**IN THE PAST:**

**The Spellplague**

In 1385 DR, the ascended deity Cyric, aided by Shar, murdered Mystra, the goddess of magic, in her domain of Dweomerheart. This act ripped asunder the fabric of magic in the world, unleashing its raw power in a catastrophe called the Spellplague. Thousands of practitioners of the Art were driven mad or killed, while the face of Faerun was reshaped by waves and veils of mystic blue fire. Entire nations were displaced or exchanged with realms from other worlds, and parts of the earth were torn free to float in the air.

**The Second Sundering**

A century after the Spellplague, the lands and peoples of Faerun had become accustomed to the state of things just in time for everything to change again. The first indication of new turmoil came in 1482 DR,

when Bhaal, the long-dead god of murder, was reborn in Baldur's Gate amid chaos and bloodshed. The return of Bhaal and his reclamation of the domain of murder from Cyric led scholars to believe that the rules by which all deities must abide were in flux.

In 1484, strange calamities began to occur throughout Faerun.

Throughout this period, tales began to spread of individuals who had been touched by the gods and granted strange powers. Some of these so-called “Chosen” were at the root of the conflicts that grip the land. Some seemed driven by divine purpose, while others claimed to be mystified as to why they would be singled out.

On the Sword Coast, the magic academy, Hosttower of the Arcane rose again in Luskan, along with the Arcane Brotherhood. In Waterdeep and Neverwinter, efforts were made to clear those cities of century-old rubble and neglect.

Early in 1487, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions abounded for months, as if the whole world was convulsing. Rumors spread of chasms caused by the Spellplague suddenly vanishing, and stories circulated of known destinations being farther away from one another, as if the world had quietly added miles of wilderness to the distance between them. Word began to spread of places and peoples not heard from since the Spell plague. It became apparent that some of the effects of that terrible time had been reversed. During the year, ships claiming to be from Evermeet, Lantan, and Nimbral- nations thought vanished or destroyed- sailed into ports on the Sword Coast and in the Shining South. Tales spread of the legendary skyships of Halruaa being spotted in southern skies. In a struggle for control of Myth Drannor's mythal and the Weave itself, the flying capital of Netheril was brought crashing down on Myth Drannor, resulting in the cataclysmic destruction of both.

Throughout much of Faerun, the winter of 1487 and 1488 lasted longer than any on record. The solstices and equinoxes had somehow drifted. Later seasons followed suit, with each starting and ending later than expected. Prayers to the gods for knowledge and mercy seemed to go unacknowledged, apart from the presence of their “Chosen.”

By 1489, many of the wars that began during the Second Sundering had ground to a close. Other conflicts arose, and mighty threats still imperiled the world, but the deities ceased interfering with the world through their “Chosen.” The gods were no longer silent but quiet, and in many places new priesthoods arose to interpret the gods' now subtle signs.

**IN THE PRESENT:**

The world today seems a place filled with new lands and opportunities, where those who dare can leave their mark. Students of history, and those elves and dwarves who recall the past that short-lived humans see as distant, perceive a world much like it was over a century ago. For most folk, wild tales of people empowered by the gods, and of far-off lands returned to the world, are the subjects of fireside chatter. Daily concerns and the dangers and opportunities just beyond their doors take precedence, and plenty of both remain on the Sword Coast.

**The year is 1491 DR.**

**Cuchulain’s intro…**

Cuchulain, in the dark shadow of a mountain, the wind howls and the bitter cold bites at your skin. The blowing storm of snow and ice obscures your vision, but you can find your way, sure enough. A barren land lies before you. This land that people to the south call The North, might as well be home to you. It’s as much comfort as you ever received as a child.

It will be nightfall soon, and not wanting to spend the evening exposed to the harsh elements, you find an abandoned winter bear cave, start a small fire, and bed down for the evening.

Your evening is not restful.

Swirling images fill your mind as you sleep. Visions of calamities, and death, enter and leave your thoughts and are replaced by visions of your ancestors. They speak to you all at once in a cacophony of screams and warnings. It is almost unbearable, until…silence…the visions disappear and are replaced by 3 figures, and with a single voice they say to you, “You must go to Amphail, find the advisor, take the book to the castle’s vault. He who has returned must not have it…or all will be lost…”

While it is not strange for your Ancestors to contact you in this way, what is concerning, is that, for the first time, they almost seem...scared.

