) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 16 (+4)	
Con 14 (+3) Int 19 (+5) Cha 13 (+2)	
Equipment robes, quarterstaff	

Hobgoblin Grunt (level 5)	Level 5 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 50
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +1; low-light vision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 19; 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 suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin soldier rolls a saving throw against the effect.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Athletics +5, History +2	
Str 18 (+4) Dex 14 (+2) Wis 13 (+1)	
Con 15 (+2) Int 10 (+0) Cha 9 (-1)	
Equipment leather armor, light shield, longsword	

ENCOUNTER 2: AT THE MIDNIGHT HOUR STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Hobgoblin Soldier (level 5)		Level 5 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid		XP 200
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +4; low-light vision	
HP 63; Bloodied 31		
AC 22 (24 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>); Fortitude 20, Reflex 18, Will 18		
Speed 5		
m Flail (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage, the target is marked and slowed until the end of the hobgoblin soldier's next turn.		
M formation Strike (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Requires flail; +9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage, and the hobgoblin soldier shifts 1 square provided it ends in a space adjacent to another hobgoblin.		
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)		
The hobgoblin soldier rolls a saving throw against the effect.		
Phalanx Soldier		
The hobgoblin soldier gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Athletics +10, History +8		
Str 19 (+6)	Dex 14 (+4)	Wis 14 (+4)
Con 15 (+4)	Int 11 (+2)	Cha 10 (+2)
Equipment scale armor, heavy shield, flail		

Hobgoblin Archer (level 5)		Level 5 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid		XP 200
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +*; low-light vision	
HP 51; Bloodied 25		
AC 19; Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 15		
Speed 6		
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.		
r Longbow (standard; at-will) Weapon		
Ranged 20/40; +11 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage, and the hobgoblin archer grants an ally within 5 squares of it a +2 bonus to its next ranged attack against the same target.		
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)		
The hobgoblin soldier rolls a saving throw against the effect.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Athletics +5, History +6		
Str 14 (+4)	Dex 19 (+6)	Wis 14 (+4)
Con 15 (+4)	Int 11 (+2)	Cha 10 (+2)
Equipment leather armor, longsword, longbow, quiver of 30 arrows		

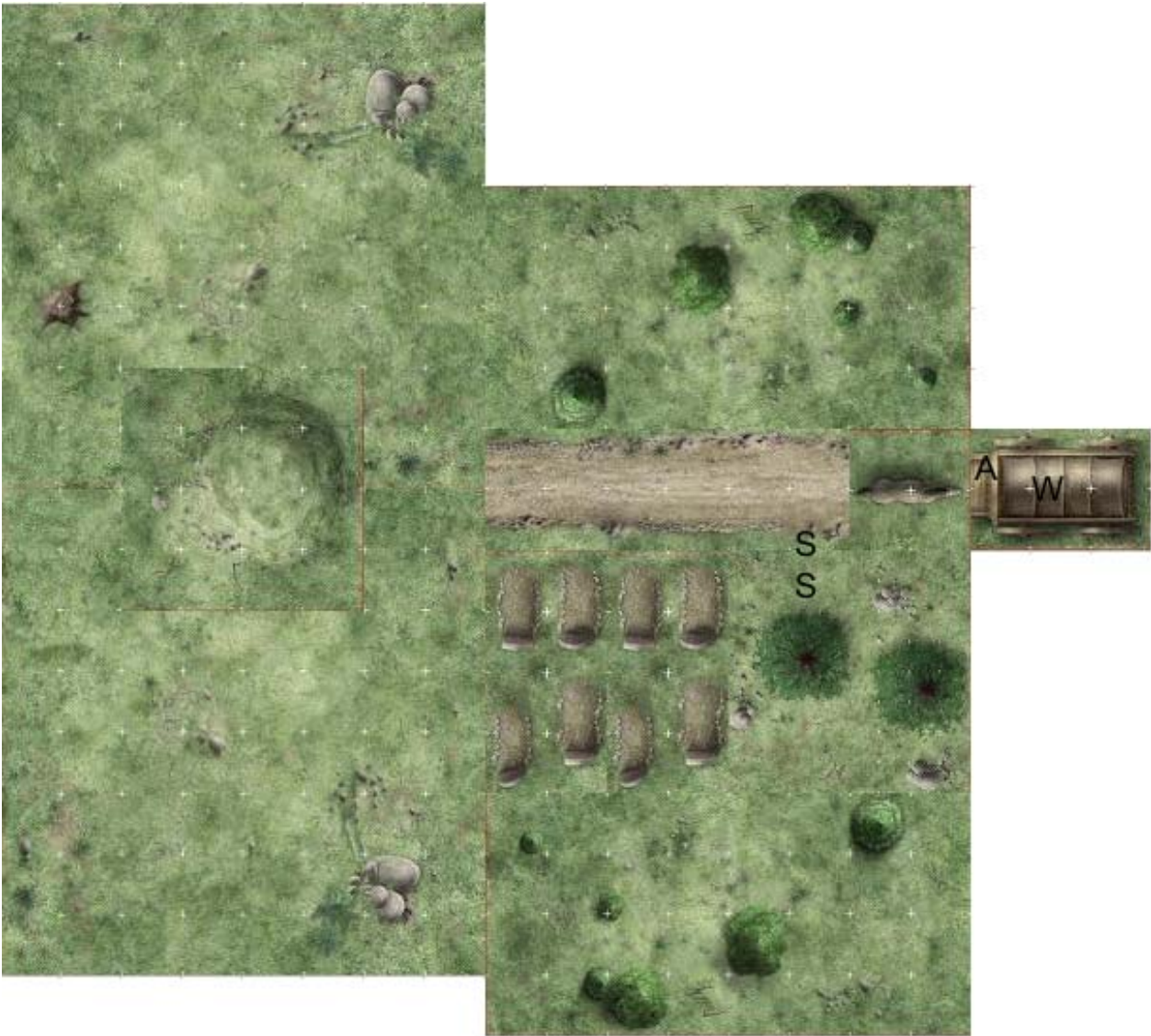
Hobgoblin Warcaster		Level 5 Controller (Leader)
Hobgoblin Warcaster		Level 5 Controller (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid		XP 200
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +4; low-light vision	
HP 62; Bloodied 31		
AC 19; Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 16		
Speed 6		
m Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.		
M Shockstaff (standard; recharge 4-6) ♦ Lightning, Weapon		
Requires quarterstaff; +10 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 lightning damage and the target is dazed until the end of the hobgoblin warcaster's next turn.		
R Force Lure (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Force		
Ranged 5; +9 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 force damage, and the target slides 3 squares.		
C Force Pulse (standard; recharge 6) ♦ Force		
Close blast 5; +9 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 force damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone. Miss: Half damage, and the target is neither pushed nor knocked prone.		
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)		
The hobgoblin soldier rolls a saving throw against the effect.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Arcana +11, Athletics +5, History +13		
Str 13 (+3)	Dex 14 (+4)	Wis 16 (+5)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 19 (+6)	Cha 13 (+3)
Equipment Robes, quarterstaff		

