

THE LADY OF TROLLSKULL PRIORY

A STORY EXPANSION FOR
WATERDEEP DRAGON HEIST



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Introduction: As the party settles in to their new home in Trollskull Alley, the neighborhood welcomes another addition. A lady from a faraway land has acquired the old Priory of the Overgod, a long-abandoned structure at the eastern end of the alley. Shortly after Lady Boguescu and her small retinue move into the priory, strange occurrences begin haunting the alley. The east end of the alley sees an uptick in vermin, and a strange fog seems to fill the alley, regardless of the season. Shadows seem longer. Soon Fala Lefaliir begins complaining that their supplies are spoiling. Will the owners of Trollskull Manor be able to discover the nature of these dark disturbances and put a stop to it? Or will the people of the alley fall prey to the Lady of Trollskull Priory?

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MARSHALLRG

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ADVENTURE PRIMER

This section gives a basic overview of the events, characters, and setting elements introduced in **the Lady of Trollskull Priory**. Though this is not an adventure in the traditional sense, the sections of this booklet are divided into episodes like a standard adventure.

BACKGROUND

In recent memory, a band of adventurers were spirited away to the cursed land of **BAROVIA**, where they faced a horrific evil in the form of the vampire **STRAHD**. When the heroes defeated the vampire, the land of Barovia was joined with that of **TORIL**, occupying a small area of wilderness along the **SWORD COAST**. Many Barovians remained in the village, content to live out their lives in the home they had always known, now free from the manipulations of “the devil Strahd.”

Some Barovians saw an opportunity to escape the accursed land once and for all. Venturing forth into the lands of the Sword Coast, these refugees looked to set up quiet, peaceful lives in new homes. Acting as merchants and tradesfolk, these travelers could blend in with the cosmopolitan cultures of the north easily enough.

A few Barovians of a less peaceful disposition saw the opportunity to visit their depravities on a new land, unaccustomed to the darkness that had held Barovia in its grasp. **LAZLO LUKRESH**, a villager from Barovia who took sadistic pleasure in his duties as a guard, saw such an opportunity when he discovered Lady **GERTRUDA BOGUESCU**, a young and naive Barovian woman who was turned into a vampire spawn shortly before Strahd’s destruction. Lazlo saw the raw power and potential in Gertruda and took her in. He began to teach her the ways of the world (as her mother had refused to do) convincing Gertruda that he had her best interests at heart and that he was the only person she could truly trust. Lazlo led Gertruda to believe that the other Barovians, including her mother, would murder her if they discovered what she was.

Upon earning her trust, Lazlo persuaded Gertruda to grab as much coin as they could carry from the coffers of Castle Ravenloft and join him in exploring the new lands at their disposal. With his sister, **MIRUNA**, and two mongrelfolk lackeys named **HANS** and **IVAN**, Lazlo led his motley crew of Barovians out into the world to acquire power.

CONTENT WARNINGS

This adventure deals with horrific themes. Kidnapping, manipulation, and outright gaslighting are among the tools Lazlo employs to achieve his ends. The mongrelfolk are intended to be disturbing and may draw the ire of NPCs or PCs, which could be offensive to some players. Phobia triggers include blood and rats, and the potential for violence is high. As with any game, a session zero and the use of safety tools is highly recommended before contending with the Lady of Trollskull Priory.

After months of travel spent familiarizing himself with the north, Lazlo determined the city of **WATERDEEP** would be ideal to set up a permanent base of operations. Using a significant portion of the treasure plundered from Castle Ravenloft, Lazlo purchased a disused priory in **TROLLSKULL ALLEY**, where the group now intends to make a home.

EPISODES

This adventure is divided into episodes, which can be treated as small encounters and inserted into other sessions throughout your **Waterdeep Dragon Heist** campaign. Alternatively, these episodes can be run back to back, whether all at once or spread out over one to three sessions.

EPISODE SEQUENCE

The episodes presented herein occur in a linear fashion, though they may be separated by downtime, other adventures, and various missions.

APPENDICES

There are five appendices:

Appendix 1: Monsters & NPCs

Appendix 2: Maps

Appendix 3: Character Handouts

Appendix 4: Dungeon Master Tips

Appendix 5: Magic Items

HOW WILL YOU PLAY?

You can spend as little or as much time as you like integrating the content of this adventure into

your **Waterdeep Dragon Heist** campaign. If your players are enjoying the creeping unease of having strange folk living at the end of the alley or are reluctant to face down the inhabitants of the priory, feel free to draw this story out in the background. If the adventurers catch on to the fact that there's a vampire in the region and focus all of their attention on ending the threat, let them do so.

Caution is advised! Technically being a vampire is not a violation of the Code Legal, nor is it alone cause for a murder to be considered “with justification.” If the party breaks into the priory with nothing more than suspicion of vampirism to support their actions, they're likely to wind up imprisoned or worse...provided they survive.

EPISODE ONE: CALL TO ACTION

Estimated Duration: 30 minutes

“Vampyr” is my new name. I still lust for life and youth and I curse the living that took that from me.”

—*Strahd von Zarovich, Tome of Strahd*

The adventure begins in Trollskull Alley. As the party rises for the day to begin their business, the arrival of new neighbors in the old priory on the east end of the alley catches their attention.

THE ARRIVAL

As the adventurers set out on their day's errands, they see a small caravan arrive at the old Priory of the Overgod, a building that has stood abandoned for years. The caravan consists of a carriage and two enclosed wagons, which park along the northeast entrance to the alley. This effectively blocks the entire passage. From the first carriage, two cloaked humans emerge. **Lazlo Lukresh** (he/him, LE Barovian human p. 16) and his sister, **Miruna** (she/her, NE Barovian human p. 17) are both dressed in dark cloaks with drab, gray breeches and tunics beneath. Lazlo wears the hood of his cloak up over his head, whereas Miruna wears a wide brimmed, pointed black hat with a silver buckle.

Once out of the carriage the duo begins issuing curt orders to the occupants of the wagons. The first wagon is driven by two humanoids dressed in heavy gray cloaks made of coarse wool. The thick cowls of their cloaks are drawn up over their heads, obscuring their features. These two are **Hans** (he/him, N mongrelfolk p. 16) and **Ivan** (he/him, NE mongrelfolk p. 16) the servants and

retainers of the house. Once they've exited the wagon, the duo begins moving a large crate from the wagon into the property. The crate is seven feet long, three feet wide, and four feet deep. Characters with a passive Perception of 14 or higher notice soil trickling from the crate.

Four hired hands (N human **commoners**) hop out of the rear wagon and begin unloading luggage, boxes, and art objects from the wagons, starting with the carriage and working their way backward. Miruna enters the priory along with the mongrelfolk, but Lazlo remains outside, supervising the hired hands as they unload the wagons.

If the party does nothing, unloading the wagons takes a little over an hour. While other neighbors in the alley give a glance in the direction of the new arrivals, none of them interrupt the process. About fifteen minutes after the unloading begins, Embric (he/him, NG fire genasi) and Avi (he/him, NG water genasi; see **Waterdeep Dragon Heist, Chapter 2: Trollskull Alley**) emerge from their forge, transporting a cart filled with steel City Watch helmets for delivery to the nearest watch post. Embric grumbles that “the damn neighborhood is filling up faster than a guildmaster's coffers on Leiruin.” Avi offers a warm smile to the party and explains, “He's just cross because we have to take the long way,” as the couple maneuvers the cart to exit Trollskull Alley from the north entrance.

If the party makes their way over to the new arrivals, read the following:

As you walk down the alley toward the priory you can hear the stern, heavily accented voice of the man from the first carriage as he chastises the workers.

“Those are the personal effects of Lady Boguescu! I would remind you that you are being paid a handsome sum to move them with alacrity and care. All must be in readiness by nightfall!”

Lazlo ignores the characters unless they address him directly. If they do, he turns to them and bows before introducing himself, speaking in a gentle tone.

Greetings. I am Lazlo Lukresh, the humble servant and seneschal of Lady Boguescu, the mistress of this property. How may I be of service?

Lazlo is well mannered and polite while speaking to the party, though his answers do tend to be a bit on the short side. Whoever is addressing Lazlo, or whoever asks him the first question, should make a DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check. If this check fails, Lazlo explains that he's quite busy at the moment, but "will be happy to entertain any of the neighbors once the Lady is settled in."

If this check succeeds, Lazlo will give the following answers:

Where are you from?

"We have traveled from a distant land, well beyond the Sword Coast. Most recently we passed through the Misty Forest by way of Daggerford, where the Lady acquired this property."

Who is the Lady?

"Lady Gertruda Boguescu. I am her humble servant. She has left the land of her birth to seek fortunes in this, the, what is it your people call it? City of Splendors?"

Is the Lady a noblewoman?

"She is of noble blood."

Can we meet the Lady?

"I am afraid that is impossible at the moment, but we should be settled in within a couple of days. I am certain she will wish to warm our humble home with the company of new friends and neighbors. Where might we extend an invitation when we are prepared to receive visitors?"

Are all of these men members of your household?

"No. These are but hirelings we acquired to help ease the task of moving our belongings. The household is only the Lady Boguescu, myself, my sister, Miruna, and the servants Hans and Ivan."

How long do you plan to be in Waterdeep?

"We've traveled far for a long time. We have no intention of going anywhere so long as the city proves inviting. If you are any indication of the kindness of the townspeople here, I could see us staying for a very long time."

Characters who succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check while speaking with Lazlo get the impression that while he isn't lying, he is being a bit standoffish and guarded. If pressed too hard on issues about Lady Boguescu's past, Lazlo will excuse himself, citing the vast amount of work he must complete before the Lady rises. Otherwise he offers polite conversation for a few moments before excusing himself the same way. Unless the party is rude or threatening to him, Lazlo will



BUT I DON'T HAVE WATERDEEP: DRAGON HEIST!

This adventure draws from characters mentioned in *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist*. Rather than reprint those stat blocks here, we simply refer the reader to that adventure. However, if you do not own a copy of *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist*, fear not! You can use these stat blocks from the basic rules instead:

- Avi: **priest**
- Embric: **bandit captain**
- Fala Lefaliir: **druid**
- Rishaal: **mage**
- Vincent Trench: **rakshasa**
- Ziraj: **gladiator**

Any other NPCs can use either the **commoner** or **noble** stat block at DM's discretion.

ask for their contact information and assure them that they will be invited to the household's first affair.

TO EPISODE TWO

Provided the party did nothing to offend Lazlo, he returns to his tasks after discovering where the characters may be contacted. Three days later, an invitation (see **Appendix 3: Character Handouts**) arrives at Trollskull Manor, inviting the characters to join Lady Boguescu for drinks and dance that evening.

EPISODE TWO: THE PRIORY

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

"Welcome to my house. Come freely. Go safely; and leave something of the happiness you bring."

— *Bram Stoker, Dracula*

PREREQUISITES

This episode begins once the sun has set on the night of the party. The adventurers need only have received the invitation and be willing to attend. If the interactions in the Call to Action went exceptionally poorly and the adventurers were not invited, they'll still note the unusual fog and vermin activity, but will need to crash the party or convince another resident of Trollskull Alley to bring them along as guests or convince Rishaal

to give them his invitation if they wish to gain access.

This episode assumes that the adventurers accept Lazlo's invitation to the party. This scene gives them an opportunity to interact with the denizens of the priory as well as the other residents of Trollskull Alley. For NPCs not included in **Appendix 1** of this book, see ***Waterdeep Dragon Heist, Chapter 2: Trollskull Alley***. When they set out for the party, read the following.

As you step out into the night air, you notice that a light fog rolls along the ground at the east end of the alley. The moon hangs low above the priory, bathing the alley in an eerie glow. Along the walkway of the north end, you see two rats rush down the walkway before ducking into the Bent Nail.

The rats are in the building and out of view before the party has much chance to react. They will notice some of the other residents of Trollskull Alley making their way to the priory.

Fala Lefaliir

Fala (they/them, CG elf) is walking out of their shop about the same time as the characters, with their friend, **Ziraj** (he/him, NE half-orc). Fala politely waves to the adventurers and asks if they are on route to the party. They also introduce Ziraj as "a very dear friend." Ziraj is personable, but reserved, and is dressed in black leather armor beneath a black cloak. The hood is currently down. Characters with a passive Perception of 16 or higher will notice a concealed dagger in each of Ziraj's boots.

Vincent Trench

Trench (he/him, N rakshasa disguised as human) lags just a bit behind the characters, about 30 feet back as they walk to the party. He is smoking his pipe and apparently lost in thought, though he responds politely if addressed.

After running any social interactions and setting the scene the adventurers may make their way to the priory, where they are greeted by **Hans**, who is working the gate that leads into the priory courtyard (see **1. West Gate.**)

AREA INFORMATION

The priory has the following features:

Ceilings. The priory building has ceilings that begin at 10 feet high and are raised to 20 feet in the center via stellar vault. The ceilings are made of concrete. Characters who succeed on a DC 25 Intelligence (Religion) check recognize the pattern of the vaulting forms a holy symbol connected to the cult of Ao.

Light. Unless otherwise noted, the priory is lit via candelabra, which are placed on tables or in wall sconces. This bathes the majority of the interior in dim light, with areas of bright light only occurring within 5 feet of a candelabra and darkness in any area further than 20 feet from a candelabra.

Shadows seem unnaturally deep in areas of dim light within the priory. On occasion they flicker or behave in odd ways, which can be unsettling to observers with a passive Perception of 14 or higher.

Sound. The priory is old. The wood of furniture and doors creaks when interacted with. Unoccupied areas are filled with eerie silence, which is randomly broken with the skittering or squeaking of vermin the adventurers can never quite find.

Doors. The doors in the priory are old and dry-rotten with standard locks. These can be picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. The doors are flimsy and can be forced open with a DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check, but doing so breaks the door entirely, ripping the lock out of the door.

Floors. The floors are constructed from clay tiles. The tiles have bizarre patterns worked into them which appear to move when stared at for too long. Characters who look at the floor in an area of bright light for more than one minute (such as when investigating a room) suffer disadvantage on Wisdom saving throws for the next minute, unless the room has a carpet.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of this episode are to meet and socialize with the inhabitants of the priory. By the end of the episode the adventurers will almost certainly suspect something is off about Gertruda and her servants. It's likely they will suspect vampirism, but if they draw other conclusions there's no reason to discourage them. Allow the players to chase red herrings, should they choose to do so.

CREATURES AND NPCs

In addition to the inhabitants of the priory found in **Appendix 1**, the residents of Trollskull Alley are all present at the party, with the exception of **Rishaal the Page-Turner** (he/him, N gold dragonborn), who received an invitation but elected to ignore it.

1. WEST GATE

AREA INFORMATION

This brick gatehouse gives access to the northeast entrance of Trollskull Alley. The exterior doorway is a wrought iron gate. The interior door is wooden and opens into the courtyard.

The interior of the house has a bench for a guard to sit along the south wall. A weapons rack hangs on the north wall but is presently empty.

On the night of the party, read the following when the characters approach the gate:

Fog curls and laps at your feet as you approach the brick gatehouse that leads to the old priory. The wrought iron gate hangs open, and you see a cloaked humanoid figure standing in the doorway. The figure is backlit from a candelabra burning on the bench behind him.
"Invitation, please?"

The shadowed figure is **Hans**, one of the mongrelfolk servants. Hans wears the same heavy woolen cloak he wore previously and an expressionless porcelain mask. Beneath the cloak, Hans is wearing a gray tunic, a leather belt, and black pants. He wears soft leather boots, which seem filled to bursting and showcase that his feet are a bit too big for his body. Characters with a passive Perception of 16 or higher notice what appears to be animal fur sticking out from beneath the mask and the neckline of the tunic. As the characters approach, Hans holds out his hand and says "Invitation, please?" He speaks in a gravelly voice that sounds like a half-growl. Once the adventurers present their invitation Hans steps aside, gesturing toward the priory door with a slight bow. From this point on, the adventure takes place within the priory. On the night of the party, the wood door on the eastern end of the gatehouse sits open, awaiting guests.

If the characters visit this location uninvited at any time other than the party, they find the iron

gate sealed and locked. The lock on the iron gate can be picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or be forced open with a DC 22 Strength (Athletics) check. The wooden door is also closed and locked. There is no candelabra in the gatehouse when it is unoccupied.

TREASURE

The candelabra (and indeed, all the candelabras in the priory) is made of brass, and designed to look like a hand, with each finger having a place to hold a candlestick. The candelabra is worth 3 sp.

2. THE COURTYARD

AREA INFORMATION

The courtyard is a neglected lawn with a small smattering of sickly trees, surrounded by a 5-foot thick, 10-foot high wall crafted of brick. On the night of the party, the courtyard is quiet and serene. As the characters enter, read the following:

The grass is about ankle deep on a human, the tips of the blades jutting out over the rolling fog below. It's clear that there has been no grounds keeper in recent memory. A cobblestone path leads from the gatehouse to the door that leads to a large wooden door. The path also forks to the north and wraps around the northern end of the property.

If the characters visit uninvited on any night other than the party, they encounter a **swarm of rats** who attack anyone not escorted by a member of the household. There's also a 10 percent chance unexpected visitors encounter Miruna engaging in a ritual of communion with the land. If interrupted in such a case, the Barovian druid fights until reduced to half her hit points before retreating into the priory.

TREASURE

None.

3. FOYER

AREA INFORMATION

This 30-foot by 30-foot chamber serves as a greeting area. As the characters enter, read the following:

As you approach the door to the priory, you see the flickering glow of candlelight in the doorway. Stepping into the large chamber, you see a patch of inky darkness beyond the candlelight's reach. Beyond the darkness, more candles flicker in a cold, empty, eastbound hallway.

This massive chamber is largely empty at this point. Candelabras have been placed in wall sconces to the north and south of the western entrance, bathing the doorway in bright light. Across the room is a hallway that continues on to the east for an additional 20 feet. Five feet into the hallway, a pair of sconces hold two more candelabras, one mounted on the north wall, the other on the south.

If the adventurers visit this area uninvited on a night other than the party, they will discover both wooden doors locked. There are no candelabras in the sconces, and the room is in total darkness. There's a 25 percent chance **Gertruda** is in area 6 at the time of the intrusion and hears the adventurers enter unless they make a successful DC 13 group Dexterity (Stealth) check.

TREASURE

Four candelabras.

4. CELLAR STAIRS

AREA INFORMATION

This stairway leads down 20 feet to a wine cellar. The sconces sit empty, leaving the stairwell and cellar in darkness.

A darkened hallway extends before you.

Any character attempting to navigate the stairs without darkvision must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or fall down the stairs suffering 3 (1d6) points of bludgeoning damage. Characters encountering the stairway for the first time in the darkness make this saving throw at disadvantage.

TREASURE

The majority of the wine racks are empty, however there are 2d6 bottles of Red Dragon Crush from the Wizard of Wines in Barovia in the southern end of the wine rack along the east wall. Each bottle can fetch 5 sp from the right collector.

5. GERTRUDA'S STAIR

AREA INFORMATION

This stairway leads an additional 10 feet down, to an area that was once a library for the clergy of the priory. The lighting conditions here are consistent with area 4.

A darkened hallway extends before you.

The door at the bottom of this stairway is locked and barred from the inside. If **Miruna** hasn't been encountered yet, there's a 50 percent chance she's in area 7, in which case the door is not barred, instead hanging open a bit.

Due to the rotten nature of the doors, barring them does very little to prevent forced entry. Though picking the lock is ineffective, a successful DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check snaps the wood barring the door, allowing entry into the room. This is not quiet and alerts any creature in area 4, 6, or 7 to the commotion.

6. MAIN HALL

AREA INFORMATION

This is the main hall where the Barovians host the party. As the adventurers enter the room, read the following:

As you step into the main hall, you see a number of dining tables set up, encircling the outside of the room, each bearing a candelabra. The center of the room is open to form a dance floor. On the raised dais along the south wall, an elven woman stands playing a romantic tune on the viol. A few of the couples from the neighborhood are up dancing, but most of the locals sit at the tables enjoying food and wine.

In the northwest corner of the room, another cloaked humanoid, dressed exactly as the man who greeted you at the gatehouse, stands in front of a cellar door, watching the crowd from behind his featureless porcelain mask.

Lazlo, who stands beside the dais admiring the bard's performance, turns to the party as they enter.

"Welcome! Please take a seat. Your presence is a gift to us." He says as he gestures to an empty table.

Lazlo escorts the party to an open table and tells them Miruna will be bringing food and drink over shortly. Ivan stands guard before the door to area 4, permitting no one entry. Peren (he/him, CG elf p. 17) plays the viol on the dais.

In addition to the Trollskull Alley NPCs, there are a dozen **nobles** present, representing the rest of the Trollskull Alley residents. Over the course of the next hour of game time the adventurers



may interact with whomever they choose. Use the following guidelines to run the scene.

Lazlo

Lazlo does everything in his power to be an infallible host. He moves from table to table, checking on everyone's meals and drink, looking up to silently signal to **Miruna** to fulfill any request. If questioned about the Lady's whereabouts, Lazlo simply replies, "Lady Gertruda prefers to dine in private. It is the custom of her people."

Miruna

Miruna runs table to table answering Lazlo's signals to address the needs of the attendees. Between circuits through the room, she darts down the hallway on the southeast end of the chamber to gather more supplies. If spoken to for any purpose other than food, drink, or comfort requests, Miruna simply replies, "No time." And continues about her errands.

Ivan

Ivan doesn't interact with anyone unless they approach the door. If anyone walks over to Ivan he simply folds his arms and says, "Off limits."

Should anyone try and force their way past Ivan, he will forcibly eject them via the southwestern exit.

Peren

Peren spends most of the evening playing, but if the characters approach him during a break, he can inform them that he was hired by Lazlo to perform at the party and is being very well compensated for his time, though tips are always appreciated.

Trollskull Alley NPCs

This is a good opportunity for the adventurers to carry forward existing interactions with NPCs from Trollskull Alley. Depending on the other events in your campaign, this may be the first opportunity for them to speak to some of the NPCs. Spend as little or as much time as you like on these interactions but try to keep it under an hour of real time unless there are serious plot-altering interactions happening.

Lady Gertruda

Once the adventurers have had the time to handle any interactions they would like to, Lazlo steps to the northwest passage and signals Peren to stop playing. When Peren stops the attendees turn their attention to Lazlo. With a booming voice, he calls out, "Presenting the Lady Gertruda Boguescu, Mistress of the House."

As **Gertruda** (she/her, NG vampire spawn p. xx) steps out of the hallway, read the following:

The young lady entering the room is dressed in a black skirt slit to the thigh, a black bustier with red accents along the seams, and a red choker. Her raven-black hair is cut just above the shoulder and looks a bit wild and unkempt. Her large, blue-gray eyes give her face the appearance of childlike innocence, but as she looks over the room, you catch a sort of sadness in her expression beyond her apparently short years. She appears to have seen twenty summers at most. Her pallid skin is accentuated by the dark red lipstick she wears. As the room silently watches she walks to the dais, looking at each person in the room with a smile. Once at the dais, she casts a final look across the room before speaking, her voice barely carrying throughout the large chamber.

"I am new to your land. Where I was raised, hospitality is considered one of the greatest virtues one can possess. It is in this spirit that I have invited you all to my home. Thank you for your gracious acceptance. Thank you for warming my new home with your company and mirth. I look forward to sharing in your warmth for countless nights to come."

Any character who succeeds on a DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check determines that Gertruda is uncomfortable with the crowd. This result also indicates that she seems disappointed somehow. A successful DC 19 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a few wet spots on her bodice, though the nature of the wetness is impossible to determine without touching it.

The look of disappointment stems from her attempt to read the crowd, as Lazlo has told Gertruda that vampires can read the thoughts of their prey. This is an ability Gertrude has tried to develop to no avail. The wetness on her bodice is a few errant drops of blood from feeding earlier in the evening.

Gertruda only remains in the room for about ten minutes before she retires for the evening. If the characters approach her in that time, she interacts politely. She is likely to be drawn to any characters who speak with authority or who are especially kind. Characters engaged in conversation with Gertruda may make Wisdom (Insight) checks to try and determine her honesty.

The adventurers can learn the following information in conversation with Gertruda:

Where are you from?

"I was born and raised in the village of Barovia. It's a tiny place."

A successful Wisdom (Insight) check betrays no falsehood here. Whether or not the characters would even have a hope of having heard of Barovia is left to the Dungeon Master to decide, though this adventure assumes that it is effectively impossible.

Why did you leave your homeland?

"Too many bad memories. I had the opportunity to build a happier home. I chose to take it."

A successful Wisdom (Insight) check reveals not only that Gertruda is speaking true here, but that she is still very upset about whatever transpired in Barovia.

What is your relationship with Lazlo?

"Lazlo is my seneschal, and my friend. He has helped me through some dark times. I am in his debt."

A successful Wisdom (Insight) check here indicates that Gertruda firmly believes she is in Lazlo's debt. She seems somewhat conflicted over Lazlo being a friend.

What's the story with the masked servants?

"Hans and Ivan. They are good men. They suffer a terrible affliction that struck some of the paupers in Barovia. They wear their masks because many find their appearance...unsettling"

A successful Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that Gertruda believes this to be true.

Where is your family?

"Gone. I'd prefer not to discuss the topic."

A successful Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that Gertruda is heartbroken by the topic. A

successful DC 25 Wisdom (perception) check reveals the slightest bit of blood appearing in her tear ducts as she speaks of her family.

What brings you to Waterdeep?

"I had never traveled outside of my village until recently. I've spent the last several months learning of the surrounding lands, and the City of Splendors was spoken of very highly. It sounded like a beautiful place to make a new home."

A successful Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that Gertruda speaks the truth here. In fact, she seems to have an almost childlike wonder when speaking about her impression of Waterdeep.

After answering any questions and bidding the guests a good night, Gertruda heads back out the way she came. Once Gertruda has excused herself for the evening, the party begins to wind down. The adventurers are free to leave or may try to investigate the area further, though doing so will be very challenging under the watchful eyes of Lazlo and Ivan.

USING MAGIC AT THE PARTY

If any adventurer casts a spell to attempt to influence any of the residents of the priory, the Dungeon Master may determine that Miruna notices, as long as that spell has a somatic or material component, unless the caster succeeds at a DC 16 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. If Miruna is the target of the spell, this check suffers disadvantage.

Miruna will pointedly demand that any character attempting to use magic in such a fashion leave immediately, and will become violent should they refuse, though if Gertruda is present, she will command Miruna to stop before asking the adventurers to leave herself.

As mentioned in the area 3 description, there's a 25 percent chance Gertruda will be in this room if the characters visit here uninvited on any night other than the party. If she faces intruders here, she will question them, possibly attempt to intimidate them, but won't initiate combat unless another member of the household is threatened or injured.

Anyone making a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) or a successful DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check while investigating the room outside of the party (where the trap door is covered by a rug) will discover the trap door in the floor in front of the dais, which drops to area 7. Anyone falling through the trap door suffers 7

(2d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall. The trap door is controlled by a mechanism in the arm of the chair on the dais. There is also a lever to open the trap door in area 7.

TREASURE

Apart from the bronze candelabras, there are enough place settings for each person present to dine. Each place setting is made of brass, and the plates are made from porcelain. Each person's place setting is worth 2 sp.

7. THE OLD STUDY

AREA INFORMATION

This 25-foot by 20-foot chamber was once the study for the priory's clergy. Most of the books are long since gone, though a few remaining tomes of interest remain on the otherwise empty shelves lining the south and east walls. When a character enters this room, read the following:

As you enter the dim chamber, you see a few scattered books on the otherwise empty, dust-covered bookshelves. A lone candelabra burns atop a broken writing desk in the far northwest corner. In the center of the room is a 10-foot by 15-foot patch of raw earth.

If the adventurers come in here during the day, you may also read:

The earth begins to shift! A hand emerges! Gertruda sits up from the dirt and looks at you, baring sharp fangs.
"Why have you disturbed my slumber?"

The earthen patch on the floor is dirt from Barovia itself, stacked on the ground deeply enough for Gertruda to bury herself to sleep in. While this is in no way actually necessary for her, she believes it to be as Lazlo has told her as much.

TREASURE

This room holds very little by way of treasure, apart from the books on the shelves. One is a personal journal from one of the priests of Ao dating back to the Time of Troubles. The second is a treatise on the history of Undermountain, written in DR 1108. Each book could fetch 50 gp from an interested collector.

8. PRIVY ROOM

This room contains a privy which leads to the sewer. There is also a washtub large enough for two Medium creatures to bathe in at the same time. When the characters enter this room, read the following:

You have found the restroom.

TREASURE

None.

9. KITCHEN

AREA INFORMATION

This is the kitchen of the priory. The room is in serviceable condition and it is clear that it is in process of being cleaned up after decades of disuse. Supplies in the kitchen are sufficient to prepare fine meals for a number of guests. Lazlo and Miruna will prevent anyone from entering this area during the party. When the characters enter this room for the first time, read the following:

Several cupboards line the walls of this room, stuffed with various cooking supplies and cutlery. Along the south wall is an iron stove.

TREASURE

The glassware and cutlery in this room is sufficient to serve 30 guests and has a value of 6 gp. The collection of foodstuffs and cooking supplies is worth 100 gp.

10. MIRUNA'S QUARTERS

AREA INFORMATION

As the characters enter this room for the first time, read the following:

A fine quality bed with a beautiful red silk canopy sits in the corner of this room. At its feet stands a wooden wardrobe. The south wall also has a wardrobe against it, in between doors that lead to the east and south.

This room is Miruna's bedchamber. She sleeps on a silk canopied bed placed in the northeast corner of the room. Next to the bed and along the south wall are a couple of wooden wardrobes which hold her clothing, Gertrude's clothing, and a number of personal effects and trinkets.

If the adventurers enter this room and have not yet encountered **Miruna**, they find her here.

TREASURE

Under the bed is a locked wooden chest which can be picked with a successful DC 18 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. In the chest are a spare druidic focus, a handwritten journal depicting Miruna's final days in Barovia, and a coin purse containing 200 Barovian electrum coins.

11. LAZLO'S QUARTERS

AREA INFORMATION

When the adventurers enter this room for the first time, read the following:

This 15-foot by 15-foot room is filled to the brim with bizarre treasures and opulent appointments. The bed is canopied with the finest silk. The furnishings, including a fainting couch, an overstuffed chair, a writing desk, a wooden chair, and a wardrobe are all carved from the finest wood with master craftsmanship. There are five wooden chests haphazardly scattered across the floor. Lazlo rises from the desk as you enter, reaching for the sword and shield nearby.

When not ordering around the underlings, manipulating Gertrude, or hosting social functions, **Lazlo** is working on expanding his wealth through moneylending and laundering. When the characters arrive, they catch him working his ledgers. Hearing them enter, he grabs the *+2 shield* and *shortsword of sharpness* next to him and attacks. If cornered in such a fashion Lazlo attempts to work his way past the characters (unlikely as he is bottlenecked.) If Lazlo is reduced to half his hit points or less he begins pleading for his life, offering the characters 250 platinum to spare him.

If Lazlo is confronted about his treatment of Gertruda he becomes enraged. He screams that he had command of a God and the characters have ruined it with their meddling. In this scenario he fights to the death.

TREASURE

Each of the 5 chests requires a successful DC 18 Dexterity check with thieves' tools to pick, though searching Lazlo reveals the keys to the chests and every door in the priory, as well as 20 gp in his coin purse. Each chest contains 200 gp worth

of various coins, art objects and gems. In Lazlo's desk is a sack with 250 pp.

The *shortsword of sharpness* and the *+2 shield* can be found in **Appendix 5: Magic Items**

12. HANS'S QUARTERS

AREA INFORMATION

The interior layout of this guardhouse is similar to that of the guardhouse in area 2. There is a bench along the west wall, and the east wall holds a weapon rack. Beneath the bench sits a makeshift bed of hay where **Hans** sleeps. The weapons rack is empty apart from Hans's spare clothing and a shortsword that he only carries if he expects trouble. Hans can generally be found in here from sunrise until a couple of hours before dusk, unless Lazlo has him run a daylight errand for the house.

A wrought iron gate runs from the east side of this guard house to the west side of area 13. The gate is chained and rusted shut. Opening the gate requires a DC 25 Strength (Athletics) check.

TREASURE

Aside from Hans's clothing and weapon, this room contains one candelabra. A successful DC 12 Investigation check made while searching the room reveals a prayer book to the Morning Lord, which could be sold for as much as 30 gp.

13. IVAN'S QUARTERS

AREA INFORMATION

The interior layout of this guardhouse is similar to that of the guardhouse in area 2. There is a bench along the east wall, and the west wall holds a weapon rack. Beneath the bench sits a makeshift bed of hay where **Ivan** sleeps. The weapons rack is empty apart from Ivan's spare clothing and a mace that he only carries if he expects trouble. Ivan can generally be found in here from sunrise until a couple of hours before dusk, unless Lazlo has him run a daylight errand for the house.

A wrought iron gate runs from the west side of this guard house to the east side of area 13. The gate is chained and rusted shut. Opening the gate requires a DC 25 Strength (Athletics) check.

TREASURE

Aside from Ivan's clothing and weapon, this room contains one candelabra. A successful DC 10 Investigation check made while searching the room reveals a set of brewer's supplies, which could be sold for as much as 10 gp.

EPISODE THREE: THERE GOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD

PREREQUISITES

The events and notes given in this episode can take place any time after the party.

Author's Note: This section offers information, vignettes, and background occurrences to be worked into your *Waterdeep Dragon Heist* campaign to integrate the priory into the Trollskull Alley neighborhood. Dungeon Masters are encouraged to come up with additional vignettes to showcase the residents of the priory and their relationships with the alley.

VIGNETTE ONE: THE LAIR

The presence of a vampire takes its toll on the alley. This effect is introduced in Episode 2 but should mature relatively quickly after the party. Apply the following effects within 500 feet of the priory.

REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region surrounding Gertruda's lair is warped by her unnatural presence, creating the following effects:

- There's a noticeable increase in the populations of bats and rats in the alley.
- Plants within 500 feet of the lair wither, and their stems and branches become twisted and thorny. This has a noticeable and terrible effect on **Fala Lefaliir's** business, Corellon's Crown (see *Waterdeep Dragon Heist, Chapter 2: Trollskull Alley*), and Fala may come to the characters for help.
- Shadows cast within 500 feet of the priory seem abnormally gaunt and sometimes move as though alive. This effect extends into the residences and buildings within the radius.
- A creeping fog clings to the ground within 500 feet of the priory. The fog occasionally takes eerie forms, such as grasping claws and writhing serpents.

If Gertruda is destroyed, these effects end after 2d6 days.

VIGNETTE TWO: HORRIBLE HUNTER

This can either take place at an inn the adventurers are visiting, such as the Yawning Portal, or in Trollskull Manor if the adventurers have reopened it. One of the party notices **Gertruda** speaking to a man (Omar Jassan he/him, NG, Calishite human **commoner**) in a secluded corner of the establishment. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals Gertruda is trying to seduce the man and failing to a nearly comical degree. She looks uncomfortable in her own skin; her movements are stiff, and it's very clear she's not actually interested in the exchange. If the adventurers don't intervene, the man leaves about two minutes later.

It's clear that Gertruda is relieved by the end of the exchange, but her relief is short lived. **Lazlo** approaches her from across the bar and leads her out by her elbow, chastising her on the way. Characters who get close enough to overhear can make out something about "this is not a game" and "you will starve" from Lazlo.

If the characters attempt to intervene before Lazlo approaches, Gertrude immediately becomes embarrassed and apologetic. If she's taken a personal liking to any of the adventurers she additionally protests about her virtue being intact and her standing as a lady. Lazlo interrupts shortly thereafter, disregarding any other characters. If the adventurers speak to him, he admonishes them to mind their own affairs and drags Gertruda out of the inn.

VIGNETTE THREE: LAZLO'S OFFER

One of the residents of Trollskull Alley who has forged a friendship with a member of the party (DMs discretion which NPC to use for this vignette) confides in the character that they're suffering financial issues. Behind on their guild dues and taxes, the neighbor is extremely worried about their financial health. The neighbor confides **Lazlo** has offered to lend the appropriate funds at an interest rate of 12 percent per tenday.

If confronted about the loan, Lazlo denies nothing. He states moneylending is a common practice in his homeland and takes great offense at accusations of usury. If the party approaches Lazlo politely and makes an impassioned case on behalf of the neighbor, they can negotiate the rate

down to 9 percent per tenday with a successful DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

VIGNETTE FOUR: WICKED

While the characters visit Corellon's Crown (perhaps responding to **Fala's** concerns about the effects of **Vignette One**) **Miruna** storms into the shop. She's clearly agitated and begins looking through the shelves frantically. After a moment, Fala asks Miruna if she needs help. Miruna asks for twig blight corpses. Fala states they don't carry twig blight corpses, nor would she have any idea where one could acquire such a thing or what you would use it for. Miruna mutters something about doing it herself and storms back out of the shop.

APPENDIX 1: MONSTERS & NPCs

This section contains game stats for monsters and NPCs presented in this adventure. Those not listed here can be found in the **Monster Manual** or **Waterdeep Dragon Heist**.

GERTRUDA (VAMPIRE SPAWN)
Medium undead, neutral good

Armor Class 15 (Natural Armor)
Hit Points 82 (11d8 + 33)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws DEX +6, WIS +3
Skills Perception +3, Stealth +6
Damage Resistances Necrotic; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks
Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 13
Languages Common
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3
Regeneration. Gertruda regains 10 hit points at the start of her turn if she has at least 1 hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If she takes radiant damage or damage from holy water, this trait doesn't function at the start of her next turn.
Spider Climb. Gertruda can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.
Vampire Weaknesses. Gertruda suffers the following flaws:
Forbiddance. Gertruda can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of the occupants.
Harmed by Running Water. Gertruda takes 20 acid damage when she ends her turn in running water.



Stake to the Heart. Gertruda is destroyed if a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into her heart while she is incapacitated in her resting place.

Sunlight Hypersensitivity. Gertruda takes 20 radiant damage when she starts her turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, she has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Gertruda makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.
Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is grappled by Gertruda, incapacitated, or restrained. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and Gertruda regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces their hit point maximum to 0.
Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, Gertruda can grapple the target (escape DC 13).

HANS (MONGRELFOLK)

Medium humanoid, neutral

Armor Class 11 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	9 (–1)	15 (+2)	9 (–1)	10 (+0))	6 (–2)

Skills Deception +2, Perception +2, Stealth +3

Senses Darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Mimicry. Hans can mimic any sounds he has heard, including voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Hans makes two attacks: one with his bite and one with his claw, dagger, or shortsword.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage.

Dagger. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

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

IVAN (MONGRELFOLK)

Medium humanoid, neutral evil

Armor Class 11 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	9 (–1)	15 (+2)	9 (–1)	10 (+0))	6 (–2)

Skills Deception +2, Perception +2, Stealth +3

Senses Darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Mimicry. Ivan can mimic any sounds he has heard, including voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Ivan makes two attacks: one with his bite and one with his claw, dagger, or mace.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage.

Dagger. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

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

LAZLO (BANDIT CAPTAIN)

Medium humanoid, neutral evil

Armor Class 19 (Studded Leather, +2 shield)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws STR +4, DEX +5, WIS +2

Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Lazlo makes three melee attacks: two with his shortsword of sharpness and one with his dagger. Or he makes two ranged attacks with his daggers.

Shortsword of sharpness. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage. On a roll of 20 the shortsword of sharpness deals an additional 14 slashing damage. Lazlo must roll again. If the second roll results in a natural 20, the target loses a limb of the DM's choosing.

Dagger. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. Lazlo adds 2 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, Lazlo must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

These stats reflect Lazlo wielding the shortsword of sharpness and the +2 shield.

MIRUNA (DRUID)

Medium humanoid, neutral evil

Armor Class 11 (16 With Barkskin)

Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)

Skills Medicine +4, Nature +3, Perception +4

Senses Passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Druidic, Elvish

Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Spellcasting. Miruna is a 4th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will):

druidcraft, produce flame, shillelagh

1st level (4 slots):

entangle, longstrider, speak with animals, thunderwave

2nd level (3 slots):

animal messenger, barkskin

ACTIONS

Quarterstaff. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit (+4 to hit with shillelagh), reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage if wielded with two hands, or 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage with shillelagh.

OMAR JASSAN (COMMONER)

Medium humanoid, neutral good

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 0 (10 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

ACTIONS

Club. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

PEREN (BARD)

Medium humanoid, chaotic good

Armor Class 15 (Chain Shirt)

Hit Points 44 (8d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws DEX +4, WIS +3

Skills Acrobatics +4, Perception +5, Performance +6

Senses Passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Spellcasting. Peren is a 4th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following bard spells prepared:

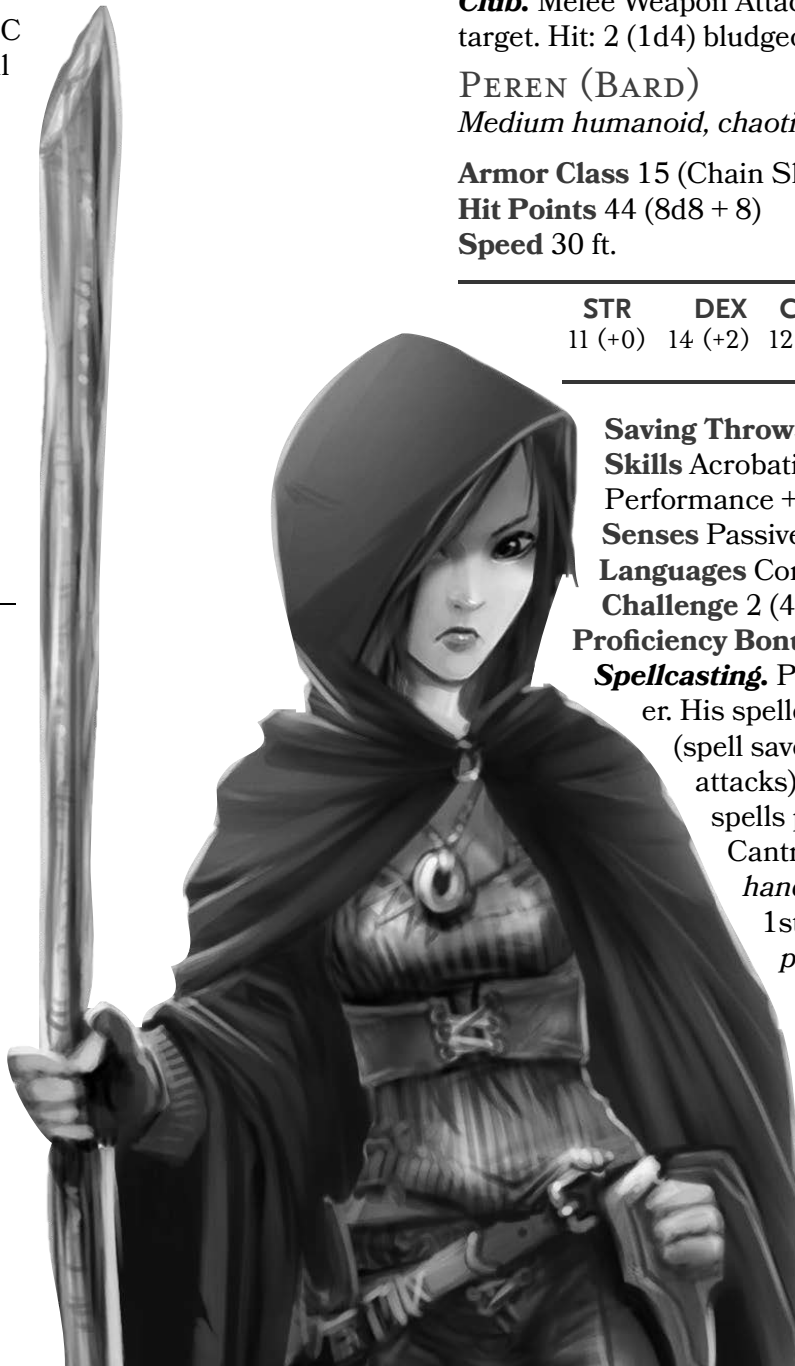
Cantrips (at will): *friends, mage hand, vicious mockery*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person, healing word, heroism, sleep, thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility, shatter*

Fey Ancestry. Peren has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep.

Song of Rest. Peren can perform a song



while taking a short rest. Any ally who hears the song regains an extra 1d6 hit points if that ally spends any Hit Dice to regain hit points at the end of that rest. Peren can confer this benefit on himself as well.

Taunt (2/Day). Peren can use a bonus action on his turn to target one creature within 30 feet. If the target can hear Peren, the target must succeed on a DC 12 Charisma saving throw or have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws until the start of Peren's next turn.

ACTIONS

Shortsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

SWARM OF RATS
Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 4 (7d8 - 7)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	2 (-4)	11 (+0)	3 (-4)

Damage Resistances Bludgeoning, Piercing, Slashing
Condition Immunities Charmed, Frightened, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Prone, Restrained, Stunned

Senses Darkvision 30 ft., Passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Keen Smell. The swarm has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny rat. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

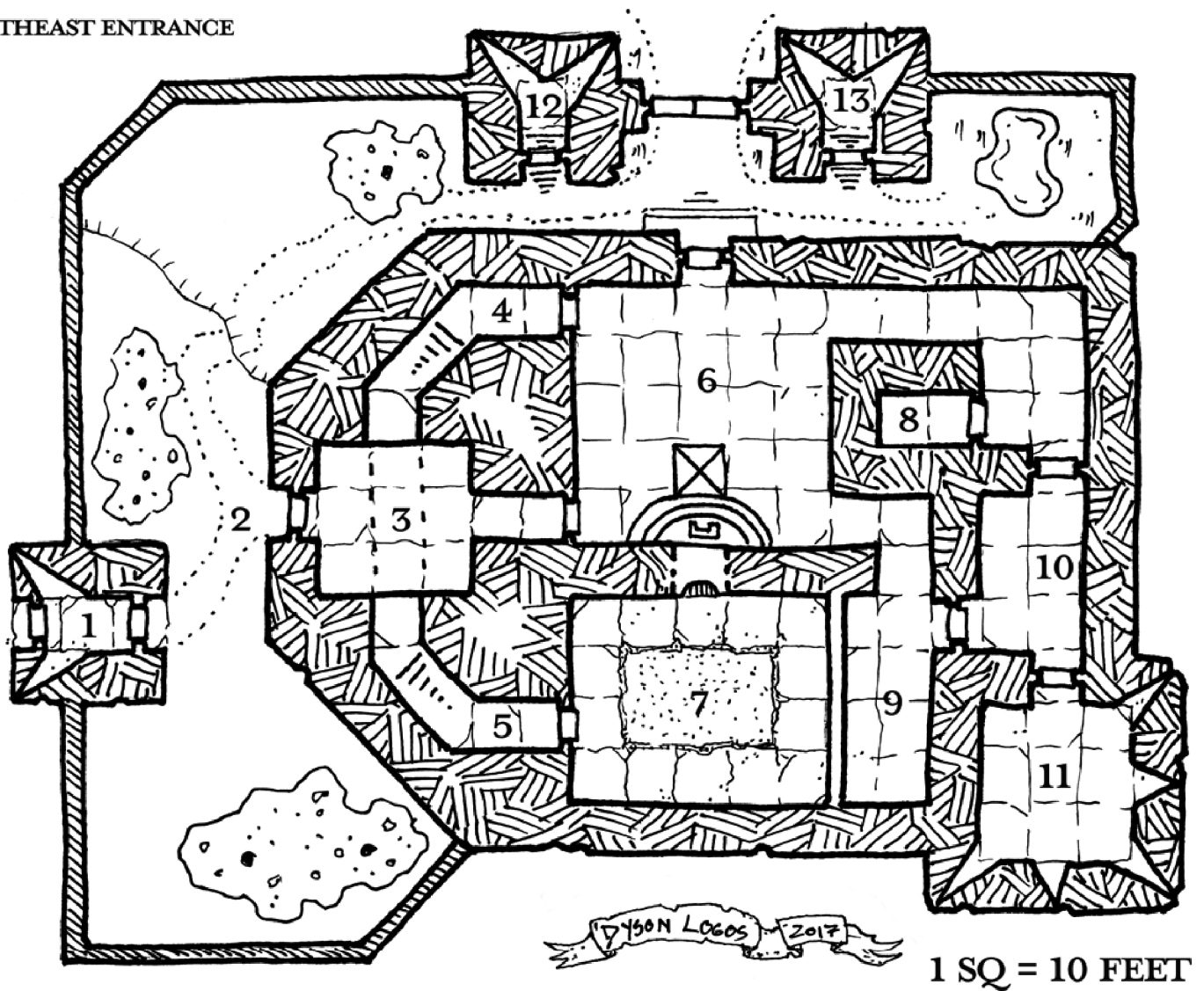
Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. Hit: 7 (2d6) piercing damage, or 3 (1d6) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.



