

# MATTERS OF LIFE AND DEATH

## *Part Two of the Daggers of Lathander Series*

A known gang from the refugee ghetto of Mulmaster wishes to make a statement at an important function at the Thayan Embassy. A murder mystery investigation is needed to catch this culprit, or the delicate peace between the city and its Thayan supporters could be shattered!

*A Two-Hour Adventure for 1<sup>st</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> Level Characters*



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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Matters of Life and Death*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and The Role Initiative's *Daggers of Lathander* series.

This adventure takes place during a feast being held to celebrate continued cooperation between the Red Wizards and Mulmaster, but an assassin lurks in the shadows poised to topple the delicate alliance.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1<sup>st</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

### ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

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

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

#### DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

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

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

### BEFORE PLAY AT THE TABLE

Before you start play, consider the following:

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

### PLAYING THE DUNGEON MASTER

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

To facilitate this, keep in mind the following:

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

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

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

## ADVENTURE PRIMER

The street gang known as the Daggers of Lathander has been waging a war against the Thayans in Mulmaster. Recently, one of their thugs was taken into custody and interrogated, revealing the gang's plan to publicly murder a Thayan and spark war between Mulmaster and Thay.

### ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The party has been sent to investigate a banquet being held at the Thayan Embassy, where an assassination may take place. They must find out who the assassin is, where they intend to strike, and who their intended target is, so that they can prevent the assassination before it happens.

#### LOCATION AND NPC SUMMARY

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

**Azak Throm (AH-zak THROM).** A Thayan ambassador who has been working in Mulmaster as a spy since before the infiltration of the Elemental Cults.

**Chalmer (chal-MUR).** A local boy who has been employed in the embassy to handle menial tasks.

**Draxkir Farsha (drax-KIR FAR-sha).** Farsha is a high ranking Thayan functionary who manages the day to day operations of the embassy.

**Hurgin Ironbrow (hur-GIN EYE-ern-brow).** A dwarven mason who recently arrived from Glister to assist with the rebuilding effort in Mulmaster.

**Keiran Sha (KEY-ren SHAW).** A half-elven merchant from the Dalelands, Keiran is representing the Black Eagle Coster of Ashabenford. While they currently have little business with Mulmaster, they do quite a bit of business exporting foodstuffs to nearby Hillsfar.

**Saerdrie Cielar (sir-DREE see-LAR).** A moon elf sage from Shadowdale who has traveled much of the North and does a brisk trade in scrolls and potions. She is secretly a Harper.

**Shuru (shoo-ROO).** An elderly servant who has worked for the Thayan Embassy for several years.

### ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

*Matters of Life and Death* is a site-based adventure, with encounters in various rooms of the Thayan Embassy that may play out in any order, depending on how the adventurers choose to approach their investigation.

The assassin entered the grounds of the Thayan embassy this afternoon and once there, was able to incapacitate and replace one of the guests. The party's investigation will eventually reveal how the assassin entered the compound, who they are masquerading as, and who their target is.

The adventure is broken down into two parts:

**Part 1. *Mystery at the Banquet.*** The story opens directly with the investigation of the various rooms of the embassy, to help narrow down the search to a few specific individuals.

**Part 2. *The Confrontation.*** Once the party has a good idea who the assassin is and where he will strike, they must lie in wait to make their attack.

### ADVENTURE HOOKS

The characters have likely been hired by one of the prominent organizations within Mulmaster to help prevent this assassination and the possible escalation that may result from an attack on the Thayan Embassy.

**Summoned by the Cloaks.** The Cloaks have requested your assistance in the investigation of a possible assassination. A captured member of the Daggers of Lathander has recently revealed that a plot is already in motion to kill a guest at a banquet. It is being held in the Thayan Embassy this evening with the intent of sparking a war between Thay and Mulmaster. The guards reported that someone in a black cloak was seen sneaking into the embassy, but they have not been able to locate the individual since.

### YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG MAN! I'M INNOCENT!

One of the risks of running a mystery adventure is the possibility that players may misinterpret or fail to find crucial clues and end up accusing the wrong individual. If the characters make a false accusation early in the session, it can lead to some great tension. The accused may produce a rock-solid alibi and force the party to find more clues and/or rethink the clues that they have.

On the other hand, if it occurs late in the adventure, the result may simply be failure and an unsatisfying end to a two-hour game session. DMs are instead encouraged to be flexible with this adventure. If the party has found a decent number of clues and has solid logic connecting those clues to a suspect, perhaps in unexpected ways, the DM should feel empowered to make the decision to change the villain. This may require a bit of improvisation, but the end result will be more fun.