Hobgoblin Grunt		Level 7 Minion
Medium natural humanoid		XP 75
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +1; low-light vision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		
AC 21; Fortitude 19, Reflex 17, Will 16		
Speed 6		
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+10 vs. AC; 7 damage.		
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)		
The hobgoblin soldier rolls a saving throw against the effect.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Athletics +5, History +2		
Str 18 (+4)	Dex 14 (+2)	Wis 13 (+1)
Con 15 (+2)	Int 10 (+0)	Cha 9 (-1)
Equipment leather armor, light shield, longsword		

ENCOUNTER 2: AT THE MIDNIGHT HOUR MAP

RUINS OF THE WILD

Camp / Field	8x8	x2
Road / Crevasse	8x2	x1
Cabin / Field w/Trees	8x8	x1
Field / Skeleton	4x8	x2
Graves / Briar	4x2	x2
Mound / Hobbit Hole	4x4	x1
Horse / Road Bend	2x2	x1
Covered Wagon / Field w/Log	4x2	x1



ENCOUNTER 3: THE CHASE IS ON.

**SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 6 / 8,
COMPLEXITY 2 (500 / 700 XP)**

SETUP

Number of Successes: 6

Number of Failures: 3

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Stealth, Athletics, Acrobatics, Streetwise.

Important NPCs: City guards -

1 x guard commander; human guard elite

10 x human guard

More guards are immediately summoned in the event of difficulties.

Depending on how the party completed Encounter 2, they will have different options for this skill challenge - beginning with either scene A, B, C or D. Regardless of the method chosen, once 3 successes or 2 failures have been gained, proceed with scene E for the final leg of the skill challenge.

SKILL CHALLENGE

The PCs engage in a skill challenge to find the hideout of the person extorting Sergor Marsk as quickly as possible.

SCENE A. INTERROGATION

The hobgoblin's armor and weapons look well maintained and he appears to take regular baths. He looks at you defiantly despite his current ordeal. It is clear that it is going to take some work to get him to talk.

The party may use the following skills to gain information from the captive hobgoblin:

Intimidate (DC 17 / 18): Impress on the captive that he will suffer if he does not talk.

Diplomacy (DC 19 / 20): Explain that the captive has everything to gain by talking to you.

Heal (DC 12 / 13): You know exactly how to cause the most pain to your victim. A successful check does not grant a success for the challenge, instead granting a +2 bonus on the next check. A failure results in a -2 penalty.

History/Nature/Religion (DC 12 / 13):

Hobgoblins are disciplined soldiers, who commonly earn gold as mercenaries even in Impiltur (an obvious sign on how far Impiltur has fallen since the hobgoblins have been a traditional enemy of the kingdom for centuries). Hobgoblins tend to worship Bane or his servants, and they respect strength and power. This knowledge grants a +2 bonus on the next check used to gain information from the hobgoblin.

A success obtains the name (Horryl van Deesbrock) of their employer, and the location of his manor. The hobgoblins are professional mercenaries and they little of what is going on inside the manor. They were ordered to collect the gold at the drop point and to be ready for trouble. They never have been at the manor, living at the gatehouse of the mansion's garden.

A second success causes the hobgoblin to confide that Horryl is not the real lord of the mansion, that is his brother. They have not seen him though. The hobgoblins also suspect Horryl is a warlock of some kind with the ability to summon demons.

A third success causes the hobgoblin to admit that they avoid the gardens unless absolutely necessary and even then they stick to the path. There is some kind of monster roaming the park.

SCENE B. CHASE

The streets of New Sarshel are narrow and not of too good a quality. Luckily they are also deserted at this time of the day or otherwise any high-speed chase would certainly result in an accident. Still, it is difficult enough as it is, especially with the horses jumpy after the fight earlier.

In hot pursuit, the party can use the following skills to accumulate successes:

Nature (DC 17 / 18): control the carriage as it careens through the deserted streets of New Sarshel. A failure on this check cause each occupant or outrider to expend a healing surge.

Perception (DC 12 / 13): See/hear the progress of the enemy as they make their way ahead. In the silence of the night, hearing and seeing their prey is rather easy.

Streetwise (DC 17 / 18): determine that the enemy is heading for the Noble District - and know the direction to the gate.

If the PCs do not accumulate any failures here grant a +2 on Athletics or Nature checks to rush the gates in Scene E.

SCENE C. STEALTH

The streets of New Sarshel are narrow and not of too good a quality. The tall narrow houses loom overhead, providing more than enough shadow to hide in. The fact that the streets are deserted is a mixed blessing, on the one hand there is nobody to betray your presence on the other neither can you disappear in the crowd and even the softest noise carries far in the current silence.

Stealthily tailing the enemy is tricky, as they move quickly in a carriage. It likely causes the party to split up, which might cause problems at the gate.

Perception (DC 12 / 13): to initially follow and subsequently track the enemy carriage. Instead of granting a success it grants a +2 on the next check.

