

UNEXPECTED HOSPITALITY



RMH-05



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1 AN ADVENTURE FOR 5TH LEVEL CHARACTERS 2

UNEXPECTED HOSPITALITY

A Ravenloft: Mist Hunters Adventure

While you were attending to other matters, Alanik dispatched a team of operatives to Barovia. The team has gone silent, and Alanik fears the worst. You have been tasked with discovering the fate of the lost team and completing their mission.

If you can avoid the attention of Count Strahd von Zarovich, all the better.

The sixth adventure in the *Ravenloft: Mist Hunters* series of adventures.

An adventure for 5th level characters.



CONTENT WARNING: gore, fur trade (mention)

Reference the [Mist Hunters' Safety Kit](#) article and *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft* for tips and tools on running a safe and fun game.

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ADVENTURE PRIMER

The horror was for love.

— Lucille, *Crimson Peak* (2015)

This adventure is designed for **three to five 5th-level characters** and is optimized for **four 5th-level characters**.

Unexpected Hospitality takes place around Krezk and rural Barovia and ends at the gates of the Amber Temple.

BACKGROUND

ALANIK RAY, an investigator hired by the **ORDER OF GUARDIANS**, dispatched the characters to **KARTAKASS** and then to **FALKOVNIA**, where the missing scholar, Radaga, was located. Under questioning, Alanik extracted two locations from Radaga's mind—**WHITE OASIS** and **AMBER TEMPLE**, and something called the **APPARATUS**. In pursuit of these clues, Alanik dispatched the characters to **HAR'AKIR**, and a second group to **BAROVIA**—the latter in search of the Amber Temple.

While the characters sent to Har'Akir succeeded in their investigations, the group sent to Barovia hasn't reported back, and Alanik has started to suspect the worst. And so, he has called upon the characters to proceed to Barovia—a domain of gothic dread, vampires, and dark bargains—to seek out the fate of the missing group, and the secrets of the Amber Temple. If they can do so without arousing the ire of **COUNT STRAHD VON ZAROVICH**, all the better.

OVERVIEW

The adventure's story is spread over **three parts** and takes approximately **3 hours** to play. The adventure begins with a Call to Action scene. "Extending Play" sidebars in the adventure provide guidance on how to expand the adventure to occupy a roughly four-hour time slot. These estimations don't include time spent in pregame and postgame discussion:

Call to Action: To Barovia with You. The characters are instructed to go to Barovia to follow the tracks of the lost investigators.

Part 1: Get in Before Sundown! Arriving in Krezk, the characters need to help the villagers if they are to uncover what happened to the investigators.

Part 2: Werewolf Ambush. Following the other investigators, the group is ambushed by furriers that are not what they seem. An unexpected friend lends a hand.

Part 3: An Offer of Passage. The group must make a choice. A small transaction for an easy ride or stick out the journey to the Amber Temple on their own.



STORY AWARDS

At certain points in the adventure, you'll see this glyph and an entry describing how the specified story award is earned or impacted by the story. Ignore the entry if it refers to a story award none of the characters have. If it refers to a story award the characters just earned, it provides information for you and the players.

CHARACTER HOOKS

At the conclusion of the previous adventure, the characters discovered the existence of an amber sarcophagus in Har'Akir, and within, the vestige of a powerful being known as Mirtu. Below are some additional hooks that can be used to tie a character to this story.

HAUNTED ONE & ACOLYTE

Characters with the haunted one background and acolytes in the service of the Morninglord resonate with the villagers of Barovia; they have advantage on Charisma checks made when interacting with the villagers. Acolytes of other faiths tend to be frowned upon—imposing disadvantage on such checks.

BAROVIAN CHARACTERS

These characters know of the Darklord, Count Strahd von Zarovich. They may not be aware of the frightening grip he has on Barovia, but they know of his influence. They know Strahd is a dangerous ally, but also that he's an even-deadlier enemy.



CALL TO ACTION: TO BAROVIA WITH YOU

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

The characters have been summoned to the Alanik Ray residence in Dementlieu in the afternoon to receive dire news about the Barovian party's disappearance. Radaga offers aid before Alanik sends them off to Barovia in search of the missing party.

Theme: Formal, to the point, decadent lavish manor.

DEMENTLIEU: THE DOMAIN OF DECADENT DELUSION

Darklord: Duchess Saida d'Honaire

Hallmarks: Masquerades, decadent aristocracy, social decay

Every night brings another glittering affair: the citizens of Dementlieu live such glamorous and exciting lives. They enjoy the finest clothes, elegant jewels, grand ballrooms, and most extravagantly, every seventh day, the Grand Masquerade hosted by Duchess Saida d'Honaire at her island estate. Everyone who's anyone attends the Duchess's balls, and everyone who longs to be someone tries to wrangle an invitation or sneak in uninvited. But Duchess Saida's wrath upon those who dare to set foot where they "don't belong" is truly horrible—and inevitably fatal.

For more information about this domain and the people that reside there, refer to *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft*.

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS

Allow each player a minute or so to introduce their character, describe their appearance and mannerisms, and establish the reason why they're working with Alanik and Kabe. Be sure to give everyone equal time in the spotlight and be prepared to gently stop players if they run on. Character introductions are crucially important for the players to understand who the other characters are, to build a basis for roleplaying opportunities, and for you as DM to learn more about the characters so you can create story elements that really speak to them.

Award inspiration (explaining what inspiration is and how it works) once everyone's had a turn.

PROMOTED!

Impressed by the characters' investigation in previous adventures (or by their reputation, if this is their first *Ravenloft: Mist Hunters* adventure), Alanik promotes the characters to lead field operatives within the Ray Agency. While this means additional duties—such as searching for the urn—it also means opportunities for greater rewards and other possible benefits, first and foremost being the removal of the gp limit on nonmagical equipment that the characters have access to.

OUTFITTING FOR THE INVESTIGATION

Before proceeding on this leg of their investigation, the characters decide what they brought with them on their journey:

Mundane Equipment. The Order of the Guardians has offered the characters access to its substantial resources to aid in their investigation. Each character has access to any mounts and nonmagical equipment from the *Player's Handbook*, as well as the material components for any spell they have prepared (or known for casters who don't prepare spells). Following the characters' promotion, the gp limit on these acquisitions has been removed. The characters are still bound to the normal rules regarding carrying capacity and, at your discretion, may find themselves in a situation that precludes being able to haul around too much—while their resources are great, the Order discourages frivolous requests.

Magical Equipment. As they adventure, the characters "unlock" magic items for later use. The group begins this adventure with one copy of each of these unlocked items and then decides who'll use them. At the end of the adventure, each item is returned to the character who brought it with them. Magic items that are destroyed or that lose their magic, such as a quaffed *potion of healing* or an exploded *horn of blasting*, however, are removed from the character's investigation journal and are no longer unlocked; the character must find another one if they want to use it in a later adventure. The character who brought an unlocked item to the table has ultimate discretion in who gets to use it. They should, however, note that their investigations require teamwork and cooperation.

EXAMPLE: OUTFITTING FOR INVESTIGATION

Peter's character, Gregov the Fighter, is preparing for their next adventure. He requisitions a greatsword, a longbow and some arrows, and a suit of plate armor. He's also heard rumors of werewolves, so he asks for a silvered dagger . . . just in case. In his previous adventures, Gregov unlocked a *horn of blasting* and a *potion of healing*. The group decides who should carry the horn and the potion. At the end of the adventure, both items are returned to Gregov. However, if a character uses the potion, or if the *horn of blasting* explodes during the adventure, Peter crosses it off the investigation journal where it was unlocked.

ORDER OF THE GUARDIANS RING

Characters with this magical ring (more information can be found in the [Mist Hunters Safety Kit](#) article) can obtain another dose of the anti-charm tonic from Alanik—provided the last dose they obtained has been used.

ALANIK'S STUDY

The characters are waiting in the office of Alanik Ray, an investigator hired by the Order of the Guardians to initially investigate Radaga's disappearance. Now, the Order wants Alanik and his field agents (the characters) to continue a broader investigation regarding the amber sarcophagi.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions & Terrain. The study is 40-feet-long and 20-feet-wide and 10-feet-high. Large windows cover the western wall, shelves displaying books, scrolls and loose stacks of paper cover the eastern wall. Double doors lead out of the room to the south, a fireplace is built into the north wall. An oaken desk sits in front of the fireplace.

