

# THE FINAL CURTAIN



©  
R  
M  
H  
-  
0  
1  
©



*By Greg Marks*

① AN ADVENTURE FOR 3RD LEVEL CHARACTERS ②

# THE FINAL CURTAIN

## A *Ravenloft*®: *Mist Hunters* Adventure

Over dinner, a friendly face asks you to venture to Emherst, a quirky village in Kartakass, in search of a missing person. No sooner do you arrive, than villagers start winding up dead.

Who is behind the murders?

The second in the *Ravenloft: Mist Hunters* series of adventures. An adventure for 3rd-level characters.



CONTENT WARNING: Murder, death by suffocation and poisoning, fire, gore and mutilation, performance anxiety, forced into a role, manipulation (gaslighting), drug and alcohol use

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.

## CREDITS

**Lead Designer:** Travis Woodall

**Designer:** Greg Marks

**Sensitivity Lead:** Ma'at Crook

**Editing:** Scott Fitzgerald Gray

**Art Director and Graphic Design:** Stacey Allan

**Artists:** Mark Behm, Eric Belisle, CoupleOfKooks, Olga Drebas, Ned Rogers

**Cover Illustrators:** CoupleOfKooks, Scott M. Fischer, Mark Behm (inset illustration)

All art provided by Wizards of the Coast and used with permission

**Campaign Narrative Design:** Chris Lindsay, Wes Schneider, Chris Tulach

**D&D Adventurers League Wizards Team:** Brandy Camel, Chris Lindsay, Chris Tulach

**D&D Adventurers League Administrators:** Ma'at Crook, Amy Lynn Dzura, Claire Hoffman, Greg Marks, Travis Woodall, Bee Zelda

**Playtesters:** Terry Barney, Charles Burbidge, Daniel Chapman, Frank Foulis, Daniel Franco, Matt Maranda, Chris McGovern, Daniel Oliveira, Dave Rosser, James Schweiss, JJ Tin, Marcello Velazquez

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, Wizards of the Coast, Forgotten Realms, the dragon ampersand, *Player's Handbook*, *Monster Manual*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, D&D Adventurers League, all other Wizards of the Coast product names, and their respective logos are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast in the USA and other countries. All characters and their distinctive likenesses are property of Wizards of the Coast. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast.

©2021 Wizards of the Coast LLC, PO Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707, USA. Manufactured by Hasbro SA, Rue Emile-Boéchat 31, 2800 Delémont, CH. Represented by Hasbro Europe, 4 The Square, Stockley Park, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB11 1ET, UK.

# ADVENTURE PRIMER

*“Some people thirst for fame. They will do anything to have it. They will betray anyone. They will humiliate themselves and those around them. To be hated or loved makes no difference to them. What they want is to be known. It is a sad addiction, and such people wallow in it all their lives, like pigs in filth.”*

—Sam Eastland, *Eye of the Red Tsar*

This adventure is designed for three to five 3rd-level characters and is optimized for four 3rd-level characters.

The *Final Curtain* occurs in the theatrical village of Emherst in the domain of Kartakass.

## BACKGROUND

**ALANIK RAY**, an investigator hired by the **ORDER OF THE GUARDIANS**, is searching for a scholar named **RADAGA** whose scholarly pursuits into taboo subjects appear to have led her astray.

The characters' search leads them to **EMHERST**, a small village in the domain of **KARTAKASS**, which is in the midst of an elaborate play whose production encompasses the whole village and all of its residents. But key players in the production are being murdered, threatening the integrity of the story and the lives of everyone in it.

**DRAGICA VOYJEC** has been passed over for a leading role in *The Furrer's Bride*, and she is not about to let that stand. She murdered **ZAGIA GLAVAS**, the actor who got the part she wanted, and then **SATORI KOZINA**, the senior actor who supported Zagia's casting. After the characters arrive, Dragica plans to finish off the other leads: **ANGELEIA JOUREV** and **SREYKO KOZINA**. And with every murder, her embrace of the Dark Powers deepens, and she becomes even more powerful herself.

## OVERVIEW

The adventure starts with a call to action and is then spread over three parts, each taking approximately one hour to play. “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 pre- and post-game discussion:

**Call to Action: An Introduction Over Dinner.** The interdomain scout Kabe Whippoorwill delivers a letter of introduction from Alanik Ray. A missing scholar named Radaga might be in Emherst, and he asks that the characters find her.

**Part 1: Welcome to Emherst.** The characters arrive in Emherst and are greeted by the helpful Zandra, then taken to meet Meistersinger Ivan Marik. Marik can help the characters find Radaga, but asks for their aid to solve two recent murders in the village.

**Part 2: Something's Not Right.** The characters investigate the goings-on in Emherst in an attempt to solve the murders. But several distractions—including new killings—complicate their investigation.

**Part 3: Whittling Away the Competition.** The apprentice woodcarver Dragica (playing a supporting part in service to the master woodcarver who was the killer's first victim) is revealed to be the killer, and the characters must bring her to justice.



## STORY AWARDS

At certain points in the adventure, you may see this glyph along with an entry that describes 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 have just earned, the entry instead provides information for you and the players.

## CHARACTER HOOKS

Characters who participated in RMH-EP-01 *The Grand Masquerade* have previously been recruited by Alanik Ray as field operatives, and have proven themselves in a mission in Dementlieu. Knowing that the characters can handle themselves, Alanik reaches out to them for help.

Characters who didn't participate in the previous adventure are being vetted by Alanik for potential long-term membership in his employ, and this investigation is a test of their abilities.

## CHARLATANS AND ENTERTAINERS

Any characters with these backgrounds feel a connection to the domain of Kartakass. This is the place where magic happens, and where any performer can be discovered and become a star. Such characters ignore the first penalty the DM assigns to their critical review score (see “Critical Review” in parts 1 and 2 of the adventure and “Appendix B: Critical Review Score”).

## KARTAKAN CHARACTERS

In addition to being famed for its performers, Kartakass is home to Meekulbrau, a bitter, blood-red wine purported to improve one's singing voice. Characters from Kartakass have advantage on checks to determine whether a serving of Meekulbrau is poisoned.

# CALL TO ACTION: AN INTRODUCTION OVER DINNER

**Estimated Duration:** 20 minutes

An unexpected invitation sees the characters enjoying a fine meal as guests of the legendary investigator and detective Alanik Ray. Alanik's associate, Kabe Whippoorwill, offers an assignment to the characters that will take them to the domain of Kartakass in search of a missing scholar—and which will make them part of a dramatic enterprise whose stakes are life and death.

**Themes:** Fine dining, just one more bite!

## DEMENTLIEU: DOMAIN OF DECADENT DELUSION

**Darklord:** Saida d'Honaire

**Hallmarks:** Masquerades, decadent aristocracy, social decay, illusions, impostor syndrome

Every night brings another glittering affair in Dementlieu, whose citizens live glamorous and exciting lives. They enjoy the finest clothes, elegant jewels, grand ballrooms, and most extravagantly, the Grand Masquerade hosted by Duchess Saida d'Honaire every seventh day at her island estate. Everyone who is *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 who 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.

## OUTFITTING FOR THE INVESTIGATION

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

**Mundane Equipment.** The Order of the Guardians has offered the characters access to its substantive resources to aid in their investigation. Each character has access to any mounts and equipment from the *Player's Handbook*, as well as the material components for any spell they themselves have prepared—provided the gp cost of the mount, item, or material component doesn't exceed 200 gp. 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 excessively 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 will 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 lose their magic, such as a quaffed *potion of healing* or an exploded *horn of blasting*, however, are marked off of the character's investigation journal and are no longer unlocked; the character must find another one if they want to use that item 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 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 chain 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, and at the end of the adventure, both of the items are returned to Gregov. However, if one of the characters uses the potion or the *horn of blasting* explodes during the adventure, Peter marks it off in 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 that the dose they last obtained has been used.

## LE RÊVE CAFÉ

The characters begin with a lovely dinner at Le Rêve, a quaint riverside café in Port-a-Lucine in the domain of Dementlieu. The food is delicious. The wine, divine. The evening's weather is perfect. Lighted boats float past on the water, as music plays gently in the night.

Instructions from Alanik Ray were imparted with the reservation, so that each character's meals and drinks have been ordered and prepared before they arrive. Whether or not the dish is something a character would have chosen, they find it is exactly what they want once they try it. Alanik's research into each character's palate is disturbingly accurate.

As the characters eat, all note that there is one more place setting than the number of party members.

## NPC INFORMATION

After the characters have introduced themselves and begun their meal, Kabe Whippoorwill approaches the table and sits down. Those who have previously met Kabe recognize Alanik's associate, who introduces himself to new characters. They then present a letter bearing Alanik's wax seal. The letter can be found as "Handout 1: Alanik's Letter."

### KABE WHIPPOORWILL

#### *Halfling interdomain scout*

Alanik Ray's scout, associate, and friend, Kabe Whippoorwill (KAYB WIP-er-wil) is also secretly a member of the Keepers of the Feather (a fact known only to Alanik). 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 guide for the characters and a field contact, they are an invaluable member of the investigative team.

**What They Want.** Kabe's line of work is dangerous, so they want to ensure that 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.

Use the following guidelines to let Kabe offer answers to any questions the characters might have:

- Alanik isn't aware that Radaga has any friends or living family in Emherst, so it's more likely that she is simply hiding out in a familiar location.
- Kabe doesn't know much about Emherst, but expects that like other settlements in Kartakass, it should be governed by a meistersinger: the town mayor and the embodiment of local art. Emherst is known for its performing arts, particularly singing and acting. Beyond arts, the village is also known for local woodcrafts.
- The domain of Kartakass is quite rural, and most of its settlements are small. Kabe recommends that if the characters need any supplies, they buy them in Port-a-Lucine.
- Kabe is a mist walker, able to magically travel between domains—and to transport other characters with them. Because their talents are needed elsewhere, Kabe can't stay with the characters in Kartakass, but they are happy to give any needed advice before taking the party there.
- Alanik is a famous inquisitive for hire who has solved many mysteries, and has many contacts that help him fight criminals, both mundane and supernatural.
- The Order of the Guardians is a network of scholars who secure dangerous supernatural objects, cursed items, and stranger anomalies. The guardians research and hunt dangerous magic in the hope of preventing calamities.

## PARTING THE MISTS

When the characters are ready, Kabe transports them through the Mists to Kartakass.

Roll on the Misty Visions table (Appendix A).



# PART 1: WELCOME TO EMHERST

**Estimated Duration:** 1 hour

The characters arrive at Emherst and are greeted by the helpful Zandra, then taken to meet Meistersinger Ivan Marik. The meistersinger promises to help them find Radaga—but only if the characters first help solve two recent murders in the village. Unknowingly, the characters have become part of a play that is in progress.

**Themes:** Mystery, subjection to gaslighting, idyllic

## KARTAKASS: DOMAIN OF TARNISHED DREAMS

**Darklord:** Harkon Lukas

**Hallmarks:** Hidden identities, dangerous performances, exploitative ambitions, werewolves

Kartakass is a vast stage that serenades the ambitious with promises of fame. Performance is a way of life in this forested domain, with everyone from the bards of Skald to the actors of Emherst pursuing dazzling dreams. Here, the people live by a simple rule: never let an audience grow bored.

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

## EMHERST

It is early morning when the party exits the Mists on the road at the base of the Fox's Theater, the hill upon which Emherst stands. Kabe Whippoorwill bids them good luck and reminds them to meet back at the same location in four days.

The Fox's Theater rises out of a dark wood of ancient trees, its sides covered in a riot of gorgeous yellow wildflowers too perfect to be entirely natural. Emherst appears to be a healthy-sized village with a few hundred people and approximately fifty buildings set inside a wooden wall. The village gate is unguarded, and opens to reveal bustling activity beyond.

## EMHERST

Upon the cave-threaded, wooded rise known as the Fox's Theater stands the idyllic village of Emherst—and beneath it lies the true Emherst. On the surface, Emherst is an elaborate, immersive stage. Every "resident" is an in-character actor, and most are younger than thirty, including those playing aged roles. These are students of the Emherst School of Living Theater located in the Understage, a network of caverns beneath the village. This underground "backstage" connects every structure in the village via tunnels and hosts elaborate elevators and special-effects devices. Incredibly devoted to their craft, the instructors, students, and support staff of Emherst continually improvise performances, taking seven weeks to prepare before performing uninterrupted through an eighth "live" week. As actors refuse to break character, outsiders find the performances changing around them to incorporate their interactions with the community. Ruthless competition for prime roles leads to tragedy, the appearance of tragedy, or individual breaks with reality.



ERIC BELUSLE

HARKON LUKAS

## AREA INFORMATION

Emherst has the following features.

**Dimensions and Terrain.** Emherst stands in a temperate forest atop a hill. Surrounded by a low wooden wall, the village is filled with several one- and two-story buildings with no particular organizational structure. Large open areas with stages are just as common as meandering back alleys. The buildings are decorated in ornate wood carvings and fresh flowers.

**Sounds.** The hustle and bustle of daily life is punctuated everywhere with music. Kartakans frequently break out into song as they work or when the mood strikes them, either singing or playing violins, flutes, and drums. Emotion is reinforced by song everywhere the characters go.

**Light.** Varies with the time of day.

**Weather.** It is clear and sunny. Warm enough to be outside, but cool enough for a light coat or cape.

### KARTAKANS: MURDEROUS ASPIRATIONS

Kartakans are quick to smile—and quicker to be suspicious of others' smiling faces. Even as the skin and hair colors among the denizens of Kartakass vary widely, so does the use of dyes and cosmetics to accent one's features—and memorability.

Everyone here strives for glory, with all seeking their chance in the spotlight. And when talent and practice fail, obsession and lies reign, leading to endless cycles of triumph, despair, and betrayal—especially for the werewolves who are the true power in this domain.

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

## NPC INFORMATION

As the characters enter through the Emherst gates, they are spotted by an actor (a **commoner**) playing the part of Zandra, a miller's daughter.

Zandra brings the characters into the performance by “assuming” that one of them is playing a character named Vaska—returning home to Emherst to claim the body of their recently deceased aunt, the woodcarver Zagia Glavas. Zandra offers condolences to the character on the loss of their aunt Zagia, and welcomes them back to Emherst after so many years. If the chosen character protests that they are not Vaska, Zandra tries to quickly talk over them. She offers to take the characters to see the meistersinger in the theater, so that “Vaska” and their friends can decide and have their questions answered.

Throughout the adventure, Zandra is an enthusiastic ally. Her job is specifically to steer new arrivals in the village into their roles—and because her reviews depend on their reviews, she is adamant in her dedication to keeping up the theatrical facade.

## UNWITTING PARTICIPANTS

The characters don't know it, but each of their “performances” in the real-world play that is Emherst has begun to accumulate a critical review score (see “Critical Review” below and “Appendix B: Critical Review Score”). This score is based on how well each character fits into the story and how well they play their role (unwittingly

or otherwise). During the play, the “villagers” will “make assumptions” about the characters' identities and reasons for being in Emherst—giving the characters prompts and cues from the play to ad-lib. If a character plays along, their review gets better. But if they don't play along or end up disrupting the performance, the critics will pan them and their score goes down. This can—and should—lead to moments where the characters begin to question if they really are who they think they are.

At the same time, the serial killer Dragica has a critical review score of her own. All the characters have ways to increase or lower their review scores (as noted in “Appendix B: Critical Review Score”), and each character keeps track of their own score. The average of all the characters' total review scores is compared to Dragica's review score in part 3. As such, the more mistakes or delays the characters make, the stronger Dragica gets before she is eventually confronted.

### ZANDRA

*Human commoner; “miller's daughter” (supporting character)*  
Zandra (ZAHN-drah) is a senior student, and this performance is her final test before graduation. To graduate, she must successfully assist visitors to the village in adopting appropriate parts in the play.

**What They Want.** Zandra is desperate to make sure the characters succeed in their roles, but must do so without letting her own role slip. As the miller's daughter, she is a friendly sort who just wants to help.

**Curious.** Zandra plays the part of a helpful new friend who has never left Emherst and is curious about the outside world. She uses this as a cover to ask many questions, which are then used to better tailor the scenes and setting to the characters.

### THE FURRIER'S BRIDE

The living play the characters have unknowingly joined is titled *The Furrier's Bride*. While the people of Emherst go about their lives for a week, their dramatic focus is the story of the handsome furrier who is about to be married to the village woodcarver, until a comedy of errors derails their wedding, and the furrier instead falls for the wedding caterer.

Dragica's murders have already started to alter the plot and push her character into the spotlight. If the players and the characters can't figure out who's behind her crimes, she's likely to get away with it.

## MEETING MARIK

Zandra leads the party to an open-air amphitheater where Meistersinger Ivan Marik (a **commoner**) is teaching a song to a group of young children. As the children sing, he accompanies them on the violin, occasionally offering suggestions. Despite the simplicity of the song, the children are impressively good. If a character wants to focus on learning the song, give them “Handout 2: The Madosti Mora.” (The handout is only for the players. As Ivan will tell the characters if they ask him later, the sacred songs of Kartakass known as the mora are transferred as an oral tradition, so there are no written songbooks for the characters to peruse.)

Zandra suggests that the characters sit on the amphitheater's bench seats and listen until the practice is over—which also allows her to stall for time to make sure that the village's backstage crew can work the newly arrived Vaska into the production. She uses the delay to make polite conversation and gather information about the characters that can be used later. Can any of them sing or play an instrument? Do they have favorite foods or beverages? Have they tried Meekulbrau? How do the others know Vaska, and what have they all been up to recently?

At no point does Zandra mention the Emherst School of Living Theater or the Understage. She maintains the cover that Emherst is a normal village, and that the current performance is real life.

## AREA INFORMATION

The amphitheater has the following features. (Full details on this area can be found in part 3 of the adventure.)

**Dimensions and Terrain.** The amphitheater is set up as an 80-foot-long cone, with two aisles descending to the lowest 30 feet where the stage is located. The ground is packed dirt, and bench seats are made from split logs. On the stage are two columns and overhead scaffolding for hanging lights or scenery.

## MEETING WITH THE MEISTERSINGER

When the practice ends, the children depart, and Zandra quickly introduces Vaska to Ivan. She describes Vaska as the child of Zagia's sister, "reminding" him of how Vaska left Emherst years ago and has only just returned in the company of friends as the sole heir to claim their aunt's holdings. Having done so, she once again offers her condolences to the character playing Vaska's part, offers to help with dealing with their inheritance, then quickly goes.

Ivan Marik is the meistersinger of Emherst and the director of the village's current performance—and also plays the role of the meistersinger in the performance. With the arrival of the characters—especially if their look or gear marks them as investigators or adventurers—he sees an opportunity. The recent murders of two characters in the play (which is to also say, the murders of the actors playing those parts) were not part of the plot of *The Furrier's Bride*. The arrival of the characters thus offers a way to roll them into the plot while still trying to keep the play on course.

### IVAN MARIK

*Human commoner; "meistersinger" (actor-director)*

Ivan Marik (EYE-vahn MARE-ic) is one of the directors of the Emherst School of Living Theater, and the only one of those directors playing a role in this production. He is a native of Emherst and has been raised in the theater all his life. In both his roles as meistersinger, he is friendly and cheerful, always looking on the bright side of life. Against the distress caused by the recent murders, he sees the characters as expert investigators sent to save the village's production of *The Furrier's Bride*. How lucky!

**What They Want.** Even though the play is Ivan's responsibility, and he wants it to go well, he is unwilling to break character to help the party. Instead, he strives to assist the characters while maintaining his role as the meistersinger.

**Breaking the Fourth Wall.** Like all members of the Emherst School of Living Theater, Ivan is completely devoted to maintaining his role. But as an actor-director, he has the added responsibility of narrating the play. This requires him to address seemingly random exposition toward a nonexistent audience as he explains backstory and fills in narrative gaps that the characters might have missed.

Read or paraphrase the following as Ivan speaks to the characters.

"I am so sorry Vaska. You have returned during a dark time that should have been one of joy. As I am sure you know, your Aunt Zagia was to be married in two days to Sreyko Kozina, the furrier. Your aunt and Angeleia the caterer had been planning the wedding for weeks, but now Zagia has been found dead under a pile of logs that collapsed upon her behind her woodcarver's shop.

"I would have thought it a tragic accident, but Sreyko's father was found dead yesterday. His tongue had been cut out, and he had choked on his own blood. I think, though I hesitate to say it, that there may be a murderer in Emherst. Gorgov, our venerable village guard, is well practiced at walking the wall and keeping wolves out. But even with all his long age and experience, he is no investigator. By all our ancestors, whatever will become of us?

"I don't suppose that you or any of your friends are investigators who might come to our aid?"

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Ivan is happy to answer any questions the characters might have, and to make a deal to help find Radaga if the characters help him save the village. Though he is willing to briefly talk about Radaga, he tries to continually steer the conversation back to the characters working to solve the murders.

**Where's Radaga?** Radaga was born nearby, but her family hasn't lived around Emherst for more than a decade. Ivan knows that the scholar was in the village a few months ago, but he hasn't seen her since. He would be happy to ask around to help find her, or to determine where she went—if only someone could help put an end to the



threat in the meantime. As the meistersinger of Emherst (both in the play and out of it), Ivan has many connections he can prevail upon to look for Radaga.

**Home Sweet Home.** Vaska is Zagia's only heir, so the woodcarver's house is now the character's home for the purpose of the play. Ivan knows that Zagia even kept a room specifically for Vaska in case her heir returned. He hands over a large key and suggests that the house might make a comfortable redoubt while the characters are in the village.

**Zagia's Shop.** Zagia Glavas had a shop where she plied her woodcarver's trade not far from the village gate. It was also the scene of her murder. Zagia's apprentice, a young woman named Dragica Voyjec, lives in the attic above the shop. Ivan describes her as "sort of a nobody" who Zagia took in, and tells the characters they shouldn't expect much from her. He doesn't know what will happen to the shop, as Dragica certainly doesn't have the skills to keep it running.

**Tell Me About My Aunt.** Zagia was a stern woman, but talented, meticulous, and thorough in her craft. Sreyko's father Satori supported their match, claiming that Zagia's solid nature would balance Sreyko's more flamboyant one, and bring health to both family businesses. (If the character playing Vaska isn't human and the difference in ancestry is asked about, Ivan says that Zagia's sister Zurella, long deceased, took in Vaska as an infant.)

**Music Lessons.** If the characters inquire about the song the meistersinger was teaching the children, Ivan explains that it is the *Madosti Mora*—one of the sacred songs, first taught to the people of Kartakass by Grandfather Wolf. Indeed, when mastered, the song is said to slow aging and grant long life. The characters will probably hear others singing it too, as it is quite popular in Emherst.

**Directions.** Ivan can give directions to anywhere in Emherst the characters might need to go. If they ever need to find him, he is in the amphitheater most days. At night, he often takes a meal and a glass of Meekulbrau at the Grinning Fox Inn.

## A NEW HOME

Zagia's former home is a safe place for the characters to rest, but it's also set up to help them delve further into their roles in the play. Any time the characters are not present, the backstage crew adds more and more details to the home, personalizing it with pictures, letters, favorite foods, and the like—to the point where the place should feel more like the characters' home than any of their real homes.

## AREA INFORMATION

The home is a simple two-story house, featuring a bedroom and a large living room with cooking hearth on the first floor, and a ladder up to an attic that contains Vaska's room.

**Doors.** A solid door exits the house from the living room. It can be locked, requiring the key the characters were given or a successful DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to open. The backstage crew also has a key.

## EXPLORING THE HOUSE

As the characters explore the house, they can learn about the lives of Zagia and Vaska—and uncover the first of many strange connections between Vaska and themselves.

### LIVING ROOM

This large room has a bearskin rug set before the cooking hearth. Several chairs and two tables fill much of the space. Over the fireplace is a family portrait depicting a young Zagia, her late sister Zurella, and a child who looks suspiciously like a young version of the character chosen to play Vaska. Any character who investigates the portrait notes that even though it appears old, some of the paint is still wet.

Beautifully carved shelves line two of the four walls, and are filled with carved wooden bowls, utensils, pots, tools, and books. The books largely discuss trees and types of wood, or are sketchbooks filled with Zagia's many designs. Other wood carvings hang on the walls.

While talking to Zandra or Ivan, if any of the characters expressed an interest in any readily available food or beverage, it can be found on the shelves. In addition, a rack on one shelf has space for four bottles of Meekulbrau, but currently holds only two. (Dragica has stolen the other two.)

The sketches and wood carvings on display show master-level talent, as can be noted by any character with a background or connection to carving or art, or who succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Performance) check or a DC 10 Wisdom check using proficiency with woodcarver's tools.

### VASKA'S ROOM

Vaska's room in the attic loft appears preserved as it might have been when Vaska left. Childlike drawings hang on the walls, and toys and other remembrances are set on shelves. All these objects are appropriate to the character playing Vaska. For example, a fighter character might find a child's wooden sword and shield in the room, while a cleric might see their god's holy symbol drawn on a paper tacked to the wall. Likewise, the clothing found in the room is sized for a child but is in styles favored by the character.

### ZAGIA'S ROOM

Zagia's room on the ground floor contains a closet hung with plain clothing and woodcarver's overalls. At the foot of the bed is a trunk filled with more of Zagia's sketches, papers detailing her thriving business, a diary, and love letters from Sreyko. From the tone of the writing, it is clear that Sreyko and Zagia were very different people. Where he was passionate and interested in fancy things, Zagia's diary portrays her as a stoic, practical sort concerned about the success of her business. She also writes of hoping her union with Sreyko produces children who might inherit, since Vaska has not been seen since running away.

Older diary entries describe how after Vaska left home, Zurella wasted away, losing her will to go on. Zagia doesn't blame Vaska, but hopes that they are well wherever they are, as they are her only family left after Zurella's death.

A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check allows a character reading the diary to pick out Zagia's impressions of many of the people in the village. She

believed her apprentice, Dragica Voyjec, to be without talent and only good for menial labor. Zagia felt that Zandra was trustworthy and dependable, and laments that fate did not offer Zandra as her apprentice. The diary also notes that Sreyko's father Satori is of closer temperament to her, and would have made a better match had he not been in his twilight years.

**Treasure.** Characters searching the trunk also discover a *potion of healing* and a pouch holding a few gold coins.

## NEW ROLES

The role of Vaska need not be the only part that the characters are called on to play—particularly if your players willingly embrace the idea of having roles in Emherst's "living play" thrust upon them. Consider adding one or more of the following roles to the adventure to expand on its central theme, but remember to be respectful of your players. If anyone is uncomfortable about some aspect of a role or asks you to desist, the role can easily be dropped.

## LOVE INTEREST

After Angeleia Jourev is murdered (see the "Timeline" section in part 2 of the adventure), Sreyko needs a love interest to complete his part in the play as intended—and could choose one of the characters. Only a day after his betrothed was murdered and half a day since his true love was similarly slain, Sreyko shows up with flowers and a picnic lunch. He claims that he and a chosen character have a connection, and even shows a gold ring carved in a floral pattern, which he says the character gave him. (Later, the love interest character finds a receipt in their personal belongings from a goldsmith for the ring.)

Sreyko is pleasant, and tries to win the character over without ever being pushy or aggressive. *The Furrier's Bride* is a romantic comedy, and he tries to remain consistent with the tone.

## MENTOR

Zandra plays the part of an interested youth, curious about the outside world. She might start following one of the characters if they show an interest in telling stories or mentoring her. Regardless of what the mentor character says or does, Zandra starts dressing like them, donning a weapon or other affectation similar to whatever the character carries. She starts to refer to herself as the character's squire or apprentice, running errands for them and bringing them their meals.

## UNAWARE MURDERER

In a role particularly well suited for a character who prefers to separate themselves from the rest of the group, the actors of Emherst might begin to convince one of the characters that they might unwittingly be the murderer. The backstage crew makes sure the unaware murderer has trouble resting by planting rocks in their mattress, brushing their clothing with strange-smelling substances, splashing blood on their boots or gloves, or drugging their food so that their sleep leaves them with no memory of the previous night.

During the day, the villager actors ask after the unaware murderer character, claiming to have seen them wandering the streets at night, keeping to the shadows—and always in the vicinity of the latest murder. Likewise, the morning after the arson, the character might find several empty flasks of oil in their pack. If the characters uncover and reveal the poisonings, the unaware murderer character later finds the poison wrapped in a linen cloth in a belt pouch or pocket. (See below for more details of these events.)

### EXTENDING PLAY

Having additional characters take on new roles provides much opportunity for roleplaying and can extend the play experience of this adventure.

## CRITICAL REVIEW—PART 1

For this first part of the adventure, each character receives a review score out of five stars. Use the guidelines in "Appendix B: Critical Review Score" for additional guidance.

### CRITICAL REVIEW MODIFIERS

Event	Modifier
Embrace a role	+1
Display musical talent	+1
Question own identity	+1
Read Zagia's papers	+1
Refuse a role	-1
Miss an important prompt or cue	-1
Demand help locating Radaga before helping to solve the murders	-1
Become rude or violent	-1
DM's discretion	+1/-1

## MOVING ON

It is likely midday by the time the characters are ready to begin their investigation. When they are, move on to part 2, but feel free to return to part 1 if the characters wish to further explore Zagia's house.

## PART 2: SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT

**Estimated Duration:** 1 hour

The characters investigate the goings-on in Emherst in an attempt to solve the mystery of the serial murders, but several distractions complicate their search for the killer. This part of the adventure culminates in determining that Dragica is responsible.

**Themes:** Mystery, questioning reality, surrealistic

### EMHERST BY DAY

The characters are free to investigate as they see fit—and can note almost immediately that the village around them seemingly changes to match the mood of their investigation. If the characters are upbeat, they are rewarded with chipper music and songs. Dark moods are reflected by gloomy looks in the locals or the singing of dirges.

Area information for Emherst can be found in part 1 of the adventure.

### TIMELINE

This part of the adventure is meant to be freeform, and relies on you to manage time while guiding the players. As such, the shape of the investigation depends on which clues the players choose to follow up on, and is mutable with the addition of distractions.

Unless the characters intervene to change the timeline, the performance in Emherst plays out as follows:

- Day 1.** *The Furrier's Bride* begins, four days before the characters' arrival in Emherst.
- Day 3.** Dragica murders Zagia in a fit of rage behind the woodcarver's shop by collapsing a large pile of logs on her.
- Day 4.** Dragica poisons Satori in his home with doctored Meekulbrau. When he doesn't die outright, she cuts out his tongue while he is unconscious.
- Day 5, Morning.** The party arrives in Emherst.
- Day 5, Midday.** The characters begin their investigation.
- Day 5, Night.** Dragica murders Angeleia by poisoning her. To cover up the crime, she sets the bakery on fire.
- Day 6.** Dragica tries to poison Sreyko, but due to his lycanthropic senses, he detects the poison and survives. If the characters have not yet named Dragica as the murderer, Sreyko offers to share the bottle of poisoned Meekulbrau she gave him. (He suspects the bottle is poisoned and wants to point the finger at Dragica without breaking character.)
- Day 7, Morning.** The play ends. If the characters have not stopped Dragica, she is hailed as an up-and-coming star.

### INVESTIGATION

The characters might take any number of approaches to trying to find the murderer. Some of the locations the characters might visit are explored below, though not all

need to be part of the investigation. Evidence that points to Dragica is noted in each entry under the “Clues” subhead. If the setting changes due to a timed event, this is noted with the “Event” subheader.

### BAKERY

The village bakery is busy throughout the day and shuts down at night. It features a storefront area for displaying wares and a much larger back room with several ovens, where Angeleia and two other women work. If the characters come to visit the bakery the first day they are in Emherst (the fifth day of the play), baker and caterer Angeleia Jourev (a **commoner**) greets them. Curiously, she is still cooking for Zagia's wedding despite the woodcarver's recent death. If asked about it, Angeleia claims that Satori Kozina already paid her, so she plans to deliver the food as promised.

If the characters watch the bakery, Angeleia, or Sreyko the furrier on the first day, they might catch Sreyko coming to visit. What starts as an uncomfortable but witty conversation about catering between the two quickly turns more flirtatious.



#### ANGELEIA JOUREV

*Human commoner; “caterer/baker” (starring role)*

One of the three leads in *The Furrier's Bride*, Angeleia Jourev (an-JA-lee-ah jor-EV) is playing the part of a lovable, hard-working baker with natural charm. Though a talented actor, she is not a particularly good cook, which the characters note if they sample any of her wares.

**What They Want.** Angeleia wants to successfully complete her part, despite losing the entire unintentional-rival-of-the-bride storyline at the center of the play.

**Lovable Klutz.** Angeleia is clumsy, and frequently drops things or incorrectly measures ingredients. Somehow, she always makes it look endearing.

## EVENT

Sometime after midnight on the day the characters arrive in Emherst, Dragica casts *invisibility* on herself and steals into the bakery to find Angeleia still working and snacking on a pastry. After Dragica covertly dusts the pastry with poison (powdered fox trumpet; see below), Angeleia has trouble breathing and falls unconscious, then dies a short while later. Nervous about being found out and enraged that Angeleia didn't die outright, Dragica uses a woodcarving chisel to remove Angeleia's tongue. To cover up her crime, she then sets the bakery on fire before casting *invisibility* once more to make her escape. Depending on what the characters are doing or where they are, they might be enlisted to help fight the blaze.

## CLUES

By the time the fire is put out, Zagia's body has been burned beyond recognition. But a thorough search of the area around the bakery and a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check locates a humanoid tongue tossed in the goat pen of a neighbor. The cut is quite rough, and a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Medicine) check notes that it was severed with a bladed implement not meant for cutting flesh. If the characters compare notches along the severed edge to one of the chisels from Zagia's shop, it is a match.

## FATAL FLOWERS

Along the hillside on which Emherst is built—as well as in the window boxes of Zagia's shop—beautiful yellow flowers grow, known as fox trumpet. All parts of the fox trumpet—flower, vine, leaves, and seeds—are poisonous. A character who studies the plant and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check assesses the plant as poisonous, and can tell that its poison causes suffocation. Any character from Kartakass makes this check with advantage. Fox trumpet retains its potency for several days if dried and ground into a powder. It loses its poisonous qualities outside Kartakass.

Any creature that inhales or ingests fox trumpet poison develops immediate respiratory problems. The creature must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned and start choking for a number of rounds equal to 1 + its Constitution modifier. At the end of that time, the creature can attempt a second saving throw. Another creature can render aid, granting advantage on the saving throw with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check or a successful DC 10 Intelligence or Wisdom check using an herbalism kit or a poisoner's kit. If the creature fails the second saving throw, it dies.

## FURRIER'S OFFICE

The furrier's office is one of the busiest businesses in the village. Trappers drop off pelts, merchants buy them, and a host of workers package them up to ship to the more populous settlements of Skald and Harmonia. Sreyko Kozina (a **commoner**) spends about a third of his day here, charming buyers and sellers alike before leaving to stop by the bakery, visit the Grinning Fox Inn, or walk through Emherst singing and basking in the adoration of his fellow villagers.

If the characters come to question him, Sreyko becomes appropriately serious and does anything he can to

help determine who murdered his betrothed. From his perspective, the distraught groom who finds romance in the arms of the caterer is as good a story as what was originally intended.



### SREYKO KOZINA

*Werewolf (human); "furrier" (starring role)*

Sreyko Kozina (SHRAY-KOH koh-zee-NAH) is smooth and confident. As a protégé of Kartakass's Darklord, Harkon Lukas, his future is bright, and it came as no surprise that he was given the starring role in *The Furrier's Bride*. As the handsome furrier set to be married to the woodcarver until a comedy of errors sees him instead fall for the wedding caterer, Sreyko is focused only on his co-leads in the play, and barely notices Dragica in her minor role as the woodcarver's apprentice.

**What They Want.** If the play goes well, it is likely that Sreyko will gain enough of a reputation to tour Kartakass. He is confident that his recent conversion to a werewolf, the patronage of the famed Harkon Lukas, and the lauded praise of the Emherst School of Living Theater will guarantee his stardom.

**Bitingly Handsome.** Sreyko is painfully handsome and possessed of a biting sarcasm. He recently contracted lycanthropy and was worried that it would prevent him from succeeding in his career. But then his mentor—the famed Harkon Lukas—admitted to also having the curse. This has led Sreyko to revel in his role as a social predator, and he enjoys being the center of attention.

## EVENT

On the evening of day 6, if the characters have not already determined that Dragica is the murderer, she attempts to poison Sreyko with a bottle of Meekulbrau tainted with fox trumpet (just as she murdered his father, Satori). His keen werewolf senses detect the poison, though, and he accepts the bottle but doesn't drink it.

Sreyko then seeks out the characters and offers to share the bottle Dragica has just given him. He hopes that clandestinely revealing the attempted poisoning will point the finger at Dragica without him breaking character. (In doing so, he hopes the characters don't simply assume that he's trying to poison them.) Sreyko notes that foreigners often find the wine bitter, and suggests they cut it with apple juice. Any character who drinks the wine must make a Constitution saving throw as described in "Fatal Flowers" above. Those who dilute the wine have advantage on the saving throw.

## GUARD DUTY

It is likely the characters will have cause to seek out the village guard Gorgov (a **commoner**), who can be found walking the village wall and nodding to everyone he meets. Gorgov has made no effort to investigate the murders, and he is happy to leave doing so to the characters. He tries to affect an air of incompetence, but really, he is afraid—not of the murderer, but of failing at his role. If asked to help in the investigation, he says he is much too busy making sure wolves don't dig under the wooden wall that surrounds the village.

Gorgov had the bodies of the previous murder victims taken to a hay barn, where they can be found if the characters wish to inspect them. Other than that, he has no suggestions but wishes the characters luck.

## EVENT

If the characters don't see it first, Gorgov sees the bakery fire and rallies the villagers to put it out. Though the fire is prevented from spreading, the bakery is a total loss. If the characters don't arrive to help, Gorgov rouses them to investigate. He similarly hands off any other crimes that occur, recognizing the characters as much more effective than he could be for a part he hasn't rehearsed.

### GORGOV

*Human commoner; "guard" (background character)*

Gorgov (gore-GAHV) is barely holding on to his spot in the Emherst School of Living Theater, and was relieved to have been cast as the village guard in *The Furrier's Bride*. Until the murders, he was a background character who was supposed to walk the walls all day, singing the *Madosti Mora* and nodding greetings to those he passes as he makes sure wolves can't get into Emherst. Now he's been thrust into a spotlight he isn't prepared for, and he is terrified.

**What They Want.** Gorgov hopes the characters take over the investigation, so he can go back to walking the wall and not risk performing his part poorly.

**Youthful Appearance.** Gorgov is twenty-three, and is playing the part of the elderly guard who has seen some things and is now retired to the idyllic village of Emherst. Though he's dyed his hair gray, tries to hide his face under a false beard, and walks slowly, it's quite clear that he isn't as old as he appears.

## GRINNING FOX INN

The Grinning Fox is filled with background characters from the play getting a drink or meal most hours of the day, until it closes two hours before midnight. Though not a location relevant to any of the murders, this is an excellent place for the characters to gather information about the people and events in the village. Everyone remains in character, and most are gossiping about the obvious spark between Sreyko and Angeleia (until she's murdered, that is). The villagers then turn to gossiping about how unlucky in love Sreyko is.

## BODIES IN THE BARN

The characters can locate the remains of the deceased stored under blankets in an otherwise empty hay barn. The unprotected bodies all show signs of decay, and damage from insects and rodents.

## ZAGIA

Zagia's body is badly bruised and broken. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) or Intelligence (Investigation) check suggests that her fatal injuries are consistent with being crushed under many falling logs.

## SATORI

The middle-aged Satori is missing his tongue, and his throat and face show bruises.

**Clues.** A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Medicine) check notes that what remains of Satori's tongue was severed with a bladed implement not meant for cutting flesh (in the same manner as Angeleia's tongue). If the characters compare notches along the severed edge to one of the chisels from Zagia's shop, it is a match.

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check notes that bruising and hemorrhaging in Satori's eyes suggest he was poisoned in a way that caused suffocation.

## ANGELEIA

After her murder, Angeleia's severely burned corpse is brought here to join the others.

**Clues.** The removal of Angeleia's tongue was a rough process. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Medicine) check notes that the tongue was severed with a bladed implement not meant for cutting flesh (in the same manner as Satori's tongue). If the characters compare notches along the severed edge to one of the chisels from Zagia's shop, it is a match.

## KOZINA HOME

The Kozina home is draped in sadness. Amid evident signs of mourning, decorations for the wedding that was to be are still in evidence. Sreyko rarely comes here except to sleep, and the servants have cleaned up the site of Satori's death.

## CLUES

If questioned, the young maid Effa (a **commoner**) meekly stares at the floor, unable to speak unless a character succeeds on a DC 12 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check. Invoking the meistersinger's authority gives advantage on the check. In a quiet whisper, Effa tells

the characters that Satori had a visitor the night he died. She didn't see who it was, but it sounded like a woman. She says that Sreyko didn't get home till morning, so he wouldn't have seen the visitor himself.

Effa found Satori's body the next morning, and called for the elderly guard Gorgov. The grisly scene was not as horrific as she first thought, since what she'd taken to be blood turned out to mostly be spilled Meekulbrau. If the characters ask for it, a half-empty bottle of Meekulbrau that Effa recovered from the murder scene is still in the pantry. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notes a strange smell to the wine. A successful DC 12 Intelligence check using an herbalism kit or a poisoner's kit determines that the wine is poisoned.

## WOODCARVER'S SHOP

Dragica (a **bard**) has been keeping Zagia's shop open since the master woodcarver's death, but business hasn't been good. With Zagia gone from the play, many of the other actors don't have reasons to stop by. Upon seeing the characters, Dragica becomes overly distraught and goes on at length about her loss. She is grateful that Vaska has arrived to inherit and take over the business. Of course, if Vaska isn't interested, Dragica will happily do so in Zagia's memory.

Dragica follows the characters around if they search the shop, her tears punctuated with the occasional wail.

### GROUND FLOOR

The main-floor workshop is generally tidy, but features several projects presently in progress.

**Clues.** A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check notes that if all the tools presently scattered around are returned to their proper places, one chisel is missing. If asked, Dragica claims that the chisel went missing a week ago, after Sreyko visited. Zagia refused to accuse her betrothed of theft, so the matter was dropped.

### ATTIC

Dragica's small bedroom is in the attic of the shop. The door is locked but can be opened with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Dragica happily lets the characters see inside, but takes offense if anyone wants to go through her belongings in detail. The area is messier than the ground floor, featuring books, clothing, and half-eaten meals scattered haphazardly.

**Clues.** Among piles of dirty clothes and plates are several books discussing wood carving. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check notes a few books on other themes—two cookbooks with lengthy chapters on baking techniques, and a book discussing the uses of animal pelts. (Dragica has used all these books to research the play's three lead roles.)

### OUTSIDE THE SHOP

A pile of logs remains in disarray after having collapsed. The scene is consistent with the story of Zagia dying in a tragic accident—and shows no signs of Dragica having pushed the pile over.

**Clues.** Fox trumpet is planted in the window boxes all around Zagia's shop (as it is in window boxes all over the village). However, a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check notes that the box under the back window is empty.

The dirt has been disturbed in the last few days, when whatever plants were in the box were uprooted.

### DRAGICA ON THE RUN

Part 3 of the adventure assumes that the characters come to the realization that Dragica is the murderer, then seek her in the village. If they come to that conclusion while they're with her in this section, you get to decide how to handle the situation. Most easily, Dragica can stay far enough away from the characters that she knows she can cast *invisibility* and run if the jig is up, with the characters able to follow her footprints to see where she's gone. Whatever happens, try to avoid getting Dragica into a fight in this part of the adventure so the climactic battle in the amphitheater can play out as intended.



### DRAGICA VOYJEC

*Human commoner; "apprentice woodcarver" (supporting character)*

Dragica Voyjec (DRAH-gih-KAH VOY-chec) can't believe that she was turned down for a leading role in *The Furrier's Bride*. She prepared for all the lead roles, learning the basics of their trades to lend realism to her performance. But then Zagia, who always hated Dragica, was given the woodcarver's role—and Dragica was forced to play her apprentice?! It can't be. It must not be. Dragica knows she was meant to be a star, even if she must climb to the top over the dead bodies of her rivals.

**What They Want.** Dragica is going to be a star. *The star!* As soon as she catches her big break, she plans to become more famous than Harkon Lukas—and maybe even tour other domains!

**Extreme Overacting.** Dragica overdoes everything, making her every action grand, big, loud, or flashy. To transform her apprentice's role into the lead role previously held by Zagia, she is constantly carving wooden trinkets, breaking out into song whenever other people are around, and starting dance numbers at inappropriate times. Whenever she sees Sreyko, she rapidly oscillates between extreme devastation at the death of her mentor, and throwing herself at the furrier in hopes of supplanting the caterer Angeleia as the play's love interest.

## ONE AND ONE MAKES THREE

A number of curious things going on in Emherst might offer distractions or complications to the characters' investigation. You can use these to add flavor to the investigation, or to lengthen part 2 of the adventure by as much as an hour.

### BLOODY MEEKULBRAU

Meekulbrau is a bitter, blood-red Kartakan wine purported to improve one's singing voice. It is prized among the folk of Emherst, but its bitterness is not appreciated by most visitors. The vintage is known to temporarily stain a drinker's teeth red (providing cover for many a lycanthrope's bloody teeth). Sreyko and Meistersinger Ivan Marik both drink Meekulbrau frequently.

### FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

Most of the villagers are young (with Ivan Marik and Satori Kozina two notable exceptions), even those who claim to be elderly. The people of Emherst attribute this to the *Madosti Mora*, a magical sacred song that keeps them young if they stay in the village and sing it frequently. The song is not really magical—nor even truly one of the sacred mora of Kartakass. But when dozens of villagers are quietly singing it as a round in the background, it might raise the characters' suspicions.

### MEISTERSINGER FOLLIES

As the director and narrator, Meistersinger Ivan Marik pops up at weird times to get the characters to bounce ideas off him. He expounds constantly on details they already know as he narrates for the play's nonexistent audience.

### ROMANCING THE FURRIER

Sreyko is an easy person to blame for the murders for characters who don't fully investigate the events surrounding them. He appears unconcerned about the death of his betrothed, he's clearly romantically involved with the caterer who is later murdered—and he might even try to substitute one of the player characters as his love interest once Angeleia dies. However, he has clear alibis for each of the murders, and if he is attacked, things go poorly for any characters who don't have the ability to hurt him with magic or silvered weapons. If forced to fight, Sreyko refrains from turning into a werewolf unless out of sight of the other actors, or if he has no other choice.

### SHADOWS BY DAY AND NIGHT

Masked people dressed in black are occasionally seen skulking about the village, emerging from the sewers or disappearing down alleyways without a trace. Oddly, none of the villagers appear to notice them, and all are dismissive of the characters' claims if the sightings are reported. These figures are members of the Emherst School of Living Theater's backstage crew, using stage effects and trap doors to move about the village. The secret doors are so cunningly placed that even 3rd-level adventurers cannot locate them.

The backstage crew should never be seen for more than a brief moment and at a distance, giving them the chance

to flee if chased by the characters. Other actors help the backstage crew escape by “accidentally” bumping into pursuing characters, shining lantern light in their faces as a distraction, and so on.

If you decide to allow the characters to somehow manage to capture a member of the backstage crew, they are older than most folk in the village and refuse to speak or react in any way. The rest of the cast pretends not to see them, but will do everything they can to distract the characters and give a captured crew member a chance to flee.

All crew members use the **commoner** stat block, but might play the silent part of a dangerous rogue or experienced spellcaster if that helps them get away from the characters.

## CRITICAL REVIEW—PART 2

For this second part of the adventure, each character receives a score out of five stars. Use the guidelines in “Appendix B: Critical Review Score” for additional guidance.

### CRITICAL REVIEW MODIFIERS

Event	Modifier
Embrace a role	+1
Display musical talent	+1
Question own identity	+1
Uncover at least one clue	+1
Drink at least one glass of Meekulbrau	+1
Refuse a role	-1
Miss an important prompt or cue	-1
Become rude or violent	-1
Question the age of actors more than once	-1
Interact with the backstage crew (beyond seeing them)	-1
Accuse the wrong NPC of murder	-1
DM's discretion	+1/-1

## MOVING ON

When the characters have determined that Dragica is the murderer and are ready to seek out and capture her, continue with part 3.

# WHITTILING AWAY THE COMPETITION

**Estimated Duration:** 1 hour

**H**aving determined that Dragica is the murderer, the characters give chase through the streets of Emherst! The adventure ends with a battle royal in the Emherst amphitheater and Dragica's capture—or her triumph.

**Themes:** Climatic finale, fan favorite

## EMHERST BY NIGHT

This encounter assumes that it is night when the characters have figured out that Dragica is the murderer. If this is not the case, substitute a heavy mist for darkness and adjust the encounter accordingly.

After searching the village for Dragica, the characters catch site of her making for the village gate. When she sees that she is pursued, she quickly ducks into the amphitheater where the characters met Meistersinger Marik in part 1 of the adventure.

### AREA INFORMATION

The amphitheater has the following features.

**Dimensions and Terrain.** The amphitheater is set up as an 80-foot-long cone, with two aisles descending to the lowest 30 feet where the stage is located. The ground is packed dirt, and bench seats are made from split logs. On the stage are two columns and overhead scaffolding for hanging lights or scenery.

**Sounds.** Wolves howl in the night, and blood-stirring music of drums and fast violins can be heard in the distance.

**Light.** It is a dark night, with the moon obscured by heavy clouds.

**Weather.** Mist fills the air, making the night cold and damp.

**Amphitheater Seats.** When ascending the amphitheater's bench seats or the steps along the edges of the space, a creature can move only at half speed unless it succeeds on a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. On a failed check, the creature falls prone.

**Columns.** Two 10-foot-tall, 5-foot-diameter stone columns stand atop the stage, providing cover. A successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check is required to climb a column. The scaffolding can be reached from the top of either column.

**Pyrotechnics.** Two pyrotechnic charges are placed in the stage scenery. If any area of the stage is subjected to fire damage, there is a 25 percent chance that one charge is set off. Each charge can also be purposefully detonated by dealing any fire damage to it. If detonated, a charge explodes with a dazzling display of colors, and each creature within 10 feet of the charge must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become blinded until the end of its next turn. In addition, colorful smoke

spreads out from the charge in a 5-foot radius, moving around corners. The area of the smoke is heavily obscured. The smoke persists for 1 round or until a strong wind disperses it.

**Scaffolding.** A fly loft is set 10 feet above the stage, with a grid of scaffolding above it. Ropes, lanterns, and sliding scenery are all mounted to and controlled from this area. A ladder in the left wing offers easy access to the scaffolding.

**Sliding Scenery.** Hanging from the scaffolding grid above the stage are several pieces of background scenery painted onto wood. The set pieces include buildings, trees, waves, clouds, and mountains, each 15 feet long and 10 feet high. As an action, a character can pull ropes in the wings to lower the scenery and make it move across the stage to create walls, block attacks, or potentially knock an opponent prone. A successful DC 12 Dexterity saving throw avoids moving scenery.

### CREATURE INFORMATION

With each murder Dragica Voyjec commits, the Dark Powers have gifted the **bard** with more talent and strength. This amplifies her theatrical flair to allow her to affect the real world, and brings four **wolves** in to help her fight the characters.

When combat begins, Dragica is just walking onto the stage and the characters are 50 feet away at the top of the amphitheater. The wolves close from behind the characters. Dragica knows this is her last chance at a big break, and an epic fight scene is just what she needs. She holds nothing back and fights till the end. Controlled by the Dark Powers, the wolves fight to the death.

#### ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Consider the following suggestions for adjusting this scene depending on the relative combat strength of the party (see "Appendix B: Dungeon Master Tips").

**Weak:** Remove one **wolf**.

**Strong:** Replace the **wolves** with two **dire wolves**.



## DRAGICA'S CRITICAL REVIEW SCORE

At the start of part 3, Dragica has a critical review score of 8, modified for circumstances as follows:

### DRAGICA'S CRITICAL REVIEW MODIFIERS

Circumstance	Modifier
The party is weak.*	-1
The party is strong.*	+1
The characters successfully accused Dragica before Sreyko's 'gift' of the poisoned meekulbrau.	-1
DM's discretion.	+1/-1

\* See "Adjusting This Adventure" in "Appendix B: Dungeon Master Tips."

Compare Dragica's Critical Review Score to the characters' average score rounded down (see "Appendix B: Critical Review Score") and modify the encounter as follows:

**Dragica's score is higher.** Dragica can take 3 legendary actions (see her stat block in the "Creature Statistics" section). Gorgov the guard arrives in the first round of the fight and sees the characters attacking Dragica. Confused as to what is happening, he tries to restrain or incapacitate the characters.

**Both scores the same.** No change.

**Dragica's score is lower.** Dragica can take 1 legendary action. Gorgov the guard arrives in the second round of the fight, and responds to any call for help from the characters by attacking the wolves.



## CRITICAL REVIEW EFFECTS

Combat in the amphitheater should be theatrical, as befits a play. Each round, randomly select a character and use their total critical review score to choose an appropriate effect from the table below. (As in all drama, fan favorites receive boons in combat, while those we love to hate are likely to see the tide turn against them.)

### CRITICAL REVIEW EFFECTS

Score (★'s)	Sample Effect
0-5	A sandbag falls from the overhead scaffolding. The character must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or take 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. A curtain falls on the character, who must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or be restrained until the end of their turn. Scenery gets in the way of the character's attack or movement. The character must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or drop whatever they are holding. A piece of sliding scenery rolls in front of a character just as they are about to attack, causing the attack to be made with disadvantage.
6-7	A part of the stage or scaffolding the character is moving across is unstable. A character who moves more than half speed must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall prone at the end of their movement. (A character on the scaffolding first falls 20 feet and takes falling damage as normal.) On a success, the character uses the erratic movement to take the Dodge action as a bonus action before the end of their turn. Music swells from offstage. If the character breaks into song or dance, they can roll a d6 and make a DC 10 Charisma (Performance) check. On a success, the character adds the d6 roll to their next d20 roll. On a failure, they subtract the d6 roll from their next d20 roll.
8-10	The character is in the right place at the right time as their enemy stumbles. One attack the character makes this round is made with advantage. A pyrotechnic charge detonates in front of the next enemy who attacks the character. The enemy's attack is made with disadvantage. Dragica uses a legendary action at the end of the character's turn, but nothing happens!

## TREASURE

Dragica is wearing a *cloak of billowing* and has a pouch holding some of Zagia's jewelry that the characters can claim.

## FOILED!

The adventure culminates in a manner determined by whether the characters defeated Dragica or not.

### DRAGICA ISN'T DEFEATED

As Dragica escapes your clutches, bright lanterns suddenly shine on you, and Meistersinger Ivan Marik steps out through a hidden door. All the villagers start running into the amphitheater and into the lights. Masked people dressed all in black emerge out of trap doors and hidden spaces.

“And that’s a wrap, everyone,” the Meistersinger calls out. “I want to thank you for coming to another performance of the Emherst School of Living Theater, and I want to remind you of our next performance in eight weeks, where we will be putting on *The Scholar of Barrow Wight Hill*. Let’s have a round of applause for our actors, our backstage crew, and especially our surprising new up-and-coming star, Dragica Voyjec.”

Dragica comes around the corner of a nearby column and takes a deep bow. The villagers clap furiously, beaming at Dragica as they begin to pull off costumes, wigs, and masks.

If Dragica lives, the other villagers find her interpretation of the woodcarver’s apprentice unexpected but quite novel. In the end, they applaud her creativity and declare her the star of the show.

### DRAGICA DEFEATED

As Dragica falls, bright lanterns suddenly shine on you and Meistersinger Ivan Marik steps out through a hidden door. All the villagers start running into the amphitheater and into the lights. Masked people dressed all in black emerge out of trap doors and hidden spaces.

“And that’s a wrap, everyone,” the meistersinger calls out. “I want to thank you for coming to another performance of the Emherst School of Living Theater, and I want to remind you of our next performance in eight weeks, where we will be putting on *The Scholar of Barrow Wight Hill*. Let’s have a round of applause for our actors, our backstage crew, and especially our guest stars.”

The villagers clap furiously, beaming in your direction as they begin to pull off costumes, wigs, and masks.

## BEHIND THE SCENES

Whatever the outcome of the fight and Dragica’s fate, Ivan Marik or another cast member can fill the characters in on the nature and purpose of the Emherst School of Living Theater.

### RADAGA’S FATE

With Dragica’s threat ended, the characters can impress upon Ivan that it’s time for him to hold up his end of the bargain. Having already made inquiries on the characters’ behalf, the meistersinger can lead them to a chamber in the Understage where Radaga had been hiding out. Witnesses say that she left the hideout just over a week ago—probably not long after she was spotted by Alanik’s operatives. Any investigation of the space shows signs that the scholar packed up and left in a hurry, but papers and books left behind suggest that she was researching dead gods and the echoes of their power, known as vestiges.

### TREASURE

Among the belongings Radaga left behind is a quiver holding four *+1 arrows* and a magic lantern known as a *ghost light* (see “Handout 3: Character Rewards”). Ivan is more than willing to let the characters take Radaga’s belongings.

## WRAP-UP

When the characters meet with Kabe Whippoorwill upon his return, the scout informs them of rumors that Radaga has been sighted in Falkovnia, in the service of an arcanist and scientist named Vjorn Horstman. The characters must find Radaga and release her from Horstman’s service.

From their pack, Kabe pulls a Mist talisman—a special object that allows characters to travel through the Mists to a specific domain. They give the characters the talisman, which takes the form of a frayed satin mask set with glass baubles, and explains that once they convince Radaga to leave Falkovnia, everyone must make their way to the Mists that border the domain, then use the mask to return with Radaga to Alanik in Dementlieu. Because Kabe doesn’t know where the characters will be upon the completion of their mission, he won’t be able to return to escort them home. He thus stresses the importance of keeping the mask safe—for without it, the characters will be unable to leave Falkovnia.

“Right ... to Falkovnia,” Kabe whispers, steeling himself.

This adventure ends as the characters enter the Mists.

## INVESTIGATION JOURNAL

Provide each player with a copy of the Investigation Journal. 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.

# DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following NPCs feature prominently in this adventure.

## ANGELEIA JOUREV

*Human commoner; “caterer/baker” (starring role)*

One of the three leads in *The Furrier’s Bride*, Angeleia Jourev (an-JA-lee-ah jor-EV) is playing the part of a lovable, hardworking baker with natural charm. Though a talented actor, she is not a particularly good cook, which the characters note if they sample any of her wares.

**What They Want.** Angeleia wants to successfully complete her part, despite losing the entire unintentional-rival-of-the-bride storyline at the center of the play.

**Lovable Klutz.** Angeleia is clumsy, and frequently drops things or incorrectly measures ingredients. Somehow, she always makes it look endearing.

## DRAGICA VOYJEC

*Human commoner; “apprentice woodcarver” (supporting character)*

Dragica Voyjec (DRAH-gih-KAH VOY-chee) can’t believe that she was turned down for a leading role in *The Furrier’s Bride*. She prepared for all the lead roles, learning the basics of their trades to lend realism to her performance. But then Zagia, who always hated Dragica, was given the woodcarver’s role—and Dragica was forced to play her apprentice?! It can’t be. It must not be. Dragica knows she was meant to be a star, even if she must climb to the top over the dead bodies of her rivals.

**What They Want.** Dragica is going to be a star. *The star!* As soon as she catches her big break, she plans to become more famous than Harkon Lukas—and maybe even tour other domains!

**Extreme Overacting.** Dragica overdoes everything, making her every action grand, big, loud, or flashy. To transform her apprentice’s role into the lead role previously held by Zagia, she is constantly carving wooden trinkets, breaking out into song whenever other people are around, and starting dance numbers at inappropriate times. Whenever she sees Sreyko, she rapidly oscillates between extreme devastation at the death of her mentor, and throwing herself at the furrier in hopes of supplanting the caterer Angeleia as the play’s love interest.

## GORGOV

*Human commoner; “guard” (background character)*

Gorgov (gore-GAHV) is barely holding on to his spot in the Emherst School of Living Theater, and was relieved to have been cast as the village guard in *The Furrier’s Bride*. Until the murders, he was a background character who was supposed to walk the walls all day, singing the *Madosti Mora* and nodding greetings to those he passes as he makes sure wolves can’t get into Emherst. Now he’s

been thrust into a spotlight he isn’t prepared for, and he is terrified.

**What They Want.** Gorgov hopes the characters take over the investigation, so he can go back to walking the wall and not risk performing his part poorly.

**Youthful Appearance.** Gorgov is twenty-three, and is playing the part of the elderly guard who has seen some things and is now retired to the idyllic village of Emherst. Though he’s dyed his hair gray, tries to hide his face under a false beard, and walks slowly, it’s quite clear that he isn’t as old as he appears.

## IVAN MARIK

*Human commoner; “meistersinger” (actor-director)*

Ivan Marik (EYE-vahn MARE-ic) is one of the directors of the Emherst School of Living Theater, and the only one of those directors playing a role in this production. He is a native of Emherst and has been raised in the theater all his life. In both his roles as meistersinger, he is friendly and cheerful, always looking on the bright side of life. Against the distress caused by the recent murders, he sees the characters as expert investigators sent to save the village’s production of *The Furrier’s Bride*. How lucky!

**What They Want.** Even though the play is Ivan’s responsibility and he wants it to go well, he is unwilling to break character to help the party. Instead, he strives to assist the characters while maintaining his role as the meistersinger.

**Breaking the Fourth Wall.** Like all members of the Emherst School of Living Theater, Ivan is completely devoted to maintaining his role. But as an actor-director, he has the added responsibility of narrating the play. This requires him to address seemingly random exposition toward a nonexistent audience as he explains backstory and fills in narrative gaps that the characters might have missed.

## KABE WHIPPOORWILL

*Halfling interdomain scout*

Alanik Ray’s scout, associate, and friend, Kabe Whippoorwill (KAYB WIP-er-wil) is also secretly a member of the Keepers of the Feather (a fact known only to Alanik). 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 guide for the characters and a field contact, they are an invaluable member of the investigative team.

**What They Want.** Kabe’s line of work is dangerous, so they want to ensure that 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.

## SREYKO KOZINA

*Werewolf (human); “furrier” (starring role)*

Sreyko Kozina (SHRAY-KOH koh-zee-NAH) is smooth and confident. As a protégé of Kartakass’s Darklord, Harkon Lukas, his future is bright, and it came as no surprise that he was given the starring role in *The Furrier’s Bride*. As the handsome furrier set to be married to the woodcarver until a comedy of errors sees him instead fall for the wedding caterer, Sreyko is focused only on his co-leads in the play, and barely notices Dragica in her minor role as the woodcarver’s apprentice.

**What They Want.** If the play goes well, it is likely that Sreyko will gain enough of a reputation to tour Kartakass. He is confident that his recent conversion to a werewolf, the patronage of the famed Harkon Lukas, and the lauded praise of the Emherst School of Living Theater will guarantee his stardom.

**Bitingly Handsome.** Sreyko is painfully handsome and possessed of a biting sarcastic wit. He recently contracted lycanthropy and was worried that it would prevent him from succeeding in his career. But then his mentor—the famed Harkon Lukas—admitted to also having the curse. This has led Sreyko to revel in his role as a social predator, and he enjoys being the center of attention.

## ZANDRA

*Human commoner; “miller’s daughter” (supporting character)*

Zandra (ZAHN-drah) is a senior student, and this performance is her final test before graduation. To graduate, she must successfully assist visitors to the village in adopting appropriate parts in the play.

**What They Want.** Zandra is desperate to make sure the characters succeed in their roles, but must do so without letting her own role slip. As the miller’s daughter, she is a friendly sort who just wants to help.

**Curious.** Zandra plays the part of a helpful new friend who has never left Emherst and is curious about the outside world. She uses this as a cover to ask many questions, which are then used to better tailor the scenes and setting to the characters.



# CREATURE STATISTICS

## COMMONER

Medium humanoid (any race)

**Armor Class** 10  
**Hit Points** 4 (1d8)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Senses** passive Perception 10  
**Languages** any one language (usually Common)  
**Challenge** 0 (10 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The champion makes three attacks with its greatsword or its shortbow.

**Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage, plus 7 (2d6) slashing damage if the champion has more than half of its total hit points remaining.

**Shortbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, plus 7 (2d6) piercing damage if the champion has more than half of its total hit points remaining.

### STAT BLOCK MODIFICATIONS

The folk of Emherst each have a Charisma of 12 (+1), and skill modifiers of Deception +5 and Performance +5. Gorgov carries a spear instead of a club, which deals 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

## DIRE WOLF

Large beast

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 37 (5d10 + 10)  
**Speed** 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +4  
**Senses** passive Perception 13  
**Languages** —  
**Challenge** 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

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

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

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

## DRAGICA (BARD)

Medium humanoid (any race)

**Armor Class** 15 (chain shirt)  
**Hit Points** 44 (8d8 + 8)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Dex +4, Wis +3  
**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Perception +5, Performance +6  
**Senses** passive Perception 15  
**Languages** any two languages  
**Challenge** 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

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

Cantrips (at will): *friends, mage hand, vicious mockery*  
 1st level (4 slots): *charm person, healing word, heroism, sleep, thunderwave*

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

**Song of Rest.** The bard can perform a song while taking a short rest. Any ally who hears the song regains an extra 1d6 hit points if it spends any Hit Dice to regain hit points at the end of that rest. The bard can confer this benefit on itself as well.

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

### ACTIONS

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

**Shortbow.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

### STAT BLOCK MODIFICATIONS

Dragica uses the **bard** stat block but gains the Not Dead Yet! trait and the following legendary actions.

**Not Dead Yet!** If Dragica is dying and has not failed three death saving throws, on initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties) she regains 12 hit points, stands up from prone, and makes a melee attack against a creature within 5 feet of her.

**Legendary Actions.** Dragica can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Dragica may not use the same legendary action until she has used another. (Nobody likes a sequel.) She regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

**Tumbling Leap.** Dragica leaps through the air a distance up to her speed without provoking attacks of opportunity.

**Unhand Me.** Dragica ends one effect on her that has her grappled, restrained, or stunned.

**Witty Retort.** Dragica casts *vicious mockery*.

## WEREWOLF

Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)

**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) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

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

### STAT BLOCK MODIFICATIONS

Sreyko has a Charisma of 12 (+1), and skill modifiers of Deception +5 and Performance +5.

## WOLF

Medium beast

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +4

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

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

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

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

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

*Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

# HANDOUT 1: ALANIK'S LETTER

Dearest friends,

I am sorry that i have been delayed by business in Darkon, but my close companion Kabe Whippoorwill bears this missive and all my trust. My talents have been employed by the order of the guardians to locate one of its members who has gone missing. Radaga is a human scholar and arcanist who researches the dark nature of the world, and the order fears she may be in danger.

I had hoped to locate her in Port-a-Lucine, but it seems my operatives were too late. Radaga was born in Kartakass, and contacts of mine report having recently spotted her in the village of Emherst, near where she was born. It is possible that if she is in danger, she has gone to ground in familiar surroundings.

What i know of the skills and character of each of you makes me believe that you would be beneficial additions to my domain-spanning team, and i wish to hire you as field operatives. I am asking you to allow Kabe to take you through the mists to Emherst, where your party is to locate Radaga and return with her. If she is in danger, help her. If she is no longer in the village, seek and pursue any clues that might determine where she has gone. Kabe will return in four days to transport you back, or to your next destination. All your basic needs will be attended to, and you will have the chance to be part of a grand adventure. I hope you accept my offer.

Yours,

Alanik ray

## HANDOUT 2: THE MADOSTI MORA

BEG NOT TO GO.  
BEG NOT TO STAY.  
IF YOU WISH REALLY HARD,  
YOU'LL NEVER GO AWAY.

WEAR ANOTHER SKIN.  
HOWL AT THE MOON.  
SING A SONG OF BLOOD,  
AND CHEAT DEATH'S TUNE.

NEVER GROW UP.  
NEVER GROW OLD.  
WITH THE HELP OF MUSIC,  
LIVE LIFE MOST BOLD.

WALK THE PATH  
WHERE NIGHT IS DAY.  
SONG IS MY BLOOD,  
AND TIME IS MY PREY.



# HANDOUT 3: INVESTIGATION JOURNAL

In hindsight, a more detailed warning about the nature of Kartakass would have been appropriate on my part, and for that slight, I can offer only my sincerest of apologies.

The events in Emherst were no doubt unusual for you, but imagine the surprise when the town's actors—who are accustomed to occasionally playing the part of the dearly departed—unexpectedly find themselves on death's door in a much more real and terminal sense.

Braving werewolf furriers, poisoned Meekulbrau, and an understudy with a murderous streak is all in a day's work, I guess.

In any case, Kabe insists that you "performed" admirably. They insisted that I emphasize this. I can't help but presume that the pun is intentional.

Yours in reason,

Alanik Ray

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

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

- (4) Arrows +1
- Cloak of billowing
- Potion of healing
- Ghost light\*

\**Ghost light* functions as a *lantern of revealing* which is found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. This ornate brass lantern is engraved with ghostly images and faces twisted in horror. Each time you add 1 pint of oil to the lantern, three drops of blood from a humanoid creature are also required to fuel it. While you possess the lantern, you are haunted by a minor poltergeist that rearranges your pack, hides your socks, occasionally pelts you with small pebbles, and generally makes life annoying for you.

# 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 their 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 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?)—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 vulnerable 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 are also blinded until the end of your next turn.
12	A bone chilling wind fills the area—driving the warmth from your body 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 adventures who attack you with a rusted dagger before fleeing back into the mists.	You take an amount of 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 nervous 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 of 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 mist. It flows through your body, weighing you down and weakening you.	You have disadvantage on Constitution saving throws made to maintain concentration on spells.

# APPENDIX B: CRITICAL REVIEW SCORE

The characters don't know it, but from the moment they arrive in Emherst, each of their performances begins to accumulate a critical review score. This score is based on how well each character fits into the story of *The Furrer's Bride* and how well they play their role (unwittingly or otherwise). During the play, the "villagers" will "make assumptions" about the characters' identities and reasons for being in Emherst—giving the characters prompts and cues from the play to ad-lib. If a character plays along, their review gets better. But if they don't play along or end up disrupting the performance, the critics pan them, and their score goes down. This can—and should—lead to moments where the characters begin to question if they really are who they think they are.

At the same time, the serial killer Dragica has a critical review score of her own. All the characters have ways to increase or lower their review scores, as noted below, and each character keeps track of their own score. The average of all the characters' total review scores is compared to Dragica's review score in part 3. As such, the more mistakes or delays the characters make, the stronger Dragica gets before she is eventually confronted.

## AWARDING STARS

They say everyone's a critic, but being a critic is harder than it looks. As DMs we often want to say 'Yes' to the characters' choices and decisions, but this is Ravenloft. The critics of Kartakass are harsh and fame is hard to achieve, so don't be afraid to penalize characters one or more stars in their critical review score. Additionally, if a modifier pertains to a scene or encounter a character was not part of, the character does not receive that modifier. Actors who put themselves out there are more likely to become famous or infamous, while others fade into the background.

Characters can earn one star for simply participating in what's going on around them, and no character can earn fewer than no stars or more than five stars. Each character's performance earns a review out of five stars at the end of part 1 and part 2 of the adventure. In part 3, those review scores are totaled and then all the characters' total scores are averaged and rounded down.

### CRITICAL REVIEW

Stars	Rating	Examples
—	Critic	The character doesn't try to fit in, causes disturbances, or uses violence or intimidation to solve problems.
★	Clown	The character makes only a token effort or shows little interest in the play.
★★	Student	The character tries to engage in the play but makes several significant mistakes.
★★★	Artist	The character tries to engage in the play but misses a few cues or lacks believability.
★★★★	Star	The character is a crowd favorite who solves problems through intelligence, wit, or comedy.
★★★★★	Master	The character gives a perfect performance, doing what is expected and then stealing the scene.

## DM PERFORMANCE TRICKS

One of the primary themes of this adventure is questioning reality, especially as it pertains to characters relating to their own identity. This section notes a few tricks you can use to subtly lead the players down the path of having their characters question who they actually are. Some of these might be initially confusing or eventually upsetting for some players—especially if they don't catch on to the spirit of the adventure. (If this happens, it might be a good opportunity to emphasize the adventure's content warning.) At the end of the day, this adventure is about the characters taking on new roles in the same way the players have taken on the roles of their characters. But if any players don't like the feel of being pushed in that direction, it is always better to err on the side of making those players feel safe and comfortable, rather than forcing that portion of the story on them.

### PROPS IN THE HOUSE

The Understage features massive storage areas filled with props, and a technical theater department that can produce a facsimile of just about any item or object in minutes. Using the many secret doors scattered throughout Emherst, the backstage crew can turn over a set or place relevant props at any time. The crew might place seemingly old paintings that feature any character's likeness, produce documents in a character's handwriting (if a sample of that handwriting can be procured), or quickly alter clothing to fit any character. The longer the characters stay in Zagia's house, the more items they find that are seemingly personalized to them.

### SYMPATHY

If any character insists they aren't the in-play character that the NPCs in Emherst say they are, they draw a sympathetic response such as: "Yes, I understand that when you left Emherst it must have seemed like starting over as a whole different person."

### TALKING OVER

If a character tries to correct an NPC as to who they are, the actors quickly interject and talk over them, pretending not to notice or hear what was said.

### VASKA'S NAME

Unless the player whose character is chosen to play Vaska asks you to stop, always refer to that player's character by the name Vaska. If that does make the player uncomfortable, respect their wishes but make it clear that the NPCs of Emherst refer to their character as Vaska. Under ideal circumstances, everyone at the table will eventually follow suit, reinforcing the adventure's sense of friendly confusion over who the character really is.

# APPENDIX C: DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

To run an adventure as a DM, you can have no more than 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: <http://dnd.wizards.com/playevents/organized-play>

## 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 a combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendices 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 (backgrounds, traits, and flaws, etc.).

A player can play an adventure they previously played as a player or Dungeon Master, but they can do so only once with a specific character. Ensure that each player has their character's adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer) with their starting values for level, magic items, gold, and downtime days. These values are updated at the conclusion of the session. The adventure information and your information are added at the end of the adventure session—whether the character completed the adventure or not.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. 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.

Point players to the *D&D Adventurers League Players Guide* for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it's the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days immediately, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters' spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give the players hints about what they might face.

### NEW PLAYERS? NO PROBLEM!

With starter adventures like this one, it's possible that you might have players who are new to D&D, or new to fifth edition D&D. It's up to you as the DM to ensure that 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 that they'll quickly follow suit.

If you are 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
Fewer than four characters	Weak
Four characters	Average
More than four characters	Strong

### SAFETY TOOLS

Safety tools help to ensure that players aren't pushed beyond their comfort levels. These tools let your players know that 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.
- **Pre- and Post-game 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 are 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](mailto:community@dndadventurersleague.org).