Stealth (DC 21 / 22): To remain out of site of both the pursued and the authorities. All PCs trailing the wagon should make a check. If more than half of the PCs make it, count it as one success for the skill challenge. Otherwise it is a failure. If the PCs are spotted the coach starts to move even faster, turning it into a chase (assuming the PCs are on horse or in a carriage - Scene A) or into tracking the coach (Scene D).

Athletics (DC 17 / 18): To keep up with the fast moving carriage.

Endurance (DC 17 / 18): Any PC running after the carriage needs to make an Endurance check. A failure results in the loss of 1 healing surge, but does not add a failure to the skill challenge.

If the PCs do not accumulate any failures here grant a +2 on Athletics or Nature checks to rush the gates in Scene E.

SCENE D TRACK

The streets of New Sarshel are narrow and luckily not of too good a quality. So despite the fact that parts are cobbled there is more than enough mud to track your quarry. The fact that it has rained recently and that the streets are deserted certainly helps as well.

The PCs can use the following skills to accumulate successes:

Perception (DC 17 / 18): follow the distinctive tracks of your quarry amidst the myriad tracks on the streets.

Streetwise (DC 17 / 18): know that most of the “carriage trade” originates in the Noble District of

New Sarshel. A second check allows the PCs to realize there is a gate nearby and how to get their via a shortcut.

SCENE E. AT THE GATES

As you turn around the corner, you see that a thick city wall blocks the street. A large gate pierces the wall. Several well-armed disciplined guards appear to be on duty. Their equipment and demeanor suggesting that whatever is behind the wall is not outside, but a district inhabited by the rich and influential.

If the PCs were chasing or trailing the coach they just see it pass the gate with the guards closing it behind. In this case the PCs can attempt to rush past the guards. Otherwise the gate is closed, and the PCs need to either climb over the wall or try to convince the guards to let them pass.

The city watch has been instructed to stop “common footpads” entering the Noble District at this time of the night. They seek to stop the PCs from gaining passage. You may need to make it clear that some of the guards have excellent cover and concealment behind arrow slits and above murder holes, and that besides, killing guards is murder and brings down the weight of city authority against the PCs.

The PCs can use the following skills if they try to reason with the guards:

Intimidate (DC 17 / 18): Suggest that it might go badly for the guards if they attempt to stop you. Failure on this roll causes a -2 on subsequent bluff and diplomacy checks.

Bluff (DC 17 / 18): Convince the guard that you are either part of the retinue of Horryl (+5 on check if you are riding in the van Deesbrock carriage), or nobility. Success also tells the PCs the name, Horryl van Deesbrock, of the Lord they are pursuing. Using information potentially gained from the hobgoblins or from what the PCs know of the family should add bonuses to this check.

Diplomacy (DC 17 / 18): convince the guards that you about good and lawful business. Success also shows the PCs that the guards were specifically told to stop them.

History (DC 12 / 13): Using facts about local nobility and their behavior to help convincing the guards to let them pass. Instead of a success it grants a +2 bonus on the next check. A failed check gives a -2 penalty instead as the PCs misremembered an important fact.

Insight/Streetwise (DC 12 / 13): Realize that bribing the guards might not be a good idea. Offering a bribe of about 25 gp in secret to the captain should work. This skill does not give a success or a failure.

Bribe: These guards are well paid, and they do not allow anybody to enter. If the PCs offer 25 gp in secret to the captain, though, he becomes much more lenient, granting 1 automatic success for the skill challenge. Openly trying to bribe any soldier results in 1 automatic failure.

Alternatively the PCs might try alternative methods to get past the gate, such as sneaking/climbing or rushing past before the guards can close the door:

Stealth (DC 17 / 18): sneak by somehow. Using the cover of another passer by judged lawful grants +2 to this check.

Athletics (DC 17 / 18): Run by before the gate closes (alternatively Acrobatics or Stealth can be used for this), or scale the wall. Each PC attempting the feat should make a check, if half or more succeed it results in a success for the skill challenge. Otherwise it is a failure. A failure while scaling the wall results in the loss of 1 healing surge. A failure while trying to rush past the gate forces the PCs to talk with the guards who are now much less inclined to listen to reason (the PCs have a -2 penalty on all remaining checks involving the guards).

Acrobatics (DC 17 / 18): slip by the guards or run along a rooftop to a point where the wall can be jumped.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Completing the skill challenge takes a variable amount of time depending on the method of find the hideout the PCs picked. Under normal circumstances it takes about 15 minutes by foot to reach the gate into the Noble District, and about 10 minutes by foot to arrive at the Van Deesbrock manor. Getting past the costs about 15 minutes.

Regardless of success or failure, at some point the PCs may learn the name Van Deesbrock, either from interrogating a hobgoblin, by a slip of the tongue from a guard or by recognizing the heraldry at the gate (see Encounter 4). A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 History or Streetwise check remembers that Harnoy van Deesbrock is an eccentric and withdrawn eladrin. Rumors say he has been banished for some kind of crime the details of which depending on the teller. Fact is that he earns his money with designing gardens

for the rich, and he has a fondness for strange plants. PCs from Impiltur gain a +5 bonus on this check.

Success: The party manages to follow the enemy and pass by the gate, proceeding in close pursuit of the enemy. Horryl has no time to prepare for the arrival of the PCs. Proceed with Encounter 4 and 5 as normal.

Failure: The party has failed to gain bloodless passage, or never even arrived at the gates, and must wait until dawn to gain access to the noble quarter. If the party fails to gain the necessary information, Sergor contacts them the following day and tell them a friend of his spotted a carriage leaving the graveyard that night, and followed it to the van Deesbrock Mansion. Horryl has been able to bolster his defenses and use a ritual to strengthen him self and the demons. They have a +1 ritual bonus on all attacks and defenses.

If the PCs decide to take an extensive rest before approaching the Van Deesbrock Mansion Horryl also has been able to prepare. Treat this skill check as failed, although, the PCs still get experience for this skill challenge as if they succeeded.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Each PC receives 100 / 140 experience for successful completion of this skill challenge.

TREASURE

There is no treasure available from this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 4: GARDEN OF EVIL

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 2 / 5 (600 / 1000 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures:

Low Level Encounter:

2 Vine Horror (V)

1 Vine Horror Spellfiend (S)

High Level Encounter:

2 Vine Horrors (V)

1 Vine Horror Spellfiend (S)

1 Dryad (D)

Once past the gate, it does not take much time to find the Van Deesbrock Mansion. It is situated in the middle of a small, but dense garden surrounded by a 10 feet high, 1 feet thick brick wall. The mansion is hidden from view from the walls by trees and bushes.

The front gate is made out of decorated black iron bars and flanked by a small gatehouse. The gatehouse is used by the hobgoblins and is likely empty now. If the PCs never fought the hobgoblins these have been recalled to the mansion. It is there that the PCs will fight them - see below for more details. There is a small wooden gate at the back. A large gravel path leads to the mansion. Several smaller paths lead through the rest of the garden.

The garden appears to be lush indeed, covered with dense bushes and tall majestic trees. There appear to be a few open places, either due to small pools or to highlight statuary or other art object. There are surprisingly few animals, and the only sound you hear is that of the wind rushing through the leaves.

Whether the PCs climb the wall, or pass through the gate, as they proceed through the grounds they are ambushed by the living plant horrors that inhabit the gardens around the Deesbrock mansion.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: At night, there is a partial moon. Characters with low-light vision see normally, to others, creatures in the area have concealment - causing -2 to melee and ranged attack rolls.

Terrain Features: Trees provide cover and concealment. Shrubs provide concealment.

Movement through shrubs cost 2x normal movement. The ponds are shallow, but movement in them costs 2x normal.

TACTICS

In the high level version, the dryad may appear as an elf maiden and run from the party, luring them into the path of the Vine Horrors.

A vine horror waits until the PCs are within 5 squares (DC 21 / 22 Perception to spot) to use their *vicious vines* to restrain them, allowing the spellfiend to lash them at a distance.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Reduce the hit points of the Vine Horrors by 16 and the Spellfiend by 12, and the attacks, AC and defenses of each by 2, and the damages by 1.

Six PCs: Add an extra Vine Horror.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The woods around the mansion seem eerily quiet as the characters can now approach the main building itself.

The characters enter the mansion by any door or window. If they did not defeat the hobgoblins in Encounter 2 (or some escaped), they encounter them in a room on the main floor here. Use a simple 8 by 6 room with some furnishings for this battle. Otherwise they soon hear noises from downstairs and there is nothing of real interest to find in the rest of the house.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Each PC should earn 120 / 200 experience points in this encounter for defeating the Vine Horrors.

TREASURE

If the PCs search the nearby pool they find some assorted coin and glittering knick-knacks for a total of 20 / 40 gp for each PC.

ENCOUNTER 4: GARDEN OF EVIL STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Vine Horror		Level 5 Controller	
Medium natural humanoid (plant)		XP 200	
Initiative +7		Senses Perception +9; blindsight 10	
HP 67; Bloodied 33			
AC 19; Fortitude 17, Reflex 18, Will 15			
Speed 6 (forest walk, swamp walk), swim 6			
m Claw (standard; at-will)			
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.			
C Vicious Vines (standard; encounter)			
Close burst 5; targets enemies; +10 vs. Reflex; the target is restrained and takes ongoing 10 damage (save ends) as magical vines spring up out of the ground and crush it.			
Malleability			
The Vine Horror can compress its body enough to squeeze through a 1-inch wide crack. Cracks and other openings that are more than 1-inch wide do not slow the vine horror at all.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Elven	
Skills Stealth +12			
Str 18 (+6)		Dex 21 (+7)	
Con 19 (+6)		Int 9 (+1)	
		Wis 14 (+4)	
		Cha 10 (+2)	

Vine Horror Spellfiend (level 5)		Level 5 Artillery	
Medium natural humanoid (plant)		XP 200	
Initiative +6		Senses Perception +10; blindsight 10	
HP 53; Bloodied 26			
AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 13			
Speed 6 (forest walk, swamp walk), swim 6			
m Claw (standard; at-will)			
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.			
r Shock Orb (standard; at-will) ♦ Lightning			
Ranged 10; +10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 lightning damage.			
R Lashing Vine of Dread (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear			
Ranged 5; +8 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 3 damage, and the target is pushed 5 squares.			
A Caustic Cloud (standard; recharge 4-6) ♦ Acid			
Area burst 1 within 10; +8 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 2 acid damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 acid damage and is blinded (save ends both).			
Malleability			
The Vine Horror can compress its body enough to squeeze through a 1-inch wide crack. Cracks and other openings that are more than 1-inch wide do not slow the vine horror at all.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Elven	
Skills Stealth +11			
Str 18 (+6)	Dex 18 (+6)	Wis 14 (+4)	
Con 17 (+5)	Int 11 (+2)	Cha 10 (+2)	

ENCOUNTER 4: IN THE GARDEN OF EVIL (HIGH LEVEL)

Vine Horror		Level 5 Controller	
Medium natural humanoid (plant)		XP 200	
Initiative +7		Senses Perception +9; blindsight 10	
HP 67; Bloodied 33			
AC 19; Fortitude 17, Reflex 18, Will 15			
Speed 6 (forest walk, swamp walk), swim 6			
m Claw (standard; at-will)			
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.			
C Vicious Vines (standard; encounter)			
Close burst 5; targets enemies; +10 vs. Reflex; the target is restrained and takes ongoing 10 damage (save ends) as magical vines spring up out of the ground and crush it.			
Malleability			
The Vine Horror can compress its body enough to squeeze through a 1-inch wide crack. Cracks and other openings that are more than 1-inch wide do not slow the vine horror at all.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Elven	
Skills Stealth +12			
Str 18 (+6)		Dex 21 (+7)	
Con 19 (+6)		Int 9 (+1)	
		Wis 14 (+4)	
		Cha 10 (+2)	