Lighting. Oil lamps along the walls light up the room. A fire burns in the fireplace.

Weather. Heavy rain is beating against the windows. An occasional lightning briefly lights up the study.

Sounds. Rain drumming against the windows, crackling fire in the fireplace, the crack of lightning.

Oaken Desk. The desk is cluttered in books, scrolls, and notes. However, it's all covered by a map of Barovia spread out on top of the clutter. Chairs are in front of it.

NPC INFORMATION

Alanik sits behind his desk, a look of concern drawn on his face as he examines the large map. Alanik offers the characters a chair, acknowledging the character's previous achievements, with a nod in the direction of a woman searching through a section of the bookshelf, a woman whom the characters recognize as Radaga from RMH-02 *Back to the Front*.

Shadows fall over his face as he introduces the party to their task:

I dispatched a trio of investigators to Barovia and it's been far too long with no word. I ask that you venture there yourselves and see if you're able to find them and ensure that they're keeping to task. If they're not, you're to investigate the Amber Temple. Kabe will get you as far as a small village called Krezk.

The missing group is made up by the following investigators.

Sheilyth Surii (SHAY-lith sore-EE). This half-elf ranger is an accomplished mist walker who traveled the width and breadth of most of the domains of Ravenloft. His thick black hair and beard are cut short—accenting his mahogany complexion. His competence is outmatched only by his arrogance.

Hector du Maroc (HEK-tohr de MA-rog). A slender human fighter, hired by Alanik soon after crossing the mists. His stern, dark eyes contrast to his bright white hair. He typically dresses in a gold-trimmed red robe underneath a half-plate with his family crest.

Neva Sparkmind (ne-VAH SPARK-MIND). Despite her small size, the intrepid gnome wizard has settled in well with Alanik. Her trip to Barovia was her fifth assignment. An excellent mage, her stylish dress accents her shiny, bald head.

RADAGA: DARK OUTFITTER

Radaga studies some books on the bookshelf. Apart from a courteous nod, she shows no interest in the characters, until they accept Alanik's mission, then he calls for her.



LET'S GIVE HER A HAND!

Characters who earned this story award during RMH-EP-01 *The Grand Masquerade* see Radaga's familiar—a desiccated animated hand—helping Radaga thumb through a book.

BLOOD-DRINKER'S BACKBONE

Radaga provides the characters with a potent magical weapon as well as two scrolls. She makes it quite clear that all of these items, including the scrolls if unused, are to be returned upon completing their mission.

Radaga pulls out a spear she refers to as *blood-drinker's backbone* from a large wooden case.



ALANIK RAY

Elf investigator

Alanik (uh-LAHN-ick RAY) is confident and insightful, a shrewd investigator, and one of the most well-traveled mortals in the Domains of Dread. Alanik is a master of insights and deduction; he can learn details about others after a few moments of meeting them. For example, he can almost instantaneously deduce a character's native domain from their accent and mannerisms. An accidental fall during an investigation caused a spinal injury that paralyzed Alanik's legs. He uses a custom wheelchair that he created with the assistance of his husband, Arthur Sedgwick.

What They Want. Alanik's concern at the moment is discovering the fate of the investigators sent to Barovia.

No Loose Ends. Having solved Radaga's disappearance, he's moved on to investigate the reasons behind it. More information on Alanik can be found in *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft*.

“This spear is called *nosferatu’s backbone*,” Radaga reveals with slight contempt. “A dangerous and mischievous weapon, made from an actual vampire’s backbone.” She slides her finger across the blade and reveals that what seems like fresh blood is only a trick of the mind caused by the color of the blade. Ancient runes are carved into each of the vertebrae. “This weapon can be a great help but also a deceitful enemy. Remember, keep the pointy end away from yourselves.”

In addition to their own equipment, the characters were lent the use of a magical spear called *blood-drinker’s backbone* (handout 1).

In addition, Radaga also hands the characters a wooden scroll case containing a *spell scroll of greater restoration* and a *spell scroll of raise dead*.

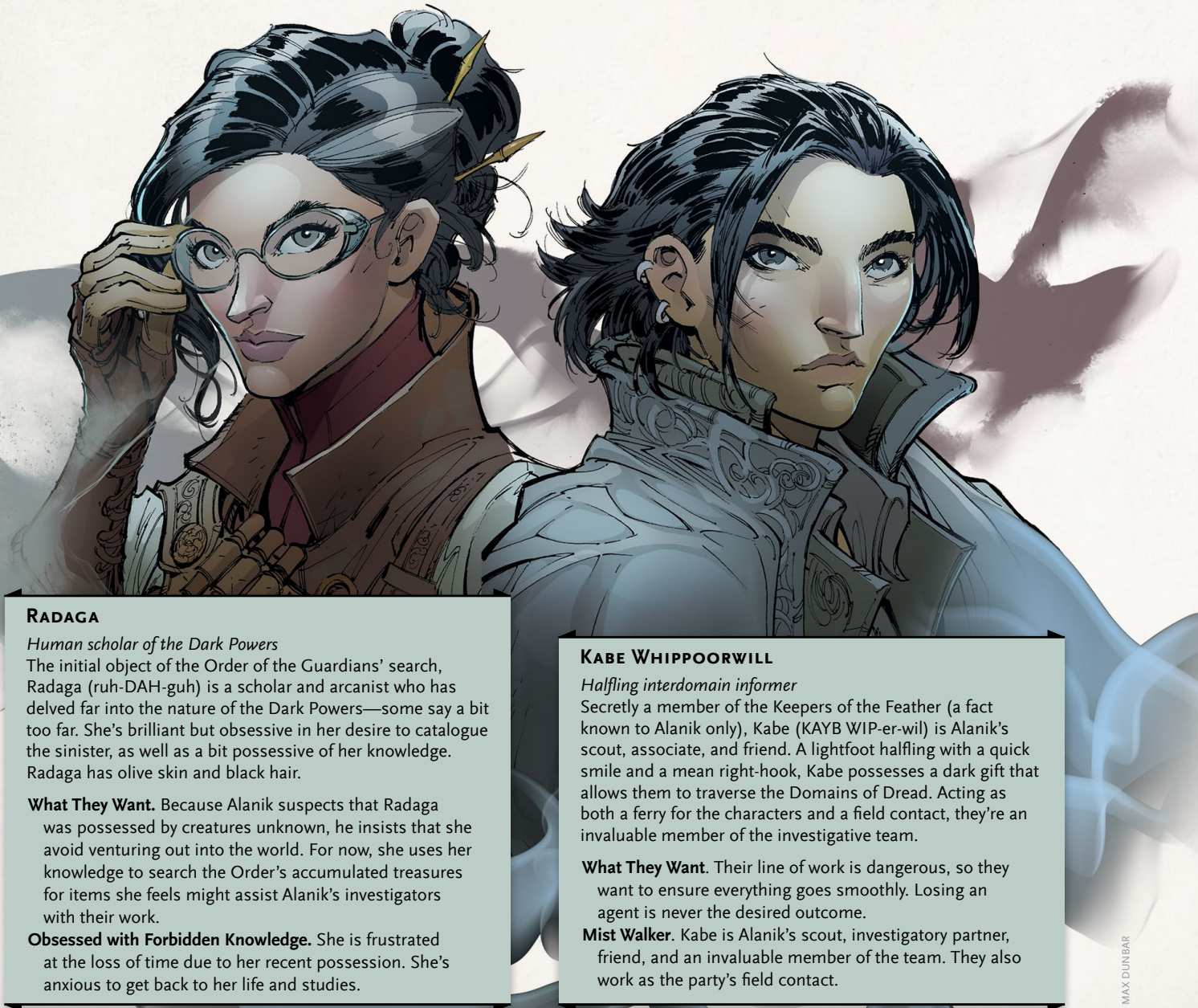
DEVELOPMENT

Once the characters confirm they are ready to go, Alanik summons Kabe, a mist walker associate who has also been assisting in the investigation.

PARTING THE MISTS

Kabe leads the characters out of Alanik’s manor. Outside the front doors, a carriage is waiting. Kabe climbs up in the driver’s seat. As the characters settle inside, it starts rolling with a jolt as the characters are transported to Barovia.

Roll on the Misty Visions table (appendix A).



RADAGA

Human scholar of the Dark Powers

The initial object of the Order of the Guardians’ search, Radaga (ruh-DAH-guh) is a scholar and arcanist who has delved far into the nature of the Dark Powers—some say a bit too far. She’s brilliant but obsessive in her desire to catalogue the sinister, as well as a bit possessive of her knowledge. Radaga has olive skin and black hair.

What They Want. Because Alanik suspects that Radaga was possessed by creatures unknown, he insists that she avoid venturing out into the world. For now, she uses her knowledge to search the Order’s accumulated treasures for items she feels might assist Alanik’s investigators with their work.

Obsessed with Forbidden Knowledge. She is frustrated at the loss of time due to her recent possession. She’s anxious to get back to her life and studies.

KABE WHIPPOORWILL

Halfling interdomain informer

Secretly a member of the Keepers of the Feather (a fact known to Alanik only), Kabe (KAYB WIP-er-wil) is Alanik’s scout, associate, and friend. A lightfoot halfling with a quick smile and a mean right-hook, Kabe possesses a dark gift that allows them to traverse the Domains of Dread. Acting as both a ferry for the characters and a field contact, they’re an invaluable member of the investigative team.

What They Want. Their line of work is dangerous, so they want to ensure everything goes smoothly. Losing an agent is never the desired outcome.

Mist Walker. Kabe is Alanik’s scout, investigatory partner, friend, and an invaluable member of the team. They also work as the party’s field contact.

PART 1: GET IN BEFORE SUNDOWN!

Estimated time: 60 minutes

The characters reach Krezk in the afternoon. The village has no inn, so they must rely on their personalities if they hope to stay the night within the city walls. The investigation for the lost party begins once inside.

Theme: Eerie, reclusive, unfriendly, suspicious eyes

BAROVIA

Darklord: Count Strahd von Zarovich

Hallmarks: Undead despot, notorious haunted stronghold

In Barovia, the night is a curse. With the dying of the light, wicked souls slip from the darkened spires of Castle Ravenloft to work the will of an immortal overlord. The howls of wolves and cries of raven swarms echo through the dismal valleys and oppressive forests of Barovia. In isolated communities, superstitious villagers find the brightness in the lives smothered by dread of their aloof overlord, his baleful servants, and ancient evils that fester unopposed. They all know to fear the mists and the long Barovian nights, as through them the Devil Strahd watches and reaches to claim whatever he desires.

OUTSIDE KREZK

Krezk is a small village in western Barovia.

AREA INFORMATION

The approach to Krezk (Appendix B) features:

Dimensions & Terrain. Fields and dense forest on all sides, the village lay about 250 feet north of a branch in Old Svalich Road (S1) that leads into a gatehouse set into the 20-foot wall that surrounds the village. The Saint Markovia Abbey watches over the village to the north.

Lighting. The sun isn't visible but lights up in a bright but colorless light.

Weather. The weather's mild, but the air feels heavy. Rain could be coming.

Gatehouse. Entrance into Krezk is made between two towers (S2) with peaked roofs that flank a pair of 12-foot-tall, iron-bound doors. "Krezk" is carved into the stone archway above the doors. Arrow slits are carved into the upper floors of each tower—allowing the guards within to fire arrows onto trespassers. Members of the city guard watch the characters from the parapet.

NPC INFORMATION

Kabe lets the characters off the carriage at the crossroad (S1), excuses themselves and drives off.

DEVELOPMENT

Moving towards the gate, a city guard tells them to stop. From inside the gate, a female human city guard armed

with sword and shield wearing leather armor, approaches the characters. If asked, her name is Olyana Brzynekov.

She asks them about their business in Krezk. She's inquisitive, snappy and gives of the idea that she's not letting everybody in.

No matter how the characters respond, as long as they are not demeaning, she lets them inside. If they are gruff, she reminds them to mind their manners while in town. She lets them in no matter their approach.

INSIDE KREZK

AREA INFORMATION

The village of Krezk (Appendix B) features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The village is 500 feet by 650 feet, built halfway up a hill. Inside the city wall, trees line every street with houses built under their crowns.

Lighting. The cloud-covered sun illuminates the village in a dull, bright light.

Weather. A distant rumble reveals a threatening thunder.

No Inn. There are no inns or taverns in Krezk.

Town Square. The triangular square, 50 feet on each side, lies 100 feet north of the city gate. A handful market stalls are here, selling local produce, and wooly clothing.

Krezk is a sleepy village at the base of the Abbey of Saint Markovia. Inside the city gate, the only square in town bears witness to the village's quiet temper. The few people present are utterly uninterested in you, almost as if they try to avoid you. You notice how the forest reaches inside the city wall; the village's cottages built discretely among the trees.

NPC INFORMATION

A few villagers are crossing the town square, hurrying to get home before the weather turns sour.

BAROVIANS: FOOD FOR AN IMMORTAL DESPOT

Many Barovians were happy once but are now wary of strangers to an extent that can be unsettling (and seem rude) to newcomers. They tend to stare openly, in silence—expressing their disapproval of anything that isn't familiar to them. Many are very suspicious with deep-rooted religious beliefs that are passed down from one generation to the next.

GUARDS

City guards wanders about the parapet around the village, but also do rounds in the streets. In case of trouble, the guards can be present everywhere in Krezk within minutes.

STALL OWNERS

The stall owners look nervously towards the dark clouds and start collecting their products to close the stalls. Two of them (Kasis and Gorcia) are less unwelcoming than the others:

Kasis Szwirnutchi (KASS-iss SHWURR-noo-chee).

Kasis is rather dirty and disheveled from the time she spends in the gardens each day—evident from the dirty apron she wears over her muddy clothes. She has no intention of letting the characters stay with her.

- A character that succeeds on a DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check is able to obtain some information from the gardener. If asked, she reveals that the other investigators passed through town a few days ago; they stayed for a few days before leaving with fresh supplies. Kasis didn't ask where they were headed.



KASIS SZWIRNUTCHI

Half-elf gardener

Native to Krezk and not the traveling type, Kasis is muscular with fair features, long dark hair, and striking green eyes. She has never wandered far from Krezk. A piece of land besides her cottage is converted into a household garden, where she grows the produce that she barter for in the square. Unusually, her garden blooms every fourth day. A recluse, she's still friendly towards the other villagers.

What They Want. Krezk is a nice town. Kasis wants it to remain this way.

Minding My Own. It's not that complicated, is it?

Gorcias Khomiakov (GORSHA COMB-ee-uh-koff).

Gorcias is a slight human with big grey eyes, sharp cheek bones, and pouty lips. They dress discretely in a flattering, earth-colored gown. Gorcias sells cured meat but is closing down early because of the turn in the weather. They could use help getting their goods inside before the rain comes, and even though they're wary of outsiders (and unlikely to provide lodging), they won't say no to offers of aid in hauling heavy barrels indoors.

- If the characters inquire about the investigators, Gorcias quickly recognizes who they're asking about—Krezk doesn't get many visitors. They believe they headed east after staying overnight in Krezk.
- Inside their house is a table in the center of the main room, with shelves along the walls containing clay jars and papers. A character with a passive Perception of 14 or higher notices an open journal on the table, containing oddly scripted letters and diagrams (characters that are proficient in the language recognize it as Celestial). If Gorcias notices a character glancing at the open book, they quickly scoop it up and place it on a shelf behind them. Regardless, they thank the characters for their service and usher them out of their residence with a forced smile and a vow to mention to the burgomaster how helpful they have been.



GORCIAS KHOMIAKOV

Covert angelic grocer

Concealed as an attractive, androgynous human, Gorcias hides a secret. Pulled in by the mists from their place in the Upper Plane of Arborea, for reasons unknown, they've made a life for themselves in Krezk while trying to figure out how to escape. They seem sweet and extroverted, but a desperate yearning for escape burns inside.

What They Want. To escape Barovia and return to the Upper Plane—no matter the cost.

Troubled Mind. They're anxious that their true nature will be uncovered, and often overplay their role as a result.

VILLAGERS

The villagers quietly tend to their own. They're not necessarily hostile towards the characters, but they initially rebuff any attempts to engage with them.

THE INN IS RIGHT OUT

If the characters plan to stay the night in more comfortable accommodations than the hard dirt floor of a stable, they must convince the denizens of Krezk to open their doors to them by helping out around town. Doing so requires a DC 13 group ability check. The ability and skill that each character must succeed upon is dependent upon what they plan to do to help.

Have each character describe what they might do to help out around town. Some sample residents (and the tasks they need assistance with) are provided, but don't limit the characters to these choices. If they want to do something not listed below, assign a DC 13 ability check as appropriate.

Marlon Staginowa (MAR-lunn staj-uh-NOW-uh). This 30-year-old human is the widowed father of five young children—the two youngest of which could use a change of diapers and possibly a little entertainment.

Pawel Valentin (PAV-ull VAL-un-teen). This middle-aged dwarf carpenter has been working on patching his roof all day, and with rain on the horizon, he's desperate to finish today.

Lukazs Brutzs (LOO-kuss BROOTCH). Young Lukazs moves a bunch of sand from one end of Krezk to another for his father. The human's wagon is leaking sand all over the road; the spacing between the boards making up the wagon is too large.

Priest Bartosz (BAR-toż). A venerable human priest, Bartosz is spending his last years in Krezk. He's typically found tending to the grave of his mentor, though his age makes this difficult nowadays.

Kalyoan Decz (CALL-yone DECH). This 35-year-old human's disabled son, Bogdan (BOG-dun), is celebrating his eighth birthday, but no one came to celebrate; the child is downtrodden and could use some cheering up.

If half or more of the characters succeed on this check, the characters manage to find a space next to a fire or even a marginally comfortable cot to sleep on or even a mug of hot broth. If the group check fails, the characters spend the night wherever they can find space—each gains a level of exhaustion that can only be removed by completing a long rest in a warm and comfortable environment.

EXTENDING PLAY

If you wish to extend the play experience, the characters can try to learn more about the missing investigators. During the characters' attempts to secure lodging, they can also try and find out what the villagers know about the missing investigators.

If a character succeeds particularly spectacularly at a task, or does an admirable job roleplaying their work, the villager they're assisting hints that they know more. Krezk folk are reserved people, so they won't out and say it, but they may ask if the character is "friends with that bald gnome that stopped by not long ago," or "you're much better at this than that Hector fella."

The characters can pry further, and if they succeed on a DC 11 Charisma (Persuasion) check, learn one of the following rumors:

KREZK RUMOR-MILL

d6 Encounter

- 1 Hector and Sheilyth got into a pretty heated argument before leaving; it almost came to blows. Hector seemed very frustrated with Sheilyth.
- 2 Sheilyth seemed very reserved; he seldom spoke—he usually just stared into the fire.
- 3 That ranger...I didn't see for certain, but he got mad about something, and for the briefest of moments, I swear his eyes actually turned red. Most unusual.
- 4 The gnome was working for me and sounded like she needed a hand. She called out for Sheilyth to help her a few times, but the ranger didn't seem to hear or recognize her. Sparkmind ended up having to hit her with a rock before he finally lent a hand.
- 5 I wasn't sure who they were talking about, but I overheard Hector and Neva talking about someone "acting strangely" and wondering if they should call off the mission. I sure hope it wasn't anyone in Krezk... Maybe it's that dwarf, Pawel.
- 6 The Burgomaster has had a lot on his mind lately, and that group of adventurers was just another thing to worry about. Thankfully, they left quickly.



TREASURE

If all of the characters succeed on this check, one of the town's residents gifts them with a *potion of greater healing*—likely their most treasured possession.

DEVELOPMENT

At this point, the party is ready to seek out the burgomaster, Dimitri Krezkov.

BURGOMASTER KREZKOV'S OFFICE

The characters can easily find directions to the burgomaster's house. They'll need to do this eventually in order to be welcomed in the village.

WHY ARE WE HERE?

Making friends with the villagers of Krezk might become a distraction to the players. Use Burgomaster Krezkov as a way of reminding the party what their goal is as he asks them interested yet inquisitive questions. Where do they come from? Where are they going? What is their purpose here?

AREA INFORMATION

The burgomaster's home is located north of the town square. Inside his home he has his formal office.

Dimensions & Terrain. The office is 20 feet by 10 feet, with shuttered windows and colorful walls. A large desk has a tall chair behind it, leaving little room for other chairs, so visitors have to stand up when in attendance.

Sounds & Smells. Crackling fire, clinking glasses inside the home. Falling rain, distant growls, howls, and the snapping of twigs beyond the walls of the village.

Silvered Mace. On the wall behind Krezkov hangs a silvered mace—the burgomaster's personal weapon.

NPC INFORMATION

Burgomaster Krezkov can be found in front of his house. Upon noticing the characters, he invites the characters inside his office—first ensuring that none of them are vampires (which entails a few prying questions and splashing them with water to see if it harms them).

Krezkov greets the characters and asks them how they have helped the village; a subtle way of letting them know that service is expected of them. If they have yet to help out, he sends the characters away to do something good in Krezk (see “The Inn is Right Out,” above).

If the characters demand answers right away, Krezkov firmly reminds them that as guests in his village, they are in no position to make demands. He's willing to answer their questions, even help them with shelter and provisions, but they need to make use of themselves first.

TREASURE

If the characters succeeded on the group ability check (see “The Inn is Right Out”) and if they treat Krezkov with respect and deference to their suspicious nature, the burgomaster gives the characters a silvered mace.

DEVELOPMENT

The following morning, the characters can leave Krezk. Their departure is met with little fanfare; even as thankful as the denizens are, they're happy to be rid of strangers.



BURGOMASTER DIMITRI KREZKOV

Human burgomaster

Dimitri Krezkov's (duh-MEET-chree KREZ-koff) ancestors built Krezk at the foot of the Abbey of Saint Markovia long ago after Strahd conquered the surrounding valley. He is the latest of his family to watch over it; he is a lord and expects to be treated as such. Fate has been cruel to Krezkov in the recent past, the loss of family and the threat of the evil that surrounds his community wear on his soul. However, he is a stalwart, unflinching ally to those who have earned his trust—a rare, genuine force for good in a realm consumed with evil.

What They Want. Krezkov assumes the worst in everyone; it is the only way his village has survived.

A Cautious Guardian. Krezkov places the welfare of his village above that of outsiders—who he typically assumes to be allies of Strahd. Strangers must earn his favor if they are to enter the village.

PART 2:

WEREWOLF AMBUSH

Estimated time: 90 minutes

The characters continue towards Vallaki, the direction the other team of investigators took. Not far into Barovia, the trip takes a wrong turn.

Theme: Cold, creepy, feeling of being watched

RELIEF OF ONE'S POSSESSIONS

The forest on each side of the road is uninviting, a thin layer of fog creeping among the trees.

If a character moves off the road, approaching the tree line, several pairs of yellow eyes peek out from the undergrowth, following by several deep growls from something big beyond the tree line.

AREA INFORMATION

The Old Svalich Road crosses Barovia, connecting Krezkov in west to the Village of Barovia in east. The road bends around a copse of trees, beside a pond.

Dimensions & Terrain. A 15-foot-wide muddy road runs

through the dense, gnarled trees of the Svalich Woods. The road curves to the left, revealing a pond through the trees.

Weather. Clouds cover the sky and a light layer of fog clings to the ground. While it's still daytime and considered brightly lit, the clouds diffuse the sunlight; it creates an eerie sensation of timelessness.

Muddy Road. Pools of mud dot the road and the grassy area on either side of it.

Gnarled Trees. The Svalich Woods follows the road across Barovia, its gnarly trees reaching for the clouded sky.

Pond. The pond, 60 feet wide, is uninvitingly covered in a litter of rotting leaves. A thin layer of fog covers the lake and creeps up the bank and into the trees.

CREATURE INFORMATION

A furrer named Rufus (a **loup garou**) emerges from the trees, flanked by two companions. These rough-looking people appear to be muscular humans in furs and leather but are in actuality **werewolves**. If the encounter devolves into violence, four more **werewolves** emerge from hiding at the end of the second round. A character with a passive Perception (Wisdom) score of 18 or higher notices the other werewolves hiding behind trees beside the lake.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

This is a difficult encounter; the spear given to them by Radaga is likely to be the only magical weapon among them. You needn't adjust this encounter to account for this.

Rufus is a **loup garou**, but doesn't have legendary actions, and doesn't use his bite attack. Instead, he attacks twice with his claws in dire wolf or hybrid form.

The werewolves want to rob the characters with no intention of killing them; they laugh and cajole while surrounding the characters—if the minimal effort of intimidation and taunts gets them what they want, the werewolves choose that over combat. In exchange for handing over their weapons, armor, holy symbols, and rations, the furrers offer safe passage. If the characters were gifted burgomaster Krezkov's silvered mace (or carry any of their own), Rufus sniffs at the air and tells the character carrying it to toss it in the lake.

If the characters refuse to surrender their equipment, the werewolves create a tension-filled, nerve-wrecking standoff. Eventually in combat, the furrers get frustrated—transforming into hybrid form in a shockingly gory display of skin and blood falling to the ground, fur, claws, and teeth breaching the skin—a shockingly grotesque process that requires each character to succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. At the beginning of each turn, a character can repeat the save, ending the frightened condition early on a success.

Any character reduced to 0 hit points is instead knocked unconscious; the lycanthropes prefer to bring their quarry to their camp to be flayed and consumed while still screaming.

LYCANTHROPY

Characters who fail their saving throw versus the curse of lycanthropy have some hope; it's a few weeks until the next full moon, and the curse is likely to be removed before this occurs—whether by agents of the Order of the Guardians.

That isn't to say that they shouldn't be given cause for concern, however. Their looming transformation can be described as restless sleep, an insatiable hunger for raw meat, or other bestial urges.

TERRIBLE BENEFACTOR

If more than half the group has been knocked unconscious, or at another dramatic point in the encounter, read or paraphrase:

Without warning, a dense fog rolls into the area from the east—obscuring everything but fleeting shadows. You hear the werewolves shouting in alarm—whimpering, yipping, whining—and then all is quiet.

The fog dissipates, revealing the werewolves lying dead on the moist grass, torn apart with shocking violence.

In the center of the carnage stands a stately, well-groomed man wearing a long blue jacket and red velvet doublet over a silk white shirt, black linen pants and shiny, polished shoes. His hands are covered in blood, but not a drop is on his clothing.



“Welcome to Barovia,” he says while wiping blood from his hands with a handkerchief. He smooths a crease in his velvet doublet. “I am Count Strahd von Zarovich; your host.”

A character that succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check immediately recognizes Strahd as the Darklord of the domain of Barovia.

Strahd motions concerned across the lake—informing the characters “your colleagues can be found over there.” A character who succeeds on a DC 17 Wisdom (Insight) check gets the impression that Strahd’s concern is a ruse.

If the characters search the pond (to retrieve the silvered mace, or if they search it out of curiosity) and succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check, they find Hector du Maroc’s *moon-touched longsword* in the water. This check automatically succeeds if the pond is searched at night.

FURRIER CAMP

Across the pond, they make a grisly discovery.

AREA INFORMATION

Dimensions & Terrain. 30-feet across, circular camp with a bonfire in the center and ramshackle tents.

Adventuring gear litters the campground.

Adventuring gear. Someone has emptied a few backpacks and left the adventuring gear scattered across the camp.

INVESTIGATING THE CAMP

The camp is what the characters expect of a furrier—camping gear, tanner’s equipment, skinning knives, and various hunting traps.

The characters also find the blood-stained remnants of a pair of adventurer’s kits near the campfire. Among the contents, they find three books: two personal investigatory journals and a third book titled *A Treatise on Ethical Mutilations*. The journals belong to Hector du Maroc and Neva Sparkmind and describes their uneventful journey into Barovia. The latest entry is dated five days ago.

BODIES IN THE TREE LINE

If the characters move away from the camp, the smell of congealed animal fat and rotting carcasses is overwhelmed by stronger stench emanating from the tree line. If investigated, the characters find the remains of a human and a gnome that match the descriptions of Hector du Maroc and Neva Sparkmind. They appear to have been mauled by clawed creatures—more than likely the werewolves.

TREASURE

If the characters find and investigate the camp and the surrounding area, they find *A Treatise on Ethical Mutilations*, and may find a *moon-touched longsword* if they search the pond.

COUNT STRAHD VON ZAROVICH

Darklord of Barovia

The first vampire, Strahd von Zarovich (STRODD vonn ZÄHR-oh-vich) is infinitely egotistical, cruel, and manipulative—a charming monster who wears the trappings of power and class. The vampire victimizes his subjects whenever the urge strikes, reveling in the fear he causes.

What They Want. Strahd senses that the characters have a mist walker among them and is ultimately curious about what the characters could possibly be searching for in his domain—especially considering they’re following the precise path that an earlier group of travelers took.

You Are Mine to Toy With. His subjects, the domain of Barovia and anyone foolish enough to enter it exist to serve and sustain him, and the blood of the defiant tastes the sweetest.

PART 3: AN OFFER OF PASSAGE

Estimated Duration: 30 minutes.

A tough decision awaits the characters—do they accept the hospitality of an undead despot or make the long, arduous trek to the temple on foot?

Theme: False hope, hard choices

OPTION A. ACCEPTING THE OFFER

If the characters accept the offer, Strahd invites them inside the carriage to take the trip through Barovia to Mount Ghakis. The carriage is large enough for Strahd and each of the characters. The interior is decadently cozy, with cushioned seats, and plenty to eat and drink.

CREATURE INFORMATION

As the characters return to Count Strahd, a black carriage, drawn by four black horses, rolls up. Strahd expresses his deepest condolences at the loss of the adventurers to the characters, though it is a facade.

He assures them that the Amber Temple, which he knows they are seeking, is far away from here and the road there is fraught with danger—it would be unwise to make the journey on foot. Thankfully, he's happy to allow them to make the journey to Mount Ghakis in his cozy carriage. All he asks for is for one of them to someday return and tell him the story of their adventures. Each character promising to return, gains the Dark Invitation story award.



DARK INVITATION

You've promised Count Strahd von Zarovich that you'd pay him a visit in the future. It'd be rude to stand him up...quite rude, indeed.

ROAD TRIP TO MOUNT GHAKIS

The trip to the temple takes a few hours as Count Strahd's carriage drives through Vallaki and past Lake Zarovich and Castle Ravenloft. Each area includes boxed text for your inspiration. Read or paraphrase as desired.

CREATURE COMFORTS

While traveling by carriage, the characters are free to enjoy the food and drink Strahd offers. Characters accepting these offerings, gain the benefit of a long rest. Strahd also offers them a silver flask containing a *potion of gaseous form*.

Characters who accept Strahd's offer receive the story award Dark Invitation.

VALLAKI

As the carriage rolls into Vallaki, read or paraphrase the following.

Small houses dot the roadside as the carriage rolls into Vallaki. The two guards at the western gate eye each other nervously as the black cart rolls past.

As the cart continues through the town, the townsfolk scurry away from the road, watching with fear as the carriage passes by.

The cart slows down as you approach the town's center. Strahd points at the Blue Water Inn, recommending it as a good place for commonfolk to stay. At least that's what he has heard.

The carriage picks up speed again, continuing towards the eastern gate and out of town.

LAKE ZAROVICH

East from Vallaki, the carriage passes a stretch where Lake Zarovich is visible.

Among the trees, the dark water of Lake Zarovich lies, mirroring the clouded skies above.

Perfectly still, not the slightest hint of a ripple on the water can be seen, making you wonder if there is any life under the surface. The only thing on the lake is a small humanoid figure in a rowboat, holding a fishing pole, patiently waiting for something to bite.

Strahd notices you regarding the fisher, a small smile on his face.

CASTLE RAVENLOFT

Half an hour past Lake Zarovich, the spires of Castle Ravenloft becomes visible in the distance.

Like a sentinel, eyeing the farthest reaches of Barovia, Castle Ravenloft looms atop a mountain peak across a rocky marsh.

Two spires, one taller than the other, claws like fingers at the colorless sky, with the grey stone construction of the castle a massive, malevolent structure, spewing out an old, cobbled road all the way down to Old Svalich Road.

Further down the road the Village of Barovia lays in the shadow of the mountain.

Strahd wiggles a finger in direction of the castle, asking you to remind him to invite you home at your convenience.

INTO THE MIST

As the carriage passes the bridge over Ivlis River, mist wraps around the carriage. The mist creeps through openings in the carriage and shrouds the characters, impairing their sight. Count Strahd encourages the characters to relax and enjoy the ride.

OPTION B. DECLINING THE OFFER

If the characters decline the offer, Strahd's face darkens. He strides immediately away towards his carriage, slams the door, and rolls away down the road.

