

Along the Wheel of Fates

**A One Round AD&D Living City Tournament
Part Five of the Five part tarot series**

“The ending to a tale, whose beginning is finally revealed to all. The rewards are great but the challenges will be deadly, and I am stating that for all who dare traverse the Wheel of Fates”

by Daniel S. Donnelly

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This is a standard RPGA Network tournament. A four-hour time block has been set aside for this event. It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players to keep track of who is playing which character.

The actual playing time will be about three hours. Make sure you use the last 20 to 30 minutes of the event time block to have the players capsule their characters for each other and vote. The standard RPGA Network voting procedures will be used. Complete the Judge's Summary before you collect the players' scoring sheets. This way you will not be influenced by their ratings and comments.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying.

A note about the text: Some of the text in this module is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in bold italics. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

Tier Structure

Add the levels of the PCs to determine which tier they are on. Tiered events and foes are marked throughout the text.

Tier 1:	Total levels 4-13
Tier 2:	Total levels 14-25
Tier 3:	Total levels 26-37
Tier 4:	Total levels 38-56
Tier 5:	Total levels 57+

DM Information

This is the fifth installment of the Tarot Series of Living City tournaments. The entire series of Fate's tests comes unraveled as the ultimate source of the test's and confusion, Madam Coth is abducted before the PCs very eyes. What happens next is a very strange game of chance in which some will live and many will die. It is not necessary for players to have already played the previous adventures, or is it necessary to play any of the future tournaments. The tournaments break down as follows:

Tarot I: The Test of Fate's Strength
Tarot II: The Stars & Moon Above
Tarot III: The Light in the Lovers Eye
Tarot IV: Rogue of the World
Tarot V: Along the Wheel of Fate

If you have not played in, or DM'd the previous tournament a synopsis of the tournament is described below:

The Test of Fate's Strength: It was within this module that the characters are first instructed in the ways of Fate and are sent by Madam Coth to the temple of Lliira (or was it Leira) to find a hidden passage. Either way they fought their way through a maze of traps, monstrous creatures and diabolical magic to rescue Madam Coth from the clutches of Fate's chosen opponent, a high priestess of a yet unknown religion. The priestess had protected herself with three powerful guardians. The PCs defeated each of these guardians and won the first of Fate's challenges.

The Stars & Moon Above: The PCs are part of a large quest of the spirit with Madam Coth as their partial guide. A number of puzzles are put to them and they must solve at least three to complete the quest. A silver sphere of unknown material is their only guide.

Light in The Lover's Eye: Madam Coth has been experiencing some awful nightmares which involved the Temple of Sune. She contacts the PCs to help in the investigation since the temple is one of her primary customers. The investigation leads the PCs to a very exclusive "spa" and some very dangerous situations. The PCs eventually discover a plot to kill or disfigure the High Priestess of Sune hatched by a priestess of Talona.

Rogue of the World: Madam Coth again called to the heroes of Ravens Bluff, but her fears were based on very realistic dreams and the dread of terror, which she felt during the dreams. The PCs spent a day looking for a realms famous rogue and then moved quickly to rescue one of the city's most famous inhabitants.

This is the fifth module in a series of five tournaments that involve Madam Coth, first found in *Luck Takes a Vacation*, and the influences of a mystical entity that she refers to as Fate. It seems that Madam Coth is under the impression that this entity she calls Fate has decided to test the different aspects of Ravens Bluff and

in particular those that call her home. In actuality, Madam Coth has been cursed and *seems* to be the instigator of all the tests herself. A refuge from the forbidden veils of Ravenloft, Madam Coth is experiencing the adverse effects of a curse laid upon her by Strahd himself during a weakening of the boundary between Ravenloft and Ravens Bluff. The PCs cannot detect the curse unless they are of gypsy blood. Even then, it is very difficult, only a 15% chance of noticing. If a character is playing a gypsy kit or actually has claim to true Vistani blood, then roll percentile. On a roll of 01-40% they will notice what appears to be a dark shadow over Madam Coth. The most logical explanation is the tests of Fate that are centered on her. The Curse has many aspects to it. It is warping the reality that Madam Coth experiences while giving her subconscious powers that she would not normally have. The details of the curse will unfold as the series of modules continue as will the details as to how certain events are being created.

In this the final module of the series, Madam Coth is being pulled back into the shadow realm of Ravenloft. Strahd is attempting to use her as a focus to pull himself out of the realm and in order to accomplish this has pulled her in to a small pocket dimension between the Prime and Ravenloft that he can manipulate.

Divination spells cast at or in reference to Madam Coth will automatically fail due to her supernatural existence. Fate as an entity is just Madam Coth's gypsy superstition wrapped about the reality that she perceives. To her, Fate is the hand that guides the gypsies and Fate provides all. It is known to test the believers, periodically assuring that it has chosen well when it chose the gypsy to guide.

At this point, it may be important to detail the abilities and capabilities of Madam Coth.

Madam Coth, hf (Vistani—Zarovan Tribe) W14:
AL CG; AC 2; HD 10 +8; hp 68; THAC0 14; #AT 1 (or by spell); Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SA Spells, precognitive powers; SD Spells, assume wraithform at will; MR nil; SZ M; ML 16.

Equipment: Dagger, Moon Amulet

Spells: as needed

Madam Cloth is a very wealthy silk merchant who deals often with the Temple of Sune and some of the better-dressed personalities in the city.

The module is very different from the others in many ways. Of course, Madam Coth again summons the PCs claiming that Fate's tests are approaching a climax and she wants to meet with them to prepare them for the tests. Of course, when the PCs meet with her, she will

look nothing like the Madam Coth that the PCs remember. She has grown old and her once radiant black hair has become gray. She does not understand what has overcome her but she is determined to see these tests through.