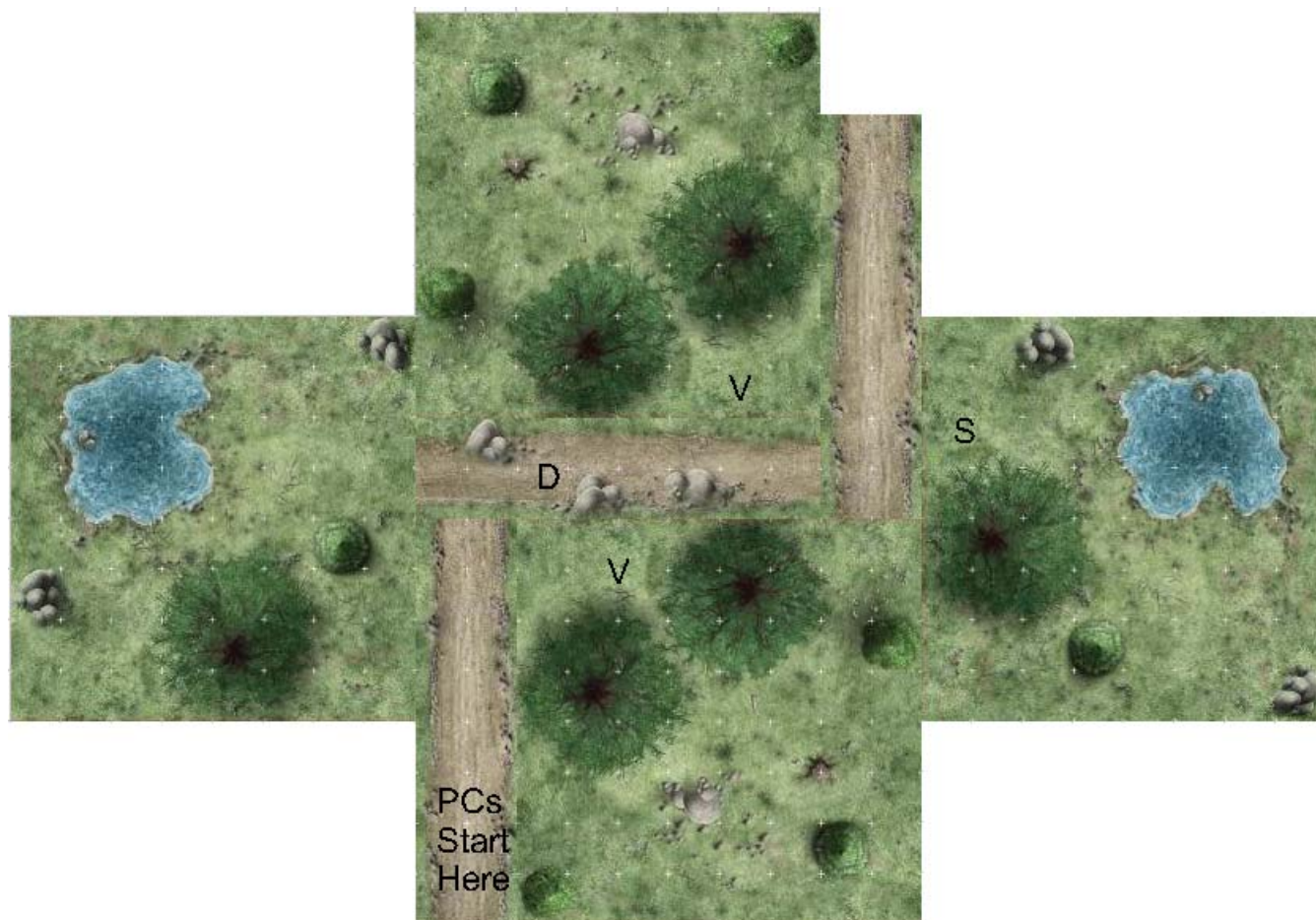
Vine Horror Spellfiend (level 5)		Level 5 Artillery	
Medium natural humanoid (plant)		XP 200	
Initiative +6		Senses Perception +10; blindsight 10	
HP 53; Bloodied 26			
AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 13			
Speed 6 (forest walk, swamp walk), swim 6			
m Claw (standard; at-will)			
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.			
r Shock Orb (standard; at-will) ♦ Lightning			
Ranged 10; +10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 lightning damage.			
R Lashing Vine of Dread (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear			
Ranged 5; +8 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 3 damage, and the target is pushed 5 squares.			
A Caustic Cloud (standard; recharge 4-6) ♦ Acid			
Area burst 1 within 10; +8 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 2 acid damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 acid damage and is blinded (save ends both).			
Malleability			
The Vine Horror can compress its body enough to squeeze through a 1-inch wide crack. Cracks and other openings that are more than 1-inch wide do not slow the vine horror at all.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Elven	
Skills Stealth +11			
Str 18 (+6)		Dex 18 (+6)	
Con 17 (+5)		Int 11 (+2)	
		Wis 14 (+4)	
		Cha 10 (+2)	

Dryad		Level 9 Skirmisher	
Dryad		Level 9 Skirmisher	
Medium fey humanoid (plant)		XP 400	
Initiative +9		Senses Perception +12	
HP 92; Bloodied 46			
AC 23; Fortitude 22, Reflex 21, Will 21			
Speed 8 (forest walk)			
m Claw (standard; at-will)			
+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage, or 1d8 + 9 damage if the target is the only enemy adjacent to the dryad.			
Deceptive Veil (minor, at-will) ♦ Illusion			
The dryad can disguise itself to appear as any Medium humanoid usually a beautiful elf or eladrin. A successful Insight check (opposed by the dryad's Bluff check) pierces the disguise.			
Treestride (move, at-will) ♦ Teleportation			
The dryad can teleport 8 squares if it begins and ends adjacent to a tree, a treant or a plant of Large size or bigger.			
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Elven	
Skills Bluff +10, Insight +12, Stealth +12			
Str 19 (+8)	Dex 17 (+7)	Wis 17 (+7)	
Con 12 (+5)	Int 10 (+4)	Cha 13 (+5)	

ENCOUNTER 4: IN THE GARDEN OF EVIL MAP

RUINS OF THE WILD

Stream / Road	8x2	x2
Stonehenge / Field w/Pond	8x8	x2
Ruined Tower / Field w/Trees	8x8	x2
Field / Road	8x2	x1



ENCOUNTER 5: INSIDE THE MANSION

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 6 / 8 (1300 / 1700 XP)

Setup

This encounter includes the following creatures. Remember, if the PCs failed at the skill challenge in Encounter 3 or took an extended rest at some point, all creatures have a +1 ritual bonus to their defenses and attack rolls:

1 x Horryl van Deesbrock (elite)

2 x Evistro

4 x Human Lackeys (minions)

After some searching, the PCs find a thick wooden door in a backchamber leading down into a cellar.