TRAVERSING THE BAROVIAN WILDERNESS

Travelling by foot in Barovia is unadvisable. The characters can meet other travelers, Vistani camps, etc. at your discretion. They tell the same story. Stay out of the woods, don't sleep in the wilderness.

The walk is six hours long. The journey is exhausting; each character must succeed a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or gain a level of exhaustion that can only be removed by a long rest in a warm bed. Further, the characters are beset upon by creatures; an encounter determined randomly or chosen from the table below:

EIGHT WAYS TO DIE IN BAROVIA

d8 Encounter

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| 1 | Three phantom warriors |
| 2 | One tree blight |
| 3 | Four wereravens |
| 4 | One cloaker |
| 5 | One giant skeleton |
| 6 | Two wereboars |
| 7 | Two werebears |
| 8 | Two wraiths |

WRAP-UP: THE AMBER TEMPLE

A thick mist clings to the peak of the mountain as they draw closer to the Amber Temple. Snow is falling, making visibility limited. Near the entrance into the temple, they notice a single set of snowy footprints leading into the Amber Temple.

INVESTIGATION JOURNAL

Provide each player with a copy of the Investigation Journal (handout 1). Before the session is over, each player must choose which of the items found during the adventure they'd like to keep, and line out others.

THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES...

The story continues in RMH-06 *Amber Reclamation*.



DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following NPCs feature prominently in this adventure:

ALANIK RAY

Elf investigator

Alanik (Uh-LAHN-ick RAY) is confident and insightful, a shrewd investigator, and one of the most well-traveled mortals in the Domains of Dread. Alanik is a master of insights and deduction; he can learn details about others after a few moments of meeting them. For example, he can almost instantaneously deduce a character's native domain from their accent and mannerisms. An accidental fall during an investigation caused a spinal injury that paralyzed Alanik's legs. He uses a custom wheelchair that he created with the assistance of his husband, Arthur Sedgwick.

What They Want. Alanik's concern at the moment is discovering the fate of the investigators sent to Barovia.

No Loose Ends. Having solved Radaga's disappearance, he's moved on to investigate the reasons behind it. More information on Alanik can be found in Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft.

BURGOMASTER DIMITRI KREZKOV

Human burgomaster

Dimitri Krezkov's (duh-MEET-chree KREZ-koff) ancestors built Krezk at the foot of the Abbey of Saint Markovia long ago after Strahd conquered the surrounding valley. He is the latest of his family to watch over it; he is a lord and expects to be treated as such. Fate has been cruel to Krezkov in the recent past, the loss of family and the threat of the evil that surrounds his community wear on his soul. However, he is a stalwart, unflinching ally to those who have earned his trust—a rare, genuine force for good in a realm consumed with evil.

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Darklord of Barovia

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they're following the precise path that an earlier group of travelers took.

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GORCIA KHOMIAKOV

Covert angelic grocer

Concealed as an attractive, androgynous human, Gorgia hides a secret. Pulled in by the mists from their place in the Upper Plane of Arborea, for reasons unknown, they've made a life for themselves in Krezk while trying to figure out how to escape. They seem sweet and extroverted, but a desperate yearning for escape burns inside.

What They Want. To escape Barovia and return to the Upper Plane—no matter the cost.

Troubled Mind. They're anxious that their true nature will be uncovered, and often overplay their role as a result.





KABE WHIPPOORWILL

Halfling interdomain informer

Secretly a member of the Keepers of the Feather (a fact known to Alanik only), Kabe (KAYB WIP-er-wil) is Alanik's scout, associate, and friend. A lightfoot halfling with a quick smile and a mean right-hook, Kabe possesses a dark gift that allows them to traverse the Domains of Dread. Acting as both a ferry for the characters and a field contact, they're an invaluable member of the investigative team.

What They Want. Their line of work is dangerous, so they want to ensure everything goes smoothly. Losing an agent is never the desired outcome.

Mist Walker. Kabe is Alanik's scout, investigatory partner, friend, and an invaluable member of the team. They also work as the party's field contact.

RADAGA

Human scholar of the Dark Powers

The initial object of the Order of the Guardians' search, Radaga (ruh-DAH-guh) is a scholar and arcanist who has delved far into the nature of the Dark Powers—some say a bit too far. She's brilliant but obsessive in her desire to catalogue the sinister, as well as a bit possessive of her knowledge. Radaga has olive skin and black hair.

What They Want. Because Alanik suspects that Radaga was possessed by creatures unknown, he insists that she avoid venturing out into the world. For now, she uses her knowledge to search the Order's accumulated treasures for item's she feels might assist Alanik's investigators with their work.

Obsessed with Forbidden Knowledge. She is angry and laments the loss of time due to her recent possession. She chomps at the bit to get back to her life and studies.

KASIS SZWIRNUTCHI

Half-elf gardener

Native to Krezk and not the traveling type, Kasis is muscular with fair features, long dark hair, and striking green eyes. She has never wandered far from Krezk. A piece of land besides her cottage is converted into a household garden, where she grows the produce that she barter's for in the square. Unusually, her garden blooms every fourth day. A recluse, she's still friendly towards the other villagers.

What They Want. Krezk is a nice town. Kasis wants it to remain this way.

Minding My Own. It's not that complicated, is it?



CREATURE STATISTICS

CLOAKER

Large aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d10 + 12)

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	11 (+0)	30 (+10)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Damage Transfer. While attached to a creature, the cloaker takes only half the damage dealt to it (rounded down), and that creature takes the other half.

False Appearance. While the cloaker remains motionless without its underside exposed, it is indistinguishable from a dark leather cloak.

Light Sensitivity. While in bright light, the cloaker has disadvantage on attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The cloaker makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its tail.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage, and if the target is Large or smaller, the cloaker attaches to it. If the cloaker has advantage against the target, the cloaker attaches to the target's head, and the target is blinded and unable to breathe while the cloaker is attached. While attached, the cloaker can make this attack only against the target and has advantage on the attack roll. The cloaker can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement. A creature, including the target, can take its action to detach the cloaker by succeeding on a DC 16 Strength check.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Moan. Each creature within 60 feet of the cloaker that can hear its moan and that isn't an aberration must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened until the end of the cloaker's next turn. If a creature's saving throw is successful, the creature is immune to the cloaker's moan for the next 24 hours.

Phantasms (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The cloaker magically creates three illusory duplicates of itself if it isn't in bright light. The duplicated move with it and mimic its actions, shifting position so as to make it impossible to track which cloaker is the real one. If the cloaker is ever in an area of bright light, the duplicates disappear.

Whenever any creature targets the cloaker with an attack or a harmful spell while a duplicate remains, that creature rolls randomly to determine whether it targets the cloaker or one of the duplicates. A creature is unaffected by this magical effect if it can't see or if it relies on senses other than sight.

A duplicate has the cloaker's AC and uses its saving throws. If an attack hits a duplicate, or if a duplicate fails a saving throw against an effect that deals damage, the duplicate disappears.

GIANT SKELETON

Huge undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 115 (10d12 + 50)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	4 (-3)	6 (-2)	6 (-2)

Damage Vulnerabilities Bludgeoning

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft.

Languages understands Giant but can't speak

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Evasion. If the skeleton is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Magic Resistance. The skeleton has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Turn Immunity. The skeleton is immune to effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The skeleton makes three scimitar attacks.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d6 + 5) slashing damage.

GREATER ZOMBIE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 97 (13d8 + 39)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	4 (-3)	6 (-2)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws Wis +1

Damage Resistances cold, necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Turn Resistance. The zombie has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The zombie makes two melee attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage and 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

LOUP GAROU

Medium monstrosity (shapechanger)

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 170 (20d8 + 80)

Speed 30 ft., 40 ft. in hybrid form, 50 ft. in dire wolf form

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws DEX +9, CON +9, CHA +8

Skills Perception +13, Stealth +9

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 23

Languages Common (can't speak in wolf form)

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Blood Frenzy. The loup garou has advantage on attack rolls against a creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

Legendary Resistance (2/Day). When the loup garou fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Regeneration. The loup garou regains 10 hit points at the start of each of its turns. If the loup garou takes damage from a silver weapon, this trait doesn't function at the start of the loup garou's next turn. The loup garou dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The loup garou makes two attacks: two with its Longsword (humanoid form) or one with its Bite and one with its Claws (dire wolf or hybrid form).

