



Trouble in the Old City

The town of Ylraphon on the border of the Flooded Forest has been targeted by the yuan-ti. One of them has uncovered an ancient ritual to change the people of the area called the Old City into their servants. Can the adventurers stop the yuan-ti in time? The whole of the Moonsea may be at risk if they fail.

A Two-Hour Adventure for 1st-4th Level Characters



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Introduction

Welcome to *Trouble in the Old City*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Convention Content* for ***Snake River Comic Con***.

The adventure is set in the newly rebuilt town of **Ylraphon**, south of Mulmaster near the mouth of the River Lis, just north of the Vast, in the Moonsea region of the Forgotten Realms campaign setting.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st - 4th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. 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.
- 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

Adventure Background

The Setting: Ylraphon Reborn

Ylraphon, pronounced “ILL-ra-fon” (or, more archaically, “Ee-YIL-ra-fon”), is a small but growing port just southeast of the mouth of the River Lis, on the southern edge of the Moonsea region, just north of the Vast. Elves from Myth Drannor built the first city here, which stood for nearly a thousand years before it was overrun by orcs, conquered by dwarves, and reconquered by orcs again, who ruled until humans finally took over. Yet in time, even the last human settlement here was destroyed by the events of the Rage of Dragons, and the nearby tree-filled swamp—the easternmost arm of the Cormanthor woods, known as the Flooded Forest—expanded hungrily to swallow the ruins. Now the town rises again, rebuilt into a bustling hive of gold-hungry adventurers, fearless pirates, and ruling merchant houses.

Today, there are three Ylraphons. Ylraphon proper is the small but thriving dockside settlement inside a recently erected Palisade. Second is the Old City, a ramshackle village of refurbished ruins just outside the port, where refugees from undone Mulmaster try to forge new lives. The third is Outer Ylraphon, which includes all the sprawling layers of ancient rubble and buried necropoli that surround the younger habitations. These spider-haunted ruins of the town's past incarnations sprawl out into the Flooded Forest, a wilderness as dangerous as any in Faerûn. Only behind the duskwood walls of the Palisade do the five houses of the Merchant Council and their newly-elected mayor hold sway. Real power lies with the local adventurers, whose exploration and plunder of nearby ruins drives the new economy. Thanks to their influence, Ylraphon remains a wild and lawless town, a frontier outpost on the borderlands of civilization.

Level Limits on Spellcasting Services

Ylraphon is a wild, uncivilized frontier settlement, and not long ago it had only one proper temple (The Moonwater). Spellcasting services are available, but limited according to the particular deity and their center of worship. Since recent growth and actions by adventuring heroes have helped found a new temple to Lathander and expand the existing shrine to Berronar into a full temple. The level limits on spellcasting services available are as follows:

- Bane (The Black Fane). *Max spell level 5th.*
- Berronar Truesilver, Moradin, Clanggedin, or any other dwarf pantheon god (The Argent Hearth). *No limit.*
- Lathander (Morningrise Hall). *Max spell level 2nd.*
- Selûne (The Moonwater). *No limit.*
- Tymora (The Lady's Token). *Max spell level 3rd.*
- Umberlee (The Kraken's Grip). *Max spell level 3rd.*

Hundreds of refugees live in the ruins outside the wooden walls of Ylraphon. Most came from larger ports around the Moonsea devastated by disaster or political turmoil, such as Phlan or Mulmaster. They fled to Ylraphon seeking safety and security, but found little of either.

Though Ylraphon has been restored to some degree, the bulk of the rebuilding has taken place within the newly walls of her Palisade (always said with a capital “P” because of the locals’ pride in it). Those who live in this more civilized area distrust and fear the large influx of refugees (though few of these “locals” have lived in the area for more than a few years themselves).

Due to these suspicions, newer arrivals had to settle for making a living in **the Old City**, the ruins of the larger previous incarnation of Ylraphon that was destroyed a century ago in the Year of Rogue Dragons. Over time, the Old City has become a village of its own, growing outside Ylraphon’s Palisade like weeds at the foot of a walled garden.

Sitalash, a yuan-ti pit master, came through Ylraphon years ago, seeking the lore of powerful ancestors of his who had dwelled in the region. He decided that he could use the town as a base while he gathered slaves from Calaunt. His task became much simpler as refugees began migrating into the nearby ruins.

Sitalash found the ancient temple he sought in the Flooded Forest, converted by other yuan-ti centuries before for the worship of their ophidian gods. There he researched old tablets he found which depicted an ancient yuan-ti transformation ritual, modifying it for his purposes. As he perfected this ritual, called the Serpent’s Kiss, Sitalash took to living in the old temple, an ancient site of power and a relic of Ylraphon’s past rulers known as the Altar of the Smoldering Eye.

Since the refugees began arriving, Sitalash and his minions have provided a delicious cooking ingredient, called Sweettongue Sauce, to the Old City’s inhabitants. Given the difficulty of growing food in the area, they were very happy to have a new flavor for their meals, and the villagers looked forward to each shipment.

Several tendays ago, Sitalash had one of his minions sneak into the town and apply a secret alchemical mixture to the major stores of food kept in the Old City. The concoction had no effect at the time but when combined with other alchemical ingredients in the Sweettongue Sauce, it made all those who consumed it vulnerable to Sitalash’s magic ritual. Soon the stars will align for maximum potency and the ritual will be performed, transforming many in the village into yuan-ti, unless the characters stop it.

There are just over two days left to thwart Sitalash’s ritual. As time slips away, the curse of the Serpent’s Kiss grows closer to completion.

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature in this adventure:

Deribis: Deribis is one of the local council leading the Old City. Deribis deals with most of the day to day issues here, as the other leading member of the Old City Alliance is often within the walls of the town proper. She is desperate to find a cure for the “disease.”

Shali: Shali is a yuant-ti, a servant of the malison warlock Sitalash. Shali has been tasked with performing a booster ritual to amplify the power of the main ceremony being performed by Sitalash elsewhere.

Sitalash: An older male yuan-ti malison warlock, he believes his people come first, and will do anything to follow the traditional rules of his ancestors

Lady Crowngold: A female half-drow with dark skin and shining blond hair, who has recently arrived to teach at the Brixmarsh School of Magic in the Old City and also serves as a local sage. The Crowngold is known to be an expert on dragons and other intelligent reptilian monsters with long histories in the Realms.

Flooded Forest: The Flooded Forest lies south of Mulmaster and northeast of Ylraphon and is home to many dangerous creatures. The swampy forest is constantly encroaching on the Old City.

The Serpent’s Kiss: A powerful curse Sitalash has discovered, that can transform a great number of people into yuan-ti. The ritual for the curse requires preparing the targets for at least three seasons applying special herbs and oils. Though the people of Ylraphon think they have contracted disease, it is rather a powerful curse.

Fember Stouthandle: Fember is a member of the Cult of the Dragon. He murdered his fellows after succumbing to the Serpent’s Kiss.

Adventure Overview

The characters are visiting Ylraphon when Deribis, a member of the Old City Alliance that governs life outside the Palisade, asks for their assistance. Many of the villagers seem to have been stricken with a strange disease.

The adventure is broken down into TWO parts:

Part 1. The characters have the opportunity to uncover the truth about the sickness and its origins.

Part 2. The characters confront Shali in her lair. Here they can learn more about the threat to the Old City, and acquire a seemingly innocuous tool (easily mistaken for simple loot) that could help in the future.

Adventure Hooks

For each character, choose an appropriate reason why they are traveling to Ylraphon. Roll 1d8 or choose for each character, or let the player decide. Another good way to assign these hooks would be based on factions, as follows:

- Hooks 3 and 8 would be well-suited to **Emerald Enclave** characters (who would probably wish to confirm that no wild creatures are being

mistreated in the menagerie described in hook 8.

- Relevant interests in historical lore and stopping dangerous organizations would make hooks 4 and 7 good for **Harpers**.
- Members of the **Lords’ Alliance** likely have interests aligned with hooks 2 and 6.
- The **Order of the Gauntlet** could task member characters with pursuing hook 6 or hook 7.
- **Zhentarim** characters are a good fit for hook 2 or 5.

Use a hook that resonates with a character’s personal history over one based on their faction, if possible. And of course, any character could also have their own reasons for being in Ylraphon’s Old City unrelated to the hooks here.

Each of the numbered encounters in Part 1 correspond to one of these adventure hooks. If a character has a different reason for ending up in the Old City, choose an appropriate numbered encounter for them.

Adventure Hooks

D8 Roll	Hook
1	You have just wrapped up some previous work in Ylraphon (as an adventurer or otherwise).
2	You have come to town in search of new markets and interesting art objects.
3	You have been traveling through the wilderness and are seeking a place to have a delicious meal and some relaxation. It just so happens that an old travel guide written by the famed Volo himself has spoken highly of the Silver Dragon Inn in Ylraphon.
4	Ylraphon has been home to several civilizations, and can be a rich environment for uncovering the lost history – or treasure—of the humans, orcs, dwarves, or elves who dwelled here in past ages.
5	A family member, friend, acquaintance, or faction comrade of yours lives in the Old City outside Ylraphon, and you have come to answer a strange letter that seems to be asking for help.
6	Hearing about recent difficulties in Ylraphon, you have come to lend aid to the town. The Old City Alliance that governs life outside the walls recognized your competence when you arrived, and they have asked you to protect one of the leading members of their council.
7	A sect of the Cult of the Dragon is rumored to have agents among the refugees who live outside of Ylraphon, attempting to supplant the leadership there to build a stronghold for their organization. You have come to investigate.

- 8 You've found paper handbills directing the courageous and curious to come to Ylraphon to see the menagerie of exotic beasts recently brought to town, said to amaze all but the most seasoned travelers.

Zhentarim (Faction Assignment). Members of the Zhentarim visiting Ylraphon's Old City are passed a discreet note upon arrival asking them to meet with a contact there, a kenku. This kenku, called Clank, can be found at an inn called the Vandal's Vigor not long after their arrival. Clank will have Zhentarim business to discuss, which the faction would like addressed.

The Five W's (and one H)

This section condenses the main points in the adventure to a few helpful bullet points.

- **Who:** Two yuan-ti, the local Shali and her hidden master Sitalash, are in the final stages of a truly horrifying plan.
- **What:** People in the city have been getting sick. The majority of them live in Little Phlan, but there have been reports throughout the Old City. This sickness is actual part of a growing curse.
- **When:** Over the past several tendays, Shali has been sneaking different ritual components into the food at the Vandal's Vigor, a popular inn situated in the Old City's Little Phlan neighborhood, to prepare residents for the final ritual. Within two days, the ritual will be completed and those who have eaten food prepared at the Vandal's Vigor will be changed into yuan-ti.
- **Where:** Shali is casting a booster ritual at her home in Little Phlan. Her master, Sitalash casts the primary ritual from inside an ancient yuan-ti temple in the Flooded Forest.
- **Why:** To transform the unfortunate people of Ylraphon into an "improved" version of themselves.
- **How:** Using special herbs and ritual components that saturate the person's system over months of time, Shali has made the intended victims vulnerable to the capstone ritual, Sitalash will perform during the correct moon phase.

Part 1. Discover the Conspiracy

Expected Duration: 50 minutes

The adventurers meet with Deribis, a member of the city council, and lead the investigation into a strange sickness that has stricken the citizens of Little Phlan.

A. The Game's Afoot

This investigation portion uses a flexible structure, in which the first eight encounters listed are numbered, with each of those eight corresponding to one of the listed adventure hooks, and the others coming up based on how the investigation proceeds. These unnumbered encounters—*Meeting Deribis*, *Lady Crowngold*, and *The Silver Dragon Inn*—are people or places the characters might visit as they seek answers. In course of their quest, the characters may come to those of the numbered encounters which are location-based as well.

In this structure, the party members are separated as groups of individuals at the beginning of the adventure, pursuing their distinct agendas, all of which should come together shortly after, bringing them together to investigate the source of the illness.

Refugees from Moonsea Ports

If a character has a story award that provides advantage or disadvantage when dealing with people from Hillsfar, Hulburg, Mulmaster, or Phlan, they apply these to ability checks with refugees from those cities at the DM's discretion.

The Investigation

Use DM's *Appendix 1: Clue Table* to provide clues to what is going on in Yraphon's Old City as the party works through different sections of this adventure. Ability checks employing skills such as **Deception**, **Intimidation**, and **Persuasion** can help characters learn the information on the Clue Table from locals, but **Intelligence** checks (for **Arcana**, **History**, **Nature**, and **Religion**) prove just as helpful, especially if the characters come across some of the same information in written form (often requiring a **Wisdom (Perception)** check to notice them).

Allow the characters at least one clue per area or NPC interaction. Provide a clue with a DC equal to or less than the highest check among the characters.

If the characters fail to suss out that Shari may be responsible, a villager that works with her can approach Deribis and tell her that Shari was acting strange yesterday and hasn't returned to work today. This will prompt Deribis to go check on her and she will ask the characters to accompany him. In

this case, give Shari and any of her allies a bless affect for the combat.

B. Yraphon – The Old City

General Features

The general features of the Old City are as follows:

Weather. There is constant rain in the city this time of year, keeping everything damp, making the waterlogged soil even muddier, and sending people everywhere to scrounge for dry wood to keep their fires going.

Light and Visibility. There is dim light throughout the town, as storm clouds have given little reprieve in the last few tendays.

Geography and Vegetation. Much of the Old City is partially submerged under the murky swampwater of the Flooded Forest. Nothing grows here but trees, various swamp-grasses, root vegetables, and lots of fungi.

Buildings. Those making a home here live in repurposed ruins and old crypts that were built in elevated places or in tents or other makeshift dwellings on the rare patches of solid ground.

Shopping. After asking around long enough, one may find a shop to purchase anything from the *Players Handbook* costing no more than 100 gp. Inside Yraphon proper, any item in the *PHB* may be purchased. Both inside and outside the Palisade walls, however, the price of food is doubled due to the impossibility of growing crops in the area.

The numbered encounter sections that follow correspond with the entries on the Adventure Hooks table. The party may also come to any or all of them at your leisure. Throughout this section, they should learn about the sickness that is spreading through Yraphon and either meet with Deribis or seek out the cause on their own.

Before proceeding to the numbered encounters, read or paraphrase the general introduction below:

Yraphon is an interesting town. Built and rebuilt upon the ruins of an ancient port city of the elves, the area has been the site of many settlements. It has been invaded by many, but one invader remains persistent: the Flooded Forest. This waterlogged swamp of black trees and choking weeds has swallowed the town before and always threatens to do so again.

Until recently, the efforts of a powerful druid held back the encroaching wilderness, but now the locals say she is gone, and swear that the water level rises each passing day. Most of those who make a home here are not lucky enough to dwell within the wooden walls of the more civilized town proper, so they live in the crowded ruins of those who came before or in motley collections of tents and shacks between them.

They call this makeshift village outside the walls The Old City, and it hasn't taken you long to learn that most of its population is made up of refugees from larger cities around the Moonsea. These folks have built up their own communities on the outskirts Ylraphon, segregated themselves in different enclaves determined by the various cities from which they fled.

The one thing all the Old City's residents have in common is the longing in their eyes as they gaze at the duskwood walls of Ylraphon's high Palisade, hoping one day to have the chance to live behind its protection.

For unknown reasons, this separation has been even starker recently, with the Town Watch thoroughly inspecting anyone who enters the Palisade gates, and the inns of Ylraphon proper refusing to rent rooms to new arrivals. As a result, you are forced to lodge out here in the Old City.

Time to Burn

The investigations and roleplaying in Part 1 should take up most of a two-hour timeslot. If your players are enjoying the role-play, don't feel pressure to move things on to confrontation with Shali until you're into the second hour.

In contrast to that, if the investigation is dragging on too long or leaving the players restless, make the flow of clues come more easily to move the adventure forward.

If you plan to run future adventures in the trilogy, be sure to start multiple characters with the same hook, especially in a large group. The idea is to give each character about five minutes for their hook. If the hook goes on for longer, or the group is larger than five, be aware of the time used and adjust accordingly in Part 2.

1. A Call to Action

Linked Adventure Hook: *You have just wrapped up some previous work in Ylraphon (as an adventurer or otherwise).*

Despite the intermittent rain, town criers stand at busy corners and wander through the streets. They call out items for sell in the markets, the times and locations of upcoming festivities, and one intriguing offer of gold:

"Hear this, all who long for adventure and laugh in the face of danger. To those who seek to earn good coin or aid the wretched and oppressed, seek Council Deribis in the council hall found in New Hillsfar!"

This encounter is a direct call to the characters to meet with Deribis at her office. Though the offices of the Old City Alliance are in New Hillsfar, Deribis is the council member chosen from Little Phlan. If the characters proceed directly to the Council Hall, you can interject some of the other encounters or go directly to *Meeting Deribis* this is also a chance to present some of the clues as directed in *The Investigation*.

2. Hunter's Market

Linked Adventure Hook: *You have come to town in search of new markets and interesting art objects.*

The Town Watch gave you an unusually vigorous inspection as you entered the Palisade gate to reach the Hunter's Market, and a hulking half-elf in a watch tabard warned you not stay in town after sundown, due to a temporary proclamation by the mayor.

However, such difficulties are quickly forgotten as you make your way through the busy stalls bearing all kinds of wares, trinkets, produce, and livestock. Everyone is out to make a sale. People of all kinds crowd the streets and it is difficult not to bump into others. The smell of fish hangs thickly in the air.

Suddenly a passerby grabs a hold of you. Their skin is scaly and they smell faintly of reptile. Dark green marble-like eyes, interrupted by a diamond-shaped slit of black stare at you. A long-forked tongue hisses out a plea, "Help me, please".

The people crowding the market push themselves as far away as possible from you as the scene falls silent.

This poor soul was among the first to be infected by Sitalash's ritual. They have been seeking help for many days, but everyone avoids them for fear of falling to the same fate. No roll is required to tell that this pitiful creature means the character no harm, as they soon fall limp. Succumbing to the transformation, they fall into a coma.

Asking those nearby will lead to being pointed to the Old City Alliance and could also possibly reveal one or more clues. The player may roll any of the skills mentioned in *The Investigation* sidebar.

If any characters want to inspect the wares being sold around them, there is not much of direct use, and any food is both expensive and in short supply, but a representative sampling of what is available appears on the table below.

Market Trinkets

Item Name	Cost
Quail killed and cooked to order	4 sp
Heart woven of twigs	4 sp
Insect-repelling ointment	2 sp
Duskwood carving of an animal	5 sp
Jerked boar meat	4 sp
Trout pan-fried in oatmeal	5 sp
Bloodhawk feather	7 sp
Ancient flint arrowhead	4 cp

3. The Vandal's Vigor

Linked Adventure Hook: *You have been traveling through the wilderness and are seeking a place to have a delicious meal and some relaxation. It just so happens that an old travel*

guide written by the famed Volo himself has spoken highly of the Silver Dragon Inn in Ylraphon.

The Vandal's Vigor in the Old City is equal part pavilion tents and repurposed crypts. Three crypts make up the storage and employee areas of the bar. A large tent covers the space between the crypts and tarps are used to fill the gaps. The floor is old cobblestone only partially unearthed from beneath a thick layer of soil, making for a muddy affair when it rains due to all the leaks.

Read or paraphrase both the following sections of boxed text if the characters come here due to the adventure hook about seeking the Silver Dragon Inn, but skip the first if they come here for other reasons:

You have yet to find the Silver Dragon Inn mentioned in Volo's report on the area. In the meantime, you have found your way to an inn called the Vandal's Vigor, determined to hunt down the "Best Drink Hall this side of the Galena Mountains." This isn't it.

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters enter the Vandal's Vigor:

While the Vandal's Vigor isn't a delightful place, it does have drink and semi-warm meals. Many of the local folks meet here and it is a suitable place to mingle. Entertainers of all kinds can be found here throughout the day, though a snoring owlbear would be better than most of them.

Talk about a sickness that is spreading through town is impossible to avoid.

A few overheard bits of conversation can be found below. Feel free to add your own, and use this as an opportunity to use *The Investigation* sidebar.

- "My sisters taken to crawling along the ground on her stomach looking for bugs to eat!"
- "This may be hard to believe, but I can see perfectly well in the dark."
- "I thought this place was bad before! Everyone seems to be going all weird. I need to get back to Phlan."

Zhentarim Mission

If Zhentarim members enter the inn, a kenku eating jellied eels in the corner gets their attention in a subtle way, perhaps by imitating something they have said in their own voices. This is Clank, a kenku from Mulmaster (known to those who played a part in the events of *DDEX 2-10 Cloaks and Shadows*) and Zhentarim operative who passes on a lot of orders to local members. As he talks, he speaks mostly in the voice of a male dwarf, occasionally dipping into a

higher pitched male voice or a scratchy woman's whisper.

After taking a moment to gloat about how all these refugees from Mulmaster have to live out here in what he calls "the ghetto"—since back in Mulmaster, Clank and other Zhent refugees were relegated to the infamous Zhent Ghetto—he gets right down to business, relating the following:

- The local Zhentarim operate a black market in both Ylraphon proper and the Old City.
- Since crops won't grow around Ylraphon (due to what some say is a curse locals call "the Dragon Blight"), imported food can be sold at prices so high they border on extortion.
- Through go-betweens, black marketeers have long been buying a cooking additive called Sweettongue Sauce from a secretive chef and selling it at a high mark-up.
- No one knows what is in Sweettongue Sauce, but the locals can't get enough of it.
- Lately, their mystery supplier seems to be trying to cut out the middleman, selling the sauce to everyone at a price so low no one could make a profit.
- Clank is pretty sure the source of Sweettongue Sauce works in the kitchen here at the Vandal's Vigor, or at least they used to. He hears the Head Chef and the Sous Chef here both recently stopped showing up for work, but hasn't inquired further.

The Zhentarim are not concerned with the loss in profits as much as they don't like an unknown business partner thinking they can take advantage of locals backed by the Zhents. Clank tells the characters that anyone who finds a way to punish those undercutting the price of Sweettongue Sauce will surely advance their standing in the faction.

Roleplaying Clank

Clank is a mean old bird, missing half the feathers on his head. A kenku gang leader and black marketer encountered in squalor in Mulmaster during the events of *DDEX 2-10 Cloaks and Shadows*, here in Ylraphon he wears nicer clothes and looks better fed.

Trait: Clank is loyal to the Zhentarim, and since he speaks only in mimicry, like all kenku, any orders he passes on are likely conveyed verbatim.

Flaw: Clank's delights in taunting those who have insulted or annoyed him, and enjoys using his mimicry abilities to repeat someone's own words with an insulting gesture or an eye roll.

4. History Lessons

Linked Adventure Hook: Ylraphon has been home to several civilizations, and can be a rich environment for uncovering the

lost history – or treasure—of the humans, orcs, dwarves, or elves who dwelled here in past ages.

Your trip to Ylraphon has been no waste of time. Through the ages elves, orcs, dwarves, then orcs again have conquered and ruled over the city. The orcs again lost the city to humans, who were in turn destroyed by a flight of dragons last century, during the Year of Rogue Dragons.

In your time digging through the dirt and mud, enduring rainy weather, and prowling through crypts and other ruins, you have seen evidence of all these cultures. There are few other sites so rich in diverse antiquities.

One peculiar piece seems a bit out of place. You've found a statuette of a large snake devouring a humanoid figure.

The statuette is a Yuan-ti religious icon celebrating their superiority over the other sentient races. A DC 13 **Intelligence (Religion or History)** check can reveal this. The statue is worth 30 gp to collectors, which can be found in the Hunter's Market.

Looking for a buyer in the market can lead to numbered encounter 2, the Hunter's Market, or to another character who had that encounter. Otherwise, characters trying to sell this item or learn more about it find only curses, as those asked perform superstitious gestures of protection. Such fearful NPCs will then mention the rumored recent sickness as the source of their worries, a sickness that seems to be changing those afflicted into snakes.

5. A Family Affair

Linked Adventure Hook: *A family member, friend, acquaintance, or faction comrade of yours lives in the Old City outside Ylraphon, and you have come to answer a strange letter that seems to be asking for help.*

If the characters come here because of a message from someone they know, read or paraphrase the boxed text below. Otherwise, if they come to the tent of this doomed victim of the curse for some other reason, skip the boxed text entirely, and simply describe howls of misery issuing from a torch lit tent on the edge of the Old City.

Answering the plea for aid via letter, you have arrived in Ylraphon. The message was difficult to decipher, not because of any purposeful attempt to code its meaning, but because as it went on it devolved into incoherent babbling.

One thing was clear. Something is wrong. Seeing Ylraphon's Old City brings no assurance of their safety. Many of the people out here seem to be living in ruins, tents, and muddy holes in the ground.

Before you stands the tent you've been directed to when asking around for the party in need. It is a large tent, made of a sturdy canvas. Warm torch light flows through the flaps, as do the howls of misery.

If the characters come seeking a specific person, that poor soul is currently tied down to a table in this hospice tent. Already deep into their transformation, the worst of those suffering in the tent cannot even pen a legible letter. The place is operated by commoner laypersons worshipping Lathander, with only occasional visits from a spellcaster who runs the nearby shrine, who can do nothing to help.

Many who have fallen ill are gathered here, with attendants trying to make them comfortable, and they are the ones howling. If a character comes seeking a familiar face, they don't find it, as the one they seek has been terribly transformed, though Wisdom checks with appropriate skills help them identify that victim. This advanced victim now makes only hissing sounds. Their body is almost completely covered in scales. One eye remains as it was, but the other is a reptile's eye. The table beneath this poor soul shakes as they struggle for freedom.

Tactics

If set free, the **yuan-ti pureblood** will attack for one round and then flee through the Old City and into the Flooded Forest. If the character insists on following, you can have the pair run into the other characters (if they aren't together already) who can help fight it, or the character can square off against it alone. If they face off and the pureblood is unable to flee, have the pureblood use its poison spray once, and then adjust its hit points so it is defeated in one or two strikes.

Diplomacy

The curse did not go well for this individual. They have near completely lost their mind and reasoning with them enough to get any answers is out of the question.

6. The Bodyguard

Linked Adventure Hook: Upon arriving in Ylraphon's Old City, your prowess was noticed by the town guard landing you a job guarding a council member. See section 9. **Meeting Deribis.**

7. Chasing the Dragon

Linked Adventure Hook: A sect of the Cult of the Dragon is rumored to have agents among the refugees who live outside of Ylraphon, attempting to supplant the leadership there to

build a stronghold for their organization. You have come to investigate.

Characters led to this crypt are interested in tracking down members of the Cult of the Dragon. This is the group that not long ago attacked cities and gathered treasure to please the dark god Tiamat.

Rumors have led just south of the Moonsea to the city of Ylraphon. The Cult of the Dragon spread terror and destruction across Faerûn not long ago, and some within the factions believe they may try again.

Carefully asking around and using information provided by a Harper agent with a common goal to find the cultists, you have arrived at a crypt. Perhaps answers lie within.

Inside the dark crypt hides a cowering halfling. Once a member of the Cult of the Dragon, has been affected by the Serpent's Kiss. He and his companions tried to remove the affliction after they began showing signs. Through trial and error they discovered that they were not infected by a disease, but instead were subjected to a curse.

The halfling, Fember Stouthandle, was an assassin for the Cult with family in the Ylraphon area (his cousin works for the Town Watch). As the curse took over his body, his mind changed as well. He saw his companions as weak for trying to remove this "blessing" from themselves, so he stalked them through town and murdered them one by one.

Now Fember's skin is scaly, and his eyes have become like those of a serpent. His favorite gift is a set of retractable fangs that can inject a venom into those he bites. He loves his new gifts, believing is being transformed into a green half-dragon rather than a yuan-ti. He is willing to speak with the characters while he hides in the shadows.

Tactics

Fember sees the party as below him, and not worth fighting. If attacked, he is surprised by his last 'blessing: he is able to turn into a **swarm of poisonous snakes** as a reaction the moment he is attacked. He uses this ability to slip through cracks in the crypt and escape. If even one snake lives, it can resume Fember's form.

What Fember Knows

- The Cult of the Dragon has continued to seek out treasure and powerful magic
- They seek to again unleash their dark queen into the world
- Their latest defeat and left them weak and scattered
- Fember and his group came to Ylraphon, seeking a powerful druid who was once the trusted adviser

of the Red Wyrmspeaker, Severin, and was said to dwell in the Flooded Forest.

- The search was interrupted by the blessings the Cult members received days after their arrival.
- Being weak, the others tried to remove the blessing, but failed.
- They were treating it as a disease at first, but then the cleric of their group began calling it a curse.

Roleplaying Fember

Once a devoted member of the Cult of the Dragon, Fember has succumbed to and embraced the effects of the Serpent's Kiss, believing them to be a gift from Tiamat.

Trait: Fember is shrewd and always watches his back.

Flaw: Fember is also paranoid. He doesn't trust anyone and sees plots where there are none

8. But Did They Stop and Ask If They Should?

Linked Adventure Hook: *You've found paper handbills directing the courageous and curious to come to Ylraphon to see the menagerie of exotic beasts recently brought to town, said to amaze all but the most seasoned travelers.*

Ylraphon doesn't appear as half as bad as you expected. It's no Waterdeep, mind you, but travelers would have had you believe the place was entirely buried under the nearby Flooded Forest.

Following the instructions on the flier, you've made your way to a very large tent in the Old City made up of alternating red and white cloth. A large spire stands tall in the center.

The drizzling rain is beginning to become a downpour, making you eager to go inside.

The character has come to Morti's Magnificent Menagerie! Morti's is a sideshow event that travels the countryside sharing all their magnificent animals and performers.

A brave (and foolish) noble from Waterdeep, Mortimyr "Morti" Adarbrent paid handsomely for the capture of exotic beasts to be part of his sideshow. His aunt allowed him to transport his first few creatures, hired performers, and equipment aboard a ship she owned, *The Blue Phantom*, a few months ago. He is doing well in the "boomtown" economy created by the wealth of adventurers in Ylraphon, and plans to take the show around the Moonsea when the money dries up here.

"Come one, come all! Gaze upon the most fearsome creatures you'll ever meet. They are cunning hunters, merciless in their murder! But don't worry folks, we have them under control. Morti hires only the most capable of wranglers!"

For an entry fee of 5 sp, one can see several monsters that have been captured for Morti. There are also trapeze performers, jugglers, tightrope walkers, fire eaters, and other performers. During this adventure, there are no events planned, but costumers are welcome to (for the entry fee) come in and see the beasts and watch the performers practice.

The creatures are not terribly well-trained, but they obey basic commands, and they are not being treated cruelty. Some genuinely large and exotic beasts are here. The most unusual include an allosaurus, a pteranodon, two axe beaks, a crocodile, a saber-toothed tiger, three tigers, and a pair of velociraptors. If a character pays the entry fee and spends time with the animals, they receive the story award "Hold onto Your Butts!"

One of the caged beasts is a "snake woman", a performer suffering from the illness spreading through the Old City and the rest of Ylraphon. This commoner is covered in scales and one arm has turned into a python. She has also lost her mind, and has the intelligence of a common snake (Intelligence 1).

Roleplaying Morti

Come one, come all and see my amazing menagerie... and if you're sick, I have the cure for what ails you.

Trait: Morti can always find someone to scam for a coin or a free meal.

Flaw: Eventually Morti's antics force him to flee any town he stays in for long, but he may just setup a torches and pitch forks stand just beforehand.

9. Meeting Deribis

If the characters respond to any of the fliers, they will come to meet Deribis at her office in New Hillsfar neighborhood of the Old City.

When you arrive at the council in the New Hillsfar area, from which the Old City Alliance administers, you are immediately ushered into Deribis' private office.

"I must ask your help for a matter of foremost importance. You may have noticed that in recent days, the Town Watch is much more vigilant about who enters the Palisade gates from the Old City, and the inns within Ylraphon proper are turning away newcomers. They won't say why, because I have asked them not to, in order to avoid a panic, but the reason is a mysterious illness out here in the Old City, one that is growing worse by the day. If it's not treated soon, I believe it could infect and likely kill hundreds of the people living here.

"Over the last 20 days, an increasing number of people in the town have been struck by a strange plague. Clerics of both Lathander and Umberlee have failed in attempts to cure it.

"Now, we believe the illness to be reaching a critical phase. Unfortunately, no one will admit to the weakness of being ill. Those that are perceived as weak in the Old City are often robbed or worse. Until we can make life better for these people, it is survival of the fittest out here."

Roleplaying Deribis

Deribis is the member of the Old City Alliance. She is desperate to find a cure for the "disease."

Trait: Deribis is always polite, respectful, and diplomatic.

Flaw: Deribis is a true believer in the village and will do anything to advance it.

What Deribis Knows

She doesn't know much about the situation because the villagers won't talk to her about the problems. She can take the PCs to some villagers that they can persuade for more information.

- The symptoms of the illness vary wildly, but in each case it seems to involve horrifying transformations in the victim's body and sometimes their mind.
- Many reports indicate these transformations tend to give the victims reptilian, draconic, serpentine, or otherwise bestial traits.
- There is no one else Deribis can call on for help. Within the Palisade, Ylraphon proper is managed by the Merchants Council, but out here in the Old City, they don't pay much attention.
- Those living out here are mostly refugees, and they have created their own council, the Old City Alliance, to govern life out here.
- The Alliance is made up of one member from each city that has a large number of refugees living here. Currently Mulmaster, Phlan, Hillsfar, and Hulburg have seats in the Alliance. Deribis represents those from Phlan,
- Of the refugees, some are here for political reasons, some are here after fleeing disasters, and others are outlaws on the run. Few are especially open to answering questions from the Alliance.
- The Alliance does not have an established constabulary as they do not have the funds. The Ylraphon Town Watch is supposed to help keep the peace out here as well, but they are still in the process of being reorganized and currently stay within the Palisade.
- Between donations from the temples, the Alliance, and personal funds, Deribis can offer 200 gp to learn what is happening to the town.

The characters can return to Deribis at any time with an update on their progress or to seek more information, in fact she encourages them to do so. If the characters put together enough information

about the local perpetrator of these troubles—particular about knowledge of rituals—Deribis will likely suggest Shali as the culprit. If this is the case, Deribis will want to lead the characters to Shali's shack atop the sunken Silver Dragon Inn and knock on the young woman's door herself.

Moving the Investigation Forward

If the characters devote a good deal of time and energy to inquiring with the locals to find out what they know, or if they seem to be failing in their skill checks and bogging things down, you can speed their quest along by granting them the clues to find Lady Crowngold, or by simply having her appear at one of the local taverns or wherever else the characters are.

10. Lady Crowngold's Cottage

Lady Crowngold (known in arcane circles simply as "the Crowngold") is something of a mystery, and never says anything about her personal history. Few know she is secretly a noblewoman of Ylraphon proper who only uses magic under this false identity.

During this adventure can usually be found in her cottage, where the locals have been consulting her on certain arcane matters. However, she can also appear at the Vandal's Vigor, or anywhere else in the Old City or Ylraphon you need her to be. Once approached, she will ask not to discuss these matters in public, and will lead the characters to her cottage. The text below assumes the characters have made their way to her cottage by way of suggestions from NPCs they have met or by following the Crowngold herself.

You approach a simple cottage, built in the shadows of two twisting, impossibly tall twin ivory towers that house a new school of magic known as Brixmarsh. Though this cottage is modest, compared to the way most live out here it seems nearly luxurious. A thin plume of smoke rises from the chimney and the smell of fresh pie almost drowns out the smell of mud and rot that pervades the Old City.

Entering the cottage, the characters find it is warm, welcoming, comfortable, and magically larger on the inside than on the outside. The furniture is in good condition and the home is clean and organized. Books with titles in languages such as Draconic, Gith, Primordial, and Celestial line shelves that take up the entire east wall, though if a creature besides Lady Crowngold attempts to touch a book here, it vanishes at once.

All of the other teachers at the newly-opened school of magic known as Brixmarsh reside within the two nearby towers where the school is based, and non-students are seldom permitted. Since the

Crowngold, for personal reasons, chooses not to take quarters in the towers, she is the most accessible to the inquisitive residents of the Old City. The locals have been inventing excuses to ask her questions related to her great knowledge in matters of *Arcana* and *History* (her total modifier for either skill roll is +13!), chiefly due to their curiosity about the school itself.

Crowngold is tight-lipped about the school, deferring questions about it to the Headmaster, the Mulmasterite wizard Salvar Brix. However, she is happy to discuss topics unrelated to the school or her personal history. Lady Crowngold can provide any information about dragons and yuan-ti that the characters may need. She knows all the information about yuan-ti included in the *Monster Manual* and *Volo's Guide to Monsters*, as well as being an expert on the history of Ylraphon itself.

However, she apologizes to the characters for her need to hurry—she has a great traveler's chest and ponderously overstuffed backpack sitting by the door, into which she is inserting a last few items. The Lady casually explains, as if it were normal, that she is soon headed to the Outer Planes, on urgent business she cannot disclose. She says she must leave within the hour, and won't be back any time soon. Therefore, this is the one chance the characters will have to visit with her during this adventure.

She normally barter for spells or service for her consulting services and lore, but for adventurers she will often trade for an interesting anecdote about a strange or exciting thing that occurred in their travels. However, if the characters say they are working for Deribis or trying to save the denizens of the Old City, she will offer her knowledge for free.

- She knows the transformations befalling the locals are caused by a transmutative curse, not a disease.
- The curse is increasing in effect and will be complete in less than two days, when the moon will be new.
- It seems to be a combination of an ingested alchemical weakening agent and religious ritual. Someone in the Old City must be tainting a popular source of food.
- She has studied the corpse of a local gnome transformed by the curse who went mad and leapt to her death from a great height. The alchemical reagent she found in his blood is derived from a rare spice said to be sacred to the yuan-ti god Merrshaulk.
- This suggests to Lady Crowngold that the creator of this ritual is one of the yuan-ti warlocks worshipping Merrshaulk, known as pit masters.
- The main ritual would have to be cast somewhere within a dozen or so miles of here to be effective, but in a large and prepared ritual space that would

be hard to miss, so nowhere within the town. However, it would likely employ a closer, lesser ritual, conducted separately, to “boost” the effects of the larger one. So there must be at least two ritualists, one near, one far.

- Someone with a deep understanding of rituals would be required to prepare the victims’ bodies for the transformation, but the Crowngold is certain no one at the school is familiar with this area of yuan-ti lore.
- The local ritualist must therefore be someone knowledgeable in rituals and alchemy, with access to food. (If given this information, Deribis realizes that Shali is the most likely person in town to have that kind of knowledge.)
- If Shali’s name is mentioned, Lady Crowngold recalls that was the name of a former apprentice of the school’s headmaster Salvar Brix, before he opened the school, but knows little else besides that she was rejected for some reason.
- Salvar Brix is away for at least a tenday visiting the Tower of the Cloaks in Mulmaster, and cannot be consulted in time to help.

Roleplaying Lady Crowngold

The Crowngold (as she is known in arcane circles) is a dark-skinned female half-elf of drow descent, with flowing blond tresses and an epic memory for history and magical lore. Empires that predate the rise of the humanoid races of the modern Realms, such as those of the dragons and the ancestors of the yuan-ti, are an area of specialty for her, as are the Outer Planes. She is newly arrived in the Old City, and some locals have claimed to have an eerie feeling of knowing her from somewhere, though no one can put their finger on it.

Trait: Lady Crowngold is an eager scholar of ancient lore and arcane metaphysics, and happy to share what she knows with those who show the proper respect.

Flaw: Crowngold is sometimes overly excited when she gets to explain arcane lore to others, like a teacher who is too enthusiastic about her subject, talking so fast anyone taking notes must ask her to slow down. It is as if she has kept all her lore to herself for many years, and now she is overflowing like a broken dam. She is also very secretive and defensive about her ties to the town and Salvar Brix.

When the conversation is over, Lady Crowngold grabs her overstuffed backpack, then opens the traveling trunk, revealing a magical staircase inside leading down, and steps in. After 1 minute, the trunk disappears as well. If she is attacked for some reason, she simply vanishes. Once she has been gone from her cottage for one minute, anyone still inside the cottage is teleported outside. The cottage vanishes as well.