# PART 1. MYSTERY AT THE BANQUET

**Estimated Duration:** 90 minutes

The majority of this adventure is a lengthy investigation of the embassy to allow the party to determine the identity of the assassin. Each room of the embassy contains clues required to prevent the assassination.

## GENERAL FEATURES

The Thayan Embassy has the following general features, unless otherwise noted.

**Terrain.** The embassy has ten-foot-high ceilings, many of which feature high peaked arches, and marble floors and walls. Pillars and statues can be found throughout, and many rooms have finely woven rugs.

**Light.** Brilliant white globes of light are suspended in midair along the walls and ceilings, providing bright light throughout.

**Smells and Sounds.** The scent of fowl roasting in the kitchen, as well as various herbs and spices, hangs heavy in the air, and the sounds of servants preparing the meal can be heard throughout the hall.

## WHAT THE CHARACTERS KNOW

Before play begins, the characters may ask what they know about various matters related to the investigation. If they ask, the following checks may reveal some useful information.

**DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana).** The Thayan Embassy is comprised of a number of *Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion* spells, all cast and layered on top of one another.

**DC 12 Intelligence (History).** The Thayan Embassy was built surprisingly quickly around an older building that has been a part of Mulmaster for centuries and had previously served as the embassy for several other nations.

**DC 12 Intelligence (Religion).** The Daggers of Lathander is a recently formed religious organization that worships the god of the morning and is dedicated to opposing the undead in all forms.

## A. THE ENTRY HALL

The adventurers begin in the foyer of the embassy, greeted by Draxkir Farsha, the Red Wizard who manages day to day operations of the embassy.

When you are ready to begin the adventure, read or summarize the following:

The entry of the Thayan Embassy is a pillar-lined hall that ends at a large set of red, wooden doors. A warm fire provides a welcome contrast to the cold, rainy night outside. Though the hall is spotless and finely appointed, you are immediately aware of the series of murder holes in the ceiling. You are reminded that in addition to being in an embassy, the building is also a fortress, which raises question: "Who would be brazen enough to try to assassinate a Thayan in their own home?" But that is why you are here: The Daggers of Lathander have contracted a professional assassin to make an attempt on the life of someone at the banquet tonight. The only clue to their identity is that they were seen entering the compound in a black hooded cloak. Your job is to figure out who is the killer is, how they plan to strike, and who their target is. And you must somehow stop them.

A woman in red robes, with intricate tattoos on her clean-shaven scalp, stands in the entry hall and greets you coldly as you enter. "I suppose you're here to clean up this mess?"

The woman, Draxkir Farsha, runs the day-to-day operations of the embassy. She can answer some of the basic questions the characters may have.

**Who is responsible?** The Daggers of Lathander are a gang from the refugee ghettos who resent the Thayans. They have hired an assassin to attack someone at the banquet.

**How did the assassin get into the embassy?** We're not entirely certain. It should be impossible, but a man in a black cloak was seen on the grounds earlier today and was somehow able to slip past the guards. He was later spotted inside the embassy itself, but again managed to escape.

**Who will be at the banquet?** The banquet is intended to celebrate cooperation between the Thayans and the people of Mulmaster. We will be hosting several influential traders and craftsmen from throughout the Moonsea Region, in hopes that we can secure their support in our efforts to rebuild the city.

**Do you know who their target is?** Any death at the banquet is likely to cause some friction, as both Mulmaster and Thay would probably blame one another for the death. Combined with the current tensions with the Emerald Enclave and Harpers of the city, it could very well spark a violent response.

**May we speak with the guests?** Yes, though I would implore you to be tactful and avoid any unnecessary confrontation. Find out who the assassin is, who they are targeting, and where it is going to take place. You must catch them and stop them in the act, as a false accusation that leads to violence could have repercussions just as dire as an assassination.

## DEVELOPMENTS

Once they have asked whatever questions they may have, Farsha grants them permission to investigate any of the public areas of the embassy unmolested. If they wish to enter private areas, they may do so while accompanied by a guard. The guards have all been alerted to their presence, so they should have little trouble.

Farsha will be available in the grand hall to answer any additional questions that they may have.

## TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Farsha is short, irritable, and distracted. She is more concerned about the banquet itself, and annoyed that the City Watch hasn't crushed the refugee uprising sooner.

## B. CLOAKROOM

The Thayan Embassy is kept warm and comfortable, so guests leave their coats and cloaks in this small chamber. A wiry young boy named Chalmer takes care of the guests, taking their names and placing a small paper slip into the pocket of each item so that it can be identified and recovered.