Bite (Dire Wolf or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a Humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with loup garou lycanthropy.

Claws (Dire Wolf or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Longsword (Humanoid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage, or 15 (2d10+4) slashing damage if used with two hands.

BONUS ACTIONS

Change Shape. The loup garou polymorphs into a Large wolf-humanoid hybrid or into a Large dire wolf, or back into its true form, which appears humanoid. Its statistics other than its size and speed, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.



PHANTOM WARRIOR

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, any languages it knew in life

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The phantom warrior can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. The phantom warrior can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Spectral Armor and Shield. The phantom warrior's AC accounts for its spectral armor and shield.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The phantom warrior makes two attacks with its spectral longsword.

Spectral Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) force damage.

Etherealness. The phantom warrior enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

TREE BLIGHT

Huge plant, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 149 (13d12 + 65)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Condition Immunities Blinded, Deafened

Senses Blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), Passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common and Druidic but doesn't speak

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

False Appearance. While the blight remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a dead tree.

Siege Monster. The blight deals double damage to objects and structures.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The blight makes four attacks: two with its branches and two with its grasping roots. If it has a target grappled, the blight can also make a bite attack against that target as a bonus action.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d8 + 6) piercing damage.

Branch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Grasping Root. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one creature not grappled by the blight. *Hit:* The target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target takes 9 (1d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of its turns. The root has AC 15 and can be severed by dealing 6 slashing damage or more to it at one. Cutting the root doesn't hurt the blight but ends the grapple.

WEREBEAR

Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger), neutral evil

Armor Class 10 in humanoid form, 11 (natural armor) in bear and hybrid form

Hit Points 135 (18d8 + 54)

Speed 30 ft., 40 ft., climb 30 ft. in bear or hybrid form

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	111 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +7

Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

Senses passive Perception 17

Languages Common (can't speak in bear form)

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Shapechanger. The werewolf can use its action to polymorph into a Large bear-humanoid hybrid or into a Large bear, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its size and AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. In bear form, the werewolf makes two claw attacks. In humanoid form, it makes two greataxe attacks. In hybrid form, it can attack like a bear or a humanoid.

Bite (Bear or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.

Claw (Bear or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Greataxe (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 4) slashing damage.

WEREBOAR

Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger), neutral evil

Armor Class 10 in humanoid form, 11 (natural armor) in boar and hybrid form

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. in boar form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +2

Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Orc (can't speak in boar form)

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Shapechanger. The wereboar can use its action to polymorph into a boar-humanoid hybrid or into a boar, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its size and AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Charge (Boar or Hybrid Form Only). If the wereboar moves at least 15 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with its tusks on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the wereboar takes 14 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wereboar makes two attacks, only one of which can be with its tusks.

Maul (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Tusks (Boar or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with wereboar lycanthropy.



WERERAVEN

Medium humanoid (human, shapeshifter), lawful good

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 31 (7d8)

Speed 30 ft. (fly 50 ft. in raven and hybrid forms)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)

Skills Insight +4, Perception +6

Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages Common (can't speak in raven form)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Shapeshifter. The wereraven can use its action to polymorph into a raven-humanoid hybrid or into a raven, or back into its human form. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed.

It reverts to its human form if it dies.

Mimicry. The wereraven can mimic simple sounds it has heard, such as a person whispering, a baby crying, or an animal chittering. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack (Human or Hybrid Form Only). The wereraven makes two weapon attacks, one of which can be with its hand crossbow.

Beak (Raven or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage in raven form, or 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage in hybrid form. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with wereraven lycanthropy.

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

Hand Crossbow (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

WEREWOLF

Medium humanoid (human, shapeshifter), chaotic evil

Armor Class 11 in humanoid form, 12 (natural armor) in wolf or hybrid form

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. in wolf form)

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

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +3

Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common (can't speak in wolf form)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Shapeshifter. The werewolf can use its action to polymorph into a wolf-humanoid hybrid or into a wolf, or back into its true human form. Its statistics, other than her AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment it's wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to her true form if it dies.

Keen Hearing and Smell. The werewolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). The werewolf makes two attacks when using the Attack action.

Bite (Wolf or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.

Claws (all forms). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage.

WRAITH

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The wraith can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the wraith has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 21 (4d8 + 3) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Create Specter. The wraith targets a humanoid within 10 feet of it that has been dead for no longer than 1 minute and died violently. The target's spirit rises as a specter in the space of its corpse or in the nearest unoccupied space. The specter is under the wraith's control. The wraith can have no more than seven specters under its control at one time.

HANDOUT 1: BLOOD-DRINKER'S BACKBONE

BLOOD-DRINKER'S BACKBONE

Weapon (spear), very rare

You have a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. It is a formidable weapon sporting a slightly curved maroon blade made from iridescent stone set into a haft of polished vertebrae—each engraved with an ancient, long-forgotten rune.

If the attack misses its target, you suffer necrotic damage equal to the damage that the attack would have normally dealt as the weapon feeds upon your lifeforce, and you gain one level of exhaustion.

Blood-drinker's backbone functions as a +3 *spear*, which is found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

HANDOUT 2: INVESTIGATION JOURNAL

To be entirely fair, this assignment was of particular concern, but you excelled where others failed. It truly is unfortunate to have lost them, but such are the risks that we accept in pursuing our particular line of work.

I am rather surprised that the denizens of Krezk didn't fill you full of crossbow bolts at first sight; they're a terrified lot (not that they don't have good cause to be).

A second encounter with werewolves. Hopefully, you went into Barovia prepared this time—with silver in hand. But that wasn't the true danger... Not many can say that they've shared an encounter with the Devil Strahd that didn't end with his teeth in your neck.

But apparently, your tale in Barovia didn't end there... The Amber Temple lay just ahead.

Yours in reason,

Alanik Ray

PS: The items that you found along the way is safe at my chateau should you have need of it in the future.

Choose one item from the list below by checking the box next to it.

- Potion of growth*
- Moon-touched longsword*
- Potion of greater healing*
- Potion of gaseous form*
- A Treatise on Ethical Mutilations**

**A Treatise on Ethical Mutilations* function as an alchemical compendium which is found in *Tasha's Cauldron of Everything*. Any friendly creature upon whom a spell from the treatise is cast is momentarily wracked with pain and must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of their next turn.

STORY AWARDS

- A Dark Invitation

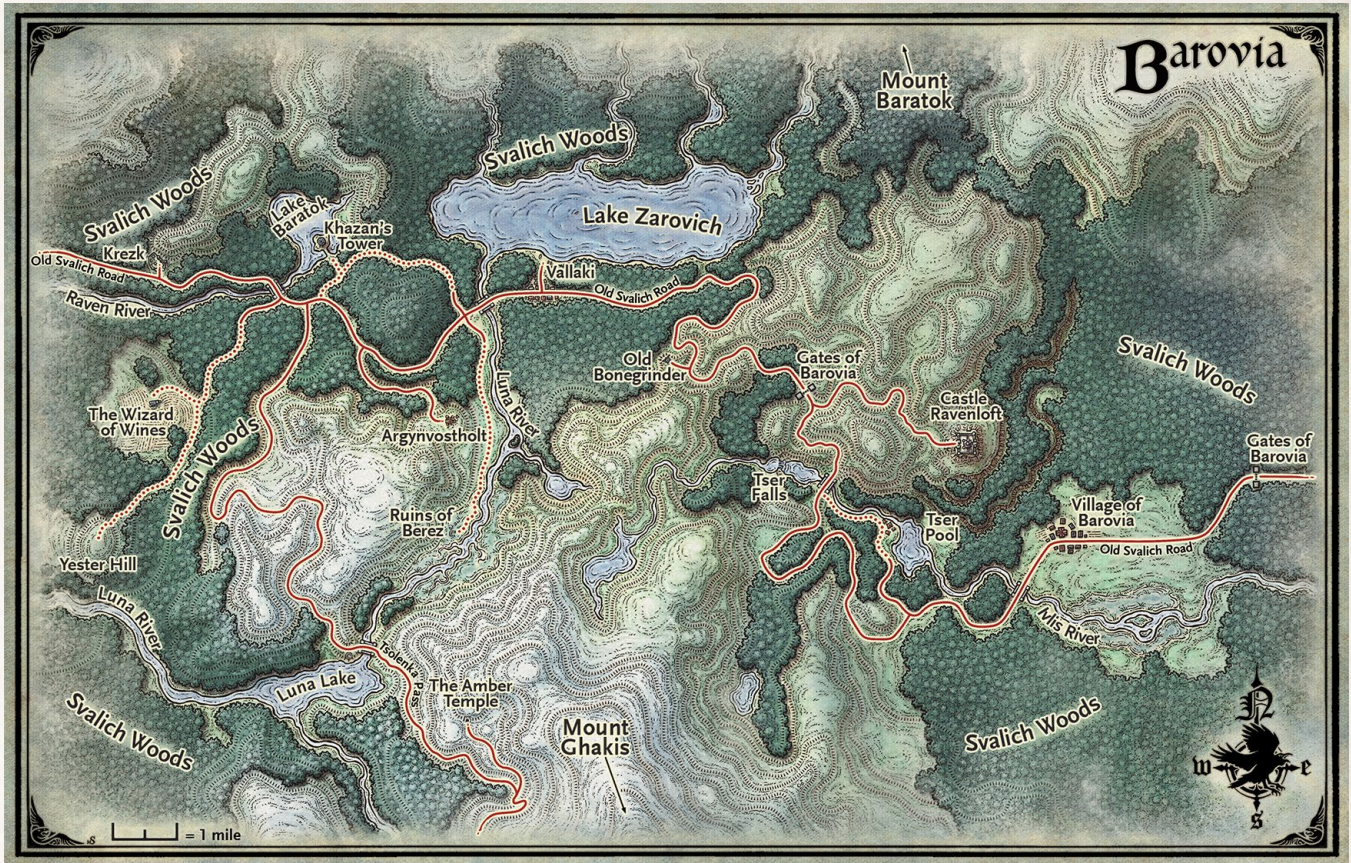
APPENDIX A: MISTY VISIONS

This adventure begins with the characters traversing the horrors of the misty borders of the various Domains of Dread. When instructed, roll on the table. If time permits, roll once for each character. Otherwise, roll once for the entire group. These effects end when the character leaves the domain.

MISTY VISIONS

d20	Vision	Effect
1	Dark, malevolent shadows flit around you, moving within the mists just beyond your sight.	You have disadvantage on initiative checks.
2	Thick, thorny vines erupt from the ground and grasp at your limbs—threatening to pull you into the clammy ground.	You have disadvantage on checks made to escape a grapple or end the restrained condition.
3	You hear the screams of friends and family crying out in fear and agony, but can't find them, despite your best efforts.	You have disadvantage on saving throws against being frightened.
4	The ground becomes wet with black, sticky mud (or is it blood?)—at first ankle-deep, then up to the knees . . .	You must spend an extra foot of movement for each foot spent moving through difficult terrain.
5	Countless clawed skeletons swarm you, clawing at your flesh and clothing.	You gain vulnerability to slashing damage.
6	You bump into a stone grave marker. Examining it closer, you see your own name engraved in its surface.	You have disadvantage on death saving throws.
7	The stench of rotting flesh fills your nostrils. Glancing at yourself, you see dark spots of decay covering your flesh.	You gain vulnerability to necrotic damage.
8	After a moment's distraction, and looking back, you find yourself in the Mists alone until you arrive at your destination.	You have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks made to notice hidden creatures and objects.
9	You see a small child in the Mists ahead of you—coaxing you deeper into the mists. After finally catching up with them, you find nothing but a cornhusk doll.	You have disadvantage on Wisdom (Insight) checks.
10	The Mists turn into a thick, noxious miasma that burns your eyes and throat—threatening to suffocate you.	You have disadvantage on saving throws against poison.
11	Your deepest fear manifests before your eyes.	If you fail a saving throw against being frightened, you're also blinded until the end of your next turn.
12	A bone-chilling wind fills the area—driving the warmth from you and sending your body into tremors.	You have disadvantage on Dexterity checks made to accomplish tasks that require fine motor skills.
13	The Mists coalesce into a tall, dense hedge maze that seems to go on forever, and you pass the same landmarks repeatedly.	You have disadvantage on Wisdom (Survival) checks made to navigate or to discern your location.
14	You encounter a group of terrified adventurers who attack you with a rusted dagger before fleeing back into the Mists.	You take slashing damage equal to a roll of your largest Hit Die.
15	An incorporeal undead creature manifests in front of you and passes through you—driving your strength away.	You have disadvantage on Strength (Athletics) checks.
16	One of your teeth loosens and falls out. One by one, more fall out and crumble away into fine, white powder.	Your anxiety imposes disadvantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks made to positively influence people.
17	You run from beastly shadows in the night. Your heart pounds at every snarl, hiss, and howl, feeling their breath on your heels as they catch up.	Your memories of the vision give you disadvantage on Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks made to positively influence animals.
18	Everything around you withers and decays before your eyes.	If you roll a natural 1 on an attack roll made with a nonmagical weapon, the weapon breaks and becomes unusable.
19	You find yourself in a library behind your closest loved ones as they turn to you, all faceless. You open nearby books to find the answers to help them, but all their pages are blank.	You have disadvantage on Intelligence (History) checks involving the recollection of lore.
20	You breathe and your lungs fill with the Mists. It flows through your body, weighing you down and weakening you.	You have disadvantage on Constitution saving throws to maintain concentration on spells.

APPENDIX B: KREZK AREA MAP



APPENDIX C: DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

To run this adventure as a DM, you must have three, four, or five players, each with their own character within the adventure's level range (see the "Adventure Primer" section at the start of the adventure).

NEW TO D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE?

Information about the Adventurers League, including finding places to play, organizing events, and a list of supporting resources and documents, can be found here: https://dnd.wizards.com/ddal_general

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

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 it, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use during combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendixes and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running the adventure, such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battle maps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception) score; and anything the adventure specifies as notable (such as backgrounds and story awards).

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a player or ran as a DM, but they can do so only once with a specific character. Ensure each player has their character sheet (if not, get one from the organizer)

PREPARING THE CHARACTERS

The adventure is designed to be played with characters of a specific level; characters of a different level should be modified accordingly. If necessary, the characters should be afforded the time needed to adjust their characters to suit.

If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they can't, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Characters that died during a previous adventure return to life, free of any conditions, curses, or other effects that would remove them from play—such as vampirism or lycanthropy. They keep any story awards they have, as any spells they might have copied during their adventures.

During the Call to Action, the characters are likely to review their available magic items among themselves and determine who is carrying what. Make sure they have a few moments to outfit one another.

NEW PLAYERS? NO PROBLEM!

With starter adventures like this one, it's possible you might have players new to D&D, or new to fifth edition D&D. As the DM, it's up to you to ensure these players have fun with the game, and that they learn the basics of how to play. At this level, having fun is more important than learning every rule exactly right. Be gentle with new players who make mistakes.

Make sure to keep your players smiling and rolling dice. Be positive and enthusiastic when describing the action, and you'll notice the players will quickly follow suit.

If you're a new DM, then welcome—and thank you! New DMs are the lifeblood of the D&D community. To help you run your game, some adventures include sidebars like this one that provide an explanation of the game's rules as they're used in the adventure.

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, assess the **party strength** by consulting the table below.

DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

Party Composition	Party Strength
Three characters	Weak
Four characters	Average
Five characters	Strong

SAFETY TOOLS

Safety tools help ensure players aren't pushed beyond their comfort levels. These tools let your players know you want them to have a positive experience. Some common safety tools are provided below, each with a summary of how they work. An [article about one such safety kit](#) is provided to help with further information. Ensure that you discuss these tools with your players before the game:

- **Code of Conduct.** This is a group agreement for play. It outlines desired and prohibited behaviors, confidential reporting, and possible consequences.
- **Pregame and Postgame Discussions.** Use time before the game to explain content warnings, set boundaries, and collaborate on a safety plan. Then decompress and discuss improvements at the end of the game.
- **Be Welcoming.** Welcome and encourage respectful and open conversations about issues as they arise. Show that you're listening by avoiding defensive responses.
- **Confidentiality.** Provide contact information for private and confidential conversations between players and DM. Only disclose another player's name if that player gave unpressured permission for you to do so.
- **Safety Tools.** Learn about the safety tools that TTRPG community members have created and compiled. A broad range of such safety tools are available for you and your players online, or you can get more information by reaching out to your event organizer or community@dndadventurersleague.org.