



Star Sword, Return!

A Two-Hour Adventure for 5th-10th level characters

Adventure Module CCC -Anime 1-3

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With less than two days until the Festival of Stars in Hawksroost, Daern's Blade is still missing, but the adventurers are en route to its resting place. Are they truly prepared for what they find?

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Introduction

Welcome to *Star Sword, Return!*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Salt Consortium's ongoing saga of con created content*.

The adventure picks up in a cave about two days journey west of Hawksroost towards the Vanishing Hills

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th–10th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 7**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

Adjusting This Adventure

This adventure provides suggestions in making adjustments for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise a bit more powerful than the adventure is optimized for. You're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience.

To figure out whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's APL. To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party	Strength
3-4 characters,	APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters,	APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters,	APL greater than	Average
5 characters,	APL less than	Weak
5 characters,	APL equivalent	Average
5 characters,	APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters,	APL less than	Average
6-7 characters,	APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters,	APL greater than	Very strong

Some encounters may include a sidebar that offers suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered or appropriate for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

Before Play at the Table

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts. *This is a Role Play heavy adventure; take the time to note the NPCs.*
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.).

Playing the Dungeon Master

You have the most important role—facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You provide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life.

To facilitate this, keep in mind the following:

You're Empowered. Make decisions about how the group interacts with the adventure; adjusting or improvising is encouraged, so long as you maintain the adventure's spirit. This doesn't allow you to implement house rules or change those of the Adventurers League, however; they should be consistent in this regard.

Challenge Your Players. Gauge the experience level of your **players** (not the characters), try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to deliver the experience they're after. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

Keep the Adventure Moving. When the game starts to get bogged down, feel free to provide hints and clues to your players so they can attempt to solve puzzles, engage in combat, and roleplay interactions without getting too frustrated over a lack of information. This gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues. Watch for stalling—play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.

Adventure Primer

With the discovery of the Halls of Goldahroud, Larazmu and the Search and Locate Treasure (SALT) Consortium have been able to devote resources to Sorrim's goal of rebuilding the home of his idol, Daern, and to again participate in a festival whispered to him through communion with deity.

Adventure Background

The Exploration into the first levels of the Halls of Goldahroud have been successful, but slow going. After a previous set of adventures ended the crystalline curse (SALT 1-3), many riches were found that had previously been incased in amber. This has allowed the SALT Consortium to invest in the infrastructure of a village to support those who have come to study or gain riches from the Halls. Work on the collapsed portions of the upper halls is ongoing, but at the insistence of Sorrim the God Whisperer, focus has turned to the upcoming Festival of the Stars and the sacred ritual of the Passing of the Blade. (Described in DM appendix)

The ceremony requires a specific blade that was lost before the fall of Hawksroost. The sword was known as Daern's Blade, in honor of the hero who protected the High Mistress of Worthy Suffering and called Hawksroost home. However, Sorrim has collected information that describes where the weapon may be found: in a valley about two days ride east of Hawksroost, only accessible through a small cave in the Vanishing Hills. The adventure begins as the adventurers have found the cave, or have just completed ANIME 1-2.

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure. Each NPC and location should have an entry with a phonetic pronunciation and one-three sentences describing them.

Larazmu (Lair-az-moo). Leader of the SALT consortium and disenfranchised monk of the Yellow Rose.

Sorrim (Soar-um). Leader of the SALT consortium and disenfranchised monk of the Yellow Rose.

Lycidus Ikurvorh (li-SID-us ee- kŭrv-ah). Vampire Lord who has come to the Moonsea to locate a halving who he once knew. He has something to give her

Otomo (Otamo). Githyaniki Captain—recuperating after having launched a successful rescue mission of some of his men that were trapped in a pocket dimension when investigating portals that purported to grant access to treasure vaults in the City of Brass.

Ashurbanipal (Aššur-bāni-apli). A travelling artificer who has recently taken an interest in Hawksroost due to the rumors that there are ancient treasures buried nearby.

Miyazaki Isoruko (mee-yah-ZAH-kee ee-saw-raw-ko). The Gold Dragon proprietor of the Phoenix Ribbon Ryokan. She and her team of Half-Dragon and Dragonborn are always smiling and tolerant of all types of beings that frequent their establishment. She has never been seen in her dragon form, but rumor has it if you make her angry enough, it will be the last thing you see.

Ryozo (ri-o-zo). Eldest son of Isoruko, a proud half dragon who welcomes folks into the ryokan and oversees the staff who manage the hot springs.

Kazushi (KAH-zoo-she). A dragonborne paladin of Bahamut, he has chosen to lead out the rest of his life at the ryokan. In exchange, he cooks and tends the greenery around the Phoenix Ribbon.

Kijo Kiki (Kee-jo Kee-Kee). A "young" night hag looking to grow her power and influence. Though she has previously worked against adventurers looking for Daern's Blade, she has seen a glimpse of what will happen if the blade is not secured by virtuous individuals.

Xalnihx (Zal-nicks). A beholder that stays in the steam baths section, he has been at the ryokan for centuries enjoying the bubble and taking his time to decide how best to overthrow the multiverse.

Hawksroost. A hamlet just far enough off the major trade paths to Damara and Vaasa to be forgotten until the SALT Consortium found the Halls of Goldahroud, and are now using the wealth they have found to fund the rebuilding of the town as a base camp for further exploration of the tunnels.

Phoenix Ribbon Ryokan. A unique place that travels the planes and appears when items of power that can shift the balance of power in the multiverse are about to be found. Isoruko and her kin run the place and welcome visitors of any race, class, and origin. It is considered neutral territory and any aggressive actions while inside are forbidden.

Immor the Guardian (Em-moor). Guardian of Daern's blade.

Festival of the Stars

The Festival of the Stars was once annually celebrated in Hawksroost, but with the fall of the city came the fall of one Ilmater's greatest loves, and secrets.

In a time before the archmages of Netheril learned magic from the high elves, Ilmater enjoyed his lot in the heavens; he was humble, patiently herding celestial cattle and healing those who came to his farm. His deeds of compassion had become well known among the deities of the Realms. It was during this time that Ao heard of Ilmater's characteristics and knew that he was a match for his youngest daughter.

Her name has been forgotten with time, but she was beautiful. She would weave cloth from wool of the celestial sheep, and make clothing for the other Deities of Ao's court, yet her father knew that

sadness gripped her heart. She spent so much of her time clothing others, that she feared she would never find one with compassion and ability to love that mirrored her own.

Ao introduced his daughter to Ilmater, and instantly they fell in love. Soon though the two gods began to be neglectful of their duties and the celestial cattle began to roam wild, and the clothing of the gods became tattered. The celestial sheep began to disturb the revelry of the gods with their braying to be sheared.

The suffering of the gods and other beings of light became known to Ao. He was asked to find the reason for their extended suffering, and he had to look no further than Ilmater and his daughter to find the cause. They had become as one, and spent all their time caring for each other, and had neglected their duties to others.

In a fury, Ao sundered the two, sending Ilmater to atone for his errors by joining the Procession of Justice with Tyr, and to ease the suffering of those beings on Toril. He was not to be reunited with his beloved until the suffering on Toril was no more.

The tears of Ao's daughter filled the inner sea, but still he did not relent on his punishment. It continued until the humans pushed out the ogres and established Hawksroost, finding among the relics of the area this tale of woe. In a tomb not far from here, they found the sword that would later be known as Daern's Blade, and they performed the first Passing of the Blade, where they took on the suffering of the others on Toril for a short time, so that Ilmater could again be with his love.