**Clue #1.** If the characters press Chalmer in their investigation, he says that he doesn't know anything about any plot, though a DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that he is nervous. In truth, Chalmer accidentally revealed the location of a secret access tunnel in the embassy's undercroft to his brother. Chalmer knows this mistake would cost him his life if the Thayans found out, so he will only reveal his mistake with a successful DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) or DC 14 Charisma (Intimidation) check. A character that promises not to tell the Thayans has advantage on this check.

If this check succeeds, Chalmer will tell them that when it is raining, he uses an access tunnel found in the undercroft's south wall to enter an abandoned sewer tunnel and make his way home. No one has noticed him coming and going, and he doesn't even think the Thayans are aware of the tunnel's existence.

**Clue #2.** A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that three of the cloaks are dry, indicating that they arrived earlier in the day, before the rain started. They belong to Hurgin Ironbrow, Keiran Sha, and Saerdrie Cielar, all of whom came from out of town to attend the banquet.

## XP AWARD

If the characters convince Chalmer to tell them about the access tunnel, award each character 50 XP.

## C. KITCHENS

Servants, both living and undead, are busy preparing the meal. When the party enters the kitchens, read or summarize the following:

A handful of skeletons are busily stirring pots, chopping vegetables, and otherwise preparing what appears to be a very elaborate meal. The aroma of sweet bread and roasting fowl fills the room. A stern looking man in a white apron is overseeing them, shouting orders and checking their work before it is given to the servants to take into the great hall.

Ramsin, the head of the kitchens for the Thayan Embassy, is loud, stern, and has absolutely no time to deal with "foolish adventurers." He won't impede their investigation, but if they linger too long or get in the way of the servants, he will not hide his displeasure.

**Clue.** There is no clue in the kitchens themselves, but Ramsin will readily complain that the most eventful thing that happened today was catching one of the guests trying to get into the larder. He's not sure which guest it was; he was too busy to pay attention to some snoop trying to grab a free snack.

## D. LARDER

The larder is well stocked with a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as a whole host of exotic spices.

This small room is packed from floor to ceiling with fruits and vegetables, including many exotic types not native to these cooler climates. The scent of hundreds of spices assails your nose as you enter, and brown paper bundles tied up in strings hang from the ceiling. Three large barrels sit in the far corner of the room. You can see your breath emerge as a cloud and realize that the room is cold, even more so than the stormy night air outside, and several glyphs on the wall glow a pale blue.

The larder is kept magically cold to preserve meat and dairy products. The barrels contain salt.

The brown paper packages hanging from the ceiling all bear scrawling script indicating the type and cut of meat contained within.

**Clue.** A successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the handwriting on one of the bundles is quite different than the others. The package says it contains "rooster", and a DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that the rooster is a sacred bird to Lathander, the god of dawn.

The package itself is trapped. A DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices that the cord holding the bundle together is also securing a

second, smaller pouch to the package. If this pouch is not carefully removed, requiring a successful DC 8 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check, a small explosive is detonated. Anyone within 5 feet of the bundle must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Opening the package reveals that it contains a small satchel stuffed with cotton and containing two daggers, a vial of poison, and a note (**Player Handout 1**—note that there are two versions of this handout, depending on whether the party was able to successfully defuse the trap).

If they ask Ramsin about the package, he will tell them that the last shipment of meat came in two days ago and that it was unloaded by the skeletons. The package was probably placed onto the shipment while in transit. There was also a shipment of wine intended for the banquet that went missing yesterday morning and never arrived.

#### XP AWARD

If the characters find the package, award each character 100 XP. If the note is undamaged, award each character an additional 50 XP.

### E. UNDERCROFT

The undercroft serves as storage for the Thayan Embassy. If the adventurers descend the stairs into the undercroft, read or summarize the following:

The embassy's undercroft is an elaborate maze of archways, and holds countless boxes, barrels, and linen sacks. Most of the contents appear to be basic foodstuffs, though there are larger, locked crates which you suspect may contain more valuable magical components.

A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a small group of loose blocks hidden behind a barrel in the south wall. If the characters were told of the passage by Chalmers, they have advantage on the check. The passage is small, barely large enough for a human-sized individual to fit through unarmored. At the DM's discretion, particularly broad-shouldered characters, dwarves, orcs, characters with high Strength and Constitution, or characters in armor, may require a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to fit through without getting stuck.

**Clue.** If the characters investigate the tunnels on the other side of the wall, they can find two clues. The first is a rough map of the embassy carved into the rock with the tip of a knife (**Player Handout 2**). The second clue is a boot print. A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Wisdom (Survival) check recognizes that the irregularity in the print comes from a nail embedded into the sole of the boot.

#### XP AWARD

If the characters find the map, award each character 50 XP.