Having been thoroughly moved by the experience, you gather your things, extinguish the small fire, and head south. You’ve never fought anyone from Amphail before…could be a good way to pass the time…

**Analya’s intro…**

Analya, the feel of the warm sun on your face invigorates you as you deftly move from tree branch to tree branch, barely disturbing a single leaf. These morning runs, amongst the treetops, high above the ground, have become quite the morning ritual for you. The stress of the outside world peels away as you hone your chi, becoming more in tune with nature, and by extension, Mielikki.

After a short while you end your run back at the monastery, nestled precariously atop the Star Mounts.

Entering the main building, you turn right and head towards the library. Standing in the doorway, is Poffo, one of the Order’s initiates, and your would-be research assistant. He hands you a scroll, that he explains just arrived this morning. It details rather distressing news.

A group of Myrkulites have taken control of a nearby Temple of Kelemvor, just outside of Amphail. They seek to take possession of the Inmortuae: Studium, a book about the study of how undead are created, for the purpose of recognition and destruction of the undead in all their forms. This codex is an invaluable artifact of irreplaceable ancient knowledge.

The tome cannot fall into the Myrkulite’s hands. This knowledge is meant for everyone and should be kept safe. You have read many history books about clandestine meetings and noble missions. A quest sounds exciting. An old-fashioned adventure. You know…you have been meaning to make a trip into Amphail, and you know just where to start!

**Rielle’s intro…**

Rielle, it is daybreak, a new dawn, and with it comes rejuvenation and the promise of renewed life and a chance to do good in the world. Lathander’s will be done. There is much good to be done in the town of Waterdeep, the “Crown of the North,” and The Spires of the Morning, Temple of Lathander, its brightest jewel.

Desiring easier access to your daily tasks and mission assignments, you recently moved to a room in the upper levels of the temple.

You rush downstairs to a large room where Clerics from novice level to full-fledged Morning Lords gather for briefings and fellowship. It is here where you are pulled aside and given a special assignment.

The temple has been contacted by Henshaw Jerdin, advisor to Lord Dauner Ilzimmer, Lord Warder of Amphail. Followers of the returned death god, Myrkul, have occupied a Temple of Kelemvor in search of the Inmortuae: Studium. You know this to be an ancient text regarding the nature of the undead. Lord Ilzimmer’s daughter was also kidnapped and is being held by the Myrkulites, to prevent the lord from sending in the town’s militia.

Your mission is to secure the Inmortue: Studium in the Amphail Archives, and, if possible, rescue the Lord’s daughter. You will need to go to Amphail and meet with Jerdin at a local tavern. There he will give you additional information about your mission.

It makes you feel good to know that the church thinks highly enough of you to send you on this very important assignment.

You collect your equipment and head towards Amphail. What a beautiful morning!

**Knykit intro…**

Knykit, you find yourself, in a small 10-foot by 10-foot cell, as you did yesterday…and as you probably will tomorrow. Such is the fate of a betrayed smug…er…”provider of difficult to acquire commodities.” You should have known better than to trust that Shifter Pirate, but his dog like features reminded you of a childhood friend…”Your sentimentality will be the death of you!” your crazy Aunt Alicia would say.

Almost as if on cue, a guard comes and unlocks your cell. No doubt taking you to some interrogation room where the guards will, once again, fail at getting you to divulge information about your “trade network.”

The normal monotony of this routine is broken up when the guard takes you to a room you’ve never been to before. In this room sits a tall slender human. He’s middle aged with short gray hair, dressed in a nice suit. He shakes your hand. You feel the rough texture and callouses on his hands and immediately determine that this man used is no stranger to hard labor, meaning he does not come from money, or nobility. His fine suit indicates he is of a higher position no doubt earned, rather than given. This man should be respected, but you must be wary… Anyone who rises this far above their birth, must be very intelligent…

The man introduces himself to you as Henshaw Jardin. He offers to drop the smuggling charge against you in exchange for you recovering the Inmortuae: Studium, a book, from the Temple of Kelemvor as well as the return of his Lord’s daughter. Upon delivery of the girl and the book, all charges against you will be dropped, and you will be free to go.

Knowing an opportunity when you hear one, you have no issue accepting his offer.

With this, your manacles and chains are removed, and your weapons and armor are returned. You and Henshaw Jardin head out towards a nearby tavern.

You are meeting someone there…some kind of priest or something…I guess she’s going to help?