Annually this was done until the fall of Hawksroost, and now we again look for Daern's Blade to allow Ilmater a chance to see his love.

Adventure Overview

The adventure is broken down into 4 parts:

Part 1. The adventurers arrive at the cave without issue and are greeted by Ryoze, one of the dragons of the Phoenix Ribbon Ryokan. He explains a bit about the ryokan, and educates the adventurers on the rules of the dwelling.

Part 2. In the ryokan, the adventurers need to locate Daern's Blade. Investigation attempts lead to humorous encounters with the staff, and opportunities to interact with the other guests. Through it all the guardian rests in the baths using her clairvoyance to view the interactions of the adventurers. It comes to a head when a beholder asks the adventurers to help wash his back. Depending on how the adventurers treated those they talked with, if they offered to ease their

suffering of others the guardian will hand them the blade or if they are aggressive it challenges them to a duel to prove their worth (3a).

Part 3a. The guardian thinks the adventurers are thieves or simply unworthy to hold Daern's Blade and therefore attacks the adventurers. Pay attention to the tactics and the moves. Upon defeat of the guardian, the workers of the ryokan remind the group that the blade has a purpose and is needed in Hawksroost.

Part 3b. Having received the blade from the guardian, the workers of the ryokan remind the group that the blade has a purpose and is needed in Hawksroost. That evening, as they travel back, the adventurers come upon Oni in disguise as travelers in distress who try to poison the party at first, but then break into open combat.

Part 4. Returning to Hawksroost the adventurers see a town in celebration of the Festival of the Stars. The adventurers turn the blade over to Sorrim and participate in the first Passing of the Blade ceremony in over two centuries.

Adventure Hooks

Why would the adventurers be willing to head to a strange cave, to find a weapon they won't get to keep, for someone who they don't really know?

Story Hook. Just finished CCC – Anime – 1-2: If any adventurer has just finished CCC-Anime-1-2, then they meet with the other adventures as they walk into the cave shortly after the other group brought down the magical wall, and revealed the ryokan.

General Hook. The adventurers have come to Hawksroost looking for work. They can inquire about any of the three bounties posted, but Larazmu tells them that the bounties will have to wait until Sorrim finishes with this festival nonsense that he has in mind. The quicker the adventurers take care of this for Sorrim, the faster they can get information on those bounties.

Religious/Scholarly. Rumor has it that Sorrim the God Whisperer has found an ancient ritual that he will perform at the culmination of the Festival of the Stars. Getting to be one of the first to see such a delight has brought you to Hawksroost, but now without your help it seems you may never get to see the ritual performed.

DM Primer

The CCC Anime Trilogy was written and designed for play at Utah's Anime Banzai. Many of the themes personified by the NPCs were pulled from manga and anime such as Death Note, Rurouni Kenshin, and

Miss Kobayashi's Dragon Maid, if you have a chance to look at those sources prior to running this, feel free to add some of that over the top action and drama that makes anime unique.

If you see an **anime** tag, this is advice on how to take the encounter or interaction to the next level.

Part 1. Welcome

Estimated Duration: 10 minutes

The Adventurers arrive at the ryokan and are shown around by Ryozo. This section establishes the layout of the ryokan and allows Ryozo to explain to the characters the unique rules of neutrality that exist in all areas of the ryokan and its grounds. He will also point out that should the adventures wish to engage in martial or magical sport, there is an arena that can be set up in the gardens for such occasions.

Don't let time get away from you. Between Part 1 and Part 2, you have 45 minutes. If the adventurers are enjoying roleplaying, feel free to let the introductions to each of the staff to be more in depth, using information about the NPCs from the appendix to help flesh things out.

General Features

Phoenix Ribbon Ryokan maintains a traditional appearance of ryokan found in feudal Japan. Its wood-slatted walls and worn roof look well maintained. While the ryokan itself seems out of place in such a cave, the numerous sculpted bushes add to that. Some show exotic creatures the adventurers may be familiar with, such as the 7-ft. tall tyrannosaurus rex; others seem to be from other planes, a successful DC 12 **Intelligence (Arcana or Religion)** identifies them as Modrooms, and even a flumph. Off to the side of the ryokan is a small group of cherry trees, their sakura blossoms a striking contrast to the darker cave walls.

Terrain. The roughhewn cave opens to reveal a large ryokan (Traditional Japanese Inn)

Weather. The air within the ryokan is cool and relaxing; as you get near the baths, the air warms up and becomes more humid.

Light. A soft yellow glow illuminates from the edge of each room, shedding light into the common areas. These can be covered by slats in the tatami-matted rooms that can be set aside to sleep in. Otherwise there is always light in the ryokan.

Smells and Sounds. As you get closer to the ryokan, the air takes on a spicy smell.

1-1 The door opens

(Omit if just finishing playing CCC- Anime – 1-2)

After an uneventful two-day journey, you have arrived at a cave like the one described by Sorrim. Entering, you see signs of a recent struggle. A small pool rests 10 ft in front of a large pond that goes from one side of the cavern to the other.

A small rock path leads across the waters to the ryokan (Inn). The door opens as you get closer and you see a half dragon framed in the door waving to you.

"Welcome to the Phoenix Ribbon Ryokan. We've been expecting you!"

Roleplaying Ryozo

Ryozo is a gold half dragon, and the sharp edges of his face glint in the light. He sports a modern looking five-button suit jacket, helping further the contrast between his golden features and the rest of his black-suit-clad body.

His job is to welcome new guests to the ryokan, and to warn them of the consequences of infractions. He attempts to be cool and suave to all he greets, but is curt to any dragonborn, as he sees them to be shallow mockeries of Half Dragons.

Quote: *Be on your best behavior, and everyone will be happy.*

Anime: Strong smart silent type. Assured of his abilities, he knows he is always right (because he is), and he attributes this arrogant attitude to his dragon heritage.

What Ryozo shares with the adventurers

- The Inn is known as the Phoenix Ribbon Ryokan.
- Miyazaki Isoruko (his mother) gave it this name because each time the ryokan shifts to observe a new magical event, the energy that is used to power the ryokan is renewed.
- The ryokan arrived at this location less than one day ago. Isoruko always moves the ryokan to locations where magical items of importance are to be found. (He supposes that is her way of meddling.)
- His family has picked up stragglers through the years, mostly those who failed in their protecting the items that had been uncovered.
- There is no fighting while in the ryokan. Should you wish to test your martial or magical prowess against another guest, an arena can be set up in the gardens for such an exhibition.
- There are places to rest if you are tired, but we are truly known for our restorative baths and unusual guests.
- Currently the most unusual is **Xalnihx**. He's been here for just under a decade; if asked why he has been here so long, Ryozo just chuckles and makes a comment about Xalnihx wanting to keep an eye on things.

If prompted Ryozo also shares the following:

- He is the eldest of six children, they all came from different clutches, but have the same mother.
- He still cannot believe that his mother would adopt such lowly creatures as dragonborn into her family, but as she is the matriarch, he's not going to complain too loudly.

- Ryozo welcomes the adventurers and invites them to look around and enjoy his family's hospitality.

Should the adventurers wish to simply bypass the ryokan and continue to search for the sword, they will find that the ryokan fills the cave in its entirety. A successful **Investigation** check will identify that the ryokan is not native to this location, and the soil compositions and materials, while looking normal enough, are foreign to this region, while a successful **Arcana** check will reveal faint traces of lingering conjuration magic.

There are entrances into the ryokan from the gardens to the main building. If they use the garden entrance, they will run into Kazushi, who has just finished trimming one of the Flumph shaped bushes.

1-2 Into the Inn

The ryokan is a warm and inviting place. The main room has by necessity become an ad-hoc meeting room, with a couple of tables. Besides the main door, there are three exits from the room. One leads to the hot springs, fresh towels on a table can be seen sitting on a table a short distance into the room. Another leads down a half-open hallway, where beautiful gardens can be seen. The final one leads to what looks to be a kitchen, and beyond is a stairway leading to an upper floor.

General Features

The interior of the Phoenix Ribbon Ryokan is warmly dressed. A couple large tapestries adorn the walls. One is of the destruction of Mystra by Torm during the times of troubles, and another looks like a map of the realms.

Terrain. Smooth wood floors are visible in the common area, though adventurers can see some tatami mats laid out in one of the rooms off the partial hallway.

Weather. The air within the ryokan is cool and relaxing; as you get near the baths, the air warms up and becomes more humid.

Light. A soft yellow glow illuminates from the edge of each room, shedding light into the common areas. These can be covered by slats in the tatami matted rooms that can be set aside to sleep in. Otherwise there is always light in the ryokan.

Smells and Sounds. A mild sulfur smell surrounds the ryokan emanating from the associated hot springs.

Ryoko guides the adventurers to the main room and introduces them to **Isoruko**.

Roleplaying Isoruko

Isoruko is an ancient gold dragon. She has lived centuries, and has been the proprietor of the Phoenix Ribbon for the last two hundred years. She has enforced the neutrality of

the ryokan through a combined use of the unique abilities the ryokan offers her as lair actions and her own abilities. (See NPC section)

While in her draconic form she is terrifying, she is the epitome of a doting caregiver while human. She has raised her children to love all races, with varying degrees of success. She has mastered her use of change self, and while she is carrying and loving, she looks like beauty epitomized. She has a slim waist and a full bust. She understands her effect on others, and uses it when guests become unruly, gaining advantage on persuasion checks.

Quote: *Please, don't let us stop you from your mission, you are the guests of honor of course.*

Character Archetype: Team Mom

Anime: Isoruko is not one to be trifled with. She gains the ability **Command** as a legendary action that can be used after any other adventurers turn.

What Isoruko shares with the adventurers

- She is a mother of many adopted and biological children. There was a time in her life when she was always looking for another distraction. (Happily will flirt with adventurers of either gender.)
- The ryokan moves at her command, using "a little wizardry." She doesn't go into further detail.
- The blade they seek is nearly within their grasp, in fact it is inside the ryokan now, but it is not hers to give. Only the owner who placed it in protection can remove it.
- All weapons must be stowed prior to entering the baths; they are safe behind the counter and are also only retrievable by the person who places it on the counter.
- There is no fighting while in the ryokan. Should you wish to test your martial or magical prowess against another guest, an arena can be set up in the gardens for such an exhibition.
- Group rooms for eating or rest are available, they are simple tatami mat covered floors with the same green glowing lights.
- She does not speculate on her guests, but there are three guests who have come in since they arrived here.

,Ryozo, and his mom, Isoruko, are the only ones in the common area or gardens at this point. Once the adventurers move on from the main area, head on to part two.

XP Award

If the characters gain entrance to the Ryokan without combat award each member 150xp.

Part 2 Bath Time!

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

This section has little to no combat built in. It is intended to use these situations to offer role playing opportunities to the party as they learn more about the ryokan and are tested to see if they are worthy of the blade. The adventurers have the options of three locations to visit: **the Baths, the Gardens, and the commons area**. In addition to the area specific NPCs that remain in those locations, the family staff will bustle around and be available to interact with the adventurers.

The Commons Area

While the adventurers are being introduced to the other staff, two individuals walk into the commons area from the garden, talking to each other. If the adventurers try to pick up parts of the conversations through a Perception (wisdom) DC15 check, success means they hear the topic of conversation seems healing in nature, they are speaking about bone structures and blood, a failure means that they still hear a conversation, but the bits they get sound more alien, words like hemogoblins, or some such thing.

They walk over and stand near a small bar top where Isoruka brings over a glass of red wine and a bowl of soba.

Roleplaying Lycidus Ikurvorh

Lycidus is a Vampire, well over 200 years old who has come to the area seeking a friend who had long ago sent him on a quest. He has finally completed the quest, and is happy to show the adventurers a large red gem.

Quote: *It's been a long time since I have seen my love, have you seen her?*

Archetype: Casanova wannabe

Anime: Lycidus is a horrible socialite. He has attempted to use his powers to change that, but he becomes socially awkward at times. This exhibits itself in humorous compliments that he will pay to the most outcast type adventurers. E.g., *You have such a strong chin ...* or he will obsess over a particular item of clothing asking where it was obtained, if you could obtain one for him, etc.

Lycidus is at the ryokan hoping that he would be able to find information on the woman of his dreams. So far, he has come up empty handed. He will happily engage the adventurers in small talk, but will steer the conversation to the places around the Moonsea and Thar that the adventurers have been to. He will latch on if the characters mention Hawksroost, and mention that was where his

beloved once lived, but he thought it was destroyed long ago.

Knowledge of Daern's Blade: He has no information on the sword, but will comment that there have been a couple more visitors since he arrived, Otomo and Ashurbanipal.

Thoughts on Otomo: A good captain always looks after his men, he says. He is here resting after a rescue mission to Yulash; but if that is the case, where are his men? Why is it that he is not rousing his men for another expedition? Lycidus thinks it is because he is a phony and likely left his men to die while he escaped.

Thoughts on Ashurbanipal: This guy is my kind of nuts. Did you know that he broke his leg just to see if his miracle salve would help? He was a mess when the gardener found him on one of his botanical expeditions. He has some cool trinkets, and seems to know more than a person of his age should though. I guess that may be a byproduct of all that tinkering he does.

Roleplaying Ashurbanipal

Ashurbanipal is a tall studious human. His leather jacket is crisscrossed with straps where he hangs numerous gadgets, trinket, and gewgaws. Upon his head, he wears a felted hat, the circular brim casting a shadow over his face.

He has had a string of bad luck recently, having lost his horse and then his wagon to bandits. That may be changing though as he was able to leverage some information on a halfling to another guest at the ryokan. He is not concerned that the information may cost the halfling their life. He can soothe his soul with inventions and discoveries.

Quote: *The cost of discovery is not worth the lives of 12 people.*

Anime: Mad Scientist. He is always coming up with crazy new ideas and will happily break into an ongoing conversation to correct someone, or inject an applicable factoid.

Feel free to use some of the Ashurbanipal's facts from Appendix 2 of CCC - Anime1-2 Let's Find the Sword, GO! For additional Role play information.

Ashurbanipal is an artificer. While there are not many like him in the realms, it is a new and exciting field that he is happy to be part of. Most of his gadgets were stolen when he was robbed by an adventuring group that he had met along the road. He fled when they began to discuss how best to cook him, and hid in some bushes. When he woke up he saw a short dragonborn man with square little glasses. He healed him with his magic and brought him to the ryokan to recover.

Knowledge of Daern's Blade: He had heard about Daern when he was studying the history of the area,

but he has not heard of Daern having any weapon of power or legendary status.

Ashur does have plenty of random knowledge; feel free to add your own random facts in addition to some of the story-driven ones below.

- Bullette are known to hunt and breed in Thar, the ogre tribes have a ritual they use to keep their numbers down.
- My leg was broken in the attack on my cart, but don't let Lycidus know, I think its best if he thinks I am crazy.
- There were many great advances in medicine at the Rosestone abbey. I trained there for a while, but left when the costs of medicine became too great.

TREASURE

Ashurbanipal is happy to have contact with adventurers who he can work with to procure more unique items he may need in his studies. If he is impressed by the adventurers (DM Discretion) he gives the group a **Potion of Poison Resistance**.

The Gardens

General Features

The gardens of the ryokan have many of the same features that you see from the front of the ryokan. Some show exotic creatures the adventurers may be familiar with such as the 7-ft. tall tyrannosaurus rex, others seem to be from other planes, a successful DC 12 *Intelligence (Arcana or Religion)* identifies them as Modroms, and even a flumph. Off to the side of the ryokan is a small group of cherry trees, their sakura blossoms a striking contrast to the darker cave walls.

Terrain. The garden is a collection of stone paths that wander among the shrubs and trees, all leading to a square area in the center of the garden that is used as a dueling arena.

Light. Lights from lanterns that hang on columns holding up the hallway roof provide a soft white glow.

Smells and Sounds. The sulfur smell from the hot springs lingers here.

The Gardens are behind the common area, and form a courtyard to several rooms along the hallway. The rooms are currently closed and forced entry into them returns nothing but an encounter with Ryoza about respecting the hospitality of their hosts. If they gain entrance to the rooms through force, they find a Guardian Naga on the other side. Skip to part 3a.

If the adventurers avoid their breaking and entering tendencies and continue into the garden they find a beautiful arrangement of bonsai plants, with the garden boundaries being marked by cherry trees in full blossom. Kazushi can be found trimming any of the Modrom-shaped bonsai bushes. He does

not engage the adventurers in conversation, except with simple answers.

Roleplaying Kazushi

Kazushi is a platinum dragonborne paladin of Bahumhet. He is extremely short for his race, but holds himself as one who is a veteran of countless conflicts and is ready to hop into battle at a moment's notice. The only sign of his true age is his eyesight is failing, bolstered using a pair of thick square framed glasses. Consort to Isoruko, he has been at the Inn for some time.

Quote: *To purge the darkness without, you must first purge the darkness from within.*

Anime: Aged Wiseman; He can share one item from each other NPCs knowledge lists.

What Kazushi will share with adventures:

- Isoruko has many contacts, and they report to her when an event of importance will occur and the ryokan shifts there at her will.
- Whether it is viewing or meddling, all depends on who is writing the history.
- Daern was once a great man, but the blade that is his namesake was around before he was.
- He lived in Hawksroost in another time and participating in the Passing of the Blade made him the dragonborn he is today.
- If asked about guests, he will only comment that everyone has their reasons for being here, and tells the adventurers that if they want to know about someone the best person to answer a question about a book is the author.

Knowledge of Daern's Blade: While Kazushi has seen firsthand the ceremony, he refuses to tell the adventurers because as he puts it *"my path is not to interfere, but to observe."*

As the adventurers tour the gardens, they can come across a beautiful maiden sitting cross legged, and she seems to have been meditating. Adventurers that have played the previous CCC-Anime adventures will recognize her as a hag. She is truly sorry for any of the trouble she has caused and has been here waiting for the adventurers, since she divined the future and saw what it looked like if they failed.

Roleplaying Kijo Kiki

A "young" night hag who has done her best to keep her image as a maiden. She is apologetic, but unable to use any of her powers to affect the outcome of the events surrounding the adventurers out of fear of angering Jenny Greenteeth.

Quote: *If you are virtuous, good things will come your way. If not, I show darkness may prevail.*

Character Archetype: Mayadere – enemy turned ally

What Kiki shares with the adventurers:

- Helping others who are suffering is a key to being worthy of holding Daern's Blade.
- She knows that the guardian of the blade is in the ryokan, but she is unsure who or where they are.
- One thing she has identified about the guardian is that she is able to see everything going on, but she doubts it is Isoruko, since she is not from this world and the guardian is native.
- She divined that the guardian is watching one who sees much, but has been blind for so long. Whoever lifts his suffering is truly worthy.

If the adventurers attack Kiki on sight, or become aggressive, the Guardian takes attention, and flies out of the ryokan into the gardens. If that happens, skip to 3a.

The Onsen

A wall of warm moist air hits you as you step out of the common room into the antechamber of the hot springs. A set of small changing areas are to the left with a bench nearby. To the right in the antechamber is a waist high table that Ryoza is standing behind.

Welcome to the rejuvenating onsen of the Phoenix Ribbon. We are happy to provide you towels, and will keep your items safe while you enjoy a relaxing bath.

The onsen (hot spring baths) are places where people have been able to relax and get to know each other. Etiquette states that while both genders occupy the same bath, care should be taken to cover oneself with a towel when going between the changing areas and the baths. For the sake of story, towels are provided at no cost, and Ryoza assures them no loss will come of their items they store.

Once inside the onsen, the adventurers will see a large steamy pool dominates most of the space, and a small fountain in the corner helps circulate the water and fills the air with the sound of a babbling brook. A set of cleaning stations along one wall welcome the adventurers as they leave their respective changing areas. A sign in the common area reads *Please clean yourself before entering the bath*. A rock formation sits near the center of the bath, and resting near it is a yellow-skinned humanoid, whose back is to the entrances. When he hears the adventurers begin cleaning themselves, he

turns around and then the adventurers can see that he is a **Githyanki Knight**, a humanoid race that normally dwells within the astral plane.

He walks over to greet the adventurers as they step into the bath.

Roleplaying Otomo

The Githyanki captain of the pirate ship Shrakar's Blessing. He and his group of men have been known to use women and children from the Moonsea as bait to lure adventures into doing his bidding. His ship and crew are identifiable by the cauldrons of dragon scales that they wear to signify their rank.

Quote: *Everything has a cost, the winners are just willing to lose more than anyone else.*

Character Archetype: The Pirate

Otomo is surprised to see others, and the adventurers can tell they are not the one(s) he was expecting to see. He happily engages the characters with conversation though.

What Otomo shares:

- He is a captain on the astral ship Shrakar's Blessing. Recently he heard that the portals beneath Yulash were becoming active, with one connecting to the fables vaults of the City of Brass, the prized city of the Fire Djinn (Efreeti). He sent a strike team to go and investigate, they failed and so he personally led a rescue for those who were locked in a maze of portals under the city. While they succeeded, the horror he faced made him seek the solace of the ryokan.
- Warning to others who would venture to Yulash, large changes are taking place there, and the Moonsea region is in turmoil.

Knowledge of Daern's Blade: He has never heard of the blade, but knows that the ryokan only appears for important points in history. If it has appeared for the group of adventurers, then they must have set their standards pretty low.

As the characters are speaking with Otomo, Xalnihx the beholder will float in from the changing area and head over to one of the cleaning stations. It will attempt to perform the traditional cleaning rituals, but in quick order, the adventurers can tell that it is not very successful.

In frustration Xalnihx turns his main eye towards the party, and asks Otomo if he would be so kind as to help him out. Otomo will laugh and bid the adventurers farewell and good luck with "Ol'eye stalks."

Roleplaying Xalnihx

Xalnihx is a beholder, he faced incredible competition for a strong magical item that would have allowed him to dominate the region. The ryokan was there when he failed to secure it, and he moved in to escape death. He has been moving with the ryokan since.

