



XEN'DRIK EXPEDITIONS

Fire in the Heart of Madness Cabal of Shadows Faction Adventure #4 An Adventure for 4th-Level Characters (Scaled for 4th-6th Levels of Play) CABAL OF SHADOWSTM Faction DM's MARK 3 for the XEN'DRIK EXPEDITIONSTM Campaign

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Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, and Peter Adkison.

Sources: Book of Exalted Deeds (James Wyatt, Christopher Perkins, Darin Drader), Complete Arcane (Richard Baker), Complete Warrior (Andy Collins, David Noonan, Ed Stark), Expanded Psionics Handbook (Bruce Cordell), Libris Mortis (Andy Collins and Bruce R. Cordell), Monster Manual IV (Gwendolyn F.M. Kestrel, Jennifer Clarke Wilkes, Matthew Sernett, Eric Cagle, Andrew Finch, Christopher Lindsay, Kolja Raven Lique, Chris Sims, Owen K.C. Stephens, Travis Stout, JD Wiker, Skip Williams), Player's Handbook II (David Noonan), Secrets of Xen'drik (Keith Baker, Jason Bulmahn, Amber Scott), Spell Compendium (Matthew Sernett, Jeff Grubb, Mike McArtor)

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Adventure Background

Stormreach is home to many strange and unique individuals, and it is only to be expected that some will become interested or involved with the draconic prophecy. All those who bare a dragonmark are thought to be living tablets of the prophecy's script, but the prophecy can be found beyond the flesh of the Dragonmarked Houses. It can be found amongst dead flesh as well.

Suroth Morellu has lived a quiet existence for a few centuries, amassing a small fortune and living a comfortable life. What most do not know is that Suroth is not living at all; he is a creature of death, whose unlife began long ago, with the death of his last relative, his mother Agnesia. Since his embrace of the state of undeath, Suroth has devoted all his efforts to uncovering and understanding the draconic prophecy. Possessed of no small power and significant resources, Suroth has acquired a powerful *gem of seeing* that is more than the usual magical item. This gem bears fragments of the prophecy surrounded by symbols of fire. His most prized possession, Suroth wears this gem where his left eye has since fallen away rotten.

Adventure Synopsis

The Cabal of Shadows has become suspicious of the day-to-day dealings of Suroth Morellu. From his actions, it seems likely that he is associated with one of the factions attempting to control the *Caladyn Fragments*, and so a group of operatives are tasked to investigate him.

Adventure Start: A messenger summons the PCs to the Hand of Stalwart Reverie, to receive instructions.

Part One: The PCs are brought together and asked to look into the life of Suroth Morellu and determine if he is a threat to the Cabal, and if he is a minion of another faction. The PCs are given broad discretion to uncover information and improve the standing of the Cabal, but are told of a nearing public appearance where they might meet with Suroth. At the same time, Suroth has become the focus of an investigation organized by the Covenant of Light.

Part Two: The PCs have the opportunity to learn more about Suroth by doing some legwork around Stormreach or looking into his past, home and business. Their attention may or may not be drawn to the Covenant of Light team.

Part Three: Suroth Morellu attends a masque, which the PCs may have arranged to attend. If so, they may meet each other and the PCs can attempt to learn more about the man, possibly following him back to his home and learning the details of his home's security.

Part Four: The PCs will eventually investigate Suroth's home, possibly while he is in residence. While there, they should be able to recover several valuable pieces of the prophecy, possibly even the *eye of flame*. The party's investigation will be interrupted by the operatives of the Covenant of Light who seek to slay the undead Suroth and claim his piece of the prophecy.

Ending the Adventure: The party returns to the Cabal's lair with the spoils of their adventure.

Troubleshooting

Adventure Secret: Should any of the PCs use a card or ability to unlock an adventure secret, they are lead to or told the location of Suroth Morellu's home (as appropriate for the ability or card).

Adventure Timeline: This adventure is nonlinear, meaning that the players may choose to do things in an order different than those presented here. That is fine. It is up to the DM to adjust accordingly based upon the plans of the party. However, the PCs meet with the Melancholy in the early evening on second Wir of Zarantyr. The masque begins on the evening of Sar. So, they have only three full days until the party.

Obscura: Some members of the Cabal of Shadows also belong to Obscura, sub-factions within the Cabal. The Obscura often have secret missions for their members, and this time is no different. Ask each player to hand you a note listing his or her Obscura, if any. All players should hand in a note, even if they are not a member of any Obscura in order to keep suspicions evenly spread throughout the party. Return the correct player handout to each player so they understand the details of their secret mission. This should be done immediately after the Part when prompted.

Adventure Start

The adventure begins with each PC receiving a private summons. The DM may have to adjust the text slightly to account for the location of each PC.

You are going about your regular business, walking down the street when a small, dirt encrusted child approaches you. "You look like them. This must be for you."

The child proffers you a scroll tube with a gap-toothed smile, while holding out his other hand.

The messenger is an urchin called Short Rolph (N, human, commoner 1), who was given the tube and a rough description by an older boy who sometimes hires Short Rolph to do chores and other errands. Rolph doesn't really expect any payment, but is willing to accept it if offered. He knows nothing of the Cabal of Shadows, and attempts to flee into the crowd on the street if attacked in any way.

When the PCs look inside the scroll tube, hand the players Player Handout One. The handout loosely alludes to the PCs being summoned to the headquarters of the Cabal known as the Hand of Stalwart Reverie, hidden inside a great statue of an upraised fist. Any PC that has a Portal Key (a story object from *COS-2 Shadows Over Stormreach*) can let themselves in, but all others require the leave of another to let them in. If no one has a Portal Key, another member of the Cabal sees them loitering around the alley behind the statue and comes to their rescue by opening the magical portal for them.

Part One: Briefing

Once the PCs are gathered inside the Cabal's secret lair, they are quickly directed to one of the meeting rooms on the second floor.

Construction has begun in earnest to convert the spacious halls of the bygone giants into more habitable living spaces. You are directed to one of the meeting rooms on the second floor lit by the strange diffused silver glow that fills the rest of the Cabal's new home. Once part of a lounge for the gargantuan creatures, the former room has been divided into several comfortable but plain rooms for small gatherings. You are not the only person who has come to this room.

The PCs find themselves alone in a room with a long table, and a dozen chairs. They have several minutes to get acquainted or get comfortable before their host makes herself known. After they have spoken for a few moments, proceed with the following read aloud text.

The door to the room opens and a woman dressed in a formless robe and many veils enters. "Welcome children," she offers with a pleasant female voice. "Many of you may know me as the Melancholy, speaker of the Mourners of Yore. I am pleased that you were able to answer my summons, for I have need of your talents.

There is a certain individual who has become very interesting of late. According to our scholars, the name Suroth Morellu has surfaced more than a few times in their scrolls. This alone would not necessarily pique our interest but the fact that these scrolls were written centuries apart has focused our attention. We suspect that we may be looking at a line of descendents from one family or that this may be a title used to designate a position within a different faction. Different descriptions of this man who may have held this name or title show up again and again in the records we have gathered about Stormreach. What's important is that each time this name has surfaced it is in connection with the Caladyn Fragments. There is currently a man living in Stormreach who possesses this name. We wish you to investigate him, find out what his connection is with the prophecy and if he's a minion of a different faction. I leave it up to you as to how you obtain this information. We have found out that he plans to attend a masque being given by Lord Eldon Vown d'Cannith of the House of Making three days hence. That may be a useful chance to meet with him in person or learn more about his residence while he's at the masque.

At this point the PCs likely have many questions. Use the following as a guide when role-playing this interaction. At all times, the Melancholy is friendly and maternal in her bearing.

- *Why is a masque being given? To celebrate the anniversary of the end of The Last War. Many individuals, particularly those of the Dragonmarked Houses still hold strong ties to Khorvaire and see this date as an important remembrance of lost family and new ties of friendship.*
- *Can we see the scrolls that Suroth Morellu is mentioned in? Unfortunately there is some information within the scrolls that can only be viewed by chosen scholars and the Council of the Obscured. Once this information is fully understood, it will be gifted to you. We have only your best interests at heart.*
- *Where is the masque being held? At the home of Lord Eldon Vown d'Cannith. Here, let me write down where you might find it. [She gives the PCs rough directions of the location and street of the home where the party will be held.]*

- How do the scrolls describe Suroth Morellu? *The descriptions vary, but in most cases he is a plain-looking, usually thin man. The coloring of his skin, eyes, and hair frequently differs, as do descriptions of his height.*
- Where can we find Suroth Morellu? *The man is a truly a recluse and we have been unable to locate his lair. We know that he can be found somewhere in or very near Stormreach; though exactly where is lost to us and will be for you to discover. If you fail to find him, your only choice may be to intercept him at the masque and hope you can follow him back to his hidden home.*
- What do the scrolls say of Suroth Morellu's skills or powers? *All suggest his is a man or men of great knowledge, some tales imply that he may have arcane powers. Regardless, the fact that his name appear on a guest list to the d'Cannith gala tells us that at least this version of him possesses significant wealth or power, and he must have potent allies.*
- Does Suroth Morellu have a business or other place he is known to frequent? *The man is a recluse even by a hermit's standards. He has no known source of income and so far we know of know one who has met him.*
- What exactly do you wish us to do and what is the extent of our authority? *Suroth Morellu interests us and he is clearly tied in some way to the Draconic Prophecy, though how we cannot say. Start by gathering information on him and try to determine in what way he may be connected. If he is a part of the prophecy we must find a way to control him. If he is an agent of another faction, he must be captured or slain and his notes, items, and belongings returned here for study. If he has somehow collected parts of the Fragments and prolonged his life or line, the results should be the same. Assuming one among you has the power, to reenter this hold, you may return here if you have questions. If you cannot reenter, I will not see you until our designated meeting in one week.*
- Can we get any additional aid, money, or items? *I believe you have all you need or are resourceful enough to acquire it through some other manner.*

Once the PCs are done asking questions, she bids them farewell.

"If there is nothing else I'll bid you farewell and look for you within a week with your report. This is an important mission, but I am confident you would not disappoint me. Good luck to you, my children."

Role-playing Members of the Council of the Obscured

The Melancholy is one of the four individuals that sit upon the Council of the Obscured and make decisions for the Cabal of Shadows. All are old and powerful individuals whose goals exceed the daily concerns of normal folk. Their powers exceed anything the PCs may muster. When portraying them, it is important that they maintain an air of otherworldly mystery.

The Melancholy: The Melancholy speaks for the Mourners of Yore in the Council of the Obscured. While her true identity is unknown, the voice and mannerisms are decidedly female. The Melancholy is generally a moderating force among the Council that urges solidifying the position of the Cabal by active recruiting of new members and the establishment of safe houses.

Part Two: Three Days 'Til We Dance

Once the PCs leave their meeting with the Melancholy, they have three full days until the party. It is early evening on second Wir of Zarantyr. The masque begins on the evening of Sar. There are many different places the PCs might go to obtain information. This encounter is extremely open ended and while a framework of vignettes is provided, the DM may have to adjust to the party's particular style or desires. If they wish to visit a location not listed, or attempt a plan not accounted for, the DM will have to adjust accordingly. Courses of action not foreseen by the author are as valid as any other and should not be discouraged.

Note that as the PCs are performing their own legwork, unbeknownst to them, the operatives of the Covenant of Light do so as well. One of the Covenant agents, Sitadedis Thelta, has paid several informants to notify him if anyone else comes looking for Suroth Morellu. If the PCs do Gather Information, or attract the Covenant informants in some way, they will likely have a confrontation with minions of the Covenant before the next encounter. See Covenant of Light Operatives for a detailed description of those watching the PCs and the consequences for being noticed.

Gathering Information

It is likely that given the limited information the PCs have at the start, it will be necessary to Gather Information. Feel free to role-play these brief encounters, or use the Gather Information skill as fits the

temperament of the table. Those that role-play these encounters may receive any of the following information as the DM sees fit, based upon whom they speak with. For those rolling skill checks, PCs who seek out information in the richer areas of Stormreach that scholars and the nobility frequent receive a +5 circumstance bonus to this roll. The PCs should receive an additional +1 to their check for every extra 10 gp they spend (up to +5 for 50 gp spent). Assume rolling Gather Information costs the PC 3d4 gp in drinks and bribes and takes three hours. Depending on whom the PCs specifically approach, the DM may also allow Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate checks with certain NPCs. PCs receive all information for the DCs they beat or equal with their check.

There are several topics that the PCs may choose to Gather Information upon. Each check only covers one topic and requires an additional three hours. Conducting information gathering may draw the attention of the Covenant of Light. See "Covenant of Light Operatives" for more information.

Note that none of these results are able to locate the exact location of the Morellu estate.

Suroth Morellu (Present Day)

- DC 5: *Never heard of a Suroth but I gotta cousin named Surrah who's single.*
- DC 10: *Never heard of him but you should try the Ship's Cat near the docks. You can hear lots of things there.*
- DC 15: *Sounds familiar. If it's the fella I'm thinking of he has a nice place over by the Weeping Widow Inn. It's not far from the Red Ring; used to be called the Wilted Rose till the family that owned it was murdered one night almost a season ago. Now it's owned by a tough old woman who wanted to commemorate her husband who died fighting in the Ring.*
- DC 20: *I have heard the name. Some sort of scholar or collector, right?*
- DC 25: *Sounds familiar. I think I may have stood behind him at Von Ruthvek's Splendors of the South while he was speaking with the proprietor. I was browsing so I don't remember much. I believe he was finely dressed, with dark hair, but I wasn't really trying to get a good look at him. I could be wrong.*
- DC 30: *Oh yes, I have heard of him. He is a scholarly hermit who lives in the shadow of Coin Lords' estates if I recall, not far from the Weeping Widow Inn. I'm sure someone in that neighborhood must know more about him, but he's definitely from around there.*

Suroth Morellu (Historically)

- DC 5: *Bless you!*
- DC 15: *Ah, that sounds familiar. I knew of a man by that name many winter's ago when I was still a young man, but he was much older than I. A rich collector he was, and known to pay well for artifacts out of the jungle but I'm sure he must be dead by now.*
- DC 25: *Suroth Morellu, yes there was a scholar by that name in Stormreach decades ago, but he was middle aged then, and since he was human, he must be dead by now. It must be a different person you seek. Perhaps you have the wrong name?*
- DC 30: *I think there is a Suroth Morellu in Stormreach descended from others of the same name. If I have heard correctly, the Morellu's are a small, but old family who keep very much to themselves and live somewhere near the Coin Lords' estates, but closer to the Weeping Willow Inn. I believe Suroth is a common male name. Come to think of it, it must be very popular since historically I can't think of any males from the family with any other name.*

Lord Eldon Vown d'Cannith and the Masque

- DC 5: *Last name's d'Cannith, that's a dragonmarked house. He must be rich.*
- DC 10: *Well the Citadel of the Twelve is out on the outskirts of town. That's where the dragonmarked houses do business. Maybe he lives out there. Doesn't seem like much of a place for a party though.*
- DC 15: *Ah, ya, I heard of him. He's throwing some sort of big party and all the rich folk are supposed to go. It's gotta be over in one of those rich neighborhoods. Head towards the Red Ring, go past the Weeping Widow Inn, and somewhere toward the Coin Lords.*
- DC 20: *Oh yes, Lord d'Cannith has excellent taste. His estate just past the riding green, on the eastern side of the Coin Lords' estates, is one of the finest in Stormreach. I do believe that this party will be the gala of year. I've heard that all society is spending a fortune on their elaborate costumes. Sadly I suspect my invitation was simply misplaced, but I haven't the heart to tell dear Eldon that one of his servants has failed him. So hard to find good help you know. You don't happen to have an invitation, do you? [The result gives the PCs adequate directions to find the d'Cannith estate.]*

- DC 25: *Once, me and my Ilse walked past there. They had great big walls, and there was all kinds of guards. Why I pointed one bruiser out to Ilse and the metal guards came right over and told us to move along. I expect they's awful mean to just about everyone; eyes like hawks though.*
- DC 30: *"The warforged guards aren't the only things guarding the estate. I've heard strange metal howls coming from beyond the obsidian walls."*

Knowledge Skills

Following the briefing by the Melancholy, learned PCs may have enough information to reference their own learning. A successful Knowledge skill check receives all information for the DC met, and lower. These Knowledge checks may not be aided or retried, though each PC may attempt them.

Knowledge: History

- DC 20: Men by the name of Suroth Morellu have been in the background of Stormreach's history for several hundred years. In each case, each of the historical references to Morellu are associated with adventurers, explorers, or collectors.
- DC 30: The Morellu name has long been associated with a rundown estate somewhere near the Weeping Widow Inn. It is popularly believed to be the ancestral home of said family.

Knowledge: Local (Stormreach)

- DC 20: Suroth Morellu is a rich antiquities collector who lives in isolation in Stormreach and rarely ventures forth into social events.
- DC 25: The Morellu name has long been associated with a rundown estate somewhere near the Weeping Widow Inn. It is popularly believed to be the ancestral home of said family.

Knowledge: Nobility and Royalty

- DC 15: Suroth Morellu is a rich antiquities collector who lives in isolation in Stormreach and rarely ventures forth into social events.
- DC 15: Lord Eldon Vown d'Cannith is a minor but wealthy member of the house of making. With the large number of wealthy merchants in Stormreach Lord d'Cannith decided they needed new outlets for their coin. He brought a stockpile of magical luxury items and charged outrageous prices. Now 15 years later he has built himself a palatial estate furnishing rich houses in Stormreach with creations like self-heating teakettles and everburning chandeliers. [The result gives the PCs adequate directions to find the d'Cannith estate.]
- DC 20: The Morellu family is traditionally known to employ Darguun mercenaries.
- DC 25: The Morellu name has long been associated with a rundown estate somewhere near the Weeping Widow Inn. It is popularly believed to be the ancestral home of said family.

Covenant of Light Operatives

Throughout the party's investigations, there is the danger that they will attract the attention of the Covenant of Light operatives who are also looking into the life and ties of Suroth Morellu. To determine if the party's research into Morellu is detected, see the section "Is Someone Watching Me?" and if they are indeed noticed, consult "Death to the Evildoers."

Is Someone Watching Me?

The Covenant of Light is aware that other factions exist, and while they have no reason to believe that anyone else is on to Suroth Morellu as a connection to the Draconic Prophecy, they are taking no chances. The Covenant agents have offered a reward to several of those whom they have gathered information from to be on the look out for anyone else hunting for information on Morellu.

Whenever a PC or group of PCs, go looking for information (not a Knowledge Skill check, but any other effort), there is a chance that the Covenant is put on their trail by a helpful informative or watchful bystander. PCs immune to mundane observation, such as performing surveillance while under the cover of an *invisibility* spell, are exempt from this check. To determine whether the party has been observed, the DM should secretly make a "notice" check. The base DC of this "notice" check is 15, but it falls by 1 for each previous time it has been rolled. Add +1 to the die roll for each PC beyond the first in the group. The DM may also assign a +2 to the roll if the PCs tend to stand out (lots of drow, tieflings, and half-giants using showy magic) or a -2 to the roll if the PCs take pains to be unnoticed (a PC of a common race such as human, quietly asking a few questions). If the "notice" check is successful, the PCs have been noticed by Covenant. Proceed with the results in Death to the Evildoers.

Each time that the DM rolls a “notice” check, there is a chance that the PCs notice something is amiss. Any PC involved in the circumstance that causes a notice check to be made may in turn make a DC 20 Sense Motive. If successful, they have the feeling that they are being watched. People look their way just a few too many times, or are just a little too interested in their doings.

Development: It is possible that nervous PCs may go to great lengths to interrogate those they feel may be working against them. Those that watch the PCs know little, only that they were paid a handful of copper coins to be on the look out for any one interested in Suroth Morellu or the draconic prophecy. They can describe the person that paid them as a cloaked human man, with short-cropped black hair and a scar on the left side of his neck (Sitadedis Thelta). The random NPC knows of no way for the PCs to find the man, as he or his minions were supposed to contact the NPC again in the future.

Death to the Evildoers (EL 7)

If the PCs are noticed (as described under *Is Someone Watching Me?*), the Covenant will dispatch Sitadedis Thelta and some of his shifter disciples in order to investigate. A reformed mercenary and murderer, Sitadedis takes his responsibilities very seriously and requires very little proof before deciding the PCs are an obstacle for the Covenant of Light. He and his disciples decide the evil cannot be allowed to flourish.

Foes: Sitadedis and his disciples attempt to ambush the PCs at a time of the DM's choosing, but before the masque. Sitadedis prefers to arrange an opportunity when the PCs are all together, and when they are most unsuspecting, such as while they sleep.

Sitadedis Thelta: Male human rogue 5/slayer of Domiel 1/warrior 1, hp 45; Combat Statistics.

Covenant Shifter Thugs (2): Female shifter rogue 2/warrior 1, hp 24; Combat Statistics.

Tactics: Prior to attacking, Sitadedis casts *bless weapon* and if available, *spider climb* and *blessed sight*. He and his disciples use their *potions of invisibility* to get close to the PCs, if necessary picking locked doors and trying to bypass any guards. Sitadedis and the shifter thugs try to flank the same target (preferably one who is evil) and sneak attack them. If the target is severely injured, Sitadedis uses his death touch ability upon the target.

Development: If captured, none of the Covenant operatives easily give up any information about the faction they work for, or why they have attacked the PCs. They begin with an attitude of Hostile and are subject to Intimidate or Diplomacy checks as per the *PH*. Checks against Sitadedis are made with a –4 penalty due to his zealotry and fanatical devotion.

Scaling the Encounter

5th-Level Characters: Use the CR 7 version of Sitadedis Thelta and three Covenant Shifter Thugs.

6th-Level Characters: Use the CR 8 version of Sitadedis Thelta and four Covenant Shifter Thugs.

Sitadedis Thelta

CR 6

Male human rogue 5/slayer of Domiel 1/warrior 1

AL LG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Listen +9, Spot +9

Languages Common

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 10; uncanny dodge (+4 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 45 (7 HD)

Resist evasion

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +1 rapier +8 (1d6+4/18-20) or

dagger +7 (1d4+3/19-20) or

sap +7 (1d6+3 nonlethal)

Ranged short bow +7 (1d6/x3) or

thrown dagger +6 (1d4+3/19-20)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +7

Atk Options death touch 1/day (evil targets only, 1d6), sneak attack +4d6

Slayer of Domiel Spells Prepared (1st):

1st – *bless weapon*

Spell-Like Abilities (1st):

At will – *detect evil*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 15

SQ Trapfinding; trap sense +1

Feats Blind-fight, Sanctify Martial Strike (rapier, +1 damage to evil creatures and +1d4 damage to evil outsiders or undead), Servant of Heavens (1/day, +1 luck bonus to any one roll or check), Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Climb +13, Hide +10, Move Silently +10, Listen +9, Open Lock +10, Search +7, Sense Motive +4, Spot +9, Tumble +11

Possessions chain shirt, +1 rapier, dagger, sap, short bow, 20 masterwork arrows, *cloak of resistance* +1, *potion of invisibility*, thieves' tools, grappling hook, 50' silk rope, 3 tindertwigs, 2 vials of oil

Hook "I will meet evil where it lives and burn it in its den."

Sitadedis Thelta

CR 7

Male human rogue 5/slayer of Domiel 2/warrior 1

AL LG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Listen +9, Spot +9

Languages Common

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 10; uncanny dodge (+4 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 51 (8 HD)

Resist evasion

Fort +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +1 rapier +9 (1d6+4/18-20) or

dagger +8 (1d4+3/19-20) or

sap +8 (1d6+3 nonlethal)

Ranged short bow +8 (1d6/x3) or

thrown dagger +7 (1d4+3/19-20)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +8

Atk Options death touch 1/day (evil targets only, 2d6), sneak attack +4d6

Slayer of Domiel Spells Prepared (2nd):

1st – *bless weapon*, *spider climb*

Spell-Like Abilities (2nd):

At will – *detect evil*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 16

SQ Trapfinding; trap sense +1

Feats Blind-fight, Sanctify Martial Strike (rapier, +1 damage to evil creatures and +1d4 damage to evil outsiders or undead), Servant of Heavens (1/day, +1 luck bonus to any one roll or check), Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Climb +13, Hide +10, Move Silently +10, Listen +9, Open Lock +10, Search +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +9, Tumble +12

Possessions chain shirt, +1 rapier, dagger, sap, short bow, 20 masterwork arrows, *cloak of resistance* +1, *potion of invisibility*, thieves' tools, grappling hook, 50' silk rope, 3 tindertwigs, 2 vials of oil

Hook "I will meet evil where it lives and burn it in its den."

Sitadedis Thelta

CR 8

Male human rogue 5/slayer of Domiel 3/warrior 1

AL LG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Listen +9, Spot +9

Languages Common

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 10; uncanny dodge (+4 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 63 (9 HD)

Resist evasion

Fort +9, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +1 rapier +10 (1d6+4/18-20) or
dagger +9 (1d4+3/19-20) or
sap +9 (1d6+3 nonlethal)

Ranged short bow +9 (1d6/x3) or
thrown dagger +8 (1d4+3/19-20)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +9

Atk Options death touch 1/day (evil targets only, 3d6), sneak attack +5d6

Slayer of Domiel Spells Prepared (3rd):

2nd – *blessed sight* (3 minutes, 120' range, as per *detect evil* but requires no concentration or time)

1st – *bless weapon*, *spider climb*

Spell-Like Abilities (3rd):

At will – *detect evil*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 16

SQ Trapfinding; trap sense +1

Feats Blind-fight, Improved Toughness, Sanctify Martial Strike (rapier, +1 damage to evil creatures and +1d4 damage to evil outsiders or undead), Servant of Heavens (1/day, +1 luck bonus to any one roll or check), Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Climb +13, Hide +10, Move Silently +10, Listen +9, Open Lock +10, Search +7, Sense Motive +10, Spot +9, Tumble +13

Possessions chain shirt, +1 rapier, dagger, sap, short bow, 20 masterwork arrows, *cloak of resistance* +1, *potion of invisibility*, thieves' tools, grappling hook, 50' silk rope, 3 tindertwigs, 2 vials of oil

Hook “I will meet evil where it lives and burn it in its den.”

Covenant Shifter Thugs

CR 2

Female shifter rogue 2/warrior 1

AL CG Medium humanoid (shapechanger)

Init +3; Senses low-light vision Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 24 (3 HD); **DR** 2/silver

Resist evasion

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +0

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk longsword +6 (1d8+3/19-20) or
Shortsword +5 (1d6+3/19-20)

Ranged javelin +5 (1d6+3)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +5

Atk Options shifting (beasthide) 2/day, sneak attack +1d6

Abilities Str 16, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ Trapfinding

Feats Beasthide Elite, Shifter Defense

Skills Climb +8, Tumble +8

Possessions chain shirt, large wooden shield, masterwork longsword, shortsword, 4 javelins, *and potion of invisibility*

Shifting (Su) 8 rounds. While shifted, a beasthide shifter gains +2 to Constitution and +4 natural armor.

The Ship's Cat and the Bilge Rats

Whether the PCs arrive at the Ship's Cat tavern due to following a red herring turned up while gathering information, or because they are seeking out the help of a former comrade, the PCs can meet with Hes at the Ship's Cat and find some aid in their mission. It is not necessary that the party ever comes to the Ship's Cat, but rather it exists as one of the many ways the PCs might proceed.

Rounding one particularly forlorn corner, your destination comes into view. Densewood twigs have been thatched together to create a building that looks like a pile of sticks. A faded and battered sign hangs from the door displaying a cat lounging upon the prow of a ship. Several actual cats come and go freely through the opened door and windows ignoring the patrons whom they clearly outnumber.

The Ship's Cat is an inn run by a shifter woman named Harysh (NG female shifter ranger 1/expert 5), and while it may not be the most luxurious inn, for fair dealing and discretion it can't be beat. The inn takes its name from Harysh's "family", a dozen cats that share the place with guests. Familiars and animal companions receive excellent care at the Ship's Cat, and as long as they leave the cats alone, such creatures are always welcome in the inn. An angry Harysh, along with the aid of several of her patrons, expel any PC that dares to show cruelty to one of her children.

The Ship's cat offers a bunk in a large and drafty common room for 2 sp a night, and edible but greasy meat stew for 1 cp a bowl, and watery ale for 1 sp a cask.

The Ship's Cat is very busy when the PCs arrive, and the PCs draw little attention from the patrons. Harysh greets the PCs with a throaty yell as they enter and offers them any table they can find. She plunks down a cask of ale and several tankards before quickly moving on to serve others, a cat held under one arm. Within moments, Hes (NE male changeling-wererat adept 7[the Traveler]) disguised as a drunken old dwarven man dressed in a faded and beer stained red dress, approaches the party.

Stepping through the crowd, an old dwarven man stumbles drunkenly in your direction. He wears an abused faded and beer stained red dress and his eyes lazily trail slowly from too much drink. Slumping against the wall and slipping to the floor, the dwarf waves to you. "You upstanding folks look like you could use some help? Lucky for you, I know just the rat." He smiles widely showing a mouth of rotted bright teeth.

Hes is a member of the Bilge Rats, a dangerous thieves gang with loose connections to the Boromar Clan of Sharn. The Bilge Rats enrich themselves with muggings, running protection rackets on local businesses, and stealing goods out of ships and warehouses. Five years ago, one of the Bilge Rats was infected with lycanthropy. Since then, the disease has spread through the upper ranks of the organization, and most of the accomplished burglars and thieves in the guild are now wererats. Hes has been previously introduced to members of the Cabal, and understands them to be fellow worshippers of the Traveler. The Bilge Rats have a casual alliance with the Cabal of Shadows, and generally Hes acts as the intermediary.

Hes maintains his cover as the drunken dwarf for the time being, pretending to be the slovenly sot. While not giving away any details about himself, he is happy to aid the PCs with their quest. Use the following as a guide when role-playing Hes. Hes can help provide any of the following services:

- Some PCs may have met Hes in *CSH-1 The Sahuagin Stone*. Since he knows them, Hes is willing to cast *comprehend languages*, *cure light wounds*, or *cure moderate wounds* (he has one of each memorized) for the PCs for normal prices. If the PCs meet Hes at a different time, he can change his spell selection. Some members of the Instruments of Change Obscura may have his favor (Obscura Reward #1; Cert ID EXCS01). In this case, Hes is willing to cast these three spells free of charge.
- Through the Bilge Rats, Hes has access to the criminal underworld of Stormreach. Using these contacts, Hes can arrange for forged documents. If the PCs want a forged invitation to the d'Cannith masque, or any other forged documents, Hes can arrange for them. Each document requested will cost the PCs 50 gp and takes 2 hours to get. A DC 18 Forgery check is required to notice that the document is a forgery.
- Hes can put the word out on the street, for a price. For 30 gp and four hours, Hes' contacts can locate all information on one Gather Information topic with a DC of 20 or lower. Hes cannot specifically locate the Morellu estate.
- In short order, Hes can help the PCs acquire appropriate costumes for the masque for 10 gp each.

Von Ruthvek's Splendors of the South

It is possible that the PCs may choose to investigate the rumor that Suroth has been seen in Von Ruthvek's Splendors of the South, a store that they may already have had conflict with. In *CSH-2 Shadows over Stormreach* some Cabal members may have killed a group of adventurers hired by the owner of Von Ruthvek's Splendors of the South, Valexa Von Ruthvek. Valexa is unaware of who the culprits were, and has no way to connect the murders to the PCs.

They party can find her at her home and shop, Von Ruthvek's Splendors of the South.

A small shop sits just off the main thoroughfare, in the shadow of a large sculpture of a long plumed bird. A flower box of blooming tropical plants does little to hide the bars across the windows that glow faintly with

the fires of the arcane. A quaint sign over the door reads, "Von Ruthvek's Splendors of the South, please come in."

Valexa Von Ruthvek (N female gnome magewright 8/lore master 5) is one of Stormreach's best-known antiquities dealers, able to identify even the most puzzling items uncovered among the giant ruins. She keeps a wide array of magic items and other curiosities in her store, although it's mostly under lock, bar, and magical ward in order to deter thieves. Von Ruthvek offers magic item identification services for the usual rates, and she'll even pay adventurers for a full expedition report if she's interested in finding out more about a particular relic of the ancient giants.

She is only open during daylight hours, and at other times retires to her home above the shop. During work hours, she is in the store happily speaking with customers like a pleasant elderly neighbor woman, or tinker with a new acquisition. She is happy to see any visitors other than drow, of whom she is instantly suspicious of due to her raiding of many of their sacred sites. Her attitude begins as Indifferent, or Unfriendly if drow are present. If questioned about Suroth Morellu, she readily admits that famous recluse does indeed occasionally browse in her shop. He has been a customer of hers since she opened her store forty years ago. She can also confirm he is a thin, plain looking man in fine dress, but she will not discuss his home, whereabouts, or purchases, and becomes suspicious of those that press her. She is well acquainted with the many thieves and treasure seekers of Stormreach and has no wish to lose another valuable customer to another.

If consulted on d'Cannith masque, she admits that she will be in attendance. Lord d'Cannith has been a valuable supplier of luxury items so hard to find in Xen'drik. If her attitude can be adjusted to Friendly, she can even tell the PCs the location and time of the masque, as well as show them her invitation. If her invitation is stolen at any point, she will report it to the d'Cannith compound and make things harder for the PCs.

Development: It is possible that the PCs will attempt to rob Valexa's store, or worse, attempt to murder her despite being told not to in previous adventures. You should make it clear that there are many visible wards and defenses throughout the shop (Valexa wishes to deter thieves). If combat ensues, she will *teleport* away and return two rounds later with an overwhelming force of guardsmen. If it comes to this, show the PCs no mercy.

Weeping Widow Inn

In their search for the home of Suroth Morellu, it is likely that they will be directed to the Weeping Widow Inn. The identity of the Weeping Widow will likely come as quite the surprise. A season ago, the Weeping Widow was known as the Wilted Rose, but it sold to new management after everyone there was mysteriously murdered during the events of *CSH-2 Shadows over Stormreach*.

The taproom has a well-worn bar opposite the door with a fireplace to the left and wooden stairs rising to the ceiling ahead and to the left. Underneath trophies and pennants that hang from the rafters, a door proceeds to another room; likely a kitchen. A willowy woman with tightly braided steel gray hair eyes you from behind the bar as you enter. "Feel free to seat yourselves. We serve ale, whiskey, bread and stew. There's dice and cards to your right."

Following the mysterious deaths in the Wilted Rose, Falaith Gnorri (female human, commoner 1; Bluff +4), purchased the empty building near the Red Ring gladiatorial arena. A scrub brush and some paint later, and Falaith opened an inn in remembrance of her deceased husband, a longtime mariner lost at sea. The old woman is straightforward, a touch bitter, and interested in making enough money to live comfortably. Those offering coin with their questions are quick to get her attention. If Falaith is offered a significant bribe (10 gp or more) or her business is threatened, she can tell the PCs the following pieces of information:

- Suroth Morellu has never been to the Weeping Willow to the best of her knowledge, but she has lived in this neighborhood all her life and stories of Old Man Morellu is a local legend.
- Old wives' tales say that Morellu is some sort of foul monster and eats children to maintain his long life. When Falaith was a small child, her sisters would dare her to touch the walls of the Morellu estate while counting to ten. It made her blood turn cold to do it.
- The Morellu estate (which Falaith can give directions to) is in significant disrepair, but regular deliveries from local businesses suggest that the Morellu family still lives there. Nothing unusual gets delivered that she knows of; just paper, ink, lamp oil, some food, and the like.
- Her cousin Betina, now deceased, once claimed to have met Suroth when she was young. She claimed Suroth came into her husband's lumber supply shop and purchased a wagonload of building supplies. Betina claimed he was a thin blonde man with a scar on his forehead in fine clothing and his direct manner suggested he was a man used to his own ways.

- Falaith knows that Darguun mercenaries have been hired to patrol the exterior of the estate since she can remember.

Development: While she won't reveal it to the PCs, Falaith has already talked with Sitadedis Thelta and plans to sell the PCs descriptions to Sitadedis as soon as possible. If the PCs speak with Falaith and leave her to live, they are automatically noticed by the Covenant.

Part Three: The d'Cannith Masque

This encounter deals solely with the d'Cannith Masque and the events that occur there. If none of the PCs attempt to attend the masque, the events described here happen without their witness. They are free to proceed to Part Four and attempt to contact or investigate Suroth Morellu at his home.

The d'Cannith Estate

The estate of Lord Eldon Vown d'Cannith is truly impressive, and it is well defended from interlopers. This section describes those parts that pertain to the masque and the defenses erected at that time. It is quite likely that the PCs might attempt to explore parts of the expansive estate or visit at a time prior to the masque. These details are left to the DM's imagination to expound upon based on the information provided here.

The Front Gate

If the PCs approach from the front entrance then read the following:

The approach to the d'Cannith estate becomes significantly more decadent as you approach. The dirt and gravel path turns off to a lovely tree-lined lane dotted with precisely placed orchids. Imported red brick cobbles echo with your footsteps as you join the line of richly garbed partygoers presenting their invitations to the warforged guards. An imposing glossy black wall surrounds the entire estate and reflects the sun back onto you as you sweat in your finery.

It is likely that the PCs will attempt to gain entrance to the party through some manner of subterfuge. Below is a list of possibilities and their likely outcomes. The DM is encouraged to use his or her best judgment.

- If the PCs attempt to present fake invitations then the guards make a Forgery skill check versus the PCs forgery check. The guards must exceed the DC of the forgery (DC 18 if the forgery is purchased from Hes), and have a total modifier of +0 to their check. If the PCs have stolen an invitation from Valexa Von Ruthvek, then the guards are on alert raising their total modifier to +2. In addition if the PCs specifically use Valexa's invitation, they will be caught.
- It is possible that creative PCs may concoct a tale as to their misplaced invitation. If the PCs have no invitation but attempt to fast talk their way past the guards, they can attempt a DC 25 Bluff check to trick the guards. Those that fail are apologetically turned away.
- The entrance is well lit and the guards are vigilant, however magic such as *invisibility* or *charm person* might also defeat the guards.
- All guests are expected to be in costume, and none are allowed to bring any weapons beyond a dagger into the estate. In addition, no armor is allowed. A DC 20 Diplomacy or Bluff check can be attempt to convince the guards that a suit of light armor is necessary for the guest's costume. They will not allow any medium or heavy armor inside.
- Actual members of any dragonmarked houses are invited inside if they show their dragonmark or possess the Favored in House feat.

Climbing the Wall

If the PCs attempt to go over the wall:

The massive wall surrounding the d'Cannith estate is a daunting piece of construction. No seams or cracks can be found in it's glossy black surface and as your eyes travel up it's twelve feet of height you notice that the top appears to be jagged. All shrubbery and trees have been culled back nearly ten feet from the wall making attempts to scale it fairly conspicuous from the street.

A DC 10 Knowledge (nature) or (architecture and engineering) identifies the wall is made from obsidian (volcanic glass). The wall can be scaled without rope by succeeding in a DC 30 Climb check. The DC can be decreased by 5 if a rope and grappling hook is used. The wall is specifically used to prevent setting a grappling hook, requiring the climber to attempt to set the hook blindly on the other side of the wall. There is

a 5% chance that in doing so, they snag a doghouse housing an Iron Defender (ECS, p. 287), automatically alerting the construct.

Assuming the PCs successfully scale the wall, there are several obstacles in their path. The top of the wall is set with small pieces of jagged glass. Any PC scaling the wall must make a DC 15 Reflex saving throw or suffer 1d4 points of slashing damage.

Several Iron Defenders patrol the grounds inside the wall. If the climbing PCs attempt to be stealthy, the Iron Defenders make succeed in a Listen check versus the PCs Move Silently check. If the Iron Defenders do not hear the PCs then they are still in their doghouses, and might be bypassed. If the PCs are trying to be stealthy, the Iron Defenders hear the PCs with a DC 5 Listen check and are waiting at the bottom of the wall. When spotted, a DC 12 Knowledge (arcana) check identifies the iron defenders.

From the top of the wall IF the Iron Defenders MAKE their Listen checks:

Waiting patiently at the foot of the wall are two horrid menacing creatures. Standing about two feet tall these creatures are made of iron plates and bars with serrated blades of steel for teeth. Their nubby spiked tails wag in anticipation of your arrival as they let out a low metallic growl.

From the top of the wall IF the Iron Defenders DO NOT MAKE their Listen checks.

At the foot of the wall are two small stone hutches. A strange screeching-scraping can be heard from inside as though metal were being dragged across stone.

Inside each hutch is an iron defender. The pairs of stone hutches are spread equally around the wall, such the PCs will encounter at least one pair. They might be bypassed if the PCs are particularly stealthy, or fought if not. The music from the party should cover any combat, through bright flashes of magic may draw the attention of the guards.

Iron Defenders (2): hp 21; ECS p. 287.

Tactics: The iron defenders are straightforward attackers that rush the nearest foe and try to tear it to pieces. If a foe falls, the constructs move on to the next target.

The Grounds

The party takes place outside of the house on the lawn in front of the mansion. Warforged guards are at all entrances to the house politely refusing access. Once the PCs are inside the grounds and near the front of the house, read the following read aloud text:

The opulence of the estate is much more apparent once inside the walls. Lush lawns have had the weeds meticulously plucked away, serene fountains make a tinkling sound as colored waters trickle down exotic stones and tiny dogs with jeweled collars caper about yipping at the guests. There are several tables laid out with fine linens laden with sweetmeats, warm breads and magically cooled water flavored with citrus. Servants scurry about with trays collecting refuse amongst the richly garbed guests. Music drifts from inside the mansion.

Once inside, there are multiple guests the PCs can interact with. Provided here is a selection of NPCs the PCs might mingle with while looking for Suroth Morellu. The DM should spend as much time on this encounter as fits the temperament of the players, and the time constraints of the play environment.

- **Alhaura d'Jorasco:** The matriarch of House Jorasco in Stormreach, Alhaura (LN female halfling cleric 9) has taken the evening from her work at the House Jorasco's Healer Guild to attend the masque. Eldon has donated money to the hospital in the past and she feels obligated to be there. If met, she speaks quite highly of the food being served. All she normally gets is something from the hospital café between her rounds. Alhaura wears a silver mask depicting the goddess Boldrei.
- **Brea Dral:** Brea is dressed as one of the serving young girls, having long ago infiltrated the d'Cannith household in the name of the Covenant. She is nervous and tries to avoid eye contact. Pretending to be a servant, she is not dressed for the masque.
- **Conac Galort:** Conac is one of the Covenant of Light operatives and devote cleric of the Silver Flame. While he does not display any outward trappings of his faith while infiltrating the party, his speech is little with references to the Flame. He is cold and rude towards those known to be members of a competing faction (if the PCs were uncovered by Sitadedis). Conac's mask looks as though it is aflame, and nicely complements Iridi's outfit.
- **Lord Eldon Vown d'Cannith:** The host of this event is a human male and a minor but wealthy member of the House of Making. With the large number of wealthy merchants in Stormreach Lord d'Cannith (CN male human aristocrat 2/expert 3) decided they needed new outlets for their coin. He brought a stockpile of magical luxury items and charged outrageous prices. The local nobles

having an abundance of coin and a need to outdo each other fell all over themselves to purchase d'Cannith's items. At one point people were giving d'Cannith money just to get whatever his next item would be not even knowing what it was. Now 15 years later he has built himself a palatial estate and every noble house in Stormreach boast things like self-heating teakettles, everburning chandeliers, and even indoor plumbing using a mechanism similar to the decanter of endless water. Lord Eldon is usually a jovial man and a shrewd businessman. When he doesn't recognize the guest he is speaking with, he feigns remembrance. Eldon wears a brilliant golden mask occasional lets loose with streams of magical sparks and glitter. He is dressed in ostentatious robes.

- **Iridi Ralucath:** Also a member of the Covenant of Light and is dressed in nice but functional clothing. Iridi stays by Conac's side at all times but rarely talks. When she does, her words are brief but well educated. She plays the part of Conac's escort. A DC 15 Spot check notices that her hands are those of a well-callused warrior or laborer, rather than a highborn escort. Iridi wears an enticing gown and a deep red mask accented by colorful feather.
- **Sir Issai Isleworth:** A warrior and military strategist for Breland during the last war, Sir Isleworth (LG male human aristocrat 1/warrior 3, hp 23), now an old man, was vaguely involved in formulating Breland's position during the Thronehold Accords and as such he is a minor celebrity during the masque. He is longwinded and prone to meandering stories. He is rather uncreatively dressed as a Brelish military officer with a large helm that hides his face but not his dangling beard.
- **Suroth Morellu:** Suroth tries to keep to the shadows and avoids conversation. He is present solely to make an appearance in order to maintain the illusion that he still lives. Those that try to speak with him find him bored and listless. He quickly makes excuses to avoid conversation unless the draconic prophecy is somehow brought up by the PCs. At all times he is shadowed by his yugoloth bodyguard who is dressed as his personal valet, who he refers to as Charlen. Both Suroth and Guggrot (Charlen) are wearing *hats of disguise* in order to avoid being noticed for what they truly are. Both wear plain cloths simple small masks, decorated with a few tasteful gems.
- **Uthiras the Battlemind:** Uthiras claims to be a the reserved representative of Dar Qat, the city of the inspired in Xen'Drik, however, if closely questioned about it by someone knowledgeable in the area (possesses the Knowledge (local) skill), it becomes clear he is not whom he claims to be. Uthiras wears a large feathered mask and a long draping cape.
- **Valexa Von Ruthvek:** Valexa is described in detail in Part Two of this adventure. If she notices anyone who stole from her at the party, she immediately reports them to security. Valexa's mask is reminiscent of a badger, and she wear's a brown dress with two white ribbons draped down the back.
- **Others:** There are literally dozens of important socialites and their associated retinues gathered at the party. If the DM desires, they may include other NPCs of their own creation.

The Abduction

After the PCs have the opportunity to mingle with the guests and meet Suroth, the Covenant of Light operatives make their move against Suroth. They approach him as a group and begin a conversation to the side of the main party, possibly maneuvering him and his bodyguard (both of which are disguised using *hats of disguise*) into a secluded portion of the gardens. When they question him about the Draconic Prophecy, the situation rapidly deteriorates and Conac orders the his associates to restrain Suroth for future questioning; causing Suroth to use his *flee the scene* ability, taking his yugoloth bodyguard with him and *dimension dooring* outside the compound while leaving images of them in place to fight for one round. The actions of the PCs may alter this sequence of events.

Creatures: Overwhelming force protects the house, but only a handful of warforged guards are present near the guests. When the scuffle begins, it appears that Conac, Iridi, Uthiras and Brea are attacking Suroth and his guard, though in truth they are only illusions of the recluse and his bodyguard. If the PCs move to involve themselves, they will have to deal with the Covenant agents as well as one nearby guard who moves to restrain the PCs. The DM is encouraged to place an excited air to this combat as whistles, shouts and metallic barking suggest that more guards or iron defenders could arrive at any moment.

Conac Galort: Male human cleric (Silver Flame) 4, hp 26; Combat Statistics.

Iridi Ralucath: Female aasimar knight 4, hp 41; Combat Statistics.

Uthiras the Battlemind: Male kalashtar psion (kineticist) 2, hp 13; Combat Statistics.

Brea Dral: Female human evoker 1, hp 6; Combat Statistics.

d'Cannith Warforged Guard: Male personality warforged fighter 2, hp 22; Combat Statistics.

Tactics: Assuming events as described above, Conac casts quickened *bleed* and *divine favor* upon himself, and afterwards supports with spells or melee as appropriate. Iridi spends the surprise round (if any) calling her armor and enlarging sword and shield, and then issues a challenge to anyone involving themselves in the fight. Uthiras uses *vigor* upon himself and then uses *energy ray* or *mind thrust* against enemies. Brea

tries to stay away from combat, saving her sudden feats for well-placed *hall of stones*. She saves her *scroll of glitterdust* for an escape.

The images of Suroth and his guard fight for one round; Suroth discharging bolts of energy and the guard drawing a dagger and rushing Iridi. The images fade after one round. Note that Suroth leaves his coach and horses behind in his escape. Quick thinking PCs may be able to rush outside and follow Suroth to his home at the DM's discretion. An additional d'Cannith Warforged Guard arrives after four rounds with one coming each round after. Every other round after four rounds, an iron defender also responds. The warforged are not trying to kill the PCs but rather expel them from the estate, so the DM is encouraged to describe a harrowing escape from the gardens.

Development: If the entire party is subdued or captured by the d'Cannith security forces, they will be arrested and tried. Since they did not actually start the combat, a defense based upon heroic guests trying to save their hosts works best. Sadly further scrutiny does reveal that the PCs were not supposed to be at the party in the first place, so the magistrate fines each PC 100 gp (deducted from their EV permanently) and releases the PCs after two days. However, if a PC wantonly killed any of the party guests, such PCs are executed at dawn and his body thrown into the harbor. The PC maybe recovered and raised if desired.

Scaling the Encounter

5th-Level Characters: One additional d'Cannith warforged guard tries to subdue the PCs.

6th-Level Characters: Two additional d'Cannith warforged guards also try to subdue the PCs and add Maldec, another kalashtar with the same statistics as Ulthiras.

d'Cannith Warforged Guard

CR 2

Male personality warforged fighter 2
AL N Medium construct (living construct)
Init +1; Senses Listen +3, Spot +3
Languages Common

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+8 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 22 (2 HD); **DR** 3/adamantine

Immune poison, sleep effects, paralysis, disease, nausea, fatigue, exhaustion, effects that cause the sickened condition, energy drain, breathe

Resist healing at half effect

Fort +6, **Ref** +1, **Will** -1

Weakness unusual physical construction (ECS 23), cannot heal lethal damage naturally

Speed 4 ft. (20 squares)

Melee mwk greatsword +7 (2d6+4) or
slam +5 (1d4+3)

Ranged longbow +4 (1d8+3/x3)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +5

Abilities Str 16, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 8

SQ do not need to eat or drink

Feats Adamantine Body, Alertness, Improved Damage Reduction, Weapon Focus Greatsword

Skills Listen +3, Spot +3

Possessions masterwork greatsword, might composite longbow [+3], 20 masterwork arrows, 2 masterwork silver arrows, 2 masterwork cold iron arrows, 2 masterwork adamantine arrows, signal whistle

Conac Galort

CR 4

Male human cleric (Silver Flame) 4
AL LG Medium humanoid (human)
Init +0; Senses Listen +3, Spot +3
Languages Common

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12

hp 26 (4 HD)

Fort +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +7

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk dagger +5 (1d4+2/19-20)

Ranged thrown mwk dagger +3 (1d4+2/19-20)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +5

Special Actions turn undead (9/day), spontaneous cure spells, protective ward (1/day, 1 hour, touch, standard action, +4 resistance bonus on next saving throw)

Combat Gear *scroll of protection from evil*, tanglefoot bag

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 4th; +4 on dispel checks):

2nd – *hold person* (DC 15), *silence* (DC 15), *sound burst*, *zone of truth* (DC 15)^D

1st – *bless*, *command* (DC 14), *divine favor*, *sanctuary* (DC 14)^D, *shield of faith*

0th – *create water*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *light*, *read magic*

D: Domain spell. Deity: Silver Flame. Domains: Inquisition, Protection.

Abilities Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 14

Feats Divine Spell Power (Quicken, Extra Turning, Quicken Spell)

Skills Concentration +9, Diplomacy +9, Spellcraft +7

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork dagger, *bracers of armor* +2, 2 holy symbols, and spell pouch

Hook “All will be purified by the Flame.”

Iridi Ralucath

CR 4

Female aasimar knight 4

AL LG Medium outsider (Native)

Init +1; Senses Darkvision 60', Listen +4, Spot +4

Languages Celestial, Common

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+6 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 41 (4 HD)

Resist acid 5, cold 5, electricity 5

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk longsword +8 (1d8+3/19-20)

Ranged thrown dagger +5 (1d4+3/19-20)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +7

Attack Options Power Attack

Special Actions knight's challenge 4/day (fighting challenge +1, test of mettle)

Combat Gear *potion of aid*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 14

SQ armor mastery (medium), bulwark of defense, knight's code, shield block +1

Feats Intimidating Strike (Subtract 4 or less from attack roll, if attack hits, make an Intimidate check with the amount subtracted from the attack roll as a bonus, if successful, foe is shaken for the combat), Mounted Combat, Power Attack

Skills Intimidate +9, Ride +8

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *called breastplate*, masterwork longsword (under the effect of a *shrink item spell*), large metal shield (under the effect of a *shrink item spell*, dagger)

Armor Mastery (Ex) Iridi suffers no movement penalty for medium armor.

Bulwark of Defense (Ex) If at the beginning of their turn, an enemy is threatened by Iridi, they treat all squares threatened by Iridi as difficult terrain.

Fighting Challenge +1 (Ex) As a swift action, Iridi can issue a challenge to a foe. If the foe has an Int of 5+ and a CR of 2 or more, Iridi gains a +1 Will save, attack, and damage against the target for 7 rounds. If knocked unconscious by the target, Iridi loses 2 uses of knight's challenge for the day.

Shield Block +1 (Ex) When using a shield, gain an extra +1 shield bonus to AC against one chosen opponent.

Test of Mettle (Ex) As a swift action, Iridi can issue a challenge to all foes within 100' for 7 rounds. Those that fail a DC 14 Will save must attack Iridi (using melee, ranged or spells). If anyone else attacks the target, the test of mettle ends for that target. If knocked unconscious by the target, Iridi gains 1 use of knight's challenge for that day. A target can only be affected (whether they save or not) by Iridi's test of mettle once per day.

Hook "Honor and order for the Light!"

Uthiras the Battlemind

CR 2

Male kalashtar psion (kineticist) 2
AL LG Medium humanoid (kalashtar)
Init +1; Senses Listen +1, Spot +1
Languages Abyssal, Common, Giant, Gnoll, Orc, Quor

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14
hp 13 (2 HD)
Immune *dream* and *nightmare*
Fort +1, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3 (+5 vs. mind-affecting)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee mwk dagger +1 (1d4/19-20)
Ranged thrown mwk dagger +2 (1d4/19-20)
Base Atk +1; **Grp** +1
Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*
Power Points/Day: 11 (10 currently); **Powers Known** (2nd):
1st—*energy ray* (1 PP, +2 ranged touch, 1d6 points of energy damage (cold/fire: +1 damage/die, electrical: +3 to hit metal armor/+2 level check, sonic: -1 damage/die, no hardness), +1 PP for +1d6), *inertial armor* (1 PP, +4 AC)[†], *mind thrust* (1 PP, 1d10 damage, DC 15 Will negates, +1 PP for +1d10), *psionic daze* (DC 14 Will negates, +1 PP for +1 HD affected), *vigor* (1 PP +5 hp, +1 PP for extra +5 hp)
[†]Already Cast
Psi-Like Abilities (CL 1st):
1/day—*mindlink*

Abilities Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 12
Feats Psionic Body, Psionic Endowment (expend focus to raise the DC of a power by 1)
Skills Autohypnosis +6, Concentration +6, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (the Planes) +9, Psicraft +9
Possessions combat gear plus masterwork dagger, *cognizance crystal* (+3 PP battery)

Hook "I see the truth of your darkness, and bring light by the power of my thoughts."

Brea Dral CR 1

Female human evoker 1
AL NG Medium humanoid (human)
Init +0; Senses Listen +0, Spot +0
Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Gnoll, Undercommon

AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10
hp 6 (1 HD)
Fort +2, **Ref** +0, **Will** +2

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee dagger +0 (1d4/19-20)
Ranged dagger +0 (1d4/19-20)
Base Atk +0; **Grp** +0
Combat Gear *scroll of glitterdust*, *wand of magic missile* (5 charges)
Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 1st):
1st- *hail of stone* (1d4, 110'-range, 5'-radius) (2), *silent image* (DC 15)
0th- *acid splash* (+0 ranged touch), *daze* (DC 14), *ray of frost* (+0 ranged touch)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 10, Cha 10
SQ Immediate Magic (4/day, immediate action, fire an arrow of force at anyone who targets you with a spell or ranged attack, 1d6 damage)
Feats Scribe Scroll, Sudden Maximize, Sudden Widen

Skills Concentration +6, Knowledge (arcane) +8, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +8, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (the Planes) +8, Spellcraft +8, Tumble +2
Possessions combat gear plus dagger, spell component pouch

Hook "I'm gonna break something."

Part Four: Old Man Morellu

Once the party manages to find Suroth Morellu's home, either through legwork, or by following him home from the Masque, proceed with this encounter.

Approaching the House

Three doors down the lane, set off by itself, sits an unassuming 2-story brick surrounded by a wrought iron fence topped with rusted spikes. The shutters have peeling brown paint and several of the clay shingles have fallen loose. Throwing dice in front of the house are what appear to be a group of goblinoids.

Suroth, under the guise of various members of the Morellu family over the years, has long hired mercenaries to guard his home from unwanted intrusion. The goblinoids know nothing of what's inside. They are paid regularly and always on time, and with the exception of the occasional deliver or the rare departure by Morellu's black coach, they are never bothered, and indeed never see their employer.

Two hobgoblins are always on patrol around the fence, and the mercenaries work in twelve hour shifts with a fresh set arrive at midday and midnight.

Bugbear: hp 16; *MM* p 29.

Hobgoblin (4): hp 6; *MM* p 153.

The goblinoids eye any approach warily but avoiding open hostility. Their initial attitude is Indifferent. They are used to deliveries arriving without notice. They will confirm that this is the Morellu estate and will open the gate so any deliveries may be placed just inside, but they will not under any circumstances allow anyone on the grounds or in the house. It is their only rule. If anyone gets inside, they will not be paid. Lethal force is used by anyone trying to violate that rule.

The ten foot tall fence that surrounds the house can be scaled by a DC 10 Climb check, but the climber needs to make a DC 5 Reflex saving throw to avoid taking 1d4 points of piercing damage as he or she navigates the threatening spike atop it. Note that the home is near a residential street, so climbing the fence will likely be noticed during daylight hours.

Tactics: The goblinoids rush any obvious attackers, but pay special attention to those displaying the capability to cast spells or otherwise use powers beyond wielding a weapon. They are paid very well and fight until only one of them remains (unless it is the bugbear, he always fights to the death). If one hobgoblin remains, he attempts to run and get help, returning in fifteen minutes with the other set of mercenaries (4 hobgoblins and a bugbear).

Development: If the PCs manage to commandeer Suroth's coach from outside the d'Cannith estate following Morellu's flight from the Covenant of Light assailants, they could drive it back to the estate and right inside. The coach comes and goes with out notice, and the driver (usually the yugoloth bodyguard in disguise) often looks different. The goblinoids will never stop or question the coach or any who might be hiding inside.

Scaling the Encounter

5th-Level Characters: Add one bugbear.

6th-Level Characters: Add two bugbears and two hobgoblins.

Once Inside the Fence

If the PCs do manage to get inside the fence and onto the grounds, they still need to get inside the house, possibly while moving among the bush or from the coach-house. If the goblinoids guards still patrol outside, the PCs may need to be using stealth to affect their entrance. If the guards are deceased and their bodies are hidden, no one will notice their absence until the shift change. Those searching for a back door find it bricked over.

Front Door

If the PCs approach from the front door, proceed with the following read aloud text:

The front stoop has fallen into disrepair. Several of the boards are sagging or rotted and the handle on the front door is rusted.

The boards creak menacingly under any weight and may even begin to crack under the weight of heavily armored PCs. The door is locked.

Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; AC 5; Break DC 25, Open Locks DC 18.

If the PCs are able to open the front door, they arrive in the parlor; proceed to the section Once Inside.

Windows

If the PCs try to go through a window, proceed with the following read aloud text:

Approaching the wall, it is home that all of the windows are shuttered. When you attempt to open the shutter it doesn't move. Upon closer inspection you can see old rusty nails holding them fast.

All of the shutters have been nailed shut, but a successful DC 15 Strength check can pry out the nails of one shutter and grant access to the window.

If the party pries open the shutters, proceed with the following read aloud text. If the PCs take care to muffle the sound, you should adjust the text accordingly.

The screeching nails are enough to wake the dead as they pry out of the old wood. Once the shutters are open it becomes apparent that heavy boards have been affixed over the window from the inside.

When the nails are pried loose, have any surviving goblinoids make DC 10 Listen checks DC 10 to hear the nails being pried out. If they do, they immediately investigate.

Once Inside

The house once belonged to Suroth's mother, but he had no use for any of the house above ground and everything has been left the way it was when she died, several hundred years ago. The house appears very simple once inside, with only a few minor repairs performed to keep the walls intact. The front door leads into the parlor. A hallway leads out of the parlor, to a formal dining room, which leads into the kitchen. Also in the parlor a set of stairs lead up to a second floor where there are 2 bedrooms and a storage closet. Underneath the stairs is a chamber pot closet. Suroth uses his *flee the scene* invocation to access his lair, and as such, he hasn't been in the house proper for a long time.

Parlor

Several formless shapes are arranged about the parlor. Inspection reveals once-fine cloth now mildewed and decaying covering upholstered couches, mahogany end tables and carefully carved rockers. The details and craftsmanship mark them as very expensive pieces but they look centuries out of date.

There is very thick dust covering everything in the front room. Nothing looks to have been disturbed in a very long time. A DC 15 Survival check with the Track feat, or a DC 15 Search check with the Investigate check, confirms the room has not been inhabited for a very, very long time.

Bedrooms

The master bedroom has a four-post bed, a chest of drawers an armoire and a long dust covered dressing mirror. A very old charcoal of a lovely woman with a toddler on her lap sits in a frame on the chest. Next to it rests a washbasin so old that the porcelain crumbles.

Searching the dresser reveals moth-eaten and yellowed women's clothes that went out of style hundreds of years ago. There is nothing of particular value here, though all was expensive in its time.

The guest bedroom has a smaller bed and a rocking chair with a basket of what may have once been rotted yarn and rusted knitting needles inside it. A small shelf over the bed has several carved wooden dolls in frilly dresses with decaying corn silk hair. In this house of dust and rot, their glass black eyes seem to follow you wherever you go.

Searching this room reveals nothing of note. It is just a guest bedroom.

Dining Room

A quaint four-person dinette adorns this room with a three stick candelabra for the centerpiece. The candles have hardened and crumbled with age.

A DC 5 Search check finds 10-gp worth of silver, hidden behind some chipped place settings in the china cabinet.

Kitchen

On the back wall of the kitchen you can clearly make out what was once a doorway but has long since been bricked in. A couple of copper pots hang on a rack above the center island green tinted and covered in spider webs. Several wooden boxes are stacked near the door. The smell of rot is strong in this room.

The boxes by the door are labeled "Verien Greengrocer, Stormreach" and each is packed with rotting food purchased to maintain the illusion that a family lives here. There is nothing of value to find in this room.

Chamber Pot Closet

This cramped little cubby looks like a miserable place to do business. The chamber pot sits considerably lower than normal, there's no place to put a candle and something black and crusted lurks at the bottom.

The crusty lurker turns out to be a long since dead rat. A DC 15 Search check reveals a slight horizontal crack about a foot lower than the ceiling on the left side. A DC 20 Search, or sitting on the chamber pot, causes a panel to the left (if the PC is sitting facing out) to slide open.

If someone sits on the chamber pot:

Sitting on the chamber pot is quite uncomfortable. Your knees are slightly higher than your lap and as soon as you get settled a panel to your left slides open at the same instant that you feel a pinprick on your bottom.

Poisoned Needle Trap: CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; Atk +17 melee (1 plus poison, needle); poison (blue whinnis, DC 14 Fortitude save resists (poison only), 1 Con/unconsciousness); Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 17; Market value 4,720 gp

Secret Room

The staircase creaks with every step you take and you can feel the temperature dropping as you descend under the earth. An expansive room waits for you at the bottom of the stairs. Shelves cluttered with knick-knacks and baubles line every wall. Books and scrolls are stacked half-haphazardly on tables. Several precarious towers of knowledge list, a slight breeze from tumbling over. An eyeball floats in some yellow liquid inside a closed jar that lists upon one of the stacks. An odor of decaying parchment permeates the room.

This room is the actual lair of Suroth Morellu, and has been for hundreds of years. A DC 10 Search check finds several books dog-eared with vague references to the *Caladyn Fragments*. A DC 15 Search check uncovers a couple of books and scrolls that have "The Eye of Flame" underlined. Very little is mentioned except for the name but in one instance you do find the line "*And with the Eye of Flame the prophecy became clearer...*" The eyeball in the jar that rests upon this book belongs to Suroth, having been removed to make room for the *eye of flame*.

Since the death of his last family member, it became clear to Suroth that he was the last of his line, and with his obsession to understand the draconic prophecy it became clear that no one would come to carry on his work. His transition to undeath followed shortly thereafter. Now Suroth spends most of his time in this room reading, and studying the draconic prophecies, and recently, the *Caladyn Fragments*. Despite his significant wealth, he spends only what is necessary to maintain a nominal illusion of life in safety. The rest of his fortune has been devoted to recovering texts and curios associated with the draconic prophecy.

Creatures: If the PCs have successfully arrived to this room, it is likely that Suroth is here with his hired yugoloth bodyguard, and it quite likely that they are aware of the PCs search of the house and approach down the rickety secret stairs. Both begin with their *hats of disguise* active so they might verbally confront the intruders. Suroth has no desire to fight in the vault that houses his most prized possessions.

Suroth immediately orders the PCs out of his home, and if they do not comply, he threatens force. This allows the PCs a few moments to negotiate. All Suroth cares for is his work and prophecy. If asked specifically about the prophecy, his eyes gleam, and he admits that he has made many sacrifices in his pursuit of the prophecy. Discussing the PCs pursuit of the prophecy, especially at the expense of any

confining morals is the best way to win Suroth over, and he will consider offers to join the PCs or whatever organization they belong to. He cares nothing for the Dark Six, the Traveler, money, or power; as long as he has access to the knowledge.

Threats against his person or property quickly inflame him, and send him into a rage. There is little that can be done once he has slipped into fury and combat quickly follows.

If Suroth is won over or if combat is about to ensue, both he and Guggrot his hired yugoloth bodyguard drop their disguises and allow their true forms to be seen. Suroth is a wither corpse dressed in fine clothing with a red gem covered in moving runes inserted into his left eye socket (the *eye of flame*, a *gem of seeing* that is inscribed with a fragment of the *Caladyn Fragments*). Guggrot is a corpulent creature with sickly yellow skin and skull like face, wearing black studded leather. When he attacks, he emits the smell of brimstone and the faint sound of rolling dice can be heard.

Suroth Morellu: Male necropolitan warlock 7, hp 60; Combat Statistics.

Guggrot, Corruptor of Fate Yugoloth: hp 52; Combat Statistics.

Tactics: Guggrot moves to intercept enemies using the full power of his abilities to corrupt fate on as many foes as possible. Suroth stands back using his *eldritch blast* against troublesome foes, using *fell flight* (at appropriate levels) to rise to the twenty-foot ceiling. The yugoloth fights until slain (and sent back to his home plane), but if Suroth is reduced below 15 hp and it is clear he cannot win, he uses *flee the scene* to escape, and flees the city.

Scaling the Encounter

5th-Level Characters: Use the CR 8 version of Suroth Morellu.

6th-Level Characters: Use the CR 9 version of Suroth Morellu and add Macrog, an additional Corruptor of Fate.

Suroth Morellu

CR 7

Male necropolitan warlock 7

AL LE Medium undead (Augmented Human)

Init +2; Senses Listen +2, Spot +2

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Undercommon

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +2 deflection)

hp 60 (7 HD); **DR** 2/cold iron

Immune undead immunities

Fort +2, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7

Resist positive energy 10

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk dagger +5 (1d4-1/19-20)

Ranged *eldritch blast* +7 (4d6)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +4

Attack Options Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot

Combat Gear *potion of inflict moderate wounds*, *potion of mage armor*

Warlock Invocations Known (CL 7th):

Lesser—*flee the scene* (*dimension door*, 40' range, leaves reactive illusion in the warlock's place)

Least—[†]*beguiling influence* (+6 Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate), [†]*dark one's own luck* (+5 to any one save for 24 hours, used on Reflex), *eldritch spear* (*eldritch blast* range increased to 250')

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th):

At will — *detect magic*

[†]Already used

Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con -, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 20

SQ deceive item (warlocks may take 10 on Use Magic Device checks), resist control, turn resistance +2, unnatural resilience

Feats Improved Toughness, Point Blank Shot, Positive Energy Resistance, Precise Shot

Skills Bluff +21, Concentration +10, Knowledge (arcane) +13, Knowledge (the planes) +13, Knowledge (religion) +13, Spellcraft +13

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork dagger, *ring of protection* +2, *hat of disguise*, the *eye of flame* (*gem of seeing*), masterwork studded leather armor, 100 gp-jeweled ring, 700 gp

Resist Control (Ex) Necropolitans receive a +2 profane bonus on their Will saving throws to resist the effect of a *control undead* spell.

Unnatural Resilience (Ex) Necropolitans automatically heal hit point damage and ability damage at the same rate as a living creature. The Heal skill has no effect on necropolitans, however, negative energy heals them.

Hook “Not even death will stop me, all the secrets of the prophecy will be mine.”

Suroth Morellu

CR 8

Male necropolitan warlock 8
AL LE Medium undead (Augmented Human)
Init +2; Senses Listen +2, Spot +2
Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Undercommon

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +2 deflection)
hp 68 (8 HD); **DR** 2/cold iron
Immune undead immunities
Fort +2, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8
Resist positive energy 10

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee mwk dagger +6 (1d4-1/19-20)
Ranged *eldritch blast* +8 (4d6)
Base Atk +6; **Grp** +5
Attack Options Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot
Combat Gear *potion of inflict moderate wounds*, *potion of mage armor*
Warlock Invocations Known (CL 8th):
Lesser—[†]*fell flight* (30' fly [Good]), *flee the scene* (*dimension door*, 45' range, leaves reactive illusion in the warlock's place)
Least—[†]*beguiling influence* (+6 Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate), [†]*dark one's own luck* (+5 to any one save for 24 hours, generally used on Reflex), *eldritch spear* (*eldritch blast* range increased to 250')
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th):
At will — *detect magic*
[†]Already used

Abilities Str 9, Dex 14, Con -, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 20
SQ deceive item (warlocks may take 10 on Use Magic Device checks), fiendish resilience (1/day, fast healing 1 for 2 min.), resist control, turn resistance +2, unnatural resilience
Feats Improved Toughness, Point Blank Shot, Positive Energy Resistance, Precise Shot
Skills Bluff +22, Concentration +11, Knowledge (arcane) +14, Knowledge (the planes) +14, Knowledge (religion) +14, Spellcraft +14
Possessions combat gear plus masterwork dagger, *ring of protection* +2, *hat of disguise*, the *eye of flame* (*gem of seeing*), masterwork studded leather armor, 100 gp-jeweled ring, 700 gp

Resist Control (Ex) Necropolitans receive a +2 profane bonus on their Will saving throws to resist the effect of a *control undead* spell.

Unnatural Resilience (Ex) Necropolitans automatically heal hit point damage and ability damage at the same rate as a living creature. The Heal skill has no effect on necropolitans, however, negative energy heals them.

Hook “Not even death will stop me, all the secrets of the prophecy will be mine.”

Suroth Morellu

CR 9

Male necropolitan warlock 9
AL LE Medium undead (Augmented Human)
Init +6; Senses Listen +2, Spot +2
Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Undercommon

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +2 deflection)
hp 76 (9 HD); **DR** 2/cold iron
Immune undead immunities
Fort +3, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8

Resist positive energy 10

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk dagger +6 (1d4-1/19-20)

Ranged *eldritch blast* +8 (5d6)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +5

Attack Options Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot

Combat Gear *potion of inflict moderate wounds*, *potion of mage armor*

Warlock Invocations Known (CL 9th):

Lesser—[†]*fell flight* (30' fly [Good]), *flee the scene* (*dimension door*, 45' range, leaves reactive illusion in the warlock's place)

Least—[†]*beguiling influence* (+6 Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate), [†]*dark one's own luck* (+5 to any one save for 24 hours, generally used on Reflex), *eldritch spear* (*eldritch blast* range increased to 250')

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th):

At will – *detect magic*

[†]Already used

Abilities Str 9, Dex 14, Con -, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 20

SQ deceive item (warlocks may take 10 on Use Magic Device checks), fiendish resilience (1/day, fast healing 1 for 2 min.), resist control, turn resistance +2, unnatural resilience

Feats Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness, Point Blank Shot, Positive Energy Resistance, Precise Shot

Skills Bluff +23, Concentration +12, Knowledge (arcane) +15, Knowledge (the planes) +15, Knowledge (religion) +15, Spellcraft +15

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork dagger, *ring of protection* +2, *hat of disguise*, the *eye of flame* (*gem of seeing*), masterwork studded leather armor, 100 gp-jeweled ring, 700 gp

Resist Control (Ex) Necropolitans receive a +2 profane bonus on their Will saving throws to resist the effect of a *control undead* spell.

Unnatural Resilience (Ex) Necropolitans automatically heal hit point damage and ability damage at the same rate as a living creature. The Heal skill has no effect on necropolitans, however, negative energy heals them.

Hook “Not even death will stop me, all the secrets of the prophecy will be mine.”

Guggrot, Corruptor of Fate Yugoloth

CR 5

AL NE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, yugoloth)

Init +8; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot+10

Languages Abyssal, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Dodge (+4 Dex, +4 armor)

hp 52 (7HD)

Immune acid, energy drain, necromantic effects, negative energy effects, poison

Resist cold 10, fire 10, electricity 10; **SR** 14

Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk short sword +12/+7 (1d6+2/19-20 plus bestow curse)

Ranged composite shortbow +11/+6 (1d6/x3)

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +9

Atk Options aligned strike (evil), bestow curse

Special Actions corrupting gaze

Abilities Str 15, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ unluck, yugoloth traits

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

Skills Balance +6, Disguise +10, Escape Artist +14, Hide +14, Jump +4, Listen +10, Move Silently +14, Sleight of Hand +14, Spot +10, Tumble +14, Use Rope +4 (+6 involving bindings)

Bestow Curse (Su) As the *bestow curse* spell; at will; Will DC 16; caster level 7th. This ability affects those touching or touched by a corruptor of fate or its weapons. A cursed subject must roll percentile dice each turn. On a roll of 01-50, it can take no action. On a roll of 51-100, it can act normally. This is a necromantic

effect. Undead are unaffected by a corruptor of fate's bestow curse ability. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Corrupting Gaze (Su) A corruptor of fate can blast its enemies with a glance, at a range of up to 30 feet. Creatures that meet the corruptor's gaze must succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of damage and a -1 penalty on attack rolls, skill checks, and saving throws for 1 minute. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Unluck (Su) Roll twice for attacks and damage against a corruptor of fate; the attacker must use the lower result. This is a mind-affecting necromantic effect. A corruptor of fate is a strange creature that brings bad luck. It favors stealth and cunning to inflict suffering.

Ending the Adventure

The adventure comes to an end when the PCs either convince Suroth to join with the Cabal of Shadows, he flees the city, or they slay him and claim the *eye of flame* and possibly Suroth's other research on the draconic prophecy. Once returned to the Hand of Stalwart Reverie to report their success or failure, read the appropriate read aloud text to the players.

Success

If the PCs are able to convince Suroth to join forces with the Cabal, or they are able to forcibly take the *eye of flame* from him, their mission is considered a success.

In the strange silver ambient light of the Hand of Stalwart Reverie, the Melancholy examines the gem pried from Suroth's rotten socket, admiring the writing that flows across its surface. "You have done well my Children. This is what we seek... The Cairn of Stone Hearts... Interesting." You can almost hear the smile forming behind her veils.

If the PCs succeed in gaining Suroth's allegiance or claim his library by force, they gain the **Servant of Darkness** story object.

Failure

If the PCs are unable to convince Suroth to join forces with the Cabal, or they are fail to forcibly take the *eye of flame* from him, their mission is considered a failure.

The Melancholy sits above on one of the great chairs sized for a giant and rants from on high. "You have brought me nothing! What shall we do? Did you even try? I should have none better than to send such children. Just wait until the other Council Members get home! You are in for such a punishment!"

If the PCs fail to claim Suroth's library, they do not gain the **Servant of Darkness** story object.

Resolving Obscura Secret Missions

Any PC that completes the secret mission given to them by their Obscura at the beginning of the adventure should receive the **Obscura Reward #7** story object. Here is a summary of what must be done to receive this reward.

- *Children of Xoriat*: The PC must recover Guggrot the Corruptor of Fate Yugoloth's masterwork shortsword.
- *The Defiance*: The PC must encounter and capture Sitadedis Thelta alive to be returned to the Hand of Stalwart Reverie.
- *Instruments of Change*: During the d'Cannith masque, the PC must kill Sir Issai Isleworth.
- *Mourners of Yore*: The PC must encounter and kill Sitadedis Thelta.
- *No Obscura*: The PC must identify the Obscura memberships of at least three other party members and report them to Deondag.

Event Treasure

If you are running *CSH-4 Fire in the Heart of Madness* as part of another event and the PCs successfully recover the *eye of flame*, please have each PC record the following event treasure upon their adventure journals in addition to any story objects. Each PC receives a *potion of invisibility* and may also choose between *bracers of armor* +2 or *cloak of resistance* +1 to be carried on their adventure journal until the results of this event are reported and their EV is updated.

Adventure Questions

1. How much effort did the PCs expend on legwork?
 - a. The party did next to nothing and stumbled along blindly.
 - b. The party performed the minimum needed to not be clueless.
 - c. The party made an average effort.
 - d. The party ran down every lead and left no stone unturned.
2. What happened with Sitadedis Thelta?
 - a. The PCs avoided meeting him and his fuzzy thugs.
 - b. He slaughtered the party in the name of justice and light.
 - c. It was touch an go, but the PCs survived his attack with either themselves or Sitadedis being forced to flee.
 - d. Never try to ambush the bad guys, they invented the ambush.
3. How did the PCs get into the d'Cannith Masque?
 - a. The never went.
 - b. They watched from outside.
 - c. The used guile and bluffed their way in.
 - d. They used stealth to sneak in.
 - e. They tried, possibly by violence, but were unsuccessful in their attempts to get in.
4. How faired the Covenant of Light attempt to kidnap Suroth Morellu?
 - a. He escaped with no thanks to the PCs, since they weren't there.
 - b. The PCs intervened but were driven off by the holy champions.
 - c. The PCs forced the good guys to run.
 - d. Evil wins because good is stupid.
5. Did the PCs find Suroth's hidden lair?
 - a. They never even found his home.
 - b. They got past the goblinoid mercenaries, but thought no one was home.
 - c. Yes, undead don't use chamber pots; dead give away.
6. What was the final outcome of Suroth and the *eye of flame*?
 - a. Suroth and his yugoloth defeated the weak PCs.
 - b. Suroth was driven away. The PCs claimed his library but not the *eye of flame*.
 - c. Suroth was defeated, and his possessions claimed as spoils.
 - d. Suroth was convinced that the Cabal was of a like mind, and he has joined their madness to his obsession.
7. Rate the players' role-playing (while keeping in mind limitations of convention time restrictions)?
 - a. Excellent, they should all be on the silver screen.
 - b. Good, you had a fun time.
 - c. Fair, someone used a funny voice.
 - d. Poor, they rolled some dice and ignored chances to role-play.

Story Objects

Obscura Reward #7

Code: EXCS14

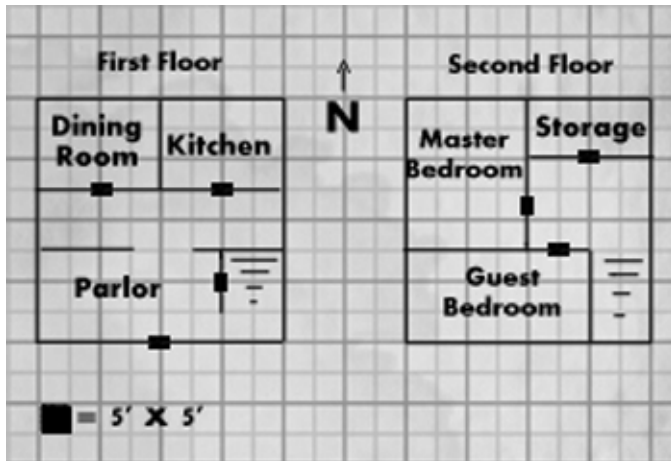
You have succeeded in a secret mission given to you by your Obscura. The benefit you receive depends upon the Obscura to which you belong. You have been rewarded with a magical token that you may activate once per adventure to cast a spell from the *Spell Compendium* as a spell-like ability. You use your character level as your caster level and your Charisma to determine any saving throw DC. The spell the token can be used for varies with your Obscura. *Children of Xoriat: caltrops; Defiance: amanuensis; Instruments of Change: silent portal; Mourners of Yore: repair minor damage; No Obscura: close wounds.*

Servant of Darkness

Code: EXCS15

You have gained access to the dark library of Suroth Morellu and while perusing the details found there in, you have encountered many fell secrets. Your PC has unlocked the following items from the *Book of Vile Darkness*: Disease: Soul Rot (self only, may not be transmitted); Feats: Corrupt Spell, Deformity (all), Disciple of Darkness, Evil Brand, Lichloved, Malign Spell Focus, Willing Deformity; Prestige Classes: Diabolist, Warrior of Darkness; Spells: *black bag*, *damning darkness*, *dance of ruin*, *devil's eye*, *masochism*, *no light*, *preserve organ*, *shriveling*, *slash tongue*, *spider hand*, *suspend disease*.

DM Map of the Morellu House



Handout #1: Delivered Message

Dear Cousin,

With the approach of night, I hope this message finds you well. An opportunity has arisen that demands your special attention, and the family wishes to hold you in their Hand before two bells. If you haven't a key, be early so that one of your siblings might let you in.

Your Aunt

Handout #2: Obscura Orders

The DM should have each player secretly write down their membership in an Obscura, if any, and then provide them with the appropriate handout. These are SECRET orders and should only be shown to players whose PCs are in the listed Obscura.

Children of Xoriat

Just as you move to leave, you are stopped by Maul, a warforged you know to be member of the Children. "I have been told that fiends of Mabar have strange weapons, maybe that eat souls or something. I like wielding my big hammer, but I could use something for my off hand. If you see any fiends while your out and they have anything light for an off-hand, bring their weapon and I'll reward you."

Goal: Kill a fiend and bring their light weapon to Maul.

The Defiance

Just as you prepare to leave for your mission, Skolin Dail, another member of the Children, contacts you. He offers you a proposition, "I know you are about to leave, so I'll be quick. An old acquaintance of mine has been seen in the city. Sitadedis Thelta was a great and artful killer before he went over to the Silver Flame and was reborn as a sniveling, and repentant follower of goodness. I would greatly like the opportunity to visit upon him all the pain he has caused for me since his conversion. He is a human man, with short-cropped black hair and a scar on the left side of his neck and was last seen in the company of several shifters. If you can recover him alive, I will reward you."

Goal: Recover Sitadedis Thelta alive.

Instruments of Change

Just before you leave, you are pulled aside by Termariel, another member of the Instruments. "Hello fellow musician, " she says. "The winds of change come once again, and you are their agent. I am told you may be visiting the d'Cannith masque to celebrate the end of the Last War three nights from now. The guest of honor is a warrior and military strategist for Breland during the last war, Sir Isleworth. He is now an old man but was vaguely involved in formulating Breland's position during the Thronehold Accords and still councils the crown on occasion. He is a voice of stolid conservatism, and he harkens back to old ways. His voice must be stilled so that the ways of the Traveler might sweep across the land. Bring me his blood-soaked beard as proof of his death and I will reward you."

Goal: Kill Sir Issai Isleworth

Mourners of Yore

Just before you leave for your mission, the Melancholy pulls you aside. "I have an additional task for you, my sweetling. A man has been troubling many of the unfortunate we care for, and his blade has silenced many of those who might seek shelter within our arms. You must stop this man so he never hurts our family again. His name is Sitadedis Thelta, and he is a human man, with short-cropped black hair and a scar on the left side of his neck. He was last seen in the company of several shifters. If you bring me his head, I will reward you."

Goal: Kill Sitadedis Thelta.

No Obscura

As you prepare to leave, you are summoned to top of the Hand of Stalwart Reverie to meet with Deondag, the Master of Rites, and disembodied giant who inhabits a great glass brain as a vessel for his mind. "I have been watching you little one. I know you have stayed out of the machinations of the others thus far. Now you will work for me. Watch your compatriots and see if you can determine what Obscura they belong to due to their carelessness. If you can identify the allegiances of at least three of them, I will reward you greatly."

Goal: If you wish (you can say no), identify the Obscura memberships of at least three other party members and report them to Deondag.