A steep stone staircase leads down into the darkness, although, flickering light suggests there are torches down below. A hideous mewling, snorting and groaning can be heard from below.

At the bottom of the stairs, a short corridor opens into a large room, where Horryl Van Deesbrock, his cultists and evistro demons await the party.

The din increases to an awful cacophony, and the smell of putrid flesh assaults your senses as you enter a hall dimly lit with candles and torches. Gore and excrement appear to be spattered on the floor and walls. A thing is howling and roaring on a dais in the center of the room. The creature cavorts and twists before you, and in a pulpit beyond, stands a tall, elegant but disheveled eladrin and below him four hooded figures bow to it in seeming rapture. At the feet of the eladrin lies another unconscious eladrin in chains who looks remarkably alike.

Unless the PCs are particularly quiet Horryl and his lackeys are aware of the PCs' approach.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The room is well lit in the center, with shadowy illumination to the edges (the 10 feet right next to the wall).

Terrain Features: The floor at the dais and the pulpit is slippery with blood and excrement. A DC 12 Acrobatics check is required to move at normal speed

otherwise movement cost is doubled. There are steps up to the dais, require double movement to climb. The pulpit is 10 feet high, with narrow stairs requiring double movement to climb, and it provides cover to occupants.

TACTICS

The cultists hang back, allowing the carnage demon to attack the party, but they attack if anyone approaches the pulpit, or starts ranged attacks on van Deesbrock. Horryl van Deesbrock stays in the pulpit and launches ranged attacks on the party, using his teleport to escape assault if necessary.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one evistro.

Six PCs: Add an extra evistro.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the fight is over the PCs can examine the room. On the pulpit, the characters find 5 colored crystals. Each crystal emanates a pulsing glow. When held, the holder can communicate with a spirit trapped within the crystal. One of the crystals is the spirit of Tarana Marsk. At this point, the party has saved the soul of Tarana. Unfortunately, even Horryl does not know how to free souls from the crystal. He was more focused on feeding the souls to his demonic masters.

The chained and unconscious eladrin is Horryl's brother, Harnoy. Harnoy is the true owner of the estate. Horryl has supplanted him, and the only reason he still is alive is of some little remaining brotherly affection and because Harnoy refuses to tell where his fortune is hidden. If rescued, Harnoy is extremely grateful offering a small sum of gold as a reward. If the party kept Horryl alive, Harnoy offers to lock him up (in the same dungeon he was imprisoned in) and promise to hand him over to the authorities - not the ones of New Sarshel, but of the eladrin.

The party may opt to keep Horryl alive. If talked with he begs, pleads and threatens. Offering to show the party the crystals (see below), and various stashes of wealth. He is clearly insane, both telling the PCs how powerful he is and how he will capture their souls. At the same time he blames his superiors for the whole ordeal. In fact, he has been acting more or less without their knowledge. He has never seen his superior, meeting him at a constantly changing location.

The characters can explore the cellars, finding the treasure gathered there by the cultists from their extortions. In a room appointed as an office, you find on a desk a letter to the local watch commander, requesting his continued cooperation in the searching for certain relics and items, and permitting the unfettered passage of the van Deesbrock vehicles and servants - and to hold or bring to his attention any person(s) interfering with said servants or plans.

Another partly finished letter is in a different tone, speaking in fawning admiration and supplication. Give the PCs Player Handout 1.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Each PC earns 260 / 340 experience points in this encounter for defeating the Cultists. Each PC also earns 10 / 20 experience points if they find the soulgem with Tarana's soul and give it to Sergor or destroy it for completing a minor quest.

TREASURE

Inside the mansion the PCs find a +2 *rod of the infernal**, a *throwing shield**, a ritual book with Arcane Lock and a ritual scroll with Knock. In addition they find or are rewarded by Harnoy van Deesbrock for his rescue 70 / 90 gp per PC in valuables.

If the PCs did not gain the *lifedrinker weapon* in Encounter 1 from Sergor, they gain it now upon delivery of the gem (even if Tarana's soul is recaptured after the gem's destruction).

CONCLUSION

Once the PCs have found the gem with Tarana's soul in it, they can return it to Sergor. He is unsure what to do with it, and asks the PCs for advice.

A DC 20 Arcana or Religion check shows the PCs that the gem is likely just a focus and not the actual prison. Simply destroying will not free the soul, that either requires a proper ritual or the destruction of whatever projects the soul into the gem. If the PCs mention this, Sergor decides that it is best to bring the gems to the local Ilmatari, followers of Ilmarer (a lawful good deity of martyrs, the relief of suffering and healing) who run a hospital and poorhouse in the city. If the PCs object, he certainly listens to them.

If nobody realizes the fact that the gem is just a focus, it is likely that they destroy at least 1 gem. In that case the imprisoned soul appears briefly as a specter. Before it can say anything, a cloud of churning darkness appears out of nowhere, sucking the soul in.

Either way, once Sergor realizes his wife's soul is still not free, he begs the PCs to keep their eyes open

for whatever captured her soul and once found to release her and destroy what or whoever is responsible. The Ilmatari (and so does any good or unaligned faith) do the same. If the PCs accept, they gain the story-award **IMPI03 Plight of the Lost Souls**.

If the PCs rescued Harnoy, they also gain the story-award **IMPI04 Favor of the van Deesbrocks**.