*(Send Amphail document)*

**AMPHAIL**

Named for its founder, a former warlord of Waterdeep, the small town of Amphail is home to just over seven hundred, yet it sought and received membership in the Lords' Alliance just under a century ago. Amphail became the playground of Waterdeep’s noble families, a place where they can send their more rambunctious offspring without harming the family's reputation in proper society. As a result of being a member of the Lords' Alliance, Amphail is the equal of such great cities as Neverwinter and Baldur's Gate in matters that concern the region, despite its inferiority in size and strength.

Amphail's sovereignty means that, although patrols from the Waterdeep City Guard sometimes ride north to check on matters in Amphail, the only true authority in the town is the will of the noble families that control it. The primary business of Amphail is horse ranching, and the town is a fine place to find replacement mounts, and all manner of tack, bridle, feed, and other goods necessary to keep up one's horse. Most farms have farriers, or at least hands that can swiftly shoe a horse, and spare shoes all but litter the town. Some businesses survive entirely by bringing the comforts of Waterdeep to Amphail, creating gathering places where young nobles can feel at home.

Visitors to Amphail often get a polite warning to "beware silver saddles" (beware the nobility) from the locals. Those who ignore such warnings should expect no help if they get into trouble with the nobility. Amphailans are by their nature suspicious of and quiet around folk who openly display wealth or status, having learned early in their lives that nobles are folk who like to throw their weight around, to the detriment of anyone nearby without enough coin or a grand enough title to stand up to them.

The three greatest families with significant interests in Amphail are Houses Amcathra, Ilzimmer, and

Roaringhorn; and most coin and business eventually passes through the hands of one of those houses or its intermediaries. When Amphail joined the Lords' Alliance, these three houses were the most influential voices, and now control the rulership of the town, with the controlling family changing each Shieldmeet.

The current Lord Warder is Dauner Ilzimmer, who speaks for the town to the Lords' Alliance.

You each find yourselves at a small ABP tavern. These ABP franchises have been popping up all over the Sword Coast, offering low priced fried cockatrice, in either Extra Crispy or Original.

(Show ABP Sign)

In the corner booth by the fireplace sits a tall human and a Kitsune. Rielle, this man matches the description of your contact. Cuchulain, the disembodied voice of your ancestor tells you to join the man in the booth. Analya, you feel the will of Mielikki pushing you toward the corner booth.

(Let the Party roleplay as much as possible here…after a few moments, if they have not already, have them all sit at the booth, where Jardin begins to speak…)

**JARDIN**

While I had not expected so many to answer, what we thought was a *secret* call for aid. I am glad to see the gods smile on us and show us favor by providing an abundance of assistance.

It is obvious that he has assumed you are here to help…

**JARDIN**

The Myrkulites have threatened to kill the Lord’s daughter if they see anyone trying to rescue her or trying to retrieve the Inmortuae: Studium from the catacombs beneath the temple. There are guards posted all over the temple grounds. To get past these guards you will need to use the “secret” entrance into the temple, we have recently become aware of. It is located through a cave positioned beneath an abandoned building in the woods that run up against the Sword Mountains. Retrieve the book and my lord’s daughter, bring them back to Amphail’s Keep, and not only will you have the thanks of the people, but you will be richly rewarded by the council. Will you accept the call, this mission?

If anyone says, “No.”…

Those who are left attempt to save the girl and the book. Unfortunately, they are captured and summarily executed, except for Rielle who manages to escape death through the use of healing magics and the favor of Lathander. Rielle returns to The Spires of the Morning. The Myrkulites kill Lord Ilzimmer’s daughter and return with the Inmortuae: Studium to Myrkul. His followers use this to create an unstoppable army of the undead. In the future, The Spires of the Morning is the last great temple to fall at the reborn god of death’s hands. The Sword Coast falls, followed by the rest of Toril. In the coming weeks, Auril falls, leaving only the realm of the gods standing in Myrkul’s way…shouldn’t take long…

If the Party says, “Yes.”…

**JARDIN**

Excellent! Please, do hurry…the stakes are most grave…most grave indeed!

He hands you the map to the cave entrance in the woods, and takes his leave, ordering an infusion of sodium enriched water and sugared syrup to go.

Jardin yells back to you as he leaves…

**JARDIN**

THEY CALL IT PEPSI…HA! WHAT WILL THEY THINK OF NEXT!

Ok, you have a map through the nearby woods. Analya, you have been to these woods before, Knykit, you have never gone into them, but you know where they start, Rielle, you have seen them indicated on a map and know the general direction that would lead to them, Cuchulain, you are amazed to find out that trees grow this close together…year ‘round!

