

DRAGONMARKED PLOT HOOKS



A series of encounters designed to naturally introduce the Dragonmarked Houses and their businesses to characters of any level



THE MARKS AND CRESTS OF THE DRAGONMARKED HOUSES

MARK OF SENTINEL



MARK OF HANDLING



MARK OF MAKING



MARK OF DETECTION



MARK OF STORM



MARK OF HEALING



MARK OF HOSPITALITY



MARK OF PASSAGE



MARK OF WARDING



MARK OF SCRIBING



MARK OF SHADOWS



MARK OF FINDING



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HOUSE CANNITH



he leaders of House Cannith today have become incredibly determined to restore their power and wealth, leading to bitter rivalry amongst the House leaders. The inventors of House Cannith are directed to work in secret laboratories, restlessly working to outdo their past creations.

FABRICATORS GUILD

Arbine Dohran is a muscular fellow who likes to stay out of sight and do his business away from prying eyes. He has recently come by a crate of 'relinquished goods' and unfortunately for Arbine, it's mostly broken armor and weapons.

Luckily, House Cannith's Fabricators Guild corners the market on the repair of mundane items. Arbine wants the players to deliver this crate of goods to be repaired by the guild so that he can sell them. He gives the players 100gp to cover the repairs, and offers each player 25gp to do the task.

If your players are in the city, the guild workshop will be a large industrial building run by mostly humans and elves. If not, even a small town may have a small collective of Cannith fabricators who work out of a smithing shop.

Wherever the players take the crate, they will be greeted by a human female named **Ewyn Halforth d'Cannith**, a marked artificer who is serving her time in the guild before working her way up the ranks of her House.

Despite her disbelief that the goods were come by honestly, it doesn't seem to bother her. She immediately takes inventory of everything in the crate and quotes a price of 80gp for the entire lot. Once she's paid, she begins work on restoring the items. Some repairs are as simple as casting the *Mending* spell, and some are set aside for more advanced artificing technique.

Any other plot you want to weave House Cannith into can be inserted while the players wait on their equipment.

TINKERS GUILD

Any players looking for the creation of items should make their way to a Tinkers Guild location. While the guild also dabbles in training those to use the arcane to build and create, they are also known to take commissions and sell equipment out of their workshops.

Like the Fabricators Guild, the Tinkers Guild is often full of House Cannith members completing their two year training before graduating to more serious (and often secret) labs and workshops.

Simeon d'Cannith is a roaming tinker who has been tasked with traveling a certain region and taking any work that comes his way. If your players aren't near a town or city, he is often seen making his way down dusty roads- though most who have bumped into him have said they heard his pleasant whistling and the metallic rattle of his covered wagon.

FRAUDULENT MAKER'S MARK

At some point, one of your players come across a magical item from a strange merchant who only goes by Drazan. After a few uses, it becomes clear that the item is dysfunctional, and will need to be tuned or repaired by a Cannith guild, as it bears the Cannith maker's mark.

You are greeted by a bored-looking elf who introduces himself as Lerion. If the players explain their plight, he will take one look at the object and claim that no one from House Cannith made it. When directed to the maker's mark, the players will be able to see anger on his face as he take the item into the backroom and says he will be right back.

When he returns, he has another man with him, wearing noble clothing and bearing a bloodline signet of the House. He greets the players kindly, and explains that, as they may have begun to suspect, they have been duped by an imposter, and holds up an item that bears the true Cannith maker's mark (A gorgon stamped into the metal, or burned into the wood, of the item).

To console them, he will offer them a job- capture the fraud and bring him in. House Cannith simply can't abide cheap, dysfunctional items being sold in their name. If they complete this task, not only will they give the player an authentic replacement of their original item, but a decent monetary payment as well.

THE WAYWARD ARTIFICER

A hooded messenger delivers a sealed golden envelope to the party in the evening. He says nothing, but the wax seal is clearly stamped with the Cannith house emblem. The message calls for the party to meet with Calren d'Cannith, an important city council member, first thing in the morning at the Clockwork Orange, a fancy diner in the city's nobility district.

When the players arrive, Carlen is seated alone at a table big enough to seat all of them. He asks them to sit and offers to pay for their breakfasts. Shortly after they order their food, he begins his explanation:

Recently, there has been word that an excoriate of House Cannith, an artificer with a deep greed for power and wealth, has begun selling Cannith trademarked schemas to the highest bidders. The schemas are blueprints for powerful artifacts and machines, some of which have been forbidden - such as components for the warforged.

While normally this would be a simple task, the artificer in question (**Oranna Athon**) has disappeared from her place of residence. Carlen d'Cannith has had spies watching her place for several weeks, but they haven't seen anyone enter or exit the house. He hopes that the party can locate the rogue artificer and put an end to her dangerous actions for the safety of all.

If the party accepts, he offers them each a large sum of gold (this amount may differ depending on character level and the type of campaign you are running) and possibly even some custom Cannith-crafted magical items.

(For a map relating to this encounter, see *The Artificer's Basement* in the Table of Contents.)

HOUSE DENEITH

Known for the martial skill and efficiency of its members, House Deneith prospers by providing bodyguards and mercenaries to anyone who can afford them. They were notoriously neutral during the Last War, and that neutrality hasn't changed they take on clients from all sides of the moral scale.

THE ROGUE'S HOLLOW

The party is approached by a well-dressed bounty hunter from House Deneith who goes by the name **Damian Galves**. He has recently tracked his quarry into town, and believes the man is hiding in the bordering forest.

While hunting him through the woodlands, he found a small cave network that is guarded and inhabited by a gang of thieves and thugs. He called on his house for more back up, but it will take a couple days for them to arrive, and he does not currently have the manpower to get in and out unscathed.

Damian's contract is to kill a criminal named **Zane Gasta** for (1,000gp to 10,000gp depending on party level) and he is willing to give the party a 50% cut of that contract if they find and kill Zane, and retrieve the arcane signet he stole from Damian's client. On top of that, whatever the party finds in the hollow is theirs for the taking.

(For a map relating to this encounter, see *The Rogue's Hollow* in the Table of Contents.)

BRULAGARDE PRISON

A newly-posted advertisement on the tavern's notice board catches the party's eye:

HELP WANTED

Now Hiring Investigators and Guards for a temporary night job at Brulagarde Prison! See *Caius Jost* with House Deneith for more information!

Many of the people inside the tavern are whispering about the recent job openings, and if approached, would gladly tell the players all about the weird happenings up the prison, including missing inmates, sounds of mad shrieking, rattling chains, and grinding metal coming from the prison in the night, and the previous guards who have all committed suicide in various ways within days of taking the job.

Upon meeting him, Caius Jost should appear to be a stoic human who doesn't appear to have much time for this particular problem. He has hired several tough people for the job, and they all ended up the same way. So for him, the hiring process is a pointless one. Regardless of that fact, he answers any questions as truth-fully as he can:

- **When did all this start?** "Well, about a month ago, an inmate died without warning. His cellmate wouldn't tell us what happened. The next morning, we found him strung up by his neck. It's been downhill ever since."
- **What can you tell us about the noises that everyone can hear at night?** "We've investigated those sounds

numerous times. At this point, we assume it's just some kids playing pranks on the townsfolk."

- **What do you know about the incidents?** "They don't occur every night. Whatever is causing this knows what it's doing, because every time my investigative team and I spend the night in there, nothing happens. I figure it must be targeting the guards and inmates specifically, which is why I've been hiring people for that position."
- **How many days will we be hired for?** "As long as it takes to get to the bottom of this nonsense. I will pay you for every day you leave that place alive, on top of the reward money for figuring out what in the hells is going on up there and putting a stop to it."
- **What will our duties be as guards?** "You won't have any real duties while working there. The inmates will already have been fed by the time your shift starts. Your only job is to stay alive, and if you can, stop whatever is attacking the prisoners and guards." **Note: Caius Jost only has the uniforms for 3 guards. If your party is bigger than that, some of them will have to pretend to be prisoners.**

It's very apparent that he doesn't know who or what is behind the suicides and assaults on the guards, so you can use whatever creature or subplot you'd like! For lower levels, something as simple as a haunted prison would do fine, and for higher levels, perhaps a cult is sneaking in through a cellar entrance and using those inside as sacrifices.

(For a map of the prison, see *Brulagarde Prison* in the Table of Contents.)

A WASP IN THE BEEHIVE

The party has been invited to one of House Deneith's lovely social galas! The head of the house and the host of the ball, **Seiger d'Deneith**, has been targeted by an assassin hired from within his own family, and he believes the killer will use his party as a way to get close to him.

His station and reputation are too important for him to simply cancel the gala, so he has invited the party to join the festivities and try to root out the assassin without arousing suspicion.

The party will be fitted with the appropriate attire if need be, and only decorative weaponry with sheaths will be permitted. This goes for all guests. The ball takes place three days from the time they receive their invitation, so they will have some time to plan. Upon RSVPing their attendance, they will be given a small map with the layout of the mansion, as well as a copy of the guest list to help them plan. They will also be reminded that the threat is coming from within, and to withhold any information related to their true intention.

The identity of whomever is attempting to assassinate Seiger is up to you! I personally think he is the one who hired the assassin- but now the party has until the end of the night to discover who his true target is. (For a map, I recommend GameMastery's 'Pathfinder Lodge' flip-mat.)

HOUSE GHALLANDA

Primarily a Halfling house, Ghallanda is one of the only houses that does not partake in violence or arms dealing of any kind. Instead, their marks allow them to provide the best food and shelter magic can offer.

GOBLINS IN THE PANTRY

Upon entering a local inn, the party will notice the emblem of Ghallanda carved into the wood of the doorframe, a sign that this particular establishment is backed by House Ghallanda. This usually means comfortable living quarters, warm meals, and a gracious host. Unfortunately, that doesn't seem to be the case this time.

The innkeeper is sitting on the bar with a bottle of whiskey, being calmly consoled by a regular. The main hall is a bit of a mess, with tapestries torn off the wall and many other bottles and mugs lying in shattered pieces upon the tables and floor.

The party is greeted by the innkeeper, but warned that there is little she can offer them aside from a roof above their heads. All her food stocks were raided in the night, and everything of value was stolen away.

Tracks in the liquor and food scraps point to a band of goblins as the culprits, and there are fresh strips in the grass outside that imply a wagon was used to make off with the goods.

If this information is shared with the innkeeper, who introduces herself as **Tuli Goldsong**, she will wipe away her tears, pour each party member a quick shot of her drink, and beg them to retrieve the supplies. She cannot promise much in the way of gold, but she can give them a Ghallandan bank note- a slip of notarized parchment that can be traded in at any Kundarak bank for a sizeable sum of gold.

Luckily for the players, the goblin rading party has been hitting quite a few places along the traveling road, and more than Tuli's foodstocks can be found among their treasures. Unluckily, more than goblins will be found among their ranks...

THE BELLPEPPER BREWERY

The party is approached by a jovial halfling woman with a messy auburn bun and a jade-hued dress. She introduces herself as **Franda d'Ghallanda** ("Yes, that's my real name, I know it's weird.") and hands each of the characters a flyer. It seems to be an advertisement for the grand opening of a new tavern here in town, run by Franda herself.

She is rather talkative, and goes on to explain that the competing pub on the other side of town, The Noisy Goose, has been trying to sabotage her since she got to town, even going as far as assaulting her staff and forcing them to quit, which is why she is out delivering flyers herself. ("Say, you wouldn't be willing to work for a hot meal and a bed, would you? Oh, and drinks are on the house, of course!")

Should the players accept, Franda will immediately put them to work. This encounter can play out however you like, but it would be a great opportunity for roleplay. Some of the

jobs Franda needs done are: flyers handed out, bar tender, someone to finish furnishing the rooms, and picking up some extra supplies from the local market- in case The Noisy Goose thugs try anything at her grand opening.

As the evening progresses, the Bellpepper Brewery seems to be a real hit! The player who is tending the bar should make around 3d10 gp in tips, which Franda will suggest be split evenly around the party.

The thugs from The Noisy Goose aren't very smart, but they can be quite difficult to spot in a crowd. Your party should be sure to be on the lookout for anyone who looks like they're up to no good.

WHAT D'YOU MEAN THE RUM'S GONE?!

While the characters are drinking in a local tavern, they are discreetly approached by the barkeep, **Nuro Greybrook**, who requests the party's attendance upstairs.

Once they're out of earshot, he bows deeply and explains his plight. He recently applied to have his inn become one of the only Ghallandan establishments in the region. Their mark on his door would raise his reputation and therefore his profits. He gets to the point rather quickly:

"Every inn or pub that wants to be sponsored by House Ghallanda has to go through a sort of interview, ya see. A few Ghallandan emissaries stop by and inspect the place, go through everything to make sure it's nice and clean-like. They are currently downstairs enjoying my plum cider... but here's the thing. I went around town today and offered everyone who showed up tonight a free drink. Just to uh, boost the population up a bit, right? Make it look like a successful place!"

At this point he is rambling, and fidgeting with his hands.

"I didn't think so many of them would show up, ya know? It wasn't a smart idea, for sure, but now I gotta big problem... I'm about to run outta liquor. Completely. I got no ale or wines left, and the grog is sloshing 'round the bottom of the barrel as it is fellas. I need your help. They'll know something is up if I'm gone too long, but I gotta make a booze run! Ya think you guys can help me? There's a brewery on the other side of town, I only need enough to last the night. I'll owe ya big, just name your price!"

Nuro is by no means rich, so any unreasonable requests will be met with nervous laughter ("You're killin me here!") and an offer he thinks is reasonable. He has a budget of 100g for the liquors, and needs to purchase the following items: 2 kegs of shimmer ale, 2 kegs of flamewhiskey, 8 bottles of Aundairian wine, and a keg of river grog.

If the party and Nuro agree on a price, he will inform him that they have approximately one hour before people start to notice that the good liquor is gone. If they can return with his supplies before then, he will pay them what they ask.

HOUSE JORASCO



he halfling healing house, known for its many hospitals and healers, provides both magical and mundane cures for whatever ails the people, provided they can afford it, of course.

THE SECRET LIFE OF ALDER MIDIMUS

While passing through town, the party may notice that a local healer clinic, Silver Gardens, is currently under maintenance, and a halfling man in pine green robes and spectacles is hammering a wooden sign into the grass outside the fence.

INFORMATION WANTED

Anyone with information pertaining to the vandalism of the Silver Gardens cemetery should contact *Valgen d'Jorasco* immediately.

The man setting up the notice is **Valgen d'Jorasco**, a House Jorasco member who runs the Silver Gardens healing house. He is an older halfling, and if the characters come by to read the sign, he will greet them as a grandfather may greet his beloved grandchildren.

If the party inquires about the vandalisms, Valgen will take the party around the back of the clinic yard, where many tombstones rest surrounded by an iron wrought fence. Many of the tombstones have been shattered, and piles of freshly displaced earth surround them.

"While at first we suspected grave robberies, it soon became clear that whoever did this had a much more sinister goal in mind. As you can see, whoever did this also stole the remains."

Valgen looks around for anyone who may be listening before lowering his voice.

"We always have staff on hand overnight in case of medical emergencies. On the night the first tomb was breached, our fellow healer **Alder Midimus** was on duty, but he hasn't been seen since that night. I fear he may have tried to confront the criminals that did this and may have paid dearly for it."

If the party is interested in taking the job, Valgen will hand one of them a portrait of Alder Midimus to aid them on their investigation. He would like them to come back just before dark and scope out the yard, waiting for whoever is behind this to return.

While the players are killing time during the day, have one of them spot Alder walking along the edge of town, back toward the clinic. He seems to be in a hurry, and will not respond to any words thrown his way. When he makes it back to Silver Gardens, have him disappear over the fence into the cemetery. This should give the party plenty of cause to thoroughly search the graves and locate a false tomb that leads underground.

Alder Midimus is a healer gone rogue- his ideals about retaining life have spiraled into necromancy, a forbidden art. He has begun experimenting on corpses, using the catacombs below the clinic to hide his plots.

When roleplaying Alder, keep in mind that he does not see himself as a villain- he is a healer at heart, wishing only to save everyone he can. He will try desperately to rationalize his experiments to the party and, if that fails, will kill in order to continue them. **(For a map of the catacombs, see *The Silver Gardens* in the Table of Contents.)**

THE RAVAGED CARAVAN

As the party approaches a small town, a crowd has gathered around the entrance, partially blocking the road. A bloodied man lies on the ground, alive but shaken and badly injured, and the guards call for **Bataya d'Jorasco**.

When she arrives, she immediately begins stabilizing him and has him moved carefully into her ward. The guard captain orders a strengthened night shift, and mentions needing to find someone who would be willing to go find any other survivors of the caravan.

If the party asks any questions, the dispersing crowd or guard captain (**Wes Ransley**) will likely have a few answers for them.

- **What happened to him?** "It seems their caravan was raided on the way home from gathering supplies and components throughout the woods surrounding the town."
- **What raided them?** "It's hard to tell, and he was in no condition to tell us. The patrol said when they found him, he was repeating the word 'fire' over and over."
- **What kind of reward would we get for bringing back the supplies or survivors?** "You'll have to speak to Madam Bataya about that, it was her caravan and supplies that were stolen."

If the players do speak to Bataya, she is grateful for the help. You can see her ward is quite busy, and that her shelves and stocks are barren. She explains that a sickness recently spread through the town at an alarming rate, and she had to use up most of her supplies to keep it at bay. She had sent the gathering party out to pick up a list of herbs, mushrooms, and other woodland components, but did not expect there to be any trouble- the trail is one she had taken alone many times.

Should the party return with the supplies and any survivors of the raid, she could gladly pay them 50gp a piece for their services, and will even offer them each a **Potion of Healing** upon their return.

The survivor's repetition of the word 'fire' is meant to hint heavily toward the culprit being one or more **trolls**, but don't let that stop you from using a different creature. While on the trail, the party will locate the wagon, supplies all over the side of the road, and there are two corpses lying roadside. A wet crunching sound can be heard in the bushes nearby.

HOUSE KUNDARAK



Dwarven house with services focused in security and banking, Kundarak's primary customers are those who have enough coin to buy something worth protecting. They are the wealthiest Dragonmarked House by far and their banking establishments can be found all over Khorvaire.

THE HEIST

Unlike some of the other plot hooks, the players have the option to be the good guys **or** the bad guys in this one.

The hook begins when the party ends up in a large town, bustling with commonfolk and nobility alike. While settling into the local inn for the night, a trio of scruffy delinquents are speaking at a table nearby. The three men, one of which is a dwarf and two of which are human, have been drinking heavily, and unluckily for them (or perhaps luckily, if your players aren't above a little criminal activity), they don't seem to be monitoring the volume of their voices.

"... the bank transfer is only two nights away. We won't have a window like this for months to come. The bank is too fortified on any other night- we have to strike then and take what we can."

"We been here too long as it is! People'll be recognizing us soon enough. An' then what?"

"So what, we have a plan for that!"

At this point, your players should be able to discern that this trio now leaving the inn is planning on robbing the bank within two nights. Should they decide to report the men, the following may happen:

A couple guardsmen patrolling outside the inn will take your report rather seriously, and direct you to speak to the head of the bank, a noble dwarf named **Taldor d'Kundarak**. He will ask a few questions about the men in question, and after a moment of thought, ask the party to join the heist. His reasoning is that, if he has men on the heist, not only will the party be able to stop the thieves before they can actually take off with the gold, but he will also find out how the men are planning on getting past his security measures- something House Kundarak prides itself on.

After this meeting, the party will have to relocate the trio of men. **Note:** (If the party did not report the men and decided to take part in the heist, skip to the part where the characters are asked to prove their loyalty.)

As the dwarf mentioned, people have begun to recognize them now, so asking around wouldn't hurt. Once found, the men will likely want proof that the characters are legit criminals. How they do this is up to you, but some suggestions I have are stealing some needed equipment from a local shop, breaking one of the trio out of jail (locked up on a drunk and disorderly charge), or something similar. Once the players have proven their worth, the criminals introduce themselves:

- **Rengrin** - dwarven male, has a man on the inside from

House Kundarak that is giving them information.

- **Arvis** - human male, bald, seems to be the leader of the group.
- **Cason** - human male, spends more time drinking than paying attention to plans.

At this point, Arvis will lay out most of his plan for the party. Ever suspicious, he'll leave out key details, such as who the Kundarak mole is, and how much they plan on stealing.

Aside from those details, he will answer any questions to the best of his ability, unless they begin to draw suspicion.

- **When and where will we meet up on the night of the heist?** "Meet us here, at the tavern, at nightfall. We'll head out then."
- **What kind of security measures should we expect from the bank?** "All of them. Fire traps. Arcane wards. Even creatures guarding the vaults. I have a map, so just stick with us and you'll be fine."
- **What will our cut of the loot be?** "Well, since it was our plan and we'll be doing most of the work, we'll give you a generous 30 percent of the treasure we get. Most of it will be in bank notes."
- **Where will we intercept the transfer?** "They'll be shutting the streets down at night and imposing a temporary curfew that night. We'll be going into the sewers to bypass the guards, and resurfacing close to the lightning rail station where the treasure will be stored for up to 6 hours. The station won't have any guards on the inside, but will be well-trapped."

After the basic plan layout, the party will have roughly 12 hours to prepare for the heist. This could be spent purchasing equipment, checking out the station before the blockades are set up, or by reporting to Taldor d'Kundarak about the mole.

Despite proving their loyalty, Rengrin wasn't totally convinced, and is watching the party during his own off time. If they don't notice and end up reporting to Taldor, have Rengrin confront them about it when they meet up at the tavern- the party will have to come up with a pretty persuasive argument to sway him back to their side.

Now, if the party gets outed by Rengrin or they decide to just end the heist by taking out the trio of criminals, Taldor will still reward their work. He will show blatant disappointment about not knowing how they planned on making it past the warding, but he will be grateful that he has less paperwork to do regarding the heist.

The trip through the city sewers may be as eventful or un-eventful as you like, but I've only provided a map of the lightning rail station. See *The Rail Station* in the Table of Contents.

HOUSE LYRANDAR



overeigns and firstborn, grant me the four blessings promised to our people; dominion over the air, dominion over the water, fortune for my family, and fortune for my future." - **From the Oath of Lyrandar**

RAINCALLER'S GUILD

This guild provides weather-manipulation services for agriculture, as well as building dams, irrigation systems and reservoirs to limit the sometimes erratic effects of natural forces.

The party finds itself approaching a dusty farming village that seems to be having a bit of a drought. The leader of the village, a human named **Horace Reeves**, is in the middle of hearing some citizen complaints about the crops, and tries to explain that he cannot control the weather- but he will plea for aid from those who can: House Lyrandar.

Horace will then notice the party, and ask where they are headed. He doesn't get out of town very often, and could use a messenger to deliver his letter to the nearest Raincaller's Guild enclave, which is about 60 miles northwest. If the characters accept, he cannot offer them much in the way of gold, but he does pay for their lodging and meals in the town if they choose to stay.

THE WINDWRIGHT'S GUILD

The Lyrandar guild dominates the shipping trade of the continent. It is the guild that brings Lyrandar its greatest prestige and honor- using its fleet of elemental-bound ships and airships, House Lyrandar is able to outpace and outserve other independent shipping companies easily.

A party looking for overseas or skyway passage may have luck with the Windwright's Guild. **Elicia d'Lyrandar** is in charge of the nearest dock, and is an adventurous captain known for her daring exploits to many hostile terrains. She is currently shipping some very important cargo to a Cannith foundry, and in exchange for some security services aboard her ship, she would be willing to offer the party free passage.

SKYWAY SABOTAGE

To add a little more spice to the Windwright's Guild hook, this encounter adds a twist to an otherwise simple transport mission.

The party members are not the only passengers aboard the ship that don't belong to the crew. A few of the others bought their way aboard, or were hired for security by House Cannith to ensure their supplies arrive safely. **Elicia d'Lyrandar** will introduce the party by their names and in turn introduce most of the passengers present:

- **Brandis:** a half-elven man who is on his way to Aundair for political reasons. He greets with party with a friendly disposition.
- **Jeralt:** a human male who was hired by House Cannith to keep an eye on their goods. He is reserved and seems suspicious of everyone around him.

- **Alera:** The ship's navigator, a halfling woman who is close friends with Elicia.
- **Salty Silas:** the ship's cook, a rugged young human man with a knack for the culinary arts.
- **Carric:** Elicia's first mate, a half-elven man who follows her every order, and seems to have feelings for her.

There are other people on this ship: underdeck crew, maintenance workers, etc., but they mostly keep to their work and pay no mind to those who aren't a part of the crew. That is, until things start going wrong.

It starts with a small fire lit in the supply room. It can be put out fairly quickly, and most of the crew (Elicia included) won't ask any questions. The party may ask around if they wish, but crew members will shrug off their concerns and assure them that it happens sometimes.

Next, an entire crate of Cannith goods goes missing. The man hired to keep an eye on the crates is furious, and begins wildly pointing fingers- especially at the PCs. A few NPCs will have seen the true whereabouts of the party, and will step forward to say so- but if any of the party members were unaccounted for, have them locked up "as a formality" by a regretful Elicia.

Later that night, a cry rings out, awaking the passengers- Elicia has been found on the bridge, throat slit. Carric has taken command, and is demanding an emergency landing in order to detain and interrogate any suspects aboard the ship.

Any players who were locked up during the night aren't in any danger of being accused- Carric himself was watching the prisoners that night.

The true culprit is Jeralt, who wasn't hired by House Cannith at all. He is a member of House Orien, who was sent to sabotage the flight so that upon the failure of the mission, Cannith would delegate their shipping needs to Orien instead of Lyrandar in the future.

If the players decide to help investigate on the way to their next dock point, there's a couple things they might notice that could incriminate several people on the ship:

- A journal entry in Carric's log stating his desire to be a Captain of his own ship may paint him in a negative light, considering Elicia's murder has given him his wish.
 - Silas and Elicia were heard arguing about something about an hour before she was found.
 - A pocketwatch in Jeralt's sleeping quarters looks ordinary enough, but if opened, will reveal an inscription on the inside- a unicorn, with the letters ORIEN carved into it- the animosity between Lyrandar and Orien is well known.
- If your players are less familiar with the setting, have Elicia drop some clues early on- such as how she didn't have to work very hard to win over House Cannith for this job, and she was excited to rub Orien's noses in it.**

Once he becomes a suspect, Jeralt will become amicable with the party and attempt to frame the other passengers, but once they're on his trail, he will try to kill them as well. He doesn't need to harm the party or crew- if they do no investigating, he'll be on his way once the ship lands.

HOUSE MEDANI



et the other houses bluster and call us 'upstart.' When they realise we hold the keys that can release the secrets of the Five Nations, they will learn respect." -**Trelib d'Medani**, patriarch of House Medani.

THE WARNING GUILD

This Medani guild provides bodyguards, inquisitives and sentries for hire all across Khorvaire. House Deneith makes profit from a similar practice, but don't consider Medani a threat due to the lower number of members in House Medani. A common belief when hiring bodyguards is that you hire Deneith when you expect to get attacked and hire Medani guards when you believe someone is plotting against you though you're unsure who it is or their motive.

In an attempt to change the way they are viewed in the eyes of Khorvaire, Medani often hires outside their house in order to bolster their ranks. The party may find work in such a way, if they have shown any aptitude with inquisitive skills, such as tracking, interrogation, investigation, etc.

Don't worry about finding a local chapter of the guild.. if they are interested in hiring the characters, they'll find them.

THE BASILISK'S GAZE

This guild hunts war criminals wanted by the five nations. Despite its reclusive nature towards the other dragonmarked houses, Medani is an active member of the Twelve and has plenty of resources and information at their disposal.

A good way to involve such a secluded guild is to have the party deal with a war criminal in some way. Perhaps they spoke briefly at a tavern, or gave him directions to the nearest town to the south. No matter how short or insignificant the exchange, Medani will arrive shortly after and demand every bit of information they can get.

If the exchange with the criminal was pleasant, Medani may even want to use the players as spies in order to get closer to the criminal and bring him down.

CATCHER OF THE SPY

The party has just been delivered a letter from none other than the queen of Aundair herself, **Aurala ir'Wynarn**. Her messenger stands by, waiting for them to read it, and informs them that his orders are to burn the letter once it has been read. It reads as follows:

Adventurers- I request your presence at my palace in Fairhaven. I find myself in need of your aid, and discretion is of the utmost importance. There is no one within my own court that I can trust anymore.

Queen Aurala ir'Wynarn

Once finished reading, the messenger will hold out his hand expectantly, and burn the letter once he has hold of it to destroy the evidence. He then hands them a second sealed envelope, this one closed with the House Medani house seal- a basilisk.

You are hereby cordially invited to join House Medani for

*its award ceremony at the Fairhaven palace of Her Majesty Aurala ir'Wynarn, who so graciously bestowed this honor upon us. This invitation grants palace access to the following individuals and no others: **insert character names here**.*

*May your travels be safe and your steps untraced,
Athron d'Medani*

If the party shows any confusion, the messenger explains that this is a decoy invitation provided by the House that deals in espionage and law enforcement for the capital so that they can enter the palace without any questions.

THE ROYAL COURT OF FAIRHOLD

This court dominates Fairhaven's impressive skyline. The massive complex, whose towers jut some eighteen into the sky, includes offices for the working government, public courts and halls, a huge hall of records, Queen Aurala's personal guards, and the living quarters for the royal family.

The King's Hall, where Queen Aurala holds audience with the public, is an impressive chamber capable of permitting fifteen hundred people to stand before Aundair's crown.

The Royal Collection of Aundair, housed in the south wing of the estate, provides one of the best libraries in northern Khorvaire. The collection includes records dating back to the founding of Galifar, as well as a few older documents that come from the days of the original Five Nations.

The Courts of Justice, located in the east wing of the estate, handle the various trials and mediations that require interpretations and rulings on the law.

The Knights Arcane maintain a garrison within Fairhold, with divisions including the royal Arcane Guard, Fairhaven Wands, Knights Phantom, and Sky Knights (dragonhawk riders).

There is plenty to do in Fairhaven while awaiting the award ceremony, which takes place in three day's time. The capital is expansive and bustling with brightly colored markets and tourists of all shapes and sizes.

A full day into their stay, the same messenger appears and tells the players that their stay (and meals) have been taken care of, and the messenger will show them to their rooms in Fairhaven's most extravagant inn- *The Silver Lion*.

Once they get settled, an obsidian black wagon (pulled by equally dark horses) arrives out front to carry them to the Medani estate, where they are promptly introduced to the elf Athron d'Medani and his children- fellow inquisitives and twins named **Garos** and **Selva**. They are polite but speak quickly, as is their nature. The party is invited inside, where they are told the truth behind their invitation- someone is trying to kill the queen. She believes the culprit is her younger brother, **Prince Adal**, whose ambitions have always been more dangerous than her own.

There are whispers on the streets of an uprising against her, led by someone whose name is never uttered. There is a tension in the air, and the Queen wants you to find Adal and stop him before a new war is started between the kingdoms.

HOUSE ORIEN

I specialize in fast, efficient delivery. I don't want or need to be told what I'm carrying- the fact that you've paid is all I need to know". - **Rikard d'Orien, of the Couriers Guild**

THE COURIER'S GUILD

As it sounds, this guild specializes in quick and efficient delivery all over the Five Nations. The house often hires outsiders to deliver scrolls and small parcels, but relies on its lightning rail system for the transport of larger and more valuable goods.

Due to the rivalry between houses Orien and Lyrandar, jobs are taken without many (if any) questions. Money is money, and any job not going to House Lyrandar is worth taking.

If the players need something sent somewhere fast, House Orien is the place to go. Likewise, if the players need to make some easy money, accepting courier jobs while traveling can be a good way to make some gold.

THE TRANSPORTATION GUILD

This guild is the largest dragonmarked guild in Khorvaire, and has tens of thousands of employees. It is rare for one to hire a Orien caravan to travel to a location of their choice as the price is often too steep. It is far more common to find travellers paying a fee in order to accompany a caravan along its pre-set route throughout a city or to a nearby settlement.

Orien often waves the fare for adventurers so long as they offer their services to protect the caravan. The house also runs the lightning rail system and a teleportation business. The lightning rail system is quite popular, but due to its high fees, teleportation has yet to become a mainstream form of transportation.

While the teleportation business is considered too expensive for the majority of the population, there are no restrictions on who can use it. Therefore, if your players have the gold, Orien will accept your business with little to no explanation.

CLEARING THE RAILS

After the tenuous politics resulting from the end of the Last War, House Orien has finally decided to resume repairs on the lightning rail that crosses through what was once Cyre and is now known as The Mourning. House Orien expects, with all the expeditions into the region, the repairs to bring lots of business.

A weathered notice catches the party's eye:

HELP WANTED

Those skilled in combat and wanting to earn glory and gold should report to *Vikard d'Orien* at the lightning rail station for an immediate interview.

The lightning rail station is on the edge of town, but is easy to find. After asking a few workers, the characters will find

Vikard doing paperwork atop a collection of maps. He immediately recognizes by their look that the PCs are adventurers, and greets them with admiration and respect.

House Orien, while preparing the land in the Mournlands for new lightning railways, has run into a bit of a problem in regards to the creatures that have begun to occupy the land since the end of the war. The territory has become hostile, and rail workers are getting attacked nearly every day. It's costing House Orien a lot of money and resources to try and keep the creatures at bay, as well as keep the workers they have left.

The house is willing to pay up to **100gp** a day to anyone willing to travel to the Mournlands and protect the workers while they establish a new railway, and travel to the new station will be provided.

Vikard d'Orien doesn't know for sure what kinds of creatures are causing trouble down there, as the attacks have yet to yield survivors. All he knows is that whatever is behind it needs to be stopped, and soon, or they'll have to scrap the project entirely.

What is attacking the railway workers is up to you, but keep in mind the environment of the Mournland: a deep gray mist hugs the borders of the Mournland, creating a barrier that only occasionally offers a glimpse of the desolation and devastation inside. Beyond the mist, this battle-scarred region remains a grim memory of the Last War, cloaked in eternal twilight.

Like a wound that cannot heal, the land is broken and blasted. In some places the ground has fused into jagged glass. In others, it is cracked and burned and gouged. Broken bodies of soldiers from various sides litter the landscape - soldiers whose dead bodies refuse to decompose. The Mournland is, quite literally, a vast open grave that was never tended to.

In the Mournland, the wounds of war never heal, vile magical effects linger, and monsters mutate into even more foul and horrible creatures. Arcane effects continue to rain upon the land like magical storms that never dissipate. Misshapened by the unnatural forces present across the region, monsters rage and hunt as they struggle to survive.

Aside from mutated beasts and demonic forces, another viable option is the Lord of Blades and his devoted warforged followers.

The Lord of Blades is a charismatic warforged who considers those with flesh to be weaker and therefore unworthy to rule. The warforged that follow him believe the warforged should be the only true masters of the world, and that the 'flesh-wearers' should be terminated.

They have since taken up residence in the Mournland, and any transgressions by House Orien or expeditionists would not taken lightly by the warforged radicals. Terrorist attacks on the rails, assaults on the workers, and even attacks on the trains themselves would all be well within their methods.

HOUSE PHIARLAN



We are the shadow- the border between light and darkness. We are not simply spies or assassins. We are agents of balance, and through our dance, we shape the future." -
Kaleth Shol d'Phiarlan

THE ARTISANS GUILD

With hundreds of years to hone their arts, the elves of Phiarlan are a legendary talent. Entertainers and Artisans Guild is the foundation on which the house's reputation is built. Any business associated with the guild (theaters, music halls, circuses and so on), only employs licensed talent to ensure quality performances.

Any player with the entertainer background has likely had many run-ins with the house, which would make for an easy plot hook.

THE SERPENTINE TABLE

The Serpentine Table is the espionage branch of the Phiarlan house. It's not a guild in the traditional sense- unlike the other guilds mentioned prior, few people outside of Phiarlan even know of its existence, and hardly any of the lower-ranked members even realize the full implications of their service. They simply collect and pass along the information, never knowing how it is used.

A character may run into the Serpentine Table at any time without knowing, so any NPC on the street can be a viable candidate for introducing the reclusive organization- whether it's to buy information from the party, or to sell it.

THE KRAKEN RING

This encounter involves mainly the Artisans Guild, but the players may seek out the Serpentine Table for information (at a cost, of course) if they wish.

The party has arrived in a coastal city just in time to witness a Phiarlan performance on a public stage, *The Melancholy of the Sea*. The play tells the tale of an elven crew that sailed the seas in search of an heirloom that was lost long ago. A mithral ring in the shape of Kraken tentacles that wrap 3 times around the finger.

At the end of the performance, the actors all bring forward a small chest, and explain that the tale is true- and open the jewelry box to reveal the heirloom ring of Phiarlan. Or at least they would have, if the box wasn't empty!

Whispers erupt through the crowd, and the charismatic leader of the actors laughs it off, blaming the stagehand for switching the boxes. The audience applauds and disperses quickly, and if the players stick around, they'll notice concern and distress on the faces of those backstage.

If the party investigates, they'll be told at first that everything is fine and that it was a part of the show, but it doesn't take much prying before one of the stagehands (a young elven woman named **Velanni**) breaks down into tears and admits she wasn't keeping an eye on the heirloom like she was supposed to be, and someone must have stolen it while she was distracted.

The leader of the acting group, **Desmona d'Phiarlan**, will be most concerned about how the main enclave will react to the news. She would normally just ask the Serpentine Table for assistance, but Desmona wants to keep this incident as far under the table as possible. She asks the players for help, offering to pay each of them (**100gp-1,000gp**, depending on level) for their aid in recovering the Kraken Ring.

There are several people around who can be asked about the disappearance of the heirloom, but only a certain number of individuals will have any information worth noting, who are listed below. The rest of them either didn't see anything or are too busy making passive aggressive remarks about each other to be of any help.

- **Jarael**. This androgynous elf mostly sticks to the wardrobe room, but while taking some measurements between scenes, they heard a male voice speaking about easy money as someone entered the prop room. Jarael thought it was a stagehand, but now remembers the accent was a little strange. (*The accent Jarael refers to is a dialect of common that contains more slang than usual- a common dialect for seafaring folk, humans especially.*)
- **Theleon**. Theleon is an elven stagehand who can vouch for the time that Velanni was missing from the prop room, because they were *together*.
- **Athelana**. This elven woman was taking a wine break outside of the artisan tent, and didn't notice anything out of the ordinary. However, if she is spoken to after the party has questioned Jarael and the players mention the accent, she will remember a grimy-looking human man with a missing left ear was heading into the southern alley past the stage, looking to be in a hurry.
- **Alathon**. Athelana's twin brother will approach halfway through Athelana's recollection and point out that the south alley leads to the docks, which is where the party is most likely to find the thief.

Once the party follows the alley to the docks, the player with the highest Passive Perception (or players if the score is tied) will begin to feel as though they are being watched. This is because they've entered the "turf" of a criminal gang that their thief is a part of.

If the players confront the hiding thugs or announce their perception of them, the criminals will begin an ambush there in the alleys. (**For a map, see the *Criminal Ambush* map in the Table of Contents.**) The crew will consist of a number of **bandits** that will provide a medium-difficulty encounter based on your party level. Be sure to add in at least one **bandit captain** for some combat variety, and the party should be sufficiently surrounded at the beginning of the ambush- these criminals have been doing this awhile.

After the combat ends, and assuming your players left any of the thugs alive, the survivors will give up a name: **Keaso Till**, a pirate-turned-smuggler who steals from the coasts and smuggles his goods to sell on foreign shores. A high Persuasion or Intimidate check will also reveal his ship's name, *The Sahaguin Kiss*. That's where the party will find the thief, wearing the ring and preparing to set sail.

HOUSE SIVIS



ommunication is the lifeblood of civilization.” -

Matriarch Lyssie Lyrriman d'Sivis

People often underestimate the value of a carefully chosen word, but not the gnomes of House Sivis. Language drives the wealth and power of this house, and Sivis has changed the shape of communication in the modern age.

SPEAKERS GUILD

Sivis message stations and their speaking stones are the most well-known service of the Speakers Guild, but the guild also oversees a number of professions concerned with the spoken word. The guild licenses barristers, interpreters, mediators, heralds, and similar professions, occasionally overlapping with the spoken arts of House Phiarlan. As a rule, House Sivis handles practical and mundane matters, while artistic endeavors belong to the elves.

Any players seeking services such as identification or traveling papers, translation, sending messages or receiving them, or even spells relating to these things will need to see a Sivis enclave.

NOTARIES GUILD

The Notaries Guild oversees a vast range of services relating to the written word. In addition to its vital work producing legal documents and authenticating letters of credit, the guild licenses cartographers, bookbinders, and scribes, including those whose specialty is copying magic scrolls. Sivis bookkeepers work with numbers as well as words, and guild appraisers are trained to spot all manners of forgeries.

One of the more interesting branches of the guild is the Hidden Word. This arm of the house sells both codes and code-breaking services, along with magical tools such as secret page and illusory script.

HOUSE SIVIS SERVICES

Service	Cost
Arcane Mark	5gp
Identification Papers	2gp, 5gp with portrait
Illusory Script	90gp
Sending	250gp
Message-Station Use	5gp per page
Translation	2gp per page

More options are available, but the above spells and services are the most commonly purchased.

ERASING THE PROPHECY

While passing a local Sivis outpost, the party notices a crowd gathered around a small form lying in an alleyway. Upon closer inspection, it appears to be the body of an older gnome. City guards and well-dressed gnomes wearing the robes and signets of House Sivis are inspecting the body and speaking lowly to bystanders.

Upon approach, the party will be stopped by a guard, who tells them that all newcomers are being questioned in

regards to the murder of **Bartholomus d'Sivis**, a scribe of House Sivis. The party will be escorted to the guard station, where they will speak to the party members in a room enchanted with the *Zone of Truth* spell.

As per the spell, the characters can make a save in order to tell a lie, but the questions aren't likely going to implicate the innocent. With the spell active, there's no need for intimidation, so the ones doing the investigation are polite and calm throughout the ordeal. Some of the questions they might ask:

- **How long have you been in town?**
- **What's your business here?**
- **Do you know the victim, Bartholomus d'Sivis?**
- **Where were you last night, and can anyone outside of your companions corroborate that?**
- **What do you know of a warforged seen in the area?** *If the players have a warforged in their party, the question becomes 'any other warforged.'*

As it is probably obvious that the party is an adventuring party based on their equipment and likely racial diversity, the questioning is interrupted by a male gnome with a long white beard and a large book. He steps into the room, introduces himself as **Gerbaldi d'Sivis** and says the following cryptic words:

When the prophet dies, the champions rise. Seek out the Blade where the mourners go to die.

Unbeknownst to the party, this is a part of the Draconic Prophecy, something that House Sivis has been working on for generations. Many gnomes are tasked with deciphering a chapter of the Prophecy, and watching for the events laid out within it. This gnome is here because he believes he has just witnessed an event in his chapter- the death of a fellow prophet.

The murderer of Bartholomus d'Sivis was perpetrated by a warforged follower of the Lord of Blades. They had long been spying on Bartholomus, and the Lord of Blades believed that the champions mentioned in the Prophecy were their own warforged forces. They decided to then set their destiny in motion by assassinating the prophet.

Gerbaldi, on the other hand, believes that the warforged radicals have sealed their own fate, and that the champions mentioned are actually the characters before him. The second half of the message refers to finding and defeating the Lord of Blades in the region known as The Mourning, where the group resides.

How easily he diverges this information is up to you, but I suggest letting the players figure out the second half of the message on their own. This can be done using various breadcrumbs throughout the adventure, such as a warforged assassin coming for them and mentioning the Lord of Blades during the encounter, or running into expeditionists who have returned empty-handed after being attacked by warforged outside The Mourning.

With the right set up, this encounter with House Sivis could become an adventure that spans several levels. Have fun with it!

HOUSE THARASHK



s is fitting, the word 'tharashk' is Orcish for 'united.' The House is comprised of three different tribes, each made up of a mix of humans, half-orcs, and orcs that specialize in hunting, tracking, and trade.

DROAAM CONTRACTS

House Tharashk contracts monster races from Droaam to either be mercenaries or laborers. Contracted monsters are first evaluated to make sure they are able to communicate and be non violent towards other humanoids. They are then licensed and monitored by the Dragonne's Roar. Gnolls, ogres and minotaurs are fielded as mercenaries or laborers, while gargoyles and harpies are used as couriers, scouts and messengers.

As a rule, House Tharashk only contracts monsters to clients with good credentials such as dragonmarked heirs. Mercenaries are more expensive than laborers as laborers will only fight when their own life is threatened. Services are restricted to one location such as a city, contracted monsters cannot be taken on journeys.

If any party member is a race that is considered monstrous, they may well have taken contracts for work prior to becoming a full-fledged adventurer.

The Droaam Contracts are one of many reasons that the house isn't trusted by other dragonmarked houses, but it's hard to argue with the results. The contracts have brought forth several 'monstrous' immigrants into cities who want a peaceful life, so the players might just run into a family of bugbears at a cafe, or perhaps a group of gnolls helping to build a new shop in the market.

PROSPECTING DRAGONSHARDS

In nearly all aspects of its businesses, House Tharashk has competition. House Deneith also desires to contract monstrous mercenaries, and many Tharashk heirs have begun to take roles as inquisitives. Where they are not rivaled, is their prospecting and trading of Dragonshards.

Dragonshards are translucent stones with pulsating veins of color within them. They can be found in various parts of Eberron, and come in three distinct varieties, varying in color, location, and uses. Dragonshards are used to enhance the powers of a Dragonmark, or in the creation of magic items, artifacts, or constructs. Dragonshards are important to many of the magic technologies used throughout the Five Nations, and if a player wanted to buy or sell a dragonshard, Tharashk is an honorable guild that would know the true value and offer a fair price.



THE FINDERS GUILD

Centuries ago, the dragonmarked members of the three clans decided to market their unique services to tribes and nations that neighbored their native Shadow Marches. While the dragonmarked inquisitives and explorers of House Tharashk were quite adept at their trade, they discovered many other individuals offering similar services. To capitalize on the entire market, the house created the Finders Guild, inviting others to join so they could benefit from each other's knowledge and provide a network of resources across the continent.

Now, the Finders Guild is still primarily composed of House Tharashk members, but it also includes many independent inquisitives, bounty hunters, explorers, and prospectors. House Tharashk manages the operations of the guild from its enclaves in major cities across Khorvaire. If something needs to be found, the first place to turn is the Finders Guild.

Dragonshard prospecting isn't the only function of the Finders Guild, but a significant part of the income produced by the guild comes from the acquisition of dragonshards of all varieties. The Mark of Finding gives Tharashk prospectors a leg up on the competition, since they can use their dragonmark magic to more quickly locate dragonshard deposits.

Through the Finders Guild, House Tharashk has control of, or at least prospecting rights for, most Eberron dragonshard fields in western Khorvaire, including the most lucrative fields in the Shadow Marches and Droaam. The guild maintains a presence in Stormreach, organizing expeditions into the wilds of Xen'drik to acquire Eberron or Siberys dragonshards.

Even expeditions into the depths of Khyber usually involve the Finders Guild in some way. Either the expedition is following a map provided by the guild, is led by a guildmember guide, or will sell unearthed Khyber shards to the guild, provided it returns to the surface. Even if the Finders Guild isn't directly involved with a dragonshard prospecting expedition, it is likely that the guild soon learns of its existence. The guild pays competitive prices for unattuned dragonshards, with a premium if the origin of the shards is also provided. Of course, with the inquisitives and bounty hunters at the guild's disposal, a new Khyber cave or Siberys fall zone won't stay secret for long, at least within the guild.

The Finders Guild sponsors a number of activities that draw the interest of adventurers. Exploration, investigation, bounty hunting, and the search for wealth are all fine endeavors for a PC. Add to this the fact that House Tharashk maintains enclaves throughout Khorvaire, and characters would always have a source of potential employment and adventure.

NPCs

Possible NPCs from House Tharashk to recruit your party:

- **Vurlaak d'Thorashk.** Head of Dragonshard Acquisition
- **Karvis d'Tornn.** Member of the Finder's Guild
- **Garik d'Velderan.** Head of the Droaam Contractors.

HOUSE THURANNI



Only from the shadows can one see clearly. Illumination waits for those who dare to step out of the light. -**Taen d'Thuranni, bright phantasm of the Shadow Network.**

COMPETITION WITH HOUSE PHIARLAN

Once a part of House Phiarlan, Thuranni has become their direct rivals competing in entertainment and espionage. Thuranni is the youngest of the dragonmarked houses and its members live a double life: to the public they are artists, entertainers and beautiful courtiers however, that is far from the truth.

House Phiarlan is still larger and stronger than House Thuranni, leading the way in information gathering and spying however, there is one field that House Thuranni surpasses their cousins: assassinations.

Players who have dealings with House Phiarlan may just as easily access the House Thuranni, and through the same means and events. In fact, due to its competition for clients, Thuranni's prices may be lower and they may take on more 'undesirable' work, such as spies of Thuranni working in the city brothels. Depending on the type of campaign you run, it is a possible for members of the party to meet a spy of Thuranni in such a way.

THE SHADOW NETWORK

The Shadow Network is the Thuranni's answer to the Artisans Guild of Phiarlan- it's a guild for musicians, artists, actors and all forms of performers. In secret, all members of the Shadow Network are also assassins or spies trained in espionage. As with their mother house, Phiarlan, Thuranni's covert services are not available to the public as their clients are selected by the house.

The performers of the Shadow Network, especially those involved in the shaping arts are well known for being some of the best in their fields, though it is in assassination that the Shadow Network is unchallenged, being the best assassins in all Eberron.

Assassins of the Shadow Network are absolutely forbidden from assassinating house Phiarlan members or even killing a House Phiarlan spy. This rule applies to the members of House Phiarlan too, so if an assassin or spy from either house goes after the same target, they do not engage in combat and instead play a sort of game and attempt to out perform each other.

THE EMERALD CLAW

Originally a group of elite shock-trooper style knights under the crown of Karrnath, the Order of the Emerald Claw has since been outlawed in Karrnath and has gone underground.

They continue to operate in a semi-terrorist fashion to this day, proclaiming their desire to see Karrnath once again rise to power and garnering support from the Blood of Vol. The Order of the Emerald Claw is spread throughout Khorvaire, making it very easy to have the players run into them nearly

anywhere on the map. The Emerald Claw makes a great campaign villain, because they have so many groups that operate at all level tiers. Despite this, it is rumored that House Thuranni works with the Emerald Claw behind the scenes. Whether you want that to be true or not is up to you, but the following encounter is going to operate on the assumption that the rumors aren't true.

THE SHADOW'S KISS

This brothel is one of many Thuranni installations, filled with women trained both in the arts of seduction and espionage, and is the opening curtain for this encounter.

The party has been tracking a couple of wanted thieves to this region for a few days now, and finally witnesses the two of them stumble into the local brothel. As the brothel is heavily guarded by House members, it may be best to wait them out somewhere outside the building.

They exit before long, looking a little drunker than they were before, and before the party can make a move on the thieves, a black wagon appears, and a group of men wearing all black and what appear to be insignias of a large green flame grab the men and throw them into the wagon. **(A medium difficulty History (Intelligence) check will reveal the insignia's true origin- The Emerald Claw.)**

Should the party decide to follow these strange kidnappers and get their bounty back, it will take a series of three or four Investigation (Intelligence) and Perception (Wisdom) checks to follow the wagon's wheel trail down a string of alleyways and streets until the come across it parked outside a rundown mansion on the outskirts of town.

The Emerald Claw warriors drag the blind-folded thieves into the mansion, and leave a single cloaked sentry outside the door. Should the players choose to go after them, they'll have to find a way into the mansion that doesn't alert every one inside. If they fail to persuade their way through the front door, they'll have to either force the guard to give the secret knock or find another way.

Within the mansion the thieves are being questioned in the basement. There are a total of 14 Emerald Claw members in the house: 4 of them are in the basement with the thieves, interrogating them about the Thuranni spies they have had contact with. 3 of them are lounging on the furniture in the main hall, located just on the other side of the front door, and the rest are patrolling the numerous rooms and hallways around the house.

For stats, I suggest using a variety of **bandit, bandit captain, archer** and **acolyte** stat blocks from the Basic Rules and upgrading to higher CR enemies depending on level. The GameMastery "Pathfinder Lodge" flip-mat is ideal for this encounter.

If the players enter the front door, battle will commence immediately- depending on how they chose to get in, they could potentially have earned themselves a surprise round against the members in the main hall.

If all Emerald Claw members are defeated, the most profitable action is to turn them in for a reward, as the group is a well-known illegal terrorist organization. Otherwise, they may take their thieving quarry and be on their way.

HOUSE VADALIS

THE HANDLERS GUILD

The Handlers Guild is a mercantile guild under the control of House Vadalis. Unlike the dragonmarked houses in which guilds control industry while the house handles administrative tasks, Vadalis divides responsibilities in a different fashion. The house handles research into new types of animals and new breeding programs, as well as the sale, care, and training of those animals.

The guild functions much as an outreach program that operates primarily in areas where Vadalis does not have official house enclaves. The guild serves to gather independent ranchers and breeders, share information and blood lines, and sell Vadalis methods and training to those who want to improve their own herds through nonmagical means. In addition, the guild licenses the teamsters, drovers, stable hands, and handlers that comprise the most common face of the house in Khorvaire.

House Vadalis also provides certification for its members, allowing them to find work with wealthy patrons who need their lands and livestock managed. It also deals with business the house does outside the Eldeen Reaches. It has almost no enclaves or outposts, its members instead meeting up wherever their travels happen to take them. Some have noted that such a fluid presence would make an excellent front for any number of sinister causes, but no evidence of such activity in Vadalis has ever been found.

HOUSE VADALIS PRESENTS.... THE ZOO!

While House Vadalis isn't known for any of the extravagant events and displays that the other houses may partake in and sponsor, one thing they do have is the house-sponsored zoo that has several locations across Khorvaire.

Known for its grandeur and informative and exciting show, the Vadalis Zoo contains over 30 species of both beast and monster, giving the city folk a peek into the dangers of the wilds for a modest price. The species depend on the region the zoo resides in so that the creatures are always comfortable, but sometimes exceptions are made and the beast is kept in an enchanted closure to ensure its happiness and health.

Some of the species your players may find in these zoos are typical beasts, such as tigers and bears and sharks, and some are beasts that are usually only seen by those who don't live to tell about it, like the owlbears, dinosaurs, giant beasts, and gryphons, etc.

The zoo itself is laid out more like a carnival, with dancing colorful lights, food and toy vendors, magewrights, and even Vadalis-certified zoologists at each exhibit to provide info to those with questions about the creatures. The entry fee to the zoo is minimal and depends on the region, with the larger cities charging an average of 5gp per person, and the smaller regions with less creatures only costing 2gp for a ticket.

The zoo is very popular with apprentice druids, whose wild shape magic requires sight of the creature they wish to become. Traveling groups of them can often be seen intensely studying the creatures and their movements. Such a place can provide many things to players, whether it be wildshape options, a place to relax after a grueling dungeon crawl, or

even an encounter, should a creature somehow happen to say, find itself outside of its enclosure.

POACHING THE POACHERS

This encounter starts with a small town on the outskirts of a forest, nestled at the base of a rocky mountain known for its sheer cliffs and winged inhabitants.

The townsfolk are bustling through the streets carrying tools and construction materials, and the party will soon be able to see that several of the homes have damaged roofs and walls. Debris and dust cover the cobblestone streets, and if a party member asks, a passerby will tell them that the town has been repeatedly attacked by a group of griffons. They descend onto the homes and tear through the wooden or thatch roofing before returning to the nearby mountains.

Any player that is familiar with animals, like a ranger or a druid, would know that this behavior is out of the ordinary for what are normally reclusive creatures.

The next passerby calls to them for aid with a collapsing barn and the party notices that the group of men fixing this particular building are wearing the same uniform- a leather tunic with a crest on the back, featuring a griffon. Most of the party would recognize this as the House Vadalis coat of arms.

House Vadalis was called to this town to help once the griffons began attacking the town out of nowhere. The house members have been exploring the cliffs and forest below to try and figure out why they're behaving this way, but so far have no real leads. There is plenty of prey surrounding the mountains, and the townsfolk don't even travel into the dark forest nearby.

A particularly perceptive player might notice a ragged pair of men watching them from a side road nearby, who will take their leave quickly if they notice they've been seen. They can be followed back to a home near the center of town, one of the ones that was partially destroyed. Unlike the others, though, there has been no attempt to rebuild. The roof remains mostly intact, and only part of the back wall has collapsed.

If the players were quick to follow the suspicious men, they will be just in time to see the men avoid the home altogether and descend into a cellar opening.

These men have traveled up to the rocky cliffs and stolen something very precious indeed- a pair of griffon eggs. The parents have tracked the eggs to the town, and are viciously trying to get them back. The players will discover this if they decide to enter the house or if they manage to get the information out of the two men.

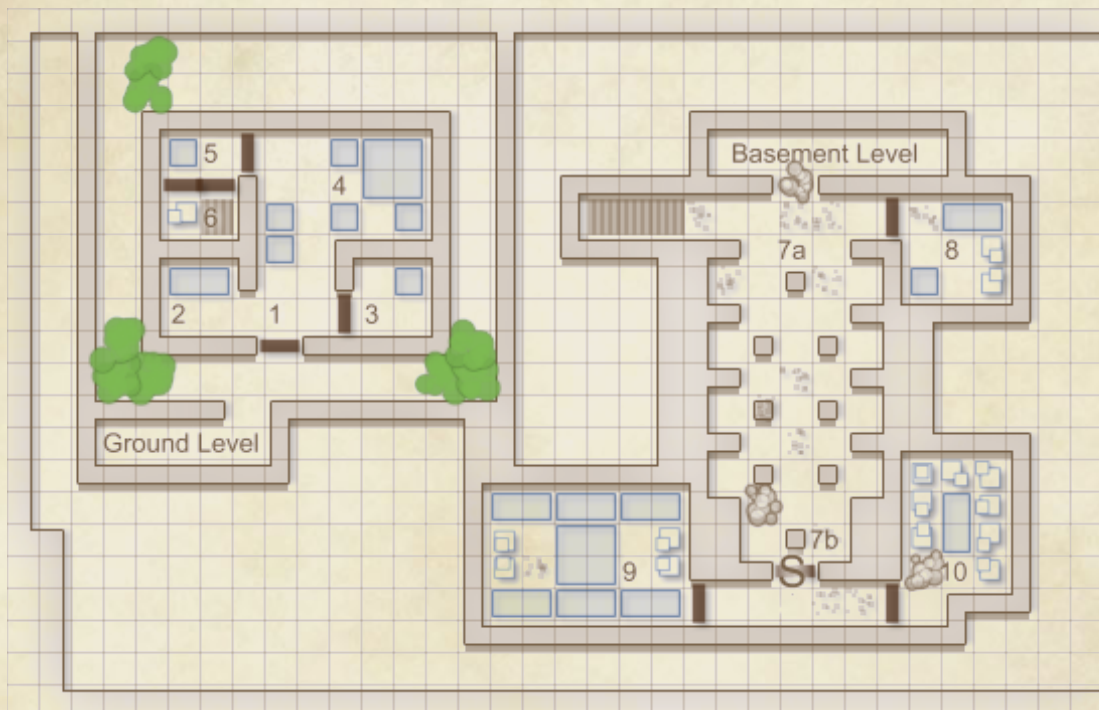
If the players choose to help with the damaged houses rather than chase the men, House Vadalis would gladly accept, seeing as their own methods aren't yielding the best results. The griffons will attack again shortly after they arrive.

In this instance, Vadalis asks that the players do not kill or maim the griffons. Shortly after the attack begins, it will become obvious to the players that the griffons are not targeting the townsfolk, but the houses themselves. This fact may help the players realize that the griffons are looking for something.

For a map of the house where the eggs are hidden, see the *Hidden Cellar* map in the Table of Contents.

MAPS

THE ARTIFICER'S BASEMENT

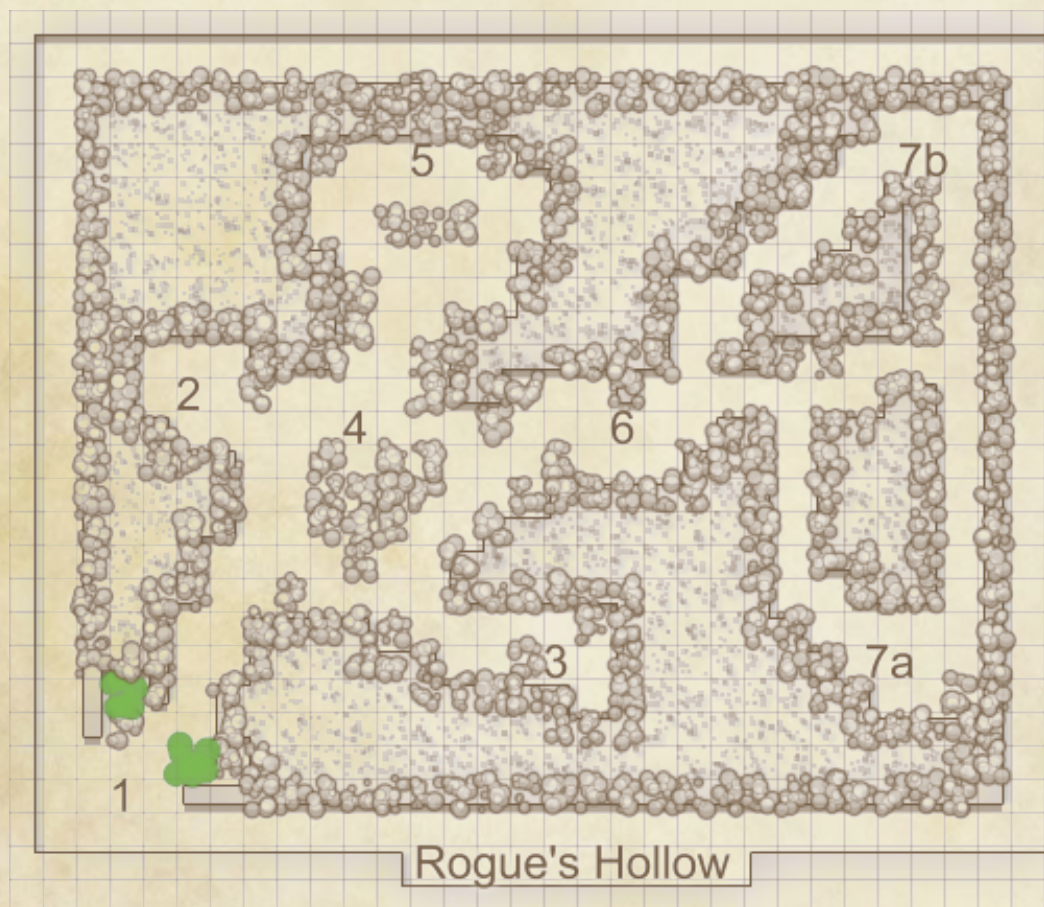


KEY

1. HOUSE ENTRANCE
2. KITCHEN
3. BATHING ROOM
4. DEN
5. BEDROOM, WITH CLOSET
6. HIDDEN STAIRS IN CLOSET

- 7A. MAIN HALL
- 7B. SECRET DOOR BEHIND COLLAPSED PILLAR
8. LIVING QUARTERS
9. LIBRARY
10. STORAGE ROOM

THE ROGUE'S HOLLOW



KEY

1. CAVERN ENTRANCE
2. TROLL PEN
3. LOOT ROOM
4. LATRINE PIT
5. SLEEPING QUARTERS
6. MERCHANT'S QUARTERS
- 7A. BOSS'S ROOM
- 7B. CAVED IN EXIT

MAPS - CONT'D

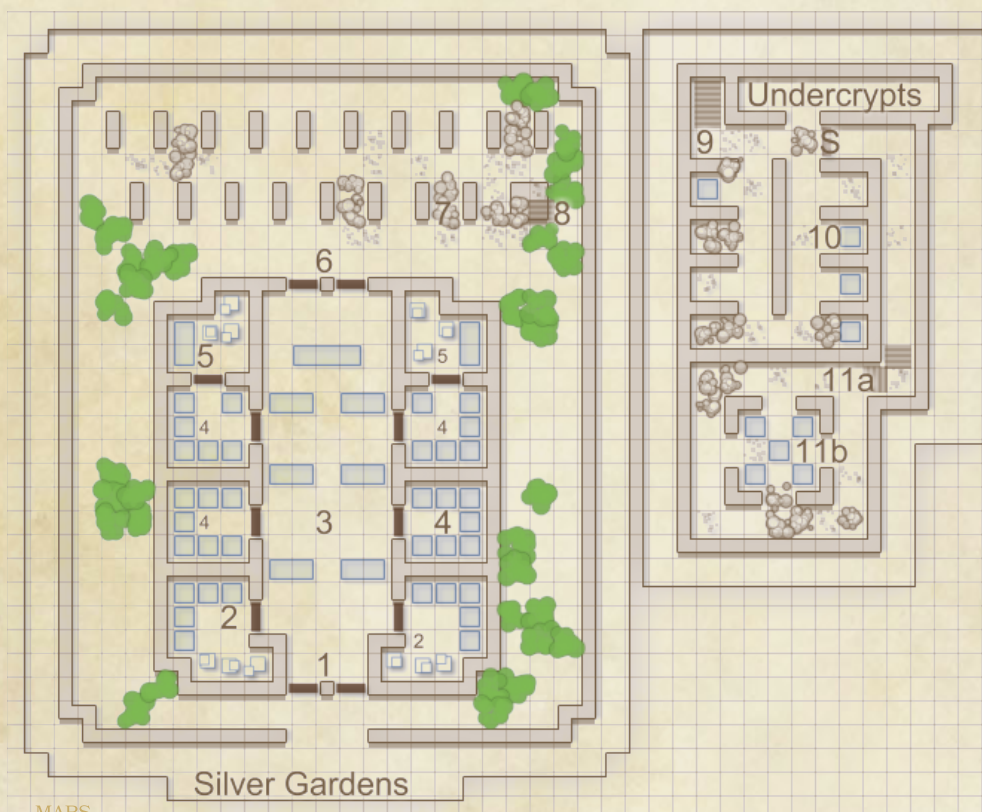
BRULAGARDE PRISON



KEY

1. ENTRANCE
2. FILING OFFICE
3. OFFICER LODGING
4. PRISON ROW HALLWAY
5. PRISON CELLS - EACH CELL CONTAINS A BED AND A BUCKET. THE TWO CELLS WITH EXTRA CRATES ARE WHERE ANY SURPLUS PARTY MEMBERS WILL BE STAYING THE NIGHT!

THE SILVER GARDENS CRYPT

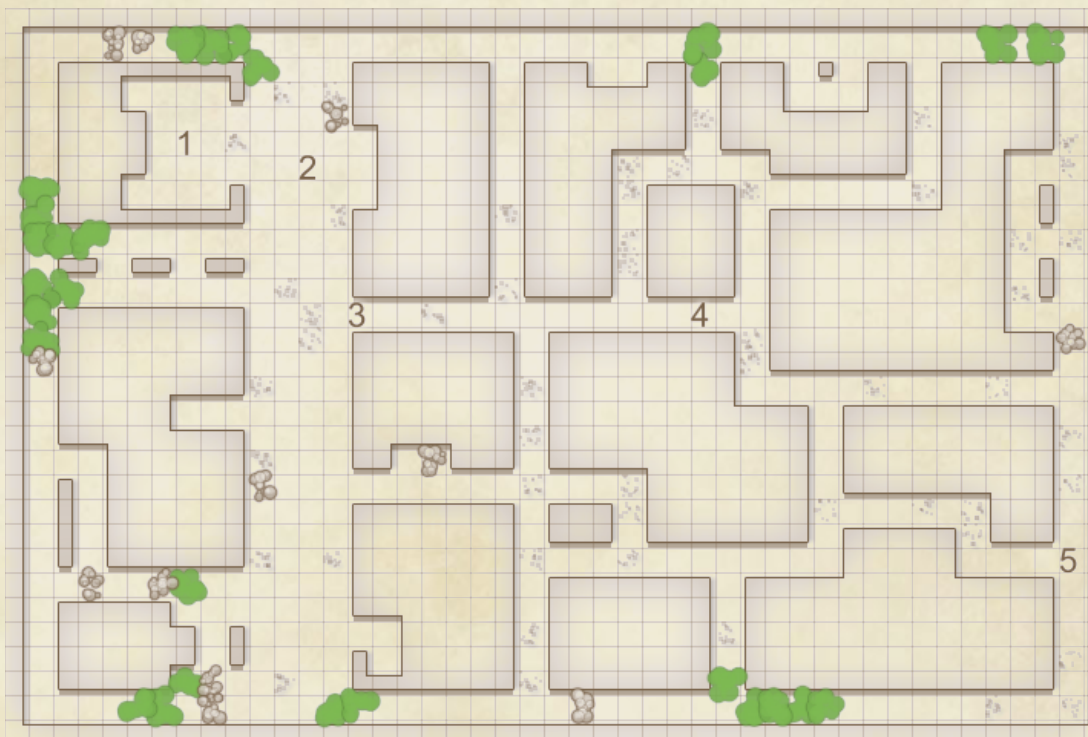


KEY

1. CLINIC ENTRANCE
2. HEALER TRAINING ROOMS
3. MAIN HALL / WAITING ROOM
4. PATIENT SICK BAYS
5. MEDICAL OFFICES
6. EXIT TO CEMETERY GARDENS
7. VANDALIZED GRAVES
8. SECRET ENTRANCE INSIDE TOMB
9. TRAPPED STAIRCASE
10. UNTOUCHED REMAINS
- 11A. TRAPPED STAIRCASE
- 11B. ALTAR WITH SIGNS OF BODILY EXPERIMENTATION AND UNDEATH

MAPS - CONT'D

CRIMINAL AMBUSH



KEY

1. STAGE
2. THE MAIN ROAD
3. SOUTH ALLEYWAY
4. AMBUSH SITE
5. DOCKSIDE ROAD

HIDDEN CELLAR



KEY

1. ENTRYWAY
2. KITCHEN
3. DEN
4. STUDY
5. BEDROOM, CAVED IN
6. CELLAR DOORS
7. MAIN HALL, LIBRARY
8. SLEEPING AREA
9. PARTIALLY CAVED IN STORAGE AREA
10. TOOL SHED
11. WASHROOM