ENCOUNTER 5: INSIDE THE MANSION (LOW LEVEL)

Horryl van Deesbrock	Level 6 Elite Controller (Leader)
Medium fey humanoid	XP 500
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +4; low-light vision
Shield of Abyssal Majesty aura 5; allies in the area gain the demonic acolyte's resistance.	
HP 124; Bloodied 62	
AC 21; Fortitude 19, Reflex 19, Will 21	
Resist lightning 5	
Saving Throws +2, +7 against charm effects	
Action Point 1	
Speed 6; see also <i>fey step</i>	
m Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of Horryl's next turn.	
R Blinding Bolt (standard; at-will)	
Ranged 10; +10 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 4 and the target is immobilized until the end of the Horryl's next turn.	
R Teleporting Bolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Teleportation	
Ranged 10; +10 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 3 damage and the target is teleported up to 3 squares. The target cannot be teleported into an unsafe space.	
C Dazzling Blast (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Radiant	
Close blast 3; +7 vs. Will; 2d6 + 4 radiant damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the eladrin twilight incanter's next turn.	
Fey Step (move; encounter) ♦ Teleportation	
The eladrin twilight incanter can teleport 5 squares.	
Abyssal Might	
Horryl gains a +2 power bonus to damage rolls with all attacks (already added).	
Consume Soul (immediate reaction, when an ally within 5 squares of the acolyte is reduced to 0 hit points)	
Horryl regains 3 hit points.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana+16, History +16, Nature +10	
Str 12 (+4)	Dex 16 (+6) Wis 12 (+4)
Con 10 (+3)	Int 20 (+8) Cha 16 (+6)
Equipment robes, spear.	

Evistro (Carnage Demon)	Level 6 Brute
Medium natural humanoid (plant)	XP 250
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +4
HP 90; Bloodied 45	
AC 16; Fortitude 18, Reflex 14, Will 14	
Resist 10 variable (1/encounter; see glossary)	
Speed 6	
m Claws (standard; at-will)	
+9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage.	
M Destructive Bite (minor; at-will)	
Bloodied target only; +8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage	
Carnage	
The carnage demon gains a +1 bonus to melee attacks if it has one or more allies adjacent to its target (+3 if one of those allies is another carnage demon). This bonus stacks with combat advantage.	
Alignment Chaotic Evil	Languages Abyssal
Str 21 (+8)	Dex 12 (+4) Wis 12 (+4)
Con 20 (+8)	Int 5 (+0) Cha 7 (+1)

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

ENCOUNTER 5: INSIDE THE MANSION STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Horryl van Deesbrock (level 8) Level 8 Elite Controller (Leader)
Medium fey humanoid XP 700
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +5; low-light vision
Shield of Abyssal Majesty aura 5; allies in the area gain the demonic acolyte's resistance.
HP 148; Bloodied 74
AC 23; Fortitude 21, Reflex 21, Will 23
Resist lightning 5
Saving Throws +2, +7 against charm effects
Action Point 1
Speed 6; see also <i>fey step</i>
m Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon
+10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of Horryl's next turn.
R Blinding Bolt (standard; at-will)
Ranged 10; +12 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 5 and the target is immobilized until the end of the Horryl's next turn.
R Teleporting Bolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Teleportation
Ranged 10; +12 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 5 damage and the target is teleported up to 3 squares. The target cannot be teleported into an unsafe space.
C Dazzling Blast (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Radiant
Close blast 3; +9 vs. Will; 2d6 + 5 radiant damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the eladrin twilight incanter's next turn.
Fey Step (move; encounter) ♦ Teleportation
The eladrin twilight incanter can teleport 5 squares.
Abyssal Might
Horryl gains a +2 power bonus to damage rolls with all attacks (already added).
Consume Soul (immediate reaction, when an ally within 5 squares of the acolyte is reduced to 0 hit points)
Horryl regains 4 hit points.
Alignment Evil Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana+17, History +17, Nature +11
Str 12 (+5) Dex 16 (+7) Wis 12 (+5)
Con 10 (+4) Int 20 (+9) Cha 16 (+7)
Equipment robes, spear.

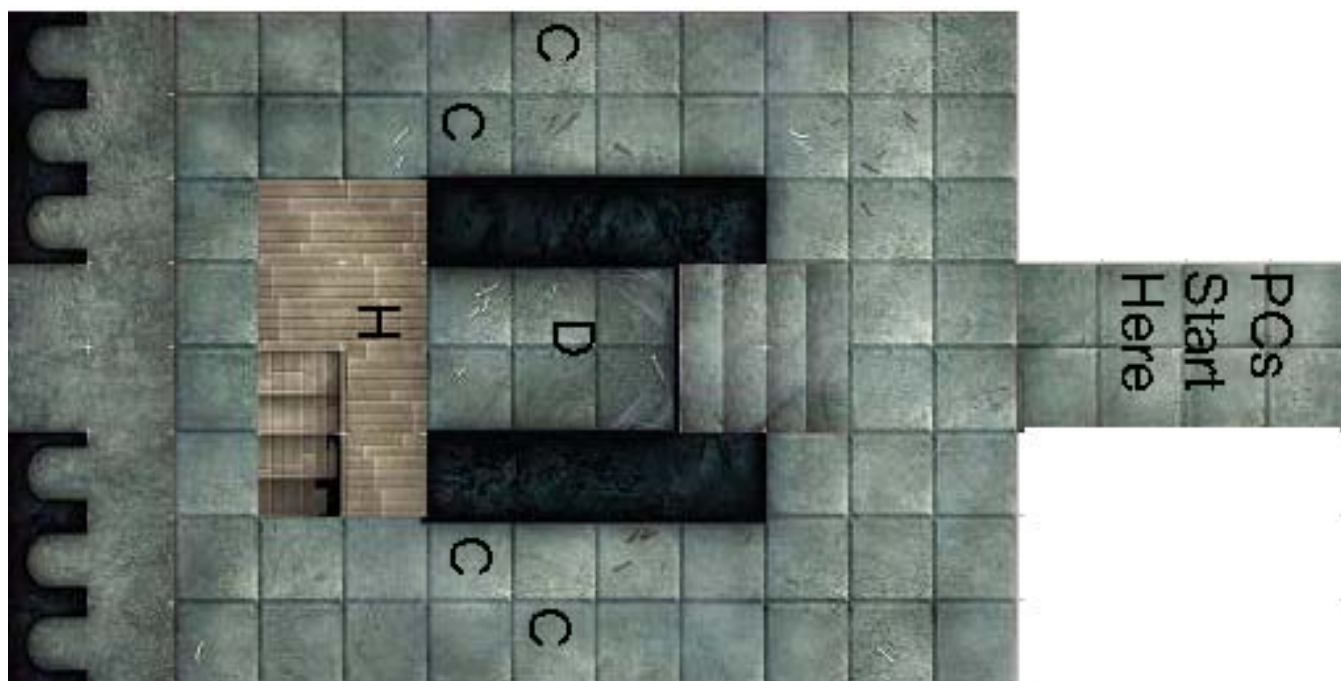
Evistro (Carnage Demon) (level 8) Level 8 Brute
Medium natural humanoid (plant) XP 350
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +5
HP 110; Bloodied 60
AC 18; Fortitude 20, Reflex 16, Will 16
Resist 10 variable (1/encounter; see glossary)
Speed 6
m Claws (standard; at-will)
+11 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage.
M Destructive Bite (minor; at-will)
Bloodied target only; +10 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage
Carnage
The carnage demon gains a +1 bonus to melee attacks if it has one or more allies adjacent to its target (+3 if one of those allies is another carnage demon). This bonus stacks with combat advantage.
Alignment Chaotic Evil Languages Abyssal
Str 21 (+9) Dex 12 (+5) Wis 12 (+5)
Con 20 (+9) Int 5 (+1) Cha 7 (+2)

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

ENCOUNTER 5: INSIDE THE MANSION MAP

HIDDEN CRYPTS

Acid Pit / Floor	2x4	x1
Alcoves / Floor	8x2	x1
Barn / Empty Crypt	8x10	x1
Stairs / Floor	2x2	x1
Wooden Platform / Floor	4x2	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: At the Midnight Hour

150 / 260 XP

Encounter 3: At the Gates

100 / 140 XP

Encounter 4: In the Garden of Evil

120 / 200 XP

Encounter 5: Inside the Mansion

260 / 340 XP

Minor Quest: rescue the soul of Tarana Marsk

10 / 20 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 / 20 gp, Encounter 4: 20 / 40 gp, Encounter 5: 70 / 90 gp)

EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING

Bundle A: *lifedrinker weapon +1* (level 5) (low-level version only)

Found in Encounter 1

Bundle B: *+2 rod of the infernal** (level 8)

Found in Encounter 5

Bundle C: *throwing shield** (level 6)

Found in Encounter 5

Bundle D: *lifedrinker weapon +2* (level 10) (high-level version only)

Found in Encounter 1

Bundle E: ritual book with Arcane Lock (level 4)

Found in Encounter 5

Bundle F: ritual scroll with Knock (level 4)

Found in Encounter 5

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.

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.

IMPI03 Plight of the Lost Souls

You discovered that a demonic cult has somehow gained the ability to capture souls. For now, they seem only to have used to them for simple extortion, but they can use those souls for much more nefarious purposes. You have promised to keep your eyes open for any similar activities, and to free these innocent souls and destroy what or whoever is responsible for the souls' plight. This starts a major quest.

IMPI04 Favor of van Deesbrock

The house of van Deesbrock in New Sarshel is obliged to you, and can provide shelter, a good word, and any other low cost assistance a noble family could likely supply within the bounds of New Sarshel.

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

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

1. How did the PCs find the hideout of Horryl (pick primary method in case of a mix)?

- a. Interrogating hobgoblins.
- b. High speed chase.
- c. Trailing the hobgoblins in stealth.
- d. They failed the skill challenge.
- e. Other.

2. Did Harnoy van Deesbrock survive?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

3. What did the PCs do with the soul gem with Tarana's soul?

- a. They gave it to Sergor Marsk.

- b. They destroyed it.
- c. They kept it or gave it to somebody else.

4. What did the PCs do with the other soul gems?

- a. They gave them to Sergor Marsk or the local Ilmatari.
- b. They destroyed them.
- c. They kept it or they gave them to somebody else.

NEW RULES

Rod of the Infernal

Level 8+

This rod enhances one's ability to draw life from enemies using the infernal pact.

Lvl 8	+2	3,400 gp	Lvl 23	+5	425,000 gp
Lvl 13	+3	17,000 gp	Lvl 28	+6	2,125,000 gp
Lvl 18	+4	85,000 gp			

Implement (Rod)

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus, or +1d10 damage per plus with powers of the infernal pact.

Property: When you trigger your infernal pact boon, you can add the enhancement bonus of the rod to the number of temporary hit points gained.

Power (Encounter): Minor Action. Gain temporary hit points equal to your level + your Intelligence modifier.

Adventurer's Vault, page 101.

Throwing Shield

Level 6+

When tossed, this throwing shield packs a hefty punch.

Lvl 6	1,800 gp	Lvl 26	1,125,000 gp
Lvl 16	45,000 gp		

Item Slot: Arms

Shield: Any

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

Level 16: Strength + 4 vs. AC; 2d8 + Strength modifier damage.

Level 26: Strength + 6 vs. AC; 3d8 + Strength modifier damage.

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

Level 16: The target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone.

Level 26: The target is pushed 1 square, knocked prone, and dazed until the end of its next turn.

Adventurer's Vault, page 121.

Oh Master of Destruction, I humbly request your most horrid darkness for favor and consideration. You know that I have only been following your orders, and that soon the items will be in my grasp – the halfling will lead me to them.

The others are lying, they are jealous of your favor. I have only taken what you have instructed, nothing more. I have acted not out of greed, but only for your greater glory. Soon I will bring enough souls to slake even your most awesome and monstrous appetite.

Yours in grateful service,

Horryl.