(Let the Party Roleplay, do what they will, etc. If it starts to take too long, remind them that they are on the clock and they should really get moving…)

You arrive at the entrance to the woods indicated on your map.

(Let the Party decide to enter the woods)

As you enter the woods, the smell of blooming trees and flowers fill your nostrils. A cool breeze is passing through the slowly waving tree branches. All in all…a pretty nice day. The path is well worn and easy to follow.

As you continue down the path, just to your left is a small clearing. In this clearing you see some rocks and some flowers, and a Bugbear. Aww…he wants to give you a hug…oh wait…no…he wants to kill you…

(Roll Initiative)

(Bugbear Encounter)

The Bugbear bellows a deep guttural roar as it collapses motionless to the ground.

*(Gear: Morningstar x1 pg.149 PHB, Javelin x1 pg.149 PHB, and 932cp)*

(Medicine check DC13 to see that the flowers have medicinal purposes but are mostly used as a recreational drug. If Check failed: These sure are some pretty flowers.)

The path continues to the right. There is a small patch of flowers, down the path a bit, to your right.

As you walk the path comes up around some trees and turns sharply left.

Here you find another clearing. There are flowers located here as well, but instead of a Bugbear there is a Goblin. He yells, “WAKKASASHA!” at you as he attacks you. (If anyone speaks goblin, the translation is, “You killed my friend, now I take my revenge by killing you!” because, of course they have a word for that.)

(Roll Initiative)

(Goblin Encounter)

The angry little goblin falls in a heap in the dirt.

*(Gear:* *Scimitar x1 pg.149 PHB, Dagger x1 pg.149 PHB, goblin size studded leather armor pg.145 PHB and 932cp)*

(Insight check DC15 to notice that the scimitars and daggers are a little nice for a goblin to have)

Moving down the path further, you finally come to what looks like a large clearing. There is an old dilapidated shack to the left with a cave entrance just beneath it. To the right there is a poorly constructed barrier erected around a makeshift campground.

(Perception check DC15 to tell that it is a goblin camp. If fail: It’s a camp, but you don’t really know much more about it.)

If the Party investigates the Camp…

You easily enter through the makeshift barricade into the camp. Upon entry, 3 goblins come out of the small tents. They begin yelling at you in goblin, “WAKKASASHA!” and the like. (If anyone speaks goblin, they somehow know that you killed their captain and are going to take revenge by killing you.)

(Roll Initiative)

(Goblin Ambush Encounter)

The last goblin falls at your feet. His respiratory functions have ceased.

(*Gear: Scimitar x3 pg.149 PHB, Dagger x3 pg.149 PHB, goblin sized chain shirt x3 pg145 PHB, and you find 932cp between the three)*

When the Party goes to the cave entrance…

You approach the abandoned building, moving closer to the dark entrance of the cave. The natural light seems to penetrate it enough that torches are unnecessary.

After entering the cave, a tunnel is before you that appears to open on the far side.

As you approach the open area, the acrid smell of death and decay almost overwhelm you.

(Perception check DC20 to tell that this is an Ankheg den. If fail: That is a pile of skeletons.)

As you enter the area you notice a large collection of boulders move just to your right. In your experience you have never known boulders to move. This experience trend continues as they are not boulders at all, but a rather large Ankheg. Apparently, he has an appetite for adventurers.

(Roll Initiative)

(Ankheg Encounter)

The chitin armored beast lets out a final screech as it moves no more, having been defeated, by you.

*(Gear: If they search the body, skeletons, or the eggs, they will find 4x Padded Armor, 2x Sickle, 2x Clubs and 22cp (SRD)*

At the other end of this area, you see a small burrowed out area that opens into what looks to be a stonework constructed tunnel.

(Perception check DC10 that must be part of the temple. If Fail: I wonder, why the rocks look different over there…)

Moving through the small tunnel, you find yourself in a hallway. Wooden pillars help buttress the ceiling against the immense wait of the hallways stone ceiling. To the left falling rocks block your path. To the right, the hallway continues towards a stone door. To the left of the door is a lever, its handle has been made to resemble a skull.

When the Party moves 4 squares from the temple entrance…

|  |
| --- |
| **Survival check DC11** to see that one of the ceiling's support beams is loose. |
|  |
| **Dexterity check DC10** using thieves’ tools to bolster the support. |
| (A character without thieves' tools can attempt this check with disadvantage using any edged weapon or edged tool. On a failed check, the ceiling collapses.) |
|  |
| *Anyone who inspects the beams can easily determine that they are merely wedged in place. The ceiling above is in bad repair, and anyone who can see it can tell that it's in danger of collapse. As an action, a character can knock over a beam, causing the unstable ceiling to collapse.*  |
|  |
| Any creature in the area beneath the unstable section must succeed on a  |
| **Dexterity check DC 11** |
| If Success: Take 3pts bludgeoning damage. |
| If Failure: Take 6pts bludgeoning damage. |
|  |
| **Once the ceiling collapses, the floor of the area is filled with rubble and becomes difficult terrain.** |

(Perception check DC15: You notice something in the rubble…looks like someone tried to stash some things in the ceiling, probably adding to its instability. You find a Warhammer, a whip, a spear and 32cp.)

(Survival check DC15 to hear the swarm of rats. If Fail: You hear an odd sound like hundreds of gears that need oil.)

A swarm of rats, ranging in size from 4-5inches to 1 foot long, come pouring out of the hole in the ceiling.

(Let Analya play the viol, if not they each take 10pts of damage as 100’s of little teeth take a bite on their way, gods only know where…)

As you approach the door, it is obvious that the handle is the mechanism to open it. It is also obvious that the handle was not made to look like a skull…it is a skull. Kelemvorites are so gross.

Pulling down the handle causes the door to be pulled down into the floor, revealing a room with a staircase heading down, no doubt into the catacombs you were looking for.

There is a lone man dressed in dark studded leather, adorned in skulls, the symbol of Myrkul. He is surprised to see you. He was unaware of the secret door…

In his apparent fright, he lunges at you in an attempt to kill you, before you kill him.

(Roll Initiative)

(Wondering Bandit 1 Encounter)

Just before he dies, the Myrkulite says, almost triumphantly, “All things must die!” The guard no longer attacks you, as his loss of life prevents it.

*(Gear: Scimitar x1 pg.149 PHB, Dagger x1 pg.149 PHB, studded leather armor pg.145 PHB, Potion of Healing pg.153 PHB and a Backpack, inside you find an Amulet of Myrkul (Holy Symbol Amulet),*

*a blowgun, blowgun needles 50ct., Mess Kit and a small pouch with a skull within a triangle embroidered on it containing 22cp…and now you know where the goblins were getting their nice weapons from.)*

(If the Party does anything other than go down the stairs. Remind them that the Temple is overrun with Myrkulites and it would be tantamount to suicide to go into the temple proper.)

You make your way downstairs and into the temple catacombs.

Upon reaching the bottom of the stairs you find yourself in an area lit only by torches. The floor and walls are made of dark black stone tile. While the décor is uninspired, it is sufficiently spooky…Kelemvorites, \*sigh…it is their way.

Down the hallway there are 3 small rooms to your left. You can tell the passageway turns left at the end of the hallway.

Read the following for each small room:

The small room has a single stone sarcophagus. It is closed.

(The sarcophagus can be opened with a successful DC 20 Strength check but contains only moldering bones.)

A Myrkulite wonders, dejected, out of one of the rooms. He is cursing at himself regarding his inability to remove the lid of a sarcophagus. (Let the Party choose to attack or talk…he eventually attacks.)

(Roll Initiative)

(Wondering Bandit 2 Encounter)

Just before he dies, the Myrkulite says, almost triumphantly, “All things must die!” He is a former guard; he has ceased to be.

*(Gear: Scimitar x1 pg.149 PHB, Dagger x1 pg.149 PHB, studded leather armor pg.145 PHB, a Prayer of Healing Scroll pg.267 PHB and a Backpack, inside you find an Amulet of Myrkul (Holy Symbol Amulet),*

*a blowgun, blowgun needles 50ct., Mess Kit and* *a small pouch with a skull within a triangle embroidered on it containing 22cp)*

As you continue to your left, you come to a hallway very similar to the previous, complete with torches on your right and small rooms on your left.

Read the following for each small room:

The small room has a single stone sarcophagus. It is closed.

(The sarcophagus can be opened with a successful DC 20 Strength check but contains only moldering bones.)

As you come to the middle room on your left, you see that it is occupied by 2 followers of Myrkul. They have managed to loot 4 sardonyx gemstones (worth 1000cp a piece) and are arguing about whether to tell the other Myrkulites. (Let the Party choose to attack or talk…he eventually attacks.)

(Roll Initiative)

(Hired Merc Duo Encounter x2)

The 2nd follower falls dead to the floor, having been struck down by your battle prowess, each having said triumphantly, “All things must die!”

*(Gear: Scimitar x2 pg.149 PHB, Dagger x2 pg.149 PHB, studded leather armor x2 pg.145 PHB and Two Backpacks, between the two, you find, 2x Amulets of Myrkul (Holy Symbol Amulet),*

*2x manacles and two small pouches with a skull within a triangle embroidered on it, each containing 22cp/?4 gems?)*

The hallway continues and turns left again. There are no smaller rooms this time and the few torches seem to ominously light the way to a bigger opening at the far side of the hall on the left.

A large room opens before you. Columns line the left and righthand sides, misplaced benches fill the middle and a large stage is set at the far side. The large symbol of Kelemvor painted meticulously on the floor indicate that this is a chapel dedicated to the worship of Kelemvor. There is a small room, on the far side, to the right.

There are 3 men standing in the middle of the room having a heated conversation.

**BIGGS**

Well, what’re we supposed to do about?

**WEDGE**

Yeah, you’re our great leader…figure it out!

**RAFE**

Don’t you think I’ve tried…there’s some hex or curse on it…I can’t even pick it up…my hand passes right through.

**BIGGS**

The Lord of Bones will your head for this if you can’t get it.

**WEDGE**

Yeah, he wants it pretty bad.

**RAFE**

You’re so naïve! He’ll have all our heads if we fail!

**BIGGS**

Uh, Boss…(he looks towards you guys) I think there’s someone else here…

**RAFE**

Ugh! Kill them! I’ll be in the room…trying…AGAIN!…(he walks off mumbling to himself)

(Let the Party roleplay, etc. However, they will attack eventually…)

They attack!

(Roll Initiative)

(Hired Merc Guards Encounter x2)

The last guard falls, with a pleasing thump upon the ground.

*(Gear: Scimitar x2 pg.149 PHB, Dagger x2 pg.149 PHB, studded leather armor x2 pg.145 PHB, fine shortsword with a silver handle and a tooled silver scabbard, probably of drow make it’s worth 2000cp and Two Backpacks, between the two, you find, 2x Amulets of Myrkul (Holy Symbol Amulet),*

*and two small pouches with a skull within a triangle embroidered on it, each containing 122cp)*

There is a small room to the right. The “boss” has not come out. You can hear a muffled conversation. While you cannot make out what is being said, it does not sound pleasant.

Upon entering the room, you see a book shelf to your right, a marble alter with a book on it against the far wall, the Lord’s daughter, you are to rescue, in a small cage in the far corner on your left as well as a statue of a gargoyle to your more immediate left.

The Myrkulite “boss” who left earlier from the previous room is getting quite a dressing down from the apparition floating before him.

(Perception check DC15…although anyone would notice this to be Myrkul the returned god of death.)

**MYRKUL**

Your incompetence never ceases to amaze me Rafe. I return from oblivion, retake my rightful place from the interloper Cyric, and you cannot retrieve a simple book!? I will take great pleasure in your torture, perhaps I will conduct it personally…(with this he notices you have walked into the room)…\*sigh, boney facepalm…your men failed. You have adventurers. I cannot wait to see this. If you defeat them, all will be forgiven…if not…well…you know where you go when you die. (He makes an evil grin.)

**RAFE**

You have embarrassed me in front of the Lord of the Dead! I WILL REND YOUR FLESH FROM YOUR BONES AND FEAST ON YOUR CORPSES!

Your would-be murderer’s body jerks violently, in short uncontrolled spasms, with skin rippling in grotesque waves as bones break, twist and reform. His size increases, as hair covers his body from head to toe. Where once stood a man now stands some unholy amalgam of man and bear. With an eardrum shattering roar, he…engages you in melee combat.

(Roll Initiative)

(Werebear Encounter)

The eminence beast crashes to the black stone tile floor in a mass of fur and broken bones. Its body shrinking as it reforms into the form of a defeated man. A man, who is dead.

The apparition speaks to you…

**MYRKUL**

Know me and fear me. My embrace is for all and is patient but sure. The dead can always find you. My hand is everywhere - there is no door I cannot pass, nor guardian who can withstand me. You have made a grave error in judgement to stand against me. I now know each of you, Analya, Knykit, Rielle and…Cuchulain? You’re here (he looks at you with a slight smirk) interesting.

With this he disappears in a puff of black and gray smoke.

*(Gear: Greataxe pg.149 PHB, three tattered devotional scrolls (worth 1000cp total to a temple), and a silver necklace featuring a symbol of Bane (5000cp) ‘Religion check DC15 “Maybe Rafe’s a double agent for Bane, or maybe he’s just covering his bases…” if Fail: Wow, a little black hand necklace!,’ and a Backpack, inside you find an Amulet of Myrkul (Holy Symbol Amulet), and a large pouch with a skull within a triangle embroidered on it containing 604cp)*

There is a book on a table and a scared daughter of a lord in an iron cage in the corner.

**SARANA**

Oh, thank the gods you’ve come. Could you let me out of here? This iron cage is causing me great pain and discomfort.

(Let the Party roleplay here…eventually have these things happen: If asked, Sarana will explain that she is the Lord’s adopted daughter and that she is fae. Sarana will also explain that the book can be easily picked up if you know where to grab. With this she casts dispel and the book appears about 2 feet to the left of where it was previously. “Simple displacement illusion.” The Kelemvorite priest cast it on the book just before being killed. If the Party doesn’t ask, she will explain that the Kelemvorites have asked/agreed to have the Inmortuae: Studium stored in the vaults at the keep. She also explains that now that she is not bound by iron or under the spell dampening effects of the iron cage, she can use her emergency teleport charm to teleport the whole group, along with the book directly to the keep. Then her father can send in his militia and retake this temple for the Kelemvorites.)

In a brilliant display of colors and swirling lights the faint smell of lavender and a sharp breeze that causes your arm hair to stand on end, the temple disappears, and a throne room appears before your still focusing eyes.

The large room is flanked by ornate columns, trees and bushes are dominate gilded planters and sun shines through enormous stained-glass windows bathing the room in light and color. Several people are sat in benches in the gallery area. A deep red carpet leads up to a raised stage with 3 thrones placed on lavishly embroidered rugs.

Sarana immediately runs towards the red bearded man sat in the bigger middle throne.

(Insight check DC15 to know this is her father. If Fail: I wonder if that’s her dad?)

**SARANA**

FATHER!

**LORD ILZIMMER**

Moonbug!

The two embrace, as a wave of emotion fills the room. It is a genuine moment where the pomp and circumstance of court life melts away, if even for a moment, in a display of what is truly important.

Decorum resumes as Lord Ilzimmer returns to his throne and addresses you as Sarana takes her leave.

Lord Ilzimmer addresses you…

**LORD ILZIMMER**

You know, here in Amphail, while we don’t have the size or influence of a Waterdeep or a Baldur’s Gate, we believe we got something better, traditional values, a hearty handshake, that feeling after a hard day’s work that you know you left this world better than you found it. Now those who know me, know that I care more about my horses than I do about most people (The gallery laughs, anyone paying close enough attention will notice that it is not heartfelt and almost patronizing, the Lord doesn’t seem to notice). But, when it comes to my Moonbug, I’d do almost anything. These Myrkuls, knew that and took advantage. Thank you, for returning my daughter. We know that the Inmortuae: Studium will be a constant target and while it might be kept safe within our vaults, we were hoping you might be able to take it to Waterdeep and keep it within the Spires of the Morning’s archive. Fact of the matter is, the Morninglords will be able to protect it way better than we could be expected to do here. Rielle, do you believe they would be willing to help us out with this one?

(Wait for an answer from Rielle…)

**LORD ILZIMMER**

Excellent! We’ll hammer out the details later. Now, I owe you a great debt. I spoke with Henshaw, and I think we got some things that you might could use. It ain’t much, just a show of appreciation for what ya done.

Henshaw appears with 2 men carrying a wooden chest with the towns crest on it.

They place it in front of you and open the lid.

Inside you find an assortment of gems. Among them are Chrysoprase (translucent green), 2x Quartz (transparent white), Citrine (transparent pale yellow-brown), jasper (opaque blue), Bloodstone (opaque dark gray with red flecks), and a Moonstone (translucent white with pale blue glow) each gem is worth 5000cp.

You also find a Staff of the Python (SRD), and a Circlet of Blasting (SRD)

Also, in the chest are some items acquired for each one of you personally.

For Cuchulain, Bracers of Defense (SRD).

For Knykit, a Cloak of Elvenkind (SRD).

Rielle, there is a Light Crossbow with the holy symbol of Lathander emblazoned upon it. It is known as The Sting of Morning. It is a +2 Light Crossbow (SRD).

Analya, looking into the box, you find no item that seems to be made for you. Henshaw seems embarrassed and quickly whispers something in Sarana’s ear. She seems surprised and a big smile comes over her face.

She approaches you and says…

**SARANA**

Henshaw noticed in your first meeting that you had an old broken sword hilt decorating part of your vestments. “It was your…grandfather’s,” she says with impossible knowledge. You may not know this, but this is an ancient item of great power…it just needs to be…fixed.

She reaches out and touches the hilt. It begins to radiate a pulsating glow. You can feel the warmth coming off it as it breaks free from your clothing and floats before you. Any cracks disappear, any missing pieces reappear. The hilt floats slowly into your hand. As you grip it, a piercing light emanates from the handle.

Sarana says to you…

**SARANA**

It is a Sun Blade.

*(Gear: Sun Blade (SRD))*

You see Henshaw whisper something to Lord Ilzimmer.

**LORD ILZIMMER**

Of course, of course, go ahead.

Kykit, Henshaw hands you a few pieces of parchment. They are official release documents.

**LORD ILZIMMER**

Kykit, all charges a have been dropped against you and you are free to go without prejudice and our thanks.

With this, everyone in the throne room stands and begins applauding you raucously. A medieval marching band enters the room, and though you don’t know it…they are somehow playing a Sousa march…because, of course they are…

Your collective looks of haughty derision are almost surely replaced by gob smacked looks of surprise as the room goes cold. And though it is midafternoon, the windows, when peered through, show darkness as if it were late evening. Any, automatically lighting, wall sconces burn with a purple flame instead of orange, as a large apparition appears in the center of the room.

You recognize Myrkul’s bone faced, rictus grin.

**MYRKUL**

What a beautiful gathering. No doubt celebrating your “victory.” But you see…I am not so easily defeated. I now know exactly were the book is, and how to get it as well as where you are. So, you see…2 birds with one stone and all that. For a time, I had considered sparing your retched town. Now, you shall witness…its dismemberment!

Tower bells begin to sound warnings from all directions throughout the town. A young town crier bursts into the room.

**CEDRIC**

My Lords and Ladies, sorry for the intrusion. But, the town…it’s…under siege…from all sides!

**LORD ILZIMMER**

Cedric, did you see who was attacking us?

**LORD ROARINGHORN**

I bet it’s those blasted Hill Giants again!

**LADY AMCATHRA**

Oh, I hope not…dreadful smell those Hill Giants have…the town reeked of it for *weeks* last time…

**CEDRIC**

The dead! The dead are attacking! Zombies, Skeletons…

Lord Ilzimmer’s momentary look of concern is replaced by a look of resolute determination.

**LORD ILZIMMER**

Henshaw! Get to the roof…sound the emergency muster bells…get everybody into the Keep!

**HENSHAW**

Yes, sir!

**LORD ILZIMMER**

Rielle, if you could use the scrying pool in my chambers…get word to your temple to send as many Morninglords as they can spare…we’re gonna need’em!

(Rielle, you can send this message easily, but you know that it will take at least 8 hours for them to get here…)

**LORD ILZIMMER**

Sarana, set up protection wards around the perimeter. And , get those Kelemvor Priests downstairs to help sanctify the grounds.

**SARANA**

Father,…that will never hold…not against this many… They will get through…

**LORD ILZIMMER**

That’s why the rest of us…and any able-bodied citizen… will be defending this Keep with our lives.

Sorry, friends, I know you’ve just helped us out,…but we’ve got no choice.

Looks like we’re all conscripted into Amphail’s defense!

Lord Ilzimmer readies his sword and turns towards you all.

**LORD ILZIMMER**

Now, let’s get downstairs and make sure there’s still something left for the Mornin’lords to save!

Many join the lord at his side, as you can do, if you wish…

If the Party does not join Lord Ilzimmer…

With this, the Lord and his companions, head downstairs. You will follow your plan, towards triumph…or death.

If the Party joins Lord Ilzimmer…

With this you head out, downstairs, towards your triumph…or…your death.

**Well, that’s the end of Best Intentions, Episode 1: “About a Girl and a Book.” Join us next time for Best Intentions, Episode 2: “Under Siege!”**

**(Give out XP)**