Quote: *I have grown tired of the manipulations of my race, here I can relax and master my botanical skills.*

Character Archetype: Fallen from greatness - Bored hippy, or Surfer guy

Xalnihx has become a pacifist over the years; he no longer sees the reason behind his maniacal planning and scheming. He has chosen to rest here in the ryokan until he finds his desire.

What Xalnihx shares with the party:

- He was once a great schemer like most beholders; however, he had set a plan in motion to steal an artifact that was used in altering magical energies to manipulate mythals and other powerful magics.
- A mythal is like a magical shield or barrier, and you can set conditions like *kill all humans found inside*. Imagine being able to hold whole cities ransom.
- He failed to move fast enough, and another beholder got it. He now finds it funny that he cannot even remember the beholder's name who he plotted against.
- He now wishes for a world where the lands around reflected the atmosphere in the ryokan: peaceful and without suffering.
- The only thing he misses from his original time is the others of his hive. He awoke one time from slumber where he dreamed about other beholders who could help him scheme and plot; when he awoke, there were three others just like him. If he has lost his motivation, have they lost theirs as well?

During the discussions, he turns to one of the largest adventurers and asks if they would lend him a hand in preparing for a bath. He comments how difficult it is for him to wash his back with no hands and asks the adventurers if they would be willing to assist him. Should one of the characters accept, he will offer to show them how he normally has to clean his back, and asks the one who helped to turn around and stand very still. If they do, Xalnihx will open one of his eye stalks and a blast of a purplish ray comes out cleanly slicing of any back hair and grime that the adventurer had.

Once the above exchange is completed, he will also share the following:

- He is not the only non-humanoid being in the ryokan; a snake-like being has been seen around, but he has not seen it this morning.
- It came in shortly after the ryokan materialized on this plane.
- It has not been talking to others, but simply watching instead. He thinks it may be the guardian of the sword, as it was carrying one that it handed over to Isoruko.

After the conversation with Xalnihx if the adventurers did/displayed at least four of the following attributes/actions:

- Acceptance for his unique race
- Concern about his children
- Hope for a unified homeland
- Spoke without using harsh language
- Washed Xalnihx's back
- Had their backs washed by him in return,

Then proceed to Part 3b The Guardian's impressed; otherwise head to 3a The Guardian's enraged.

Part 3 The Guardians choice!

Estimated Duration: 30 minutes

3A -The Guardian's Enraged

If in the Onsen –

A large snake-like creature erupts from behind the rock in the middle of the path declaring *"You are unworthy! If you want the sword, your worth will have to be proven through your suffering!"* It quickly flies out to the garden where it awaits the adventurers.

If elsewhere -

A large snake speeds past you headed for the garden. You hear its voice shout *"You are unworthy! If you want the sword, your worth will have to be proven through your suffering!"* It quickly flies out to the garden where it awaits the adventurers.

No matter where the adventurers are in the ryokan, it begins to meld and fold around them, and they appear in the arena in the garden. A gold dragon sits on a nearby roof and warns all that such aggressiveness will only be resolved in the arena.

The adventurers appear in the garden fully equipped. Across from them stands an indignant **Guardian Naga Belorium**.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- Very weak party: The **Guardian Naga Belorium** does not have any 5th or 6th level spell slots, and reduce the poison damage of its attack to 25.
- Weak party: The **Guardian Naga Belorium** does not have access to 6th level spell slots, and reduce the poison damage of its attack to 35.
- Strong party: Add a **Wood Wold** and read the strong introduction.
- Very strong party: Add the following lair action: On the initiative count of 20, choose three locations within sight and trees will grow out of the ground at a rapid rate. Characters within 5 ft of the tree must make a **Dexterity** Save (DC14) or fall prone. And read the strong introduction; Also include the anime power **scale of negation**.

Before you coils a Naga, its snake-like scales glistening in the lamp light, its fangs dripping with venom. It rears up and shouts, "You are not worthy to bear the blade of the heavens! Die for your insolence of trying to reclaim Daern's Blade!"

Strong Intro

Before you coils a Naga, its snake-like scales glistening and its fangs dripping with venom. It rears up and shouts, "You are not worthy to bear the blade of the heavens! Warrior(s) of the woad arise and defend that which you have sworn to protect!"

From the trees emerge a humanoid shape, its skin resembling the bark of a tree, others may yet be lying in wait, but the trees around the ryokan remain silent for now.

TACTICS:

The guardian Naga is here to test the strength of the party, not to kill them. It will begin by attempting to banish those adventurers who show more brawn than brains, and it will target ranged attackers with its spit poison as it closes to melee.

For weak Parties: If the adventurers are struggling, Kijo Kiki will surreptitiously use her magic to help to the fight to the adventurers' side. If this happens, she tells the characters as they leave to remember she helped them prove their worth.

For strong Parties: The guardian Naga will still attempt to banish its stronger enemies, even if for a short time, while the **Wood Wolds** use the sparse cherry trees in the area to gain better positioning and close in on the adventures. The **Guardian Naga Belorium** will use support magic to help the **Wood Wolds** if it will not endanger the **Guardian Naga**.

ANIME TACTICS:

Guardian Naga Belorium is sure of its abilities and loves to shout out what it is doing. Here is a list of moves that the Naga will use, but feel free to make up your own outrageous names.

Serpentine Slam – Bite Attack

Venomous Cobra Strike – Spit Poison

Saturn Blow – Flame Strike

Mystic Pitfall – Banishment (Hole opens up beneath the character and they are sucked in)

Bonds of justice – Hold Person

Legendary Actions: strong & very strong parties

Guardian Naga Belorium can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn (Unless otherwise noted). **Guardian Naga Belorium** regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Hyper Fang Strike. Belorium makes an additional bite attack

Scale of Negation. (Cost 2) As a free action Belorium can cry out to activate his scales of negation which acts as is a *counterspell* was cast by her as a 3rd level spell

Ultimate Suffer. Belorium bite herself causing 25 points of damage, all creatures within 30 ft must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw taking 45 (10d8) psychic damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

Once Belorium is reduced below 15 hit points, she yields admitting defeat at the hands of superior warriors, and asks what the adventurers intend to do with Daern's Blade. She compliments the response, saying that it is "a worthy answer" and hands over Daern's Blade. If Belorium perishes before she is able to hand the blade over, it glows and floats to rest lightly on the corpse of Belorium.

Once the sword is obtained, Isoruko brings out a gift of velvet drawstring bag with a **rose gold statue of the Phoenix Ribbon Ryokan with jade stones inset into the doors and windows (575 gp)**, thanking the adventurers for the excitement, and encouraging the adventurers to make haste as the festival will start within two days and to always remember their time at the Phoenix Ribbon Ryokan. If they are hesitant to leave, Kazushi will offer them his secret revitalizing tea. Anyone who drinks one cup of this tea gains the benefits of a short rest. Characters cannot gain this benefit more than once per lunar cycle.

They experience no further issues on their way back to Hawksroost. If they take a long rest they have dreams where they hear a sullen voice crying out for his love, and then the sight of a beautiful woman standing near a cherry tree on the opposite side of a great river.

Proceed to section 4.

3B - The Guardian Approves

The Guardian gives the sword, and the adventurers get waylaid by Oni on their way back to town.

A large snake-like creature erupts from behind the rock in the middle of the bath declaring *"At last, beings of compassion with the ability to suffer that equals that of Daern in his youth. Join me in the garden for your reward."* It quickly flies out to the garden where it awaits the adventurers.

The hag, Kijo Kiki joins the adventurers in the garden and warns them that while the journey may have seemed easy, dark shadows still lie in wait, plotting to keep the Ilmater and his love apart.

Once the blade is obtained, Isoruko encourages the adventurers to make haste as the festival will start within two days. If they are hesitant to leave, Kazushi will offer them his secret revitalizing tea. Anyone who drinks one cup of this tea gains the benefits of a short rest. Characters cannot gain this benefit more than once per lunar cycle.

Hawksroost is two days journey from the ryokan. As the sun begins to lower on the first day, the adventures come across an overturned cart. A successful investigation check shows that the cart was hit by a large bladed weapon which splintered the side panels. Large footsteps head to the north, but a group of footprints belonging to medium and small creatures head towards Hawksroost, hinting of survivors.

If the adventurers spend any amount of time at the wagon, they will see the light of a campfire coming from a copse of trees towards Hawksroost. There they will encounter a group of two **Oni**, one changed self into a goliath, the other a halfling. They are sitting around the campfire, their blades hidden from view.

They welcome the adventurers and offer them to lie by their fire for the night. They have the following information they will share:

- They are hoping to get to Hawksroost before the Festival starts; they have heard it has been years since it was performed.
- They were attacked by a large group of orcs. Luckily the bandits were more interested in their wares than their lives, and they were ignored as they ran to take shelter in these trees.
- They are happy to see friendly faces, as the road can be a dangerous place.

- If asked where they came from, they mention they travel here and there, always looking for something new.

At this point the halfling takes out a hip flask and lifts it to the adventurers. She offers them each a drink, and if they accept passes the flask around till everyone who would like a drink has had one. She takes it back and sets it by the fire mumbling something about a good drink deserves good food, and produces enough pieces of jerky for everyone to have one. She happily chews on one as she offers some to the rest of the group. During this time, the other targets the one who looks the most susceptible to their *Charm Person* ability. They have practiced this before and any attempt to perceive the casting is made with disadvantage.

Shortly after, instruct the adventurers who drank from the flask to make a DC 16 **Constitution saving throw**, with disadvantage if they also ate the jerky. Failure means they are at a disadvantage on attacks and saving throws for the next 8 hrs.

If the adventurers grow suspicious, the **Oni** jump up wielding their glaives and shifting to their true forms; otherwise they wait until everyone is lying down to rest for the night. At that point, the Oni attack!

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- Very weak party: Remove one **Oni**, she is the one disguised as a halfling lass.
- Strong party: Add an additional **Oni**, he is disguised as a half-orc when the adventurers meet them.
- Very Strong party: Add an additional **Oni**, he is disguised as a half-orc when the adventurers meet them. In the first round of combat, he unstoppers a cracked *Iron Flask* that brings forth a **Bone Devil** and then shatters.

TACTICS:

The **Oni** go straight in for the attack, targeting whoever is carrying the blade first with their *Cone of Cold* abilities. If they find their attacks ineffective at disabling the bearer of Daern's Blade, they will use their other abilities, such as sleep and darkness, to try to hinder others from aiding the bearer. If it is a very strong party, they will use darkness to help control the battle field as they know the **Bone Devil** is unaffected by such tropes.

For weak Parties: If the adventurers are struggling, Kijo Kiki will show herself (as she has been following the adventurers) and will surreptitiously use her magic to help the fight on the adventurers' side. If

this happens, she tells the characters as they part ways to remember she helped them prove their worth.

ANIME TACTICS:

The **Oni** and **Bone Devil** are sure of their abilities and will shout out what they are doing. Here is a list of moves that the **Oni** and **Bone Devil** will use, but feel free to make up your own outrageous names.

Oni-

Ice Embrace – Cone of Cold

Battling Crashing Assault – Multiattack

Lullaby – Sleep

Barbed Devil *using telepathy* -

Fusion Crasher – Multiattack

The **Oni** and **Bone Devil** fight to the death, knowing that their dark master will not be happy if they fail in retrieving the blade. Once they are defeated, the adventurers can search through the **Oni**'s gear and will find two vials of platinum filings (63 gp), a set of Jeweler's Tools (12 gp), and 16 one ounce bars of platinum (500gp)

No further issues occur while they are heading into town.

Part 4 The Festival of the Star

Estimated Duration: 30 minutes

The Adventurers are greeted with great fanfare by the inhabitants of Hawksroost. They lead the characters along a procession to rebuild temple to the “One who Endures.”

General Features

Sun is setting as Hawksroost come into view, the villagers are forming to begin the walk to the temple, and they rejoice at the adventurers return.

Terrain. The roads are hard dirt with purple flowers growing up between the old cobblestones.

Weather. As evening falls, the temperature cools to a comfortable level.

Light. The sun casts a prismatic rainbow of colors across the horizon.

Smells and Sounds. the smell of the road is slowly replaced with that of fresh baked breads from the village.

The Festival Begins

As the shrine comes into view, you can see he is dressed in fine garb, befitting a high priest. He hands off his scepter and runs to meet the procession.

“Ah, do you have the sword? We are short on time.”

Sorrim is happy to speak with the adventurers, but insists that the time is nigh, and that without the sword, Ilmater will continue to suffer. If the adventurers demand compensation, he will give them 150gp and a **Greater Potion of Healing**. If he does, remove it from treasure they receive from the villages.

With the blade returned, Sorrim holds the sword up to the heavens and begins to recite the origin tale of the Festival of the Stars.

Long Version:

The Festival of the Stars was once annually celebrated here in Hawksroost, but with the fall of the city came the fall of one our dear Ilmater’s greatest loves and secrets. In a time before the archmages of Netheril learned magic from the high elves, Ilmater enjoyed his lot in the heavens. He was humble, patiently herding celestial cattle and healing those who came to his farm. His deeds of compassion had become well known among the deities of the Realms. It was during this time that Ao heard of Ilmater’s characteristics, and knew that he was a match for his youngest daughter.

Her name has been forgotten with time, but she was beautiful! She would weave cloth from wool of the celestial sheep, and make clothing for the other Deities of Ao’s court. Yet her father knew that sadness gripped her heart. She spent so much of her time clothing others that she feared she would never find one with compassion and an ability to love that mirrored her own.

Ao introduced his daughter to Ilmater, and they instantly fell in love. Soon though the Celestial cattle began to roam wild, and the clothing of the gods became tattered. The celestial sheep began to braid and disturb the revelry of the gods with their moans to be sheared.

The suffering of the gods and other beings of light became known to Ao. He was asked to find the reason for their extended suffering, and he had to look no further than Ilmater and his daughter to find the cause. They had become as one, and spent all their time caring for each other, and had neglected their duties to others.

In a fury Ao sundered the two, sending Ilmater to atone by joining the Procession of Justice with Tyr, to ease the suffering of those beings on Toril, not to be reunited with his beloved until the suffering on Toril was no more.

The tears of Ao’s daughter filled the inner sea, but still he did not relent on his punishment. It continued until the humans pushed out the ogres and established Hawksroost, finding among the relics of the area this tale of woe. In a tomb not far from here, they found the sword that would be later known as Daern’s Blade and performed the first Passing of the Blade, where they took on the suffering of the others on Toril for a short time, so that Ilmater could again be with his love.

Annually this was done until the fall of Hawksroost, and now we again look for Daern’s Blade to allow Ilmater a chance to see his love.

Now is the time to note items we are particularly suffering from, of the pains, maladies, or woes that we carry in our hearts, and send them into the heavens to be caught by Ilmater as he returns from the time he has spent with his beloved.

Short Version:

“And so once again we share in the experience of suffering, so that Ilmater may see his beloved, if only for an instant, so that we may relieve his agony, and he relieves ours.

Now is the time to note items we are particularly suffering from, of the pains, maladies, or woes that we carry in our hearts, and send them into the heavens to be caught by Ilmater as he returns from the time he has spent with his beloved.

The Adventurers hear Sorrim recite the origins of the Festival of the Stars, and then he asks the party to present him Daern's Blade. He then offers for them to join him in the ritual of the Passing of the Blade. He allows them to each write a point of suffering that they wish Ilmater to take from them on a small strip of parchment and add it to a paper lantern.

Sorrim begins to chant in an unknown dialect, as the lanterns slowly begin to float upward. Daern's Blade glows red and suddenly it pulses outward, washing over the crowd.

Sorrim offers the blade to others in the town; the adventurers will be offered a chance to grasp the blade for a short moment and take on the suffering.

Astute characters with a **Passive Perception** of 13 or more will notice that as the villagers take a turn holding the blade, some react with tears, others gasp as if in pain. Should the adventurers choose to take up the blade, have them make a DC 10 CON save. Success means that they experience slight discomfort. Continuing to hold the blade requires another CON save every turn with the DC increasing by 5. Failure means the adventurer drops the blade and an effect applied to them from the following table:

Daern's Blade Effect Table

Roll	Effect
1	Character fall unconscious for 1d4 minutes
2-3	Uncontrollable sobbing for 1d2 minutes
4	Characters hands begin to itch for 1d8 minutes

Once the blade is returned to Sorrim, the red glow is sucked back into the blade, and at once all of the lanterns explode into fireworks of multiple colors. The villagers and any character who was afflicted by Daern's Blade feel as if a gust of warm wind wraps around a soul and for an instant everyone in attendance feels all their pain, worries, and suffering replaced by a feeling of heartfelt thanks.

In the aftermath of the ceremony, one of the pieces of a lantern drops heavily to the ground in front of Sorrim, who smiles knowingly before picking it up and handing it to the adventurers. Upon inspection, the characters know it to be an **Orb of the Stein Rune**.

Sorrim invites the adventurers to dine with him, were he rewards the party with 1475 gp and a *Potion of Heroism*.

Rewards

Make sure players note their rewards on their adventure log sheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

Experience

Total up all combat experience earned for defeated foes, and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For non-combat experience, the rewards are listed per character.

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Guardian Naga	5,900
Oni	2,900
Wood Woad	1,800

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Entering with Ryoza in the ryokan	350
Talk with at least three NPCs at the Ryokan	500
Not attacking Xalnihx, the Beholder	500
Washing Xalnihx, the beholder's back	700
Turning over the sword to Sorrim	1200

The adventures minimum and maximum XP awards are located on the Adventure Rewards document. Note that DDAL adventures award a maximum of the "target XP" award. Only epics may grant the "maximum" amount.

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 3750 **experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 5000 **experience points**.

Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Treasure is divided as evenly as possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
Rose Gold and Jade Statue	575
Loot from the Oni	575
Gift from the Church of Ilmater	1750gp

Consumable magic items should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

Permanent magic items are divided according to a system detailed in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Orb of the Stein Rune

Wondrous Item, rare (Requires Attunement)

This spherical chunk of granite is about the size of a human fist. The stein rune—the rune of stone—appears on the orb as crystalline veins that play across its surface. When first grasped, the stone feels impossibly heavy, as if even a titan could not lift it. That feeling passes after a moment, allowing you to carry the stone with ease. This item can be found in **Player Handout 1**.

Potion of Poison Resistance

Potion, uncommon

This item can be found in the *Player's Handbook*.

Potion of Poison Resistance

Potion, uncommon

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Renown

Each character receives **one renown** at the conclusion of this adventure.

DM Reward

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* (ALDMG).

Appendix. Dramatis Personae

The following NPCs are featured prominently in this adventure:

Lycidus Ikurvorh:

Lycidus is a tall, dark-haired human with pale skin, and looks like he just come back from a long adventure. Despite the chill his looks send down your spine, you can't help but feel engrossed by him. Charisma drips from his teeth. Over a century ago, he was a young adventurer traveling with different parties from danger to danger. In his travels, he came across a small ragtag group where he happened to meet a halfling that he falls deeply in love with at first sight. As fate would have it, he was thrust into quest after quest with her, hoping at the end of every one that she would return the adoration that he felt for her.

Years went by like this until one day the party found themselves swept away to the land of Barovia.

Promising to do whatever was required to prove his love to Oriel, he swore he would bring her whatever her heart desired. She sent him on a fool's errand in hopes of him leaving her alone. It was within this land that he met his demise and fell to the bloodlust of a local vampire.

Upon returning, his traveling companions attacked. He barely escaped with his life. Since that moment he has spent the decades planning his revenge on the one that spurned him. He will give her one last chance to love him and spend eternity with him. If he can't have her, no one can.

Appendix. Monster/NPC Statistics

Guardian Naga Belorium

Large monstrosity, lawful good

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 127 (15d10 + 45)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +8, CON +7, Int +7, Wis +8, Cha +8

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Celestial, Common

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Rejuvenation. If it dies, the naga returns to life in 1d6 days and regains all its hit points. Only a wish spell can prevent this trait from functioning.

Spellcasting. The naga is a 11th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks) that needs only verbal components to cast its spells.

Cantrips (at will): *mending, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*
 1st level (4 slots): *command, cure wounds, shield of faith*
 2nd level (3 slots): *calm emotions, hold person*
 3rd level (3 slots): *bestow curse, clairvoyance*
 4th level (3 slots): *banishment, freedom of movement*
 5th level (2 slots): *flame strike, geas*
 6th level (1 slots): *true seeing*

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Spit Poison. *Ranges Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 15/30 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Oni

Large giant, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (chain mail)

Hit Points 110 (13d10 + 39)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Con +6, Wis +4, Cha +5

Skills Arcana +5, Deception +8, Perception +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Giant

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The oni's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). The oni can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *darkness, invisibility*

1/day: *charm person, cone of cold, gaseous form, sleep*

Magic Weapons. The oni's weapon attacks are magical.

Regeneration. The oni regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

Actions

Multiattack. The oni makes two attacks, either with its claws or its glaive.

Claw (Oni Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Glaive. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) slashing damage, or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage in Small or Medium form.

Change Shape. The oni magically polymorphs into a Small or Medium humanoid, into a Large giant, or back into its true form. Other than its size, its statistics are the same in each form. The only equipment that is transformed is its glaive, which shrinks so that it can be wielded in humanoid form. If the oni dies, it reverts to its true form, and its glaive reverts to its normal size.

Wood Woad

Medium Plants, Lawful Neutral

Armor Class 18 (natural armor, shield)

Hit Points 75 (10d8_30)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing,

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 14

Languages Sylvan

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Magic Club. In the wood woad's hand, its club is magical and deals 7 (3d4) extra damage (included in its attacks).

Plant Camouflage. The wood woad has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks it makes in any terrain with ample obscuring plant life

Regeneration. The wood woad regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it is in contact with the ground. If the wood woad takes fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of its next turn. The wood woad dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Tree Stride. Once on each of its turns, the wood woad can use 10 feet of its movement to step magically into one living tree within 5 feet of it and emerge from a second living tree within 60 feet of it that it can see, appearing in the an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the second tree. Both trees must be large or bigger.

Actions

Multiattack. The wood woad makes two attacks with its club.

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d4+4) bludgeoning damage

Beholder

Large aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 180 (19d10 + 76)

Speed 0 ft., fly 20 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +8, Wis +7, Cha +8

Skills Perception +12

Condition Immunities prone

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 22

Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Antimagic Cone. The beholder's central eye creates an area of antimagic, as in the antimagic field spell, in a 150-foot cone. At the start of each of its turns, the beholder decides which way the cone faces and whether the cone is active. The area works against the beholder's own eye rays.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) piercing damage.

Eye Rays. The beholder shoots three of the following magical eye rays at random (reroll duplicates), choosing one to three targets it can see within 120 feet of it:

1. **Charm Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by the beholder for 1 hour, or until the beholder harms the creature.

2. **Paralyzing Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

3. **Fear Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

4. **Slowing Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target's speed is halved for 1 minute. In addition, the creature can't take reactions, and it can take either an action or a bonus action on its turn, not both. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a

success.

5. **Enervation Ray.** The targeted creature must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

6. **Telekinetic Ray.** If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or the beholder moves it up to 30 feet in any direction. It is restrained by the ray's telekinetic grip until the start of the beholder's next turn or until the beholder is incapacitated.

If the target is an object weighing 300 pounds or less that isn't being worn or carried, it is moved up to 30 feet in any direction. The beholder can also exert fine control on objects with this ray, such as manipulating a simple tool or opening a door or a container.

7. **Sleep Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or fall asleep and remain unconscious for 1 minute. The target awakens if it takes damage or another creature takes an action to wake it. This ray has no effect on constructs and undead.

8. **Petrification Ray.** The targeted creature must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature begins to turn to stone and is restrained. It must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn. On a success, the effect ends. On a failure, the creature is petrified until freed by the greater restoration spell or other magic.

9. **Disintegration Ray.** If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 45 (10d8) force damage. If this damage reduces the creature to 0 hit points, its body becomes a pile of fine gray dust.

If the target is a Large or smaller nonmagical object or creation of magical force, it is disintegrated without a saving throw. If the target is a Huge or larger object or creation of magical force, this ray disintegrates a 10-foot cube of it.

10. **Death Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 55 (10d10) necrotic damage. The target dies if the ray reduces it to 0 hit points.

Legendary Actions

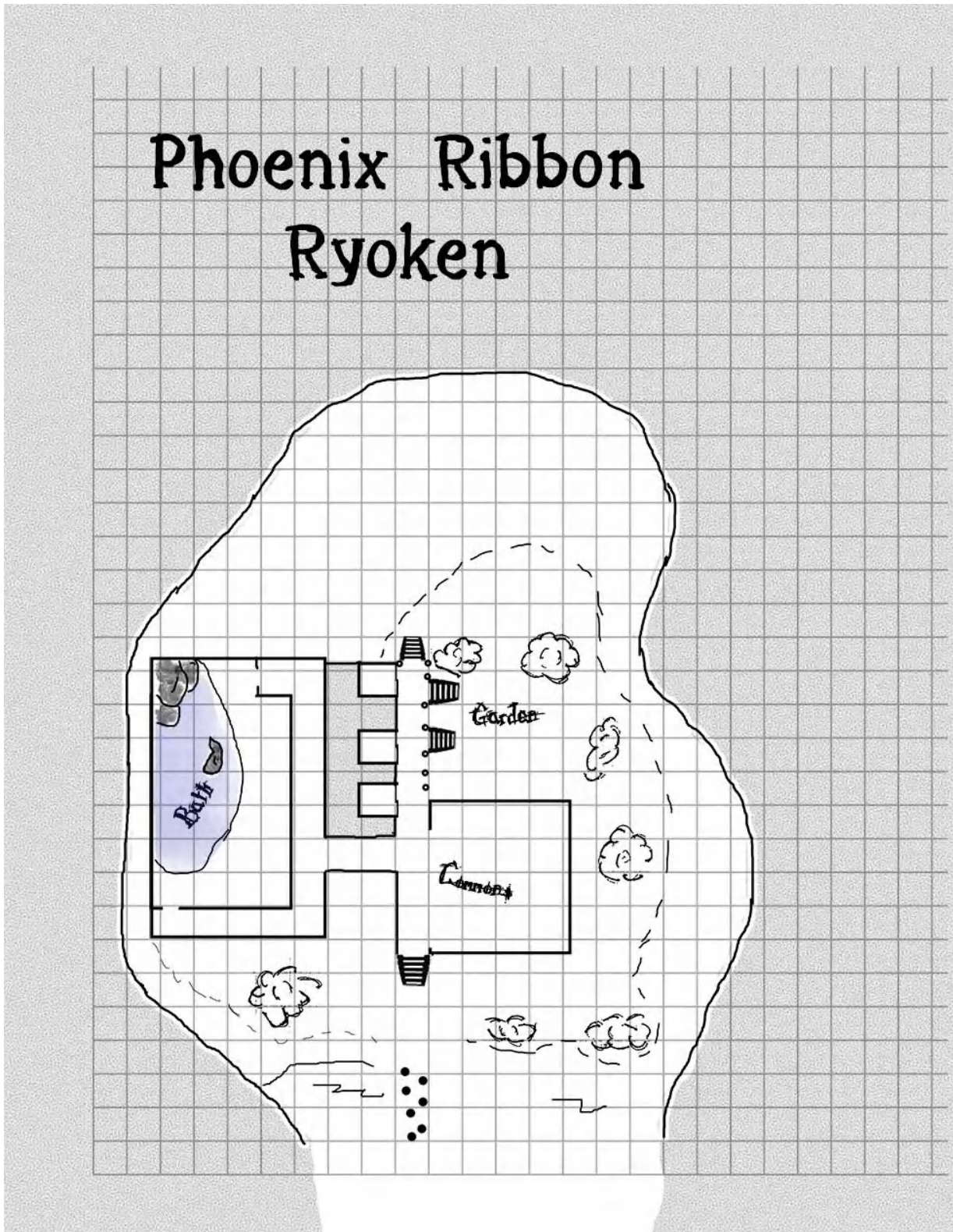
The beholder can take 3 legendary actions, using the Eye Ray option below. It can take only one legendary action at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The beholder regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

- **Eye Ray.** The beholder uses one random eye ray.

Appendix. Map – Hawksroost



Map – Phoenix River Ryokan



Player Handout 1. Magic Item

During the course of this adventure, the characters may find the following permanent magic item:

Orb of the Stein Rune

Wondrous Item, rare (Requires Attunement)

This orb of granite is about the size of an adult human's fist. The stein (stone) rune appears on it in the form of crystalline veins that run across the surface. The orb has the following properties, which work only while it's on your person.

Indomitable Stand. As an action, you can channel the orb's magic to hold your ground. For the next minute or until you move any distance, you have advantage on all checks and saving throws to resist effects that force you to move. In addition, any enemy that moves to a space within 10 feet of you must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be unable to move any farther this turn.

Stone Soul. You can't be petrified.

Earthen Step. You can cast meld into stone as a bonus action. Once you use this property, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Gift of Stone. You can transfer the orb's magic to a nonmagical item—a shield or a pair of boots—by tracing the stein rune there with your finger. The transfer takes 8 hours of work that requires the two items to be within 5 feet of each other. At the end, the orb is destroyed, and the rune appears in silver on the chosen item, which gains a benefit based on its form:

- **Shield.** The shield is now a rare magic item that requires attunement. While you wield it, you have resistance to all damage dealt by ranged weapon attacks.
- **Boots.** The pair of boots is now an uncommon magic item that requires attunement. While you wear the boots, you have advantage on Strength saving throws, and you can use your reaction to avoid being knocked prone.