If anyone attempts to follow Lady Crowngold into the magical trunk, they briefly find themselves in a bewildering large city, filled with exotic humanoids

of various races and fantastic architecture, with even more buildings hanging above them in the sky like stalactites. They see no sign of Lady Crowngold, but hear her voice in their heads saying “You don’t belong here...” Then they character immediately returns to the Old City, appearing outside the cottage.

The Silver Dragon Inn

The Silver Dragon Inn was once a great hall in the original elven city of Ylraphon, named in honor of a silver dragon who dwelled there, Pharyssolnyth. The orc warchief who first conquered through the city used the tavern as his personal office, and later a feast hall. When humans finally came to rule the region, they made it a tavern, and an excellent one, with marvelous cuisine. Before a flight of enraged dragons destroyed the town, the legendary Volo made a point of stopping here whenever he was in the South Moonsea.

Though the structure survived many conquests and rebuildings, once it was abandoned in the wake of the raging dragons’ assault, the ever-encroaching swamps of the Flooded Forest finally claimed it. Today, it sits in a deep pond on the north end of the Old City, near the Hunt Trail.

While the structure is nearly completely submerged, only the first floor is flooded. Some accident of physics or ancient magic keeps the upper floors filled with air rather than water. Shali uses the tavern as a home, where she enters through a hole in the ceiling. A small shack is built around the roof. If the characters arrive hear following rumors of the tavern, refer to *Shali’s Shakedown*.

Part 2. Shali's Shakedown

Estimated Duration: 50 minutes

The adventurers' investigation has led them to this lost inn, mostly submerged. The encounters here use the map from **Appendix. Maps**.

General Features

The general features of the Silver Dragon Inn are as follows:

Light and Visibility. Dim light filters in through the trap door during the day. Otherwise there is no lighting throughout the Inn.

Sounds. An eerie silence persists throughout the inn, broken only occasionally by a creak of shifting wood or an echo of dripping water.

A. Shali's Faux Hole

If lead to Shali's home by Deribis, read or paraphrase:

You arrive at the home of Shali. Deribis goes to the door and knocks. "Shali, I would like to speak with you." She waits for about a minute with no response before trying the door. "The door is locked. She must not be home. Maybe we should come back later."

Shali's home is a small wooden shack that has been built atop the stone ceiling of the Silver Dragon Inn. Her home has sparse furniture and she appears to sleep on a pile of straw on the floor.

The door is locked and can be picked with a DC 13 **Dexterity (Thieves Tools)** check or kicked in with a DC 10 **Strength (Athletics)** roll. A **Passive Perception** or active **Wisdom (Perception)** of DC 14 will notice that there is a trap door underneath the straw.

1a. False Foyer – Top Floor

Shali and her co-conspirators enter the Silver Dragon Inn through a murky pool of swamp water, where they can swim down to the original entrance of the inn and enter unseen. This room has been trapped to destroy or dissuade intruders.

The trapdoor opens into a room below. There is no ladder or rope. It appears to be about a 10-foot drop.

Once the characters descend, read or paraphrase:

Inside, the room appears to be the top floor of an inn. There are a handful of rooms, though the doors and walls have all fallen into disrepair, making this into one large hall albeit with many tripping dangers. A tattered rug lies in the center of the hall. A set of stairs at the end of the room lead further down.

Explosive runes are inscribed in the center of the hall. Anyone except a yuan-ti who steps on or touches the glyph will cause it to be triggered. If the rug is moved, a character can see the glyph with a DC 14 **Intelligence (Investigation)** roll.

Dispel magic can remove the glyph, but trying to scrape it away will cause it to trigger. The explosive rune affects a 20-foot radius, doing thunder damage and alerting the complex. Characters may make a **Dexterity saving throw** with the DC indicated below to take half damage.

Adjusting the Trap

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

- **Very Weak:** Save DC 12, (9) 2d8 thunder damage
- **Weak:** Save DC 13, (13) 3d8 thunder damage
- **Average:** Save DC 14, (18) 4d8 thunder damage
- **Strong:** Save DC 15, (22) 5d8 thunder damage
- **Very strong:** Save DC 15, (27) 6d8 thunder damage

Treasure

If the various rooms are searched, no roll is required. There are 26 gp, 8 sp, and a *scroll of protection vs poison*.

2a. Dining Hall – Main Floor

If the explosive rune in the previous room was not set off, read the following:

This room has several tables surrounded by chairs. A bar sits at the far end of the room near what must have been the front door. Mud seeps in through around the door and through the broken windows. Opposite the bar is a performance stage, red dusty curtains are partially open revealing a few piles of detritus. A small supply room is positioned against the west wall and a long bar runs parallel to the same.

If the explosive runes have been set off, Shali's guards are prepared. Read the below:

Loud crashes come from the room below. As you peer in you see a large room. Tables have been flipped over onto their sides and movement can be seen from behind them. A large stage to the side of the room has old red curtains drawn shut, obscuring what is behind.

Use the encounter from the guard room, but keep in mind the guards are using the tables for cover. Exploring the room uncovers the same treasure regardless of whether an encounter happens here or not. A trap door can be found behind the bar, it is not hidden and requires no check to find. Opening the door reveals a ladder that heads down to the cellar.

Treasure

A painting depicting an enormous snake coiled around and through the city of Hillsfar (worth 250 gp) hangs on the wall behind the bar. 5 wooden mugs carved with the Silver Dragon Inn logo can be found in good condition and would be valuable to a collector (50 gp).

3a. Guard Room - Cellar

This storage room has been repurposed into a guard room.

This long room is sparse and holds only a few chairs, barrels, and crates. Waves of energy pulse through the air, creating an unpleasant breeze. Purple light emanates through the cracks of what must be a hidden door on the east wall. Weapon racks line the walls of this room.

Several cultists stand in this room, guarding the ritual and waiting for further instructions from Shali. A **Yuan-ti broodguard**, 2 **thugs**, and an **apprentice wizard** share this room. The thugs and wizards all have snake like mutations.

Adjusting the Encounter

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

- **Very Weak:** Remove one **thug** and the **yuan-ti broodguard**
- **Weak:** Remove both **thugs**
- **Strong:** Add two **thugs** and an **apprentice wizard**
- **Very strong:** Add one **yuan-ti broodguard**

Treasure

Shali stores equipment here to arm the new yuan-ti once the ritual is completed. Many of the items are in disrepair, but some can be recovered and sold. 8 longswords (60 gp), 4 shortswords (20 gp), and 4 shortbows (50 gp).

In addition, one of the barrels in this room is full of Sweettongue Sauce that can be sold for 10 gp. On top

of that barrel is a scroll case which contains the secret recipe Shali uses to make Sweettongue Sauce, along with a letter to Sitalash signed by Shali, describing all the places she has sold Sweettongue Sauce in the last month, at an extremely low price (the better to taint more victims with the alchemical ingredient).

3b. The Ritual Chamber - Cellar

Shali is in her inn-turned-home performing a ritual that extends the range of the primary ritual being performed in the Flooded Forest. Shali is a **Yuan-ti Pureblood** and is defended by two **giant constrictor snakes**.

As you open the hidden door, the purple light that was barely being held back by the door, floods into the guard room. Inside you can see a woman with her arms raised to the sky invoking power from a purple crystal. The stone must be about the size of a human fist. She turns as you enter, and with no sign of emotion points to you, letting out a long hiss...

Adjusting the Encounter

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

- **Very Weak:** Replace both **giant constrictor snakes** with one **thug**
- **Weak:** Replace one **giant constrictor snake** with a **thug**
- **Strong:** Add two **thugs**
- **Very strong:** Add three **thugs**

Tactics

Shali and her allies fight to the death to prevent anyone from putting an end to the ritual. A few rounds of fighting are not enough to disrupt her work.

Diplomacy

Diplomacy is not possible. If all of Shali's defenders are defeated and she is reduced to half HP or less, she can be convinced to surrender with a DC 13 **Charisma (Persuasion)** or **(Intimidation)** check.

Treasure

100 gp in ritual components and a potion of healing. The purple stone used in the ritual is a **corrupted flamesoul stone**. Shali wears a pair of **Slippers of Spider Climbing**.

What the Yuan-ti Know

- The compound was introduced into the food at the request of a yuan-ti pit master Sitalash.

- He is planning some type of ritual to bless the “abandoned peoples of the Moonsea”.
- The ritual will be complete in less than two days, on the first night of the new moon.
- The ritual will take place at a yuan-ti temple in the Flooded Forest known as the Altar of the Smoldering Eye, which was once a temple to the orc god Gruumsh.
- The Altar of the Smoldering Eye is 10 miles away from here, requiring several hours of travel on foot through the Flooded Forest. The thugs or Shali can provide the exact location of the temple based on landmarks, but cannot give exact directions.
- Shali was to meet Sitalash at the temple after the ritual is complete.

If the characters did not capture any of their opponents, they find this same information on the body of Shali or another of their fallen foes. They can make a DC 13 **Intelligence (Arcana)** check on the ritual to determine that this is a “booster” ritual and stopping this ritual just bought them some time. The diary also includes a crudely drawn map showing the location of the yuan-ti temple, 10 miles from here in the Flooded Forest, though a safe route through the swamp to get there is not described.

Roleplaying Shali

A failed apprentice to the wizard Salvar Brix, Shali was unable to grasp the intricacies of magic, and so Salvar dismissed her. Having already disgraced her family when left home to become an apprentice, she had nowhere to go after her rejection, and so she became a cook and waitress in Ylraphon. Though she failed at becoming a wizard, she has an understanding of ritual magic. Shali was once human, but has been utterly transformed by Sitalash, losing any semblance of humanity. Old friends and cherished family are both strangers to her. She remembers her hatred for Salvar Brix, however, and bitterly resents the school of magic he has built nearby, which gives her added motivation.

Trait: Shali is determined to succeed at her task at any cost.

Flaw: Shali can no longer notice social queues and can be confused by behavior that she doesn’t expect. She also has a vengeful hatred of wizards and their apprentices.

An **Intelligence (Religion)** check can provide the following information, if the characters did not already obtain it from Lady Crowngold:

- DC 11: The yuan-ti worship three main gods, once of which is a being known as Merrshaulk.
- DC 13: Merrshaulk is known as the Master of the Pit, and is also said to be in an ages-long slumber.
- DC 15: Priests of Merrshaulk are known as Pit Masters and are yuan-ti malison warlocks.

Conclusion

When the characters return to Deribis, she is anxiously awaiting them:

“My friends, you were gone for some time. Were you able to find out what has happened to my people?”

If Deribis knew the characters were seeking Shali, she will ask about her as well. Other than asking these urgent questions, she patiently listens to the characters describe what happened in the Silver Dragon Inn and what they have learned about the illness.

If they were successful, she happily pays them the reward of 200 gp, and also gives them a note of introduction to the dwarf Jotan Silverhammer, lieutenant guildmaster of the Adventurer’s Guild of Ylraphon. She suggest they inquire about joining the Adventurers Guild, and thanks the characters again. She also hints at more work to come.

“Thank you for your help. I know the Old City would be left to fall to this fate if it weren’t for you. Please accept this humble reward. You deserve so much more, but it is all we have to give along with our gratitude.

“If you go visit Jotan Silverhammer in Ylraphon, please tell him I sent you. He will allow you to join the Adventurers Guild and waive the membership fee.”

If you do not intend to follow this game session up with the next part of this trilogy, *SRCC1-2 Down the River of Snakes*, Deribis informs the characters that she will be organizing an expedition into the Flooded Forest to seek the temple that will leave in the morning, then thanks them once more for doing their part to save the Old City.

If you will be running *SRCC1-2 Down the River of Snakes*, read or paraphrase the following:

Deribis clears her throat, considering her words carefully, as if what she will say next is of great importance. “Once you have conducting this or any other necessary business, I have another task for you, if you are willing. Given this new information, I will hopefully be able to obtain a greater reward for this next quest, given the greater danger. Obviously, someone needs to make their way through the Flooded Forest and stop the yuan-ti at this temple from completing their foul ritual. It is too late to leave now—no one should be in the Flooded Forest after dark, and I would like to find you more information if possible before you depart—but if you agree to perform this service, you can rest up for the night and I will send in the morning with all the guidance and assistance I can muster. Can I count on your help to save these suffering people from a fate worse than death?”

If the characters agree, they have the opportunity to prepare and take a long rest before proceeding to *SRCC1-2 Down the River of Snakes*.

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
Apprentice wizard	50
Giant constrictor snake	450
Thug	100
Yuan-ti Broodguard	450
Yuan-ti Pureblood	200

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Discover the source of the problem	250

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 450 **experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 600 **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
Feasting snake statuette	30
Silver Dragon Inn Guest Rooms	26.8
Ritual Components	100
Snake painting	250
Silver Dragon Inn Mugs	50
Shali's Weapons	130
Barrel of Sweettongue Sauce	10
Deribis' payment	200
Total Possible	796.8

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*.

Spell Scroll: Protection from Poison

Scroll, uncommon

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Potion of Healing

Potion, uncommon

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Slippers of Spider Climbing

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

While you wear these light shoes, you can move up, down, and across vertical surfaces and upside down along ceilings, while leaving your hands free. You have a climbing speed equal to your walking speed. However, the slippers don't allow you to move this way on a slippery surface, such as one covered by ice or oil.

These slippers are made of black silk embroidered with spider webs. Though they were taken off a drow the yuan-ti waylaid, they are not drow crafted.

Corrupted Flamesoul Stone

Trinket, unique

This fist sized crystal emits a pulsing purple light. The pulses change to match the heartbeat of any who carry it (assuming they have a heartbeat). Casting *detect magic* on the Corrupted Flamesoul Stone shows a slight hint of transmutation magic emanating from within. The light from the stone is a distinct color from the comet that has recently been seen over Ylraphon, though you can't help but to feel they are connected.

Note: This does not count as a magic item for purposes of counting the number of permanent magic items you possess.

Player Rewards

The characters earn downtime and renown in accordance with the guidance prescribed by the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Zhentarim characters who recover the secret recipe for Sweettongue Sauce or defeat Shali receive **one additional renown point**

Story Awards

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award:

Hold onto Your Butts! Your character has now seen the following beasts, and if they have the Wild Shape ability and otherwise meet the requirements, they may change into them: allosaurus, pteranodon, axe beak, crocodile, saber-toothed tiger, tiger, and velociraptor.

Characters receive this story award if they visited Morti's Magnificent Menagerie.

Local Pursuit. You have become involved with a local institution in Ylraphon. You may choose **one** (and only one) of the "Local Pursuit" story award options described in **Player Handout 4Y: Local Pursuits** for successfully completing this adventure. This signifies your character having the opportunity to become more involved with day-to-day life and significant institutions in Ylraphon. You may gain only one of the story award options listed for completing this adventure, though you may later gain additional ones if other adventures grant these story award options.

This award is available to characters who successfully completed this adventure.

Ylraphon Adventurers Guild. You may join the Ylraphon Adventurers Guild if you discovered the cause of the illness affecting the Old City, if you obtained one of the Local Pursuit story awards (as described above), or if you are willing to pay 50 gp initial dues as described in **Player Handout 4Z: The Ylraphon Adventurers Guild**. This grants access to the Guild Delving downtime activity described in that handout, as well as other benefits to be seen in future modules set in Ylraphon.

This award is available to characters who successfully completed 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:

Clank. Clank is a mean old bird, missing half the feathers on his head. A kenku gang leader and black marketer encountered in squalor in Mulmaster during the events of DDEX 2-10 Cloaks and Shadows, here in Ylraphon he wears nicer clothes and looks better fed.

Fember. Once a devoted member of the Cult of the Dragon, Fember has succumbed to and embraced the effects of the Serpent's Kiss, believing them to be a gift from Tiamat.

Morti. Come one, come all and see my amazing menagerie... and if you're sick, I have the cure for what ails you.

Deribis. Deribis is the member of the Old City Alliance. She is desperate to find a cure for the "disease."

Lady Crowngold. The Crowngold (as she is known in arcane circles) is a dark-skinned female half-elf of drow descent, with flowing blond tresses and an epic memory for history and magical lore. Empires that predate the rise of the humanoid races of the modern Realms, such as those of the dragons and the ancestors of the yuan-ti, are an area of specialty for her, as are the Outer Planes. She is newly arrived in the Old City, and some locals have claimed to have an eerie feeling of knowing her from somewhere, though no one can put their finger on it.

Shali. A failed apprentice to the wizard Salvar Brix, Shali was unable to grasp the intricacies of magic, and so Salvar dismissed her. Having already disgraced her family when left home to become an apprentice, she had nowhere to go after her rejection, and so she became a cook and waitress in Ylraphon. Though she failed at becoming a wizard, she has an understanding of ritual magic. Shali was once human, but has been utterly transformed by Sitalash, losing any semblance of humanity. Old friends and cherished family are both strangers to her. She remembers her hatred for Salvar Brix, however, and bitterly resents the school of magic he has built nearby, which gives her added motivation.

Appendix. Monster/NPC Statistics

Apprentice Wizard

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Spellcasting. The apprentice is a 1st-level spellcaster, its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following wizard spells prepared.

Cantrips: *fire bolt, mending, prestidigitation*
1st level (2 slots): *burning hands, disguise self, shield*

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

Giant Constrictor Snake

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 60 (8d12+8)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Skills Stealth +4

Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages —

Challenge 2 (200 XP)

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 16). Until this grapple ends, the creature is restrained, and the snake can't constrict another target.

Thug

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 11 (leather armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Pack Tactics. The thug has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the thug's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Multiattack. The thug makes two melee attacks.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

Yuan-ti Broodguard

Medium humanoid (yuan-ti), neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (7d8+14)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)	11 (+0)	4 (-3)

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +4, Wis +2

Skills Perception +2

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Mental Resistance. The broodguard has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't paralyze it.

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the broodguard can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls it makes during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Actions

Multiattack. The broodguard makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) slashing damage.

Yuan-ti Pureblood

Medium humanoid (yuan-ti), neutral evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 40 (9d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Deception +6, Perception +3, Stealth +3

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The yuan-ti's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). The yuan-ti can innately cast the following spell s, requiring no material components:

At will: *animal friendship* (snakes only)

3/day each: *poison spray*, *suggestion*

Mental Resistance. The yuan-ti has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't paralyze it.

Actions

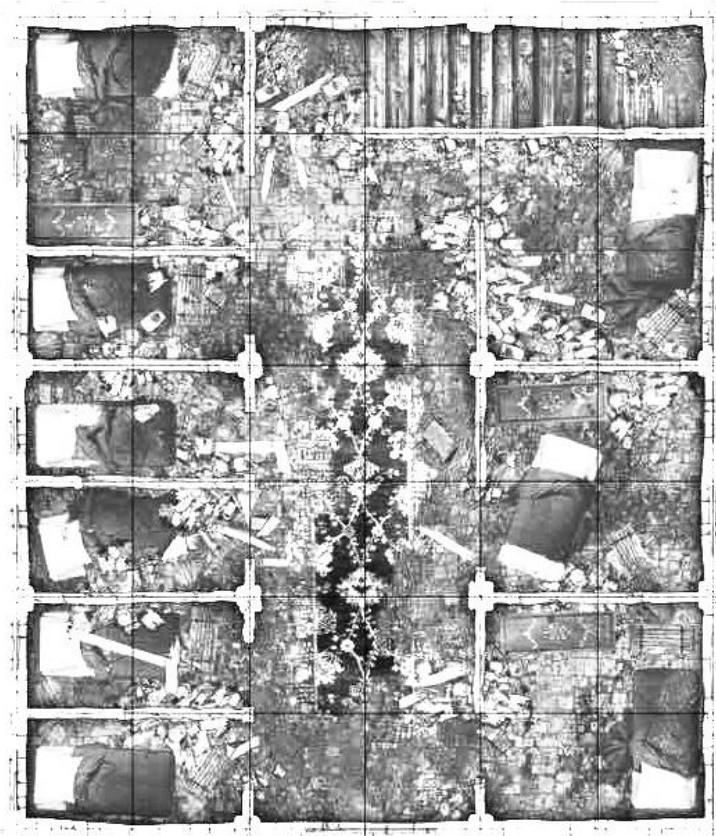
Multiattack. The yuan-ti makes two melee attacks

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

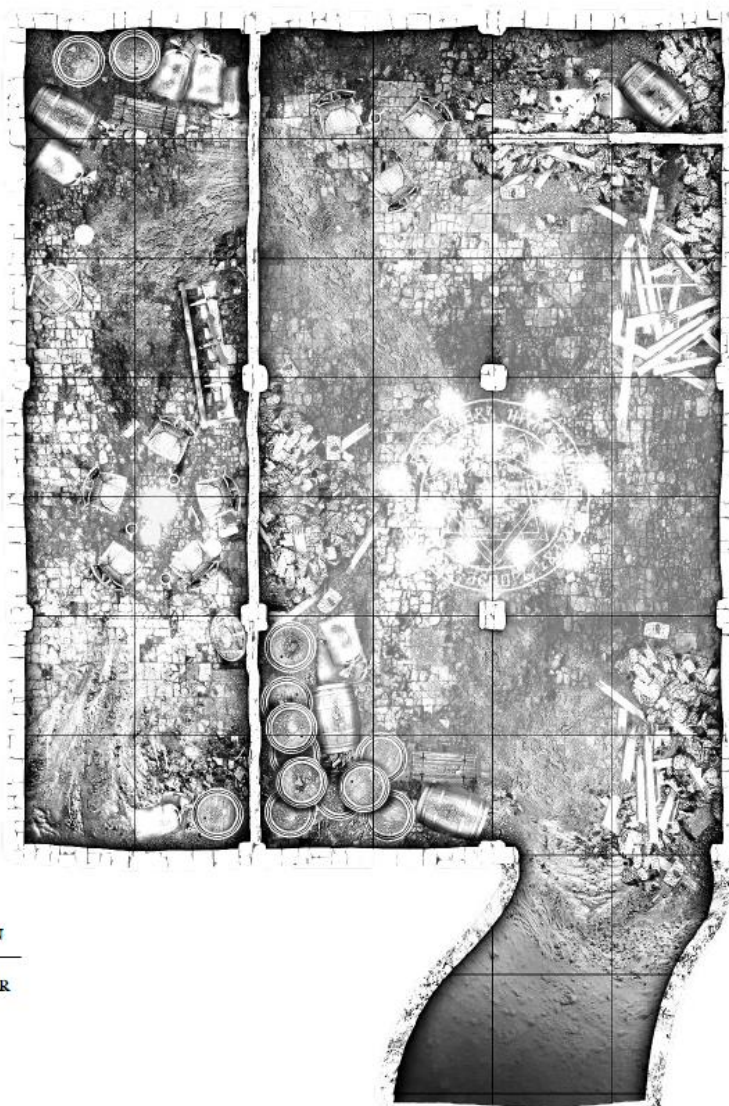
Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage.

Appendix. Maps

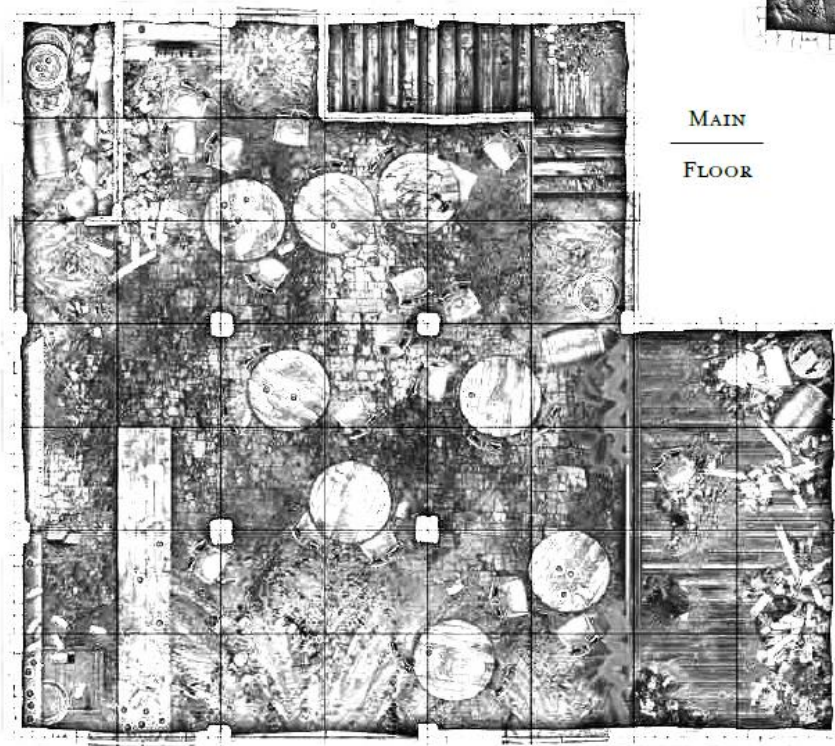
TOP
FLOOR



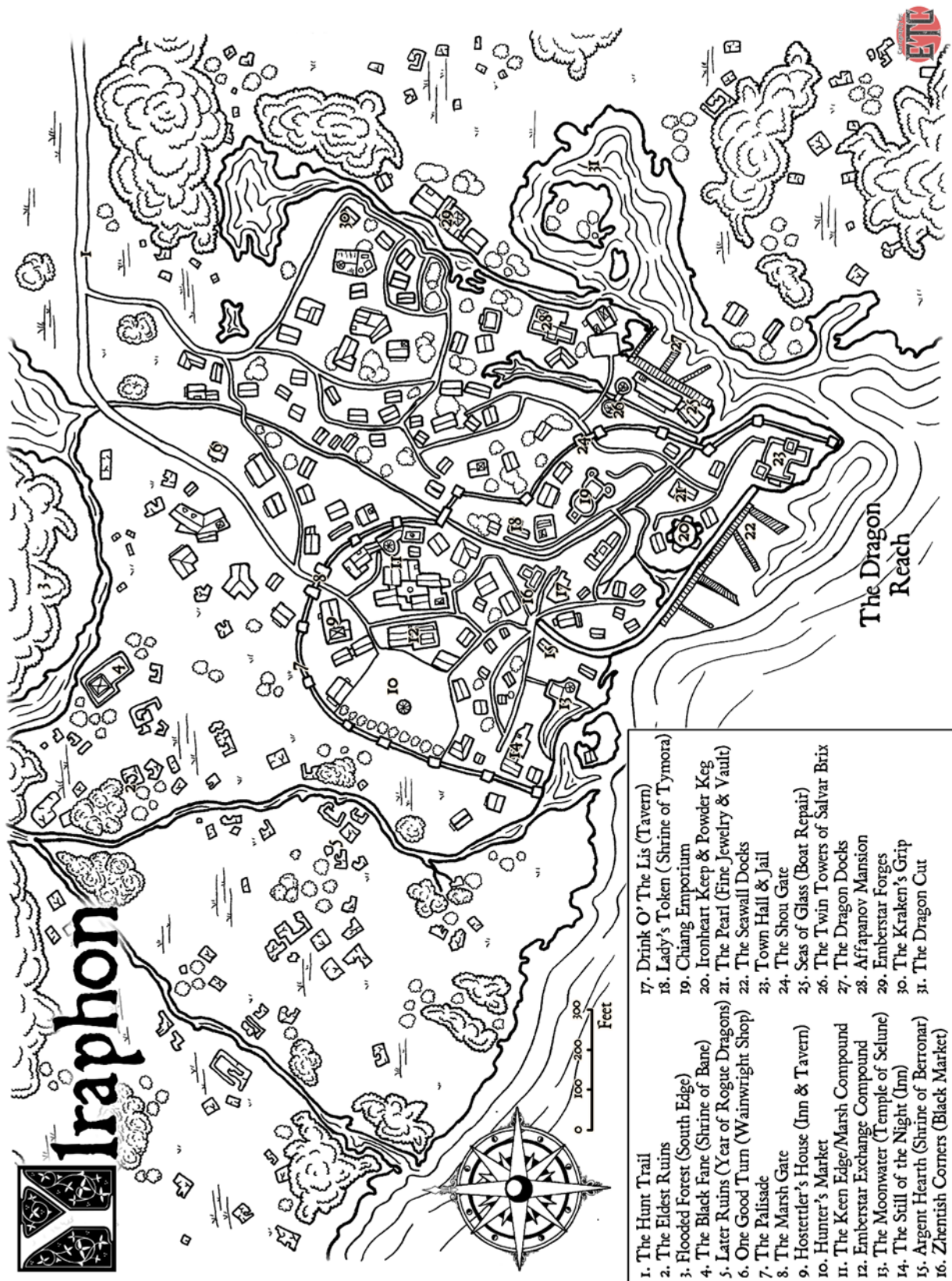
CELLAR
FLOOR



MAIN
FLOOR



Player Handout 1. Ylraphon



Player Handout 3. Magic Item

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

Slippers of Spider Climbing

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

While you wear these light shoes, you can move up, down, and across vertical surfaces and upside down along ceilings, while leaving your hands free. You have a climbing speed equal to your walking speed. However, the slippers don't allow you to move this way on a slippery surface, such as one covered by ice or oil.

These slippers are made of black silk embroidered with spider webs. Though they were taken off a drow the yuan-ti waylaid, they are not drow crafted.

Corrupted Flamesoul Stone

Trinket, unique

This fist sized crystal emits a pulsing purple light. The pulses change to match the heartbeat of any who carry it (assuming they have a heartbeat). Casting *detect magic* on the Corrupted Flamesoul Stone shows a slight hint of transmutation magic emanating from within. The light from the stone is a distinct color from the comet that has recently been seen over Ylraphon, though you can't help but to feel they are connected.

Note: *This does not count as a magic item for purposes of counting the number of permanent magic items you possess.*

Player Handout 4X. Story Award

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award. If you are printing these out for your characters, print as many as you may need to ensure that any eligible character receives a copy:

Hold onto Your Butts!

Your character has now seen the following beasts, and if they have the Wild Shape ability and otherwise meet the requirements, they may change into them: allosaurus, pteranodon, axe beak, crocodile, saber-toothed tiger, tiger, and velociraptor.

Characters receive this story award if they visited Morti's Magnificent Menagerie.

Local Pursuit

You have become involved with a local institution in Ylraphon. You may choose **one** (and only one) of the "Local Pursuit" story award options described in **Player Handout 4Y: Local Pursuits** for successfully completing this adventure. This signifies your character having the opportunity to become more involved with day-to-day life and significant institutions in Ylraphon. You may gain only one of the story award options listed for completing this adventure, though you may later gain additional ones if other adventures grant these story award options.

This award is available to characters who successfully completed this adventure.

Ylraphon Adventurers Guild

You may join the Ylraphon Adventurers Guild if you discovered the cause of the illness affecting the Old City, if you obtained one of the Local Pursuit story awards (as described above), or if you are willing to pay 50 gp initial dues as described in **Player Handout 4Z: The Ylraphon Adventurers Guild**. This grants access to the Guild Delving downtime activity described in that handout, as well as other benefits to be seen in future modules set in Ylraphon.

This award is available to characters who successfully completed this adventure.

Player Handout 4Y. Local Pursuits

If you successfully completed this adventure, you may choose one “Local Pursuit” story award. This signifies your character becoming involved with significant Ylraphon activities or institutions. You may gain only one of the story award options listed below for completing this adventure, though other adventures may offer additional ones.

Local Pursuit: Part-Time Taverner

Your experiences in the Old City brought you into contact with a group of would-be tavern owners looking to found their own place outside the Palisade, who offered to bring you in as a partner. Choose a name for the tavern and record the name as part of this story award (“*Local Pursuit: Business Owner (Name of Tavern)*”). If you wish, you can write down the same tavern name as other characters who take this story award, making them some of your partners. Immediately before or after an adventure set in Ylraphon, you can spend up to 10 downtime days tending to your business, making use of the “Running a Business” downtime activity described on page 129 of the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*, with a maintenance cost of 2 gp per day for your share of expenses. In addition, if you purchase a meal or drink in Ylraphon during an adventure, the price you pay is never higher than the normal price listed in the *Player’s Handbook* (this does not affect lifestyle expenses).

Local Pursuit: Metaphysical Studies

You have enrolled for tutoring with the mysterious spellcaster known as the Crowngold, though such teaching is sporadic during the brief periods she spends visiting the Old City. This does not affiliate you with the Brixmarsh School of Magic, at which she is a teacher, but her tutoring may be very helpful if you ever pursue related studies or research, and makes your insights into certain subjects more valuable. Immediately before or after an adventure set in Ylraphon, you may spend 3 downtime days receiving the Crowngold’s tutelage. Once during your next game session after this activity, when you grant another character advantage on an Intelligence (Arcana or History) check by assisting them, you may inform your DM you are also using this benefit to roll 1d4 and grant that character a bonus on the Intelligence check equal to the number rolled.

Local Pursuit: Healing the Sick

You have spent time working with the healers of Ylraphon to help people recover from the Serpent’s Kiss. Record the story award Local Pursuit: Healing the Sick. Immediately before or after an adventure set in Ylraphon, you may spend 5 downtime days helping the city healers. Once during your next game session after this activity, you may inform your DM you are using this benefit to roll a Wisdom (Medicine) check to stabilize or heal a target as a bonus action instead of an action.

Player Handout 4Z.

Adventurers Guild of Ylraphon

The Adventurers Guild of Ylraphon is a loose-knit league of “dungeoneers, tomb-robbers, errant crusaders, swashbuckling mercenaries, and sundry formidable scalawags of all races and vocations” (according to its charter). It represents adventurers’ interests in town and helps regulate the profitable exploration of the surrounding ruins.

Joining the Guild

To initially join the Adventurers Guild of Ylraphon, a character must speak to Jotan Silverhammer, lieutenant guildmaster and volunteer sergeant of the Town Watch. There is no cost if you discovered the cause of the illness affecting the Old City, or if you obtain one of the *Local Pursuit* story awards (described in Player **Handout 4Y: Local Pursuits** or appearing in other adventures), due to your substantial contribution to prosperity of the Old City. Otherwise, initial dues are 50 gp, with additional payments of 12 gp a month. These costs are waived, however, for volunteers either who work three shifts a month for the Town Watch. In game terms, this means a character must spend 50 gp to join, and to remain a member, whenever they spend downtime, they must spend an additional 4 gp for every 10 downtime days they spend (though you may be able to substitute downtime for this cost, see below).

If a character who owes these dues fails to pay them as soon as they spend downtime, they must pay them by the end of their next game session or they lose all benefits of guild membership, and must pay the 50 gp initial dues again to regain them.

Benefits of Membership

Members of the Adventurers Guild may delve local ruins in search of treasure. They gain access to the *Guild Delving* downtime activity before or after any adventure set in Ylraphon.

New Downtime Activity: Guild Delving

Immediately before or after an adventure set in Ylraphon, you may spend up to 30 downtime days (minimum 10) to attempt to research, find, and explore some of the ruins of Outer Ylraphon in search of treasure. In the presence of the DM, roll percentile dice and add the number of days spent on this downtime activity, comparing the total to the Treasure Seeking Results Table on this page.

d100 +

Downtime

Spent

Result

1-35	A fatiguing and fruitless cavern exploration. You spend 10 gp on expenses and gain 4 levels of exhaustion. For each downtime day you spend recovering before your next adventure, you remove one of these exhaustion levels.
36-50	A difficult and taxing trudge through the Flooded Forest. You gain 2 levels of exhaustion. For each downtime day you spend recovering before your next adventure, you remove one of these exhaustion levels.
51-65	A strange and discouraging affair. You make only enough to recuperate half of your lifestyle expenses.
66-79	A lengthy but unremarkable overland trip. You recuperate half your lifestyle expenses and gain 2d12 gp.
80-89	A profitable expedition to the Underdark. You recuperate half your lifestyle expenses and gain 1d4 x 10 gp.
90-99	An exciting delve into a lost dwarven tomb. You recuperate half your lifestyle expenses and gain 1d6 x 10 gp.
100-109	An unexpected discovery of a long-lost merchant house compound. You recuperate all your lifestyle expenses and gain 1d8 x 10 gp, as well as a book on the history of a Sword Coast city or town. (Have your DM select a title for it.)
110-119	A lost shrine. You recuperate all your lifestyle expenses and gain 1d10 x 10 gp as well as a holy symbol for a deity of your choice.
120 or Higher	Altar of the Ghost Hound. You find a millennia-old shrine to a god you cannot identify, with treasures laid upon an altar deep beneath the ground. You recuperate all your lifestyle expenses and gain 1d12 x 10 gp as well as a <i>potion of healing</i> . <i>If this is the first time you have rolled this result:</i> You also gain a shining copper cloak-pin bearing the image of a flaming spirit hound. Write down “Copper Pin of the Spirit Hound” as a separate story award on your logsheet.

DM Handout 1. Clue Table

Clue Table

Ability Check DC	Clue	DM Notes
8	The symptoms don't appear to be fatal, but they are having a transformative effect.	Casting <i>detect magic</i> on a victim will indicate transmutation magic.
10	Several people have been able to see in the dark at various times. The effect only lasts about 15 minutes but has been happening for several weeks and seems to be affecting more and more people	Some welcome these changes and feel blessed, most however are also left in debilitating pain.
10	Not everyone is affected equally, but members of the same family seem to show similar symptoms.	
12	Some people believe the effects of the "illness" are actually from a magical curse that is continuing to progress.	A few people in the Old City believe all who dwell here have been cursed, because of the way so many old tombs, crypts, and mausoleums have been converted into residences.
12	Several seemingly normal locals have developed the ability to spit poison recently.	This ability in particular has caused chaos in town, as the Town Watch has pulled back behind the Palisade walls, and the Old City Alliance attempts to maintain what little order existed out here in the first place.
12	Collating the list of people affected you notice they were all at a feast 23 days ago, at a tavern called the Vandal's Vigor.	The Lead Chef at the Vandal's Vigor, Victor has not been seen in over two tendays. His Sous Chef, Shali, took over the kitchen at the Vandal's Vigor until a permanent replacement could be found. However, co-workers and the owner can reveal that Shali has not been in for the last few either days either.
12	The effects are not due to an infection or other kind of natural illness. It seems magical in nature.	
12	"There is a new teacher of magic who has recently appeared in Old City by the name of Crowngold, a mysterious half-elf who many have already consulted as a sage. She may be of assistance."	Lady Crowngold keep a cottage in Old City. For more information see Lady Crowngold's Cottage.
14	"There is a tavern in Little Phlan that has sunken beneath the water. Someone lives on top of it. I can give you directions."	This leads to the Silver Dragon Tavern.
14	Shali was the head chef at the feast held at the Vandal's Vigor 23 days ago.	As the tavern's head chef, Victor was preparing to cook the feast, but had fallen ill a few days before. Most assumed it was due to stress and being overworked. He was last seen shortly after the feast.
15	It appears that all the villagers affected have had small personal items stolen in the last 15 days.	A couple folks saw someone whose profile matches that of Shali skulking away from the areas of some thefts.

DM Handout 1. Mutation Table

Roll or choose a mutation for humanoid afflicted by the curse. Due to the curse's magical nature, effects that would normal draw on the creature's own ability scores instead use only the statistics described below.

Yuan-ti Mutations

d8 roll	Description	Effect
1	Patches of skin become scales	+1 AC
2	Eyes become slitted and serpent-like	Darkvision 60 feet
3	Arm replaced by snake head	Gain a bite melee attack. Bite. <i>Melee Weapon Attack:</i> +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. <i>Hit:</i> 5 (1d10) piercing damage.
4	Tongue has become long and forked	Advantage on Charisma (Deception) checks
5	Can spit poison	Can cast <i>poison spray</i> cantrip, saving throw DC 13
6	Limbs become long and tentacle-like	Gain a constrict melee attack: Constrict. <i>Melee Weapon Attack:</i> +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. <i>Hit:</i> 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled. Until this grapple ends, the creature is restrained, and no other target can be grappled.
7	Eyes are golden and hypnotic	Can cast <i>suggestion</i> 1/day, saving throw DC 14
8	Long prehensile tail	As a bonus action, force a creature within 5 feet to make a Dexterity saving throw (DC 13). If the creature fails, it falls prone.