APPENDIX 2: MAPS

THE PRIORY (DM MAP)

NORTHEAST ENTRANCE



APPENDIX 3: PLAYER HANDOUTS

INVITATION

Greetings,

*You are cordially invited to attend a
housewarming party in honor of the Lady
Boguescu's arrival in the City of Splendors.
I would consider it the highest honor if you
would join us this evening for dining, drink
and dance. The festivities begin at sunset.*

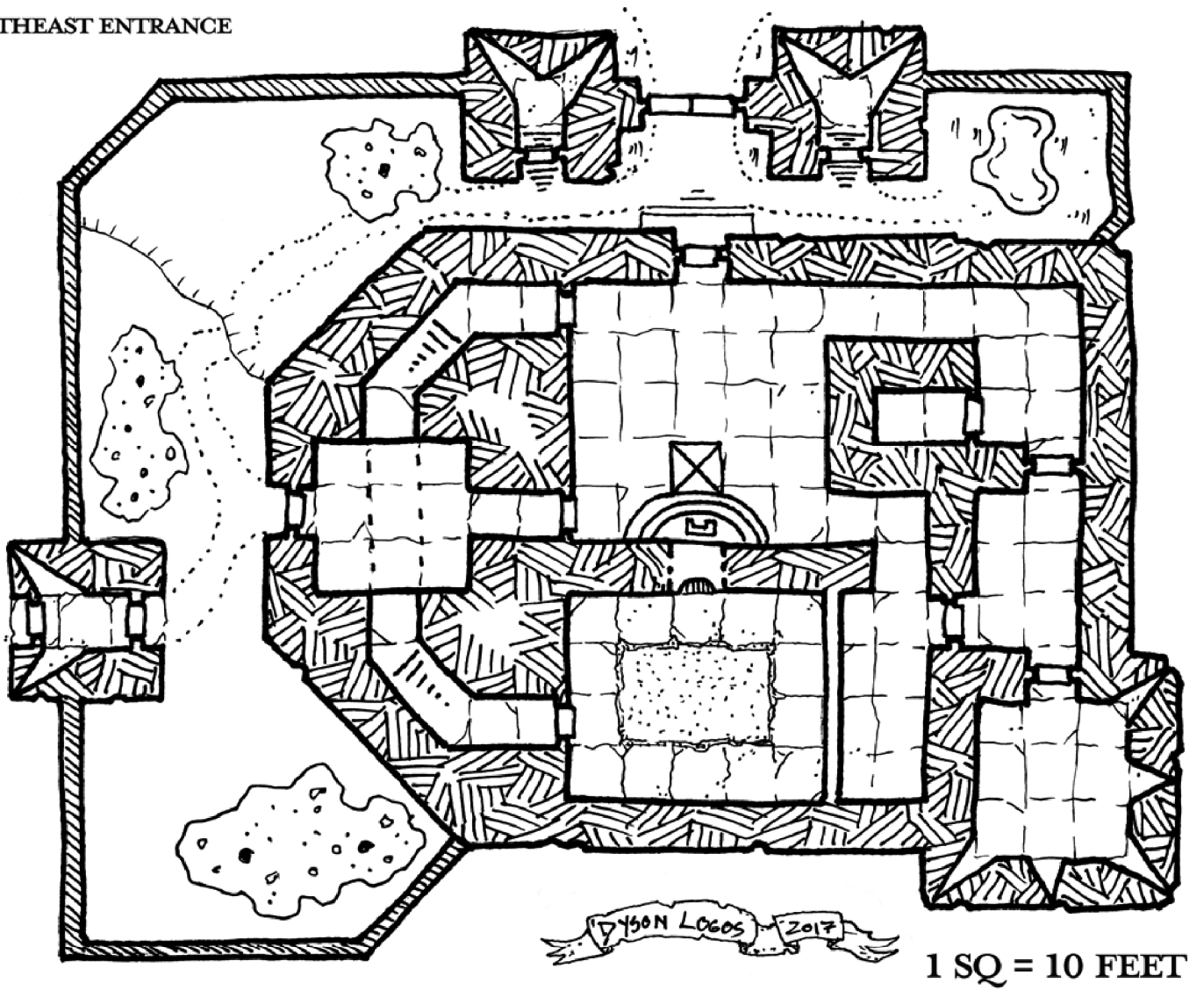
Your humble servant,

*Lazlo Lulresh
Seneschal to Lady Boguescu*



THE PRIORY (PLAYER MAP)

NORTHEAST ENTRANCE



APPENDIX 4: DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

PLAYING WITH TROPES

Many of the tropes in vampire fiction are problematic.

This adventure gives you the opportunity to address, subvert, and rectify some of these tropes. The vampire, Gertruda, is not evil. She is misguided, and she suffers from an awful condition, but she is inherently good. She is, however, under the influence of an evil man. Lazlo is horrific. He has used Gertrude as a tool. He used her to plunder Strahd's treasures, he used her to escape Barovia, and he is using her now to set up shop in Waterdeep. If the players do no more than scratch the surface of this story, they will find a vampire that they want to destroy. However, if they discover through roleplaying that Gertruda is an innocent, they may see an opportunity to save her from Lazlo and Miruna.

A DARK ALLY IN THE ALLEY?

It is possible, if the adventurers free Gertrude from Lazlo and Miruna's influence, that she could become a potent ally. Using her supernatural ability, she could become a protector of the people of Trollskull Alley, and a staunch ally once the larger events of **Waterdeep Dragon Heist** get rolling.

THE FRIEND OF MY ENEMY

Alternatively, Lazlo could find himself in league with the villain for your story. Lazlo is a manipulative monster but compared to the villains in **Waterdeep Dragon Heist** he is strictly small potatoes. If Lazlo manages to avoid getting himself killed and tries

to engage with any of the main villains in the story, he will quickly wind up another minion in their arsenal. If the players do nothing about his hold over Gertrude, she will become another powerful pawn in the chase for the hidden gold.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

COMBAT

This adventure can be run entirely without combat or can turn into a rather brutal slugfest if the characters initiate violence against the inhabitants of the priory. During the party the priory residents will not initiate combat (though they may bodily remove those who disturb the party.) If the adventurers return later for a fight, all bets are off.

EXPLORATION

This adventure gives an interesting location to look through and a chance to learn a bit about an utterly foreign culture. Though Lazlo has not restrained himself from spending Gertruda's money to acquire goods and art native to Toril, there are still plenty of Barovian items in the collection at the priory.

SOCIAL

This pillar truly shines throughout the adventure and is the basis for the story herein. Each interaction has the potential to alter the various relationships that the adventurers maintain with their neighbors in Trollskull Alley, as well as potentially dictating how the rest of the neighborhood reacts to the priory residents.



APPENDIX 5: MAGIC ITEMS

The following magic items can be acquired in this adventure.

SHIELD, +2

Armor (shield), rare

While holding this shield, you have a +2 bonus to AC. This bonus is in addition to the shield's normal bonus to AC.

This shield is made from metal and is carried in one hand. It has the symbol of the Order of the Dragon etched into it. Wielding a shield increases your Armor Class by 2. You can benefit from only one shield at a time.

SHORTSWORD OF SHARPNESS

Weapon (shortsword), very rare (requires attunement)

When you attack an object with this magic sword and hit, maximize your weapon damage dice against the target.

When you attack a creature with this weapon and roll a 20 on the attack roll, that target takes an extra 14 slashing damage. Then roll another d20. If you roll a 20, you lop off one of the target's limbs, with the effect of such loss determined by the DM. If the creature has no limb to sever, you lop off a portion of its body instead.

In addition, you can speak the sword's command word to cause the blade to shed bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet. Speaking the command word again or sheathing the sword puts out the light.