The module is broken out into the following encounters:

Introduction:

A young gypsy girl approaches the PCs separately. She tells them that she works for Madam Coth and that Madam Coth is very concerned that the final test of Fate is coming soon. She has been determined to find some helpful information, but so far has not been able to determine any information. The girl's name is Isabelle Darklight and she is very worried about her mentor. She will ask the PCs to meet with Madam Coth at The Sleepy Dwarf Tavern later that evening for dinner. The introduction is unique so read all of it carefully.

Encounter One: Meeting with Coth

The PCs will meet with the very old Madam Coth in The Sleepy Dwarf tavern, their all-you-can-eat buffet open once again. Everything will seem fairly normal and Madam Coth will deny asking Isabelle to summon the PCs yet since she does not have enough information yet to help them. She does realize that something is happening to her, however she is not sure if it is an attack against her, or if it is the results of her investigation. She would not mind the PCs protecting her or determining the cause of her aging. During the meal, a bard will be performing on the stage and Madam Coth will slowly move back and into the darkness of a black misty gate. It will be up to the PCs to whether they follow.

Encounter Two: The Shadow Keep

Even if the PCs follow Madam Coth immediately they will not find her upon entering a realm of darkness and despair. A large black stone keep rises out of the misty ground. Of course, the gate that brought them there is no where to be found. The PCs can experiment at this point, but their only choice is to continue the investigation at the keep.

Encounter Three: The Shadow Lord

A man meets them at the doors to the keep. This is Strahd and he has no worries about the powers of the PCs. He will invite them inside, and entertain them in a very elegant dining room. He will explain the entire situation to the PCs. Yes, the villain tells his entire plan to his enemy. Well it is a little old but how Strahd sees it, he is going to have to defeat the PCs to succeed

anyway. So he will propose a challenge between himself and the PCs.

Encounter Four: A game of Chess

This is a very tricky encounter to run as you NEED a CHESSBOARD to run it properly. You can use a piece of graph paper and make do, however, the game has a much greater impact if you take the time to have chess pieces (miniatures) and the chess board. See the attached Handouts for the specifics of each square of the chessboard.

Encounter Five: (Optional)

This encounter is only used if the PCs are foolish enough to attack Strahd directly. This details the consequences of this foolish action.

Encounter Six:

If the PCs have successfully defeated Strahd they will find themselves unable to return to the Prime Material Plane. However, Madam Coth has one more trick up her sleeve, as long as the PCs have the items that she had previously rewarded them with. If not, it is going to be up to the PCs to return them home, or to call in an old favor to provoke their return. It might be a little while depending on the level of success of the PCs.

Conclusion-A:

Everyone gets home fine and Madam Coth is gently laid to rest in the mausoleum of her friend Ambassador Carrague. Many citizens of the city come to mourn her death and the public reading of her will leaves her shop to Isabelle and reward the PCs.

Conclusion-B:

This conclusion assumes that the PCs did not rescue Madam Coth or did not follow into the gate. In both case, Madam Coth never reappears in Ravens Bluff and many consequences to the PCs are listed in this conclusion.

Players' Introduction

Before beginning the event ask the players how many of the previous events that they played with this particular character. Choose the character with the highest number of previous events. In the case of a tie use the character with the highest Fame in merchant class. If still a tie just take one of them. Remember those that played all four previous modules.

Take the player away from the table and give them the introduction. It is up to them to recruit the others. You should have the names of the other adventurers so

that the PCs has a reason to approach a PC that they may not know. Below is the introduction for the first PC.

She was not the type you would expect to be approaching an adventurer. A very slender girl perhaps 15 years old, and she could not have weighed much more than 80 pounds. As she gets a little closer you can see the faint touches of elven blood in her emerald green eyes. Still she boldly approached, "Hello. My name is Isabelle, and I have been told that you are (fill in the PC's name). Is this correct?"

The girl is just under 5-feet tall and only weighs 84 pounds. She is tiny. She wears sandals and a simple dress of cotton with a dark black silk shawl and many silk scarves. Her face is covered except for her eyes. As long as the PC answers in the affirmative continue:

"I work with Madam Coth and have heard her mention your name on occasion. I think she is in trouble. She has been afflicted by something and refuses to do anything about it. She is getting very old, very quickly. She is meeting me for dinner tonight at the Sleepy Dwarf Tavern, if you would agree, I would like you to meet us there and help her if you can. I have a list here of the other adventurers in the city that have assisted her in the past, I know it is not a complete list but perhaps you might find others who might also be able to assist her."

The List is **Players Handout A**. Make sure to put the names of the other PCs in the empty lines in the list. Once the PC has agreed, Isabelle will inform them that dinner is at 7 bells and that she will pay for the meal. If the PCs have any further questions, she has only the addresses for the people on the list. Any questions about Madam Coth she will postpone, preferring for the PCs to make their own judgements. You can use the General Fame rating of the other PCs to help the "recruiting" PC find the locales for the others.

Encounter One Meeting with Coth

You should make sure that the PC that you gave the Players Introduction recruits the other players at the table. Obviously, if the character goes looking for some of the other names on the list they are probably not available unless the player happens to be sitting at the table. That will leave the other PCs. Each PC should describe themselves when approached and the

"recruitment" should be done in character. After all the PCs have been informed and are ready to go to the Sleepy Dwarf Tavern continue with the following:

The Sleepy Dwarf tavern has seen busier nights and tables are not hard to find. Unfortunately you do not see any sign of Isabelle or Madam Coth. Then one of the figures at the table closest to the stage removes her cloak revealing the slender form of Isabelle. But, that must mean that the old woman next to her is Madam Coth?

Let the PCs move over to the table. Madam Coth is currently about 85 years old and extremely gray and wrinkled. She is a little surprised at Isabelle's actions but does not become angry, in fact she appears a little pleased. The all-you-can-eat buffet is open and Isabelle has already paid for the PCs to get meals. They can get food first, or they may begin to speak with Madam Coth. Below is information regarding her condition and the information that she will relay to the PCs. Note: There is additional box text between the answers so if the PCs have gotten some answers from part one use the boxed text before continuing with part two.

- She has been very busy looking into what she believes is the last test of Fate for Ravens Bluff.
- Her dreams are very cloudy and she has not been able to make sense of any.
- She has realized that one of her dreams showed a young bird taking flight to the surprise of the parent. She realizes that Isabella is that bird and that she has matured and come of age. She is now accomplished enough to be her own woman.
- She is not sure what test might be coming next however she is very concerned as her searching has obviously had ill effects upon her. She will state that she is determined to aid Ravens Bluff in any way she can.

The young male bard continues to play on stage as a small group of entertainers approach and speak to him in quiet voices. The bard continues to play but looks worried. He exits the stage shortly there after as you continue to speak with Madam Coth.

The bard was not a member of the Bard's Guild and has been informed of the consequences of playing without a permit. He has left to obtain a permit and join the Bard's Guild. As the PCs continue to examine Madam Coth continue with the following information.

- Madam Coth does not appear to be under the influences of any spells.

- She believes Fate will send the remaining challenges against the PCs. The challenges that the city has already faced include:
 - Test of Fates Strength: The Baatezu, The High Priestess, The Hanged Man, Death and Strength
 - The Stars and Moon Above: the Sun, the Star, the Moon, the Hierophant, the Tower and the Chariot
 - Light in the Lovers Eye: The Lovers, Temperance, Justice, and the Empress
 - Rogue of the World: The Emperor, The Fool, The World and the Hermit.
- That leaves only the Magician, and Judgement for this final test.

Continue with the following boxed text as Madam Coth tells of the cards and the relationship to the tests to come and the tests that have already been endured.

As Madam Coth continues to speak with you it seems she moves a little back from the table and closer to the stage. Suddenly it becomes apparent that a gaping chasm of darkness has opened behind her sweeping her rapidly back into the darkness.

It is time for the PCs to react, by the time anyone realizes something is not right she is completely engulfed in the darkness. Isabelle will scream in terror at the dreadful abduction and will be useless for a good 10 minutes. It will be up to the PCs as to what they do. They only have 2 minutes of wall clock to decide then the gate begins to close. So only the equipment that they have. If they put on armor give them time to do that, but do not allow them to go to other locations in the city to get equipment. When they have finished continue with Encounter Two. If they do not enter continue with Conclusion-B.

Encounter Two The Shadow Keep

Make sure to keep track of the items that the PCs have available to them at this time. Magical items of holding have ceased to function in this border ethereal area.

The dark gate spirals you downward and finally out into a bleak plane with no sky, only darkness. There is no sun, only a dark sky that barely sheds enough light to see by. The plain is bleak with absolutely no features, only a dull gray powder extending in a smooth surface from your position. Only the faint

shadow of a distant tower or castle breaks the endless plane of dust.

The PCs might be thinking that they are in another plane and their items might be working differently. If they check by any logical means they will determine that yes indeed, they are now one plane removed from the Prime Material Plane and thus all their items have lost one "plus". Thus, rings of protection, scarabs of protection, armor, shields, weapons are all one "plus" less. NOTE: A scarab +0 has no powers. If they do not check at this time don't worry, you will have the opportunity to inform them later.

They might also look for tracks; there are none. Only the footsteps of their own entry into the plane. The dust, although it does appear to be loose dust is actually a fairly packed substance and thus they will not be creating tracks or dust clouds as they walk. The logical place to go is the castle but they might experiment a little prior to going so I will detail the PCs situation as far as spells go here:

- Most spells work normally. The exceptions are those spells that require living natural components. Those spells fail as the living components can not be found here. This would include spells that require dirt, plants, fire, water, etc other than the amounts that the PCs have outside of dimensional spaces.
- Priests are able to feel the presence of their deities in this location, however their ability to cast magic and turn undead is reduced by one level.
- Any priest capable of casting *plane shift*, or wizards of 10th level or higher, will realize that this is some sort of pocket dimension. A spellcraft or Intelligence check (for a priest) will give the impression that it probably borders the Negative Material Plane and perhaps another Prime Material Plane.

When the PCs are ready to go to the castle continue with the following text:

It takes about an hour to arrive at the Black Basalt Castle still standing lonely on the plane of bleakness. As you approach the castle the front gates swing open, their fifty-foot height disappearing to the sides of the castle walls. A dark cloaked figure stands waiting for you behind the open gates.

Let the PCs take whatever actions they wish. The figure is indeed Strahd and his statistics are listed below. When they approach continue with the text.

Count Strahd von Zarovich, 16th level Ancient Vampire Necromancer: AL LE; AC 1; MV 12, Fl 18 (D); HD 12; hp 62; THAC0 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+7 (strength bonus); SA charm gaze, energy drain, spells (6/6/6/6/6/4/3/2); SD contingency spell, vampire abilities; MR 20%; SZ M; ML 19.

Strahd is a tall man at just over six feet tall. His body is lean and hardened from long years as a warrior. His gaunt face has strong features and prominent cheekbones. His eyes are dark and hypnotic, like deep pools with subtle reflections of red light, but when he is aroused or enraged, they burn like red-hot coals. His skin is usually pale, but it becomes flushed with each feeding and retains its healthy color for several hours.

When Strahd became Lord of Barvovia, his ears developed points, like the ears of an elf. His fingers are elongated and thin, with long, sharp nails. He wears a large red stone on a heavy gold chain around his neck.

Strahd is immune to garlic, holy symbols, and mirrors. He can withstand up to ten rounds of direct sunlight without suffering damage, although he would on the eleventh round. This includes magical items that create sunlight.

He is able to charm with either his eyes or his voice. The victim must make a saving throw at -4 to avoid the charm. Strahd regenerates 4 hit points per round and requires +2 weapons or better to damage him. (+3 Prime Material weapons). The necklace is a bloodstone amulet that acts like an *amulet of proof against location and detection*, thus the PCs will not be able to detect evil or undead upon him.

Strahd cannot be destroyed on this plane. The only consequence of destroying him is to delay his return for 24 hours. This delay will cause all the PCs to age 10 years including the NPCs trapped by Strahd.

If the PCs approach but do not attack continue with the following:

The black cloaked figure motions you towards the main keep, a circular tower of the same black stone. "Welcome to my Black Tower. Please enter, for although you are not welcome guests you are free to enter my abode. Please, I shall have dinner served at once." With those few words the doors to the tower open and the cloaked man moves into the keep and into a large study or dining room. There are many dishes from the realms spread out upon the table. "Please sit, if we can be nothing else civil is a good starting location."

Okay the PCs should be kind of spooked at this point, if not then it is time to spook them.

- As the last PC enters the castle the outside gates close slowly. These gates weigh well over a couple of tons each and there does not seem to be any way to open or close them.
- As the last PC enters the tower, the tower doors close, anyone looking back does not even see a door at all.
- The food is all tasty to anyone eating. Strahd, of course, does not partake of the food but does have a goblet of "wine" he drinks from. He does allow the PCs a chance to get situated before he continues.

The dark-cloaked man removes the cloak and sits with a glass of wine, "Please help yourselves. We must determine what to do with you. I had not intended for you to follow the gypsy. But now you are here. Surprisingly, I feel that it is appropriate to offer you a chance at freedom. I can allow you to return to your Ravens Bluff, if you wish. Of course, I expect you would want to return with the gypsy. I cannot allow you to freely leave with what I have worked at bringing here. However, since Fate has provided this opportunity, I will offer you a challenge to capture the gypsy. What do you say, it is not often that Count Strahd von Zarovich even allows that much freedom to those in his realm?"

At this point make sure to allow the PCs to react or take actions. If they do not attack, continue with the next encounter, which describes the dining room in greater detail and Strahd's plan.

If they attack him use the statistics above to destroy any PCs if possible. He will start with those that are most dangerous to him, obvious paladins and clerics, then wizards. Remember if he is destroyed it is merely 24 hours before he returns and everyone in the party ages 10 years. There is no food, water or means to escape the keep. Only planar travel will enable the PCs to leave, however, no amount of searching will discover the missing Madam Coth.

Encounter Three The Shadow Lord

Strahd laughs drinking at more wine. The room is extremely well decorated with most of it taken up by a 20+ person dining room table and the rest of the room decorated like a rich study. There is a great desk and many plush divans and sofas. An ornate chessboard lies open without pieces on the great desk,

its black and white marble surface contrasting to the darkness of the keep's walls.

"I suppose I should inform you as to the reason for all of this. I am trying to escape a prison that has held me for over 400 years. Somehow the gypsy girl escaped and I have tracked her since. I had hoped to transfer myself to your realm while leaving her here. It has not worked. I even had a suitable replacement but that too was not yet accepted. I believe the problem was you!"

Give the PCs a chance to role-play a bit at this point.

With another little laugh, Strahd drinks a little more and then settles back to his deep staring story, "No, it was not you, but the gypsy's belief in you and this Fate. I have created all the "tests" but still she believes in a Fate. Well I am not going to fight this one, I do offer you a challenge not only for your own lives but for those of the gypsy. So are you up for the challenge of your lifetime?"

The tournament continues with Encounter Four. They might also attack Count Strahd at this point and nothing about the combat has changed since the beginning of encounter two. Remember the 24-hour delay if they are able to defeat him.

Encounter Four A Game of Chess

This is where you would need a chessboard. The PCs all enter the board as the following chess pieces. Thankfully, Strahd also has only a few pieces. (Shorter game). Unfortunately each of the board locations is special in some way so the challenge is two-fold.

#1: Capture the different pieces on the board.

#2: Survive the journey.

See the **Dungeon Master's Handout** to show the starting locations. Use the first six locations FIRST. Only give the queen position to a PC if there is a 7th player and then only to the player who has contributed the least at this point. Experience is earned PER PC for this encounter only. Use the XP after each creature.

Strahd laughs, "I see alone we will compete. Then know you the rules. I have eight creatures, which I will use to protect she who I have captured. You must defeat them. Beware, I have set "challenges" along the way. You may not assist each other, but may heal one another if you can but touch the wounded. Are you ready? You have until dawn."

Now the rules for you, the judge. Take the chessboard and put figures or dice on the starting locations for the PCs. The creatures that Strahd uses depends on the make-up of the party. All the PCs may make a legal chess move once per turn, and may not occupy the same space. If they are next to each other, then they may briefly touch and spells may be cast upon each other. The opposing creatures do not move and await the PCs. NOTE: If the PCs are smart and use the knights only, they do not have to encounter the creatures, but they will not know this. These are covered here:

Encounter Four-A10:

Use the following table to determine the makeup of the creatures. Their statistics follow the table. Take the creatures that relate to each of the PCs levels and then add two regular zombies. You can place the creatures in any way you would like. **The PCs are not able to determine, which creature is which until they are within one square of the creature.** NOTE: Clerics are NOT able to turn the undead they are under Strahd's control. The number following the creature type is the number in the ONE square awaiting the PCs.

PC Level	Creature Type (#)
1-2	Zombie (1)
3-4	Shadow (1)
5-6	Werewolf (2)
7-8	Huge Bats (1)
9-10	Wights (2)
11+	Spectral Troll (2)

Zombie: Int Nil; AL N; AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA nil; SD spell immunity, immune to sleep, charm hold, and cold-based spells; SW attack last; MR see below; SZ M; ML 20.

Shadow (1): Int Low (6); AL CE; AC 7; HD 3+3; hp 21; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 + special; SA strength drain 1 point for 2d4 turns; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, 90% undetectable in all but brightest surroundings, immune to sleep, charm hold, and cold-based spells; MR nil; SZ M; ML 20.

SPECIAL: Non-magical weapons still do half damage to the Shadow

Lycanthrope, Werewolf (2): Int Average (10); AL CE; AC 5; HD 4+3; hp 31; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SA surprise; SD hit only by silver or +1 or better magical weapons; MR standard; SZ M; ML 20.

SPECIAL non-magical weapons still do half damage in this tournament

Huge Bat: Int Low (5); AL NE; AC 7 (see below); MV 3, Fl 15 [C]; HD 6; hp 36; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SA see below; SD see below; MR nil; SZ H; ML 20.

Wights (2): Int Average (9); AL LE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 4+3; hp 25; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SA Energy Drain; SD Hit only by silver or +1 or better magical weapons, immune to sleep, charm hold, and cold-based spells; MR nil; SZ S (Halflings); ML 20.

SPECIAL non-magical weapons still do half damage to the wights

Spectral Troll (2): Int Very (12); AL CE; AC 0; MV 12; HD 8; hp 64; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+2/1d4+2/1d8+2; SA Nil; SD see below; MR nil; SZ L; ML 20.

Spectral trolls, taking material form only in darkness, are tormented by the memory of life. They try to slay all living creatures they encounter. Resembling normal trolls in all respects except color, their jet black skin and hair make them easily distinguishable from other trolls. Spectral trolls have the same attacks as regular trolls and can divide them among many opponents. A silver or magical weapon is needed to attack them, making the final disposition of a spectral troll an even trickier prospect.

Being undead, spectral trolls can be turned by priests as though they were specters. It is noted that a humanoid slain by a spectral troll becomes one itself in three days, unless a proper burial ceremony is performed by a priest of the victim's religion. Spectral trolls vanish in direct sunlight. They do not take damage from sunlight, they merely fade from view and reappear at the same spot at nightfall. Even those captured, unconscious, or trapped in temporal stasis have escaped permanent imprisonment in this manner.

Encounter Four-A9:

I am going in reverse order since the later encounters should be found by all the parties if they want to succeed and rescue Madam Coth. Read the following text to the player that first comes into the square with Madam Coth.

This chamber like the others is dark. Madam Coth sits in a straight back chair her eyes unmoving as she looks directly at you.

Madam Coth is "connected" to the chair via a number of cords and silver tubes. The chair is functioning to

keep her alive while slowly siphoning her blood from her body. It is not an easy task to remove her from the machine, however it will take a very successful healing proficiency to do it correctly. You can use this method to determine the results unless the player wants to roleplay the situation. The tubes are connected to her heart, her throat and through the small of her back. They need to be removed in the following order (back, heart, throat). Healing proficiencies made at -2 will indicate this. A diagnosis proficiency check may be made at +2. If no one has the proficiency then they must make a wisdom -8 check.

Note, if they are not removed in the proper order, she will begin to bleed at an unstoppable rate in fact having only a couple of rounds (three) left to live. Only a Cure Critical or better healing spell will help her in this case, and that will only slow the bleeding.

If the tubes are removed properly, she will be fine, however she will still be bleeding slightly, a condition that does not seem to be helped by magical healing.

Encounter Four-A8:

An older halfling woman sits unmoving about a short arm length from a table full of food. Each time she reaches for the food, the table seems to move a slight distance away, just out of her reach. Her thin frame shows that the situation has been developing for far too long. As you begin to approach..

Have the player roll for surprise. The table is actually going to attack them. Use the following break-outs for the small battle again by the character's level not a tier level.

Character level 1-4:

The table gives a lurch but seems entangled upon the halfling lady's dress. It dumps all the food over you but has flipped onto its back and although it is appearing to attempt to right itself, it seems unable.

Character level 5-7:

With a sudden lurch the table kicks out at you attempting to knock you into a large maw opening up in the center of the table.

Mimic, Common: Int Average (10); AL N; AC 7; MV 3; HD 7; hp 56; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 3-12; SA Glue; SD Camouflage; MR nil; SZ L; ML 20.

Character level 8+:

With a sudden lurch the table kicks out at you attempting to knock you into a large maw opening up in the center of the table.

Mimic, Killer: Int Semi (2); AL NE; AC 7; MV 3; HD 9; hp 72; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3-12; SA Glue; SD Camouflage; MR nil; SZ L; ML 20.

If the PCs rescue the halfling, she goes unconscious but may be removed from the square by the PCs.

Encounter Four-A7:

The dark room is perhaps forty feet in depth, and is only lit by a small continual light spell. An unconscious form lies in the center of the barren room. He is secured with dark black chains and manacles from all four limbs. The chains continue right into the wall and the manacles seem to have no lock or seems to them.

There is no physical or magical method of removing the chains. The only way to remove the chains is to willingly offer to take the place of the unconscious gnome. Strahd will be heard to be very upset if the PCs take this path. The only clue to this solution is a small riddle, which can be found on the body if the body is searched. This can be found in **Players Handout B**.

The crime of the hand, by wounding or stealing;

The crime of the foot, by kicking or moving to do evil deeds;

The crime of the tongue, by satire, slander or false witness;

The crime of the mouth, by eating stolen things;

The crime of the eye, by watching while an evil deed is taking place.

Only one whose ethos matches the goodwill that this one holds dear may replace him in the arms of the darkness.

Tales tell of another method lost in time, one involving the four relics of Fate, however they are feared lost and the solution lost to the ages.

If a player does replace the gnome, then that player goes unconscious although the gnome does not stir. The only PCs that would be allowed are those of good alignment. Another PC will need to get into the square to remove the gnome from the room. NOTE: The sacrificing PC may be replaced by another PC that comes into the room later. Only the last PC to sacrifice

needs to stay in the shackles. If the last PC on the board sacrifices themselves, the unconscious PC is removed from the board with the other surviving PCs.

down pushing the air and all else into the hard floor at the bottom of the pit.

There is one way to open the manacles WITHOUT sacrificing a character however, it requires a combination of items from the different Tarot Series Modules. The items that need to come together include:

- The *Silver Sphere of Continual Light* from "The Stars and Moon Above".
- All the *Silver Links of Healing* in the party from "The Test of Fates Strength".
- The *Rod of Splendor* from "A Light in the Lovers Eye".
- The *Ivory Pipe of Aroma* from "Rogue of the World".

If these items are brought together in the room, the room will immediately brighten. When it occurs, read the following:

The items seem to move of their own as a bright white light springs from them. You hear the agonizing shouts of pain from the Count somewhere nearby however it is the chains that grab your attention. The silver sphere floats into the air and slowly pulls the darkness from the chains binding Perfectly Harmless. The chains glow in the sphere's perfect light revealing chains of pure silver. These chains move of their own accord, combining with the other silver links and the rod. The sphere moves down to the top of the now floating rod and settles on the top of the rod. The smoke continues to pour from the ivory pipe as its form merges with the rod as the light burns until you are forced to close your eyes from it's brightness. When the light fades, there is an ivory scepter where the items used to rest.

Make sure to destroy all the items used. This is especially true for all the silver links.

Encounter Four-A6:

This square is directly in front of the creature protecting Madam Coth. The room is a giant trap, which will swallow up the first PC that enters the square.

You enter a small 10-foot by 10-foot room, it's tiled floor sparkling in a square black and white pattern, almost like the board you currently stand. Suddenly the floor falls apart below you and the ceiling comes

Damage is according to level:

PC Level	Damage Suffered
1-3	2d4 from the fall and concussion. Only on this tier will characters brought below zero will not bleed to death.
4-6	2d6 from the fall and concussion.
7-8	3d8 from the fall and concussion.
9-10	4d10 from the fall unto sharpened wooded spikes.
11+	5d12 from the fall unto rusty iron spikes. A saving throw versus disease will need to be made as well.

Characters trapped in the pit can be rescued by another character. The rescuing character will need to move into the square and then break through the floor to rescue the missing PC. This will take ONE physical round per table entry. Thus, an 8th level character trapped will take three rounds of physical destruction to break through the floor. Once done the 20-foot pit must be scaled to get to the PC.

Encounter Four-A5:

This square is along the far edge of the board and that plays into the results of a PC landing on this square. The board exists partially in the Ethereal Plane and a number of spectators have decided to look into the game.

A cheery silver locked woman sits next to this square intently attempting to peer inside the other squares. "Hello, I was wondering if you could tell me what is going on?"

Allow the PC up to 5 MINUTES (ONLY) to explain themselves. The woman, is very curious and will not introduce herself in any way. When they are concluded she will ask them if they want her to help them escape the board. If they reply to the positive, she will reach to the border. If the PC attempts to touch her hand, roll a d20. On a natural roll of 11-20, the character will be teleported into the Temple of Tymora in Ravens Bluff. If the roll is 1-10, then the character is teleported to the Temple of Tymora in Procampur and will need to make their way back to Ravens Bluff, unless of course they want to stay in Procampur for a while.

Encounter Four-A4:

This is one of the easiest paths to Madam Coth for one of the Knight pieces. Thus, Strahd has trapped the square. When the PC lands in the square, an *Evard's black tentacles* appears lasting as many rounds as the character has levels. If the PC survives they may continue. If they are unconscious and bleeding, there is a 75% chance that they have fallen close enough for another PC to come rescue them, by healing them. FOR THIS TOURNAMENT THERE ARE ONE TENTACLE PER LEVEL OF THE PC.

Encounter Four-A3:

The other common knight's entrance to Madam Coth, Strahd has trapped this square as well. Unfortunately, this is one of the worst squares on the board. A modified *Mordenkainen's disjunction* is created on this square. It has the following saving throws based on the character level. IF a character has a *scarab of protection*, first make the saving throw for the scarab, if it fails, then no other saving throws are necessary. The number next to the saving throw is the maximum number of items that can be lost to the spell. Go in the order that the PC requests of you.

PC Level	Item Saving Throw
1-3	Electricity: All need 2s, 15 for potions (MAX 1)
4-6	Normal Fire: (MAX 6)
7-8	Crushing Blow: (MAX 12)
9-10	Magical Fire: (MAX 18)
11+	Acid: (MAX 24)

Once the spell has gone off, this one RESETS, unlike the other ones on the board.

Encounter Four-A2:

This square fires off a *maze* spell against all PCs that enter the square.

Encounter Four-A1:

There are a number of Four-A1 squares, each of these moves the PCs back to their starting square each time a PC lands on the square.

The last issue to face is "dawn". Just how long do our heroes from Ravens Bluff have to rescue those on the board. Of course this too depends on the level of the PC, however we will use a regular tier system of total levels.

PC Total Levels	Number of Rounds they have on the Board
4-16	As many as they need.
17-26	40 rounds
27-38	30 rounds
39-50	20 rounds
51+	10 very short rounds, they had better move awfully quick.

Okay, once the PCs have rescued all they are going to continue with Encounter Six. If they fail to rescue Madam Coth continue with Conclusion-B.

Note: Any PC left "on the board" when the time has expired will age magically one year (system shock is NOT required). They cannot assist in returning the PCs to Ravens Bluff, being as unconscious as the other victims of Strahd. The exception to this is anyone who sacrificed themselves in order to rescue the gnome. They age 5 years and MUST make a system shock.

Encounter Five: Slaying the Count

This encounter should only be used if the PCs have slain Count Strahd in combat.

With your final blow, the Count staggers and starts to lose his form. "Foolish mortals. I control the realm, and although I will return in a short time for me, your bodies will be racked with the torture of the years until my return."

There is nothing the PCs can do to stop Strahd. Even, if they stop boxed text, they have killed him and he will leave for 24 hours. Each of the PCs will age 10 years UNLESS they have a *scarab of protection* and can make a scarab save.

During the 24 hours in which Strahd is gone, the PCs can explore the entire mansion. There is no sign of Madam Coth. They also find no food or wine ANYWHERE in the mansion.

Encounter Six Getting Home

With a final scream of despair Count Strahd struggles against an outside force which draws him

back into the darkness. The mansion dissolves into the mists leaving only the bleak black plain.

If the PCs freed the gnome with the combination of items, then the scepter will glow opening a portal in the blackness. Otherwise the PCs are going to need to determine a method of returning back to Ravens Bluff. Here are the methods that are allowed:

- A PC priest can utilize a *plane shift* spell to bring the PCs to the plain about a day outside of the city.
- A PC can exchange a favor from a major temple for the return of the party to the city. You may inform them that the "gods" are attuned to the demi-plane. This includes boons/favors of Tyr, Selune, Sune, Tymora and Oghma.
- The PCs can wait out the day. This ages them all 10 years but the realm disappears leaving the PCs in the Sleepy Dwarf tavern, in the exact moment in which they left. There is a little role-playing with the staff as the people closest have fainted.

IN ALL CASES: Madam Coth is continuing to BLEED!

No matter what the PCs do, she continues to bleed slowly fading from this life. She does have a good final scene, which you should allow her before she passes into the next life.

Madam Coth jerks as her eyes open. Weakly she glances about looking at each of you directly. "My time is almost up, Fate has been kind. Do not believe the monster Strahd, Fate is real and although the creature may have manipulated me, only Fate allowed us to battle him and for you to be able to defeat him as you have. Please tell Isabelle that I leave her my shop, she will know what to do. One last task then I will bother you no longer. My body. I wish it to be wrapped in the.", Madam Coth coughs violently taking a few shallow breathes before she is able to continue. "Wrapped in silks, I wish to be brought to Sune to rest forever among beauty and art. Thank you. I will not forget your courage or assistance. Goodbye." With those final words, Madam Coth, gypsy and merchant of Ravens Bluff closes her eyes one final time.

Continue with the Conclusion, but please make sure to ask the PCs who played all of the previous events with this same character. Just verify the answers from before.

Note that the halfling woman and the gnome are not real creatures, and when the characters go home

they won't go with. The creatures are creations of Strahd's, to distract the characters from rescuing Madam Coth.

Conclusion-A: Success

Completing the module by saving at least Madam Coth will bring the PCs here.

Your return to Ravens Bluff is almost anti-climatic. You sadly follow Madam Coth's last wishes and bring her body back to the Temple of Sune. They prepare the body and lay it to rest in a private section of the graveyard attached to the estate of Ambassador Carrague. Never has so many priests and priestesses of Sune been seen together and all of them tastefully dressed in black silk.

A couple of days later her will is read and her last wishes are followed to the letter. The silk shop goes into the hands of Isabelle who is granted full title as long as she never willingly overcharges and respects Madam Coth's support of the Temple of Sune. You never find out who the halfling woman was, she seemed to disappear with Perfectly Harmless as soon as they awoke.

Surprisingly, Madam Coth did leave each of you a small sum of gold and a permanent discount at her old Silk Shop.

Conclusion-B Not so Good

This encounter should be used if the PCs did not rescue Madam Coth or did not even follow her through the original gate.

Months pass but no sign of Madam Coth is ever found. Divinations reveal nothing and eventually, the city opens her will granting title to her silk shop to her assistant Isabelle.

This Ends Along the Wheel of Fates

Experience Point Summary:

Experience is calculated as follows for Living City events.

1. Sum the experience listed below for objectives.

2. Assign discretionary role-playing experience (0-500 points). These should reward accurate character portrayal throughout the adventure, not just how well the PC interacted socially.
3. Finally, multiply the total by the tier according to this chart:

Levels 6-13	Tier 1
Levels 14-25	Tier 2
Levels 26-37	Tier 3
Levels 38-56	Tier 4
Levels 57+	Tier 5

PCs should get the experience points of the tier for which they qualify, regardless of which tier is actually played. For example, if you have a Tier 3 group and you have to bump the combats by one tier to challenge them, they still get the experience points for a Tier 3 group, not for a Tier 4 group.

Encounter Two or Three:

Defeating Strahd in combat (may only receive this once) 100 xp

Encounter Four:

Experience for Rescuing Madam Coth:	200 xp
Experience for rescuing the halfling woman:	75 xp
Experience for rescuing the gnome:	100 xp

Total Experience for Objectives:	475 xp
Roleplaying Experience:	0-500 xp

Total Possible Experience so far: 975 xp

For Tier 2:	1,950 xp
For Tier 3:	2,925 xp
For Tier 4:	3,900 xp
For Tier 5:	4,875 xp

The add the following experience based on the actions taken in the chessboard squares

Encounter Four:

Per Zombie:	65 xp
Per Shadow:	300 xp
Per Werewolf:	350 xp
Per Huge Bat:	975 xp
Per Wight:	1000 xp
Per Spectral Troll:	1400 xp
ONETIME Common Mimic:	975 xp
ONETIME Killer Mimic:	2,000 xp

Maximum total experience for the creatures is 7 spaces of Spectral Troll and one Zombie.

Removing the tubes properly:	100 xp
Sacrificing to save the gnome:	250 xp
ONETIME surviving the Pit:	100 xp
ONETIME rescuing a trapped character:	100 xp
ONETIME surviving the tentacles:	100 xp
ONETIME experiencing the disjunction:	100 xp

Treasure Summary:

The PCs can only keep what is on this list. This is a Living City house rule which overrides common sense and everything else.

- Scepter: This certificate needs to be filled out by the judge and sent with the scoring packets or the player with a self-addressed stamped envelope to HQ. The certificate will be sent back to the player by mail.
- 500 gp
- Permanent 15% discount at Madam Coth's Silk Shop

For those PCs that played all the modules with the same character they gain an additional reward if they succeeded in the adventure:

- Supernatural Favor - once Madam Coth's spirit will appear to perform some or all of the following tasks for the PC: *augury, identify, prayer, cure light wounds*, or take one physical blow meant for the PC (not to exceed 50 hp of damage). All favors must be taken at the same time, since Madam Coth appears only one time to the PC, and Madam Coth will not take a blow and also grant any spells.

Along the Wheel of Fate Story Summary

for use at the First Run- Andcon 1998 Convention Only

Please fill out the following and return it to Andcon RPGA HQ for mailing to Dan Donnelly, 2250 Lexington Way, Kennesaw, GA 30144.

Did the PCs rescue Madam Coth? YES NO

Did the PCs rescue Perfectly Harmless? YES NO

Did the PCs rescue the halfling woman? YES NO

Did any of the PCs accept Tymora's Teleport home? YES NO

If yes, Whom?: _____

Did the PCs attack Count Strahd? YES NO

If yes, did they destroy him? YES NO

Did the PCs remove the tubes from Madam Coth Properly? YES NO

What was the highest amount of experience awarded? _____

To which PC: _____

Players Handout A

List of Adventurers who worked with Madam Coth

Lord Rashaverak Dandelion
Lady Cassandra
Tauntien
Lady Melissa Eldaren
Lord Uldred Deepaxe

Sir Lucky Whitewolf - I think he is dead
Lady Dora of Sune
Grog the Mighty
Aric Moonstone of Selune
Carmen of Aber's Way

Raven
Sir Drakkar Von Damn
High Priest Daren of Selune
Lady Irwina Austentell of Tyr
Sir Reggie

Retlif Deepburrow
Benzoate Glycole
Elyssa Firemane

Conde of Calisham
Dame Anna Kara Des Solara
Deputy Mayor Belanor - I really think he is dead

Metamorphosis Cateyes

Players Handout B

Five-fold are crimes;

The crime of the hand, by wounding or stealing;

The crime of the foot, by kicking or moving to do evil deeds;

The crime of the tongue, by satire, slander or false witness;

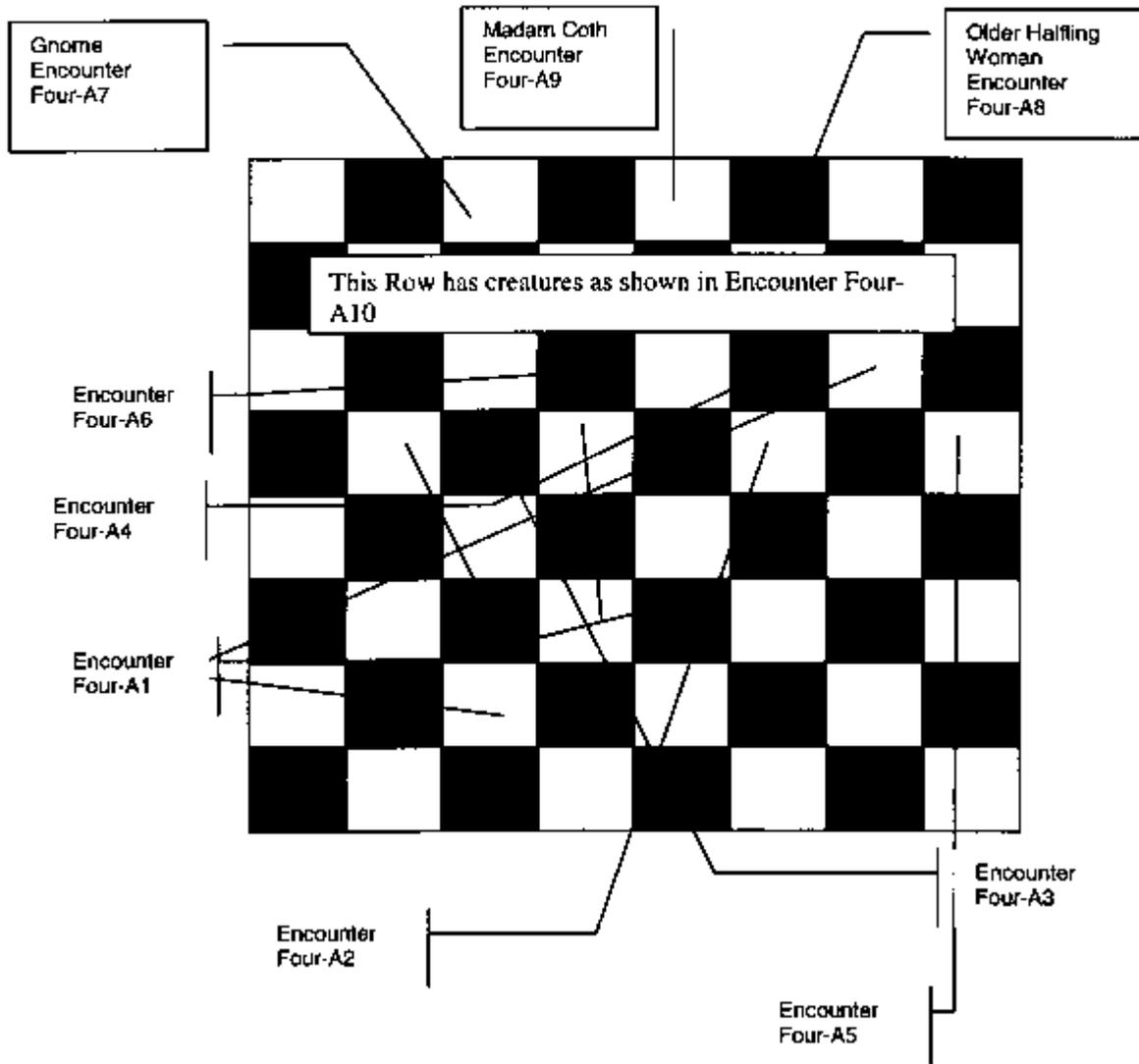
The crime of the mouth, by eating stolen things;

The crime of the eye, by watching while an evil deed is taking place.

***Only one whose ethos matches the goodwill that this one holds dear
may replace him in the arms of the darkness.***

***Tales tell of another method lost in time, one involving the four relics of Fate, however they are
feared lost and the solution lost to the ages.***

Dungeon Master's Key To the Chessboard Encounters



Dungeon Masters Handout

Chessboard starting Locations