### F. GRAND HALL

During dinner, the characters are largely unwelcome in the grand hall, as the Thayans do not want any of the guests to feel uncomfortable during their meal. However, after dinner (after 1 hour of play time has passed), they are permitted to pull guests aside to discuss anything they wish with them. Use the information in the "Dramatis Personae" appendix to assist you in roleplaying these interactions.

The characters may also wish to discuss the investigation with Draxkir Farsha, although she will be blunt and dismissive, as she is still more concerned with the needs of the guests. If the characters insist that they have a solid lead on a specific individual, she will advise them to check that guest's room (and give them a key to do so) to see if they can confirm their suspicions.

### G. CONSERVATORY

The conservatory is a large, crystal-walled room where the Thayans grow plants for use as spell components and ingredients in alchemical concoctions.

Panes of crystal, etched with what appear to be magical runes, stretch between the thick beams of the room's walls and ceiling. The room is filled with potted plants of all varieties.

A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check or a *detect magic* spell reveals that the runes etched into the glass are abjuration magic, making the crystal as solid as steel, while still permitting light to pass through.

**Clue.** A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Survival) check notices that several of the plants have recently been trimmed in a hurry. Anyone proficient with a poisoner's kit will recognize the plants taken as being highly poisonous.

#### XP AWARD

If the characters identify the stolen plants as being poisonous, award each character 100 XP.

### H. STUDY

This small room is designed to facilitate meetings between the Thayans and those who visit their embassy.

This small wood paneled room is spartan and functional, with two leather chairs, a small table, and a row of low cabinets along the south wall. On the north wall is a comfortable looking sofa with soft leather cushions dyed an outlandish shade of green.

This room may be used by the characters to quietly question suspects during the banquet.

## I. LOUNGE

This large room is frequently used for private gatherings after banquets and other functions.

This room features a large fireplace and two large leather sofas. The wood-paneled walls feature several portraits. A small bookcase is positioned in the far corner of the room, and contains several dozen thick, leather-bound tomes.

The portraits can be identified with a DC 12 Intelligence (History) check: they are of the Zulkirs of Thay, with the largest being a portrait of Szass Tam himself.

**Clue #1.** A successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the portrait of Szass Tam is fixed to the wall. The secret passageway cannot be opened from this side.

**Clue #2.** If the characters linger for long, or if it is late in the adventure (more than 1 hour of game time has passed), one of the servants will politely tell the characters that they need to wrap up their inspection of the room quickly, as Azak Throm uses this room for private dealings after dinner. If more than 90 minutes has passed, they will encounter Azak Throm here meeting with one of the other guests.

## J. LIBRARY

The library is a place of quiet reflection, used almost exclusively by the embassy staff, though it is open to guests.

This room has bookcases stretching from floor to ceiling along each wall, along with an enormous leather armchair.

## K. MUSIC ROOM

This room is comfortably appointed and used for smaller gatherings which do not necessitate the use of the grand hall.

This room features several comfortable chairs, as well as a large grand piano.

## L. GUEST HALL

Located on the second floor is a small guest hall where those who are staying at the embassy can gather for meetings or meals.

A small guest hall sits at the top of the stairs. Two large, overstuffed chairs flank a fireplace that has burned down to embers. There is a large, rectangular table, still covered in papers from what appears to have been some sort of meeting, surrounded by six chairs. A servant shuffles the papers together as you come up the stairs and gives you a long cold stare.

The servant is Shuru, an elderly man who has worked for the Thayan Embassy since it was established in Mulmaster and has grown bitter over his years of service. He was the inside man on the job and has been feeding information to the Dagers for the past several weeks. The papers he's gathering are from a meeting between Hurgin and Saerdrie, and he's hoping to pass them along to the Dagers using the secret drop in the undercroft.

If the characters attempt to talk with Shuru, he will feign the role of an utterly devoted servant of Thay, both too self-important and crotchety to be bothered with unwelcome distraction. If they mention their investigation, he will make off-hand remarks that seem to implicate Saerdrie ("I've seen the moon elf woman skulking about this afternoon and talking in hushed tones with one of the other guests"). A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check will reveal that he appears nervous, like he is worried that someone might overhear, but not why.

As long as they are upstairs, Shuru will follow them around, feigning interest and ensuring that they have whatever they need. Any requests to open the doors to guest rooms, however, must be approved by Draxkir Farsha, though he happily opens Saerdrie's room for them.

## TRICKS OF THE TRADE

This adventure is written as though Keiran was the guest who was attacked and subsequently replaced by the assassin. However, you may find that over the course of the adventure, that the party either misinterpreted something or picked up on something you hadn't intended. If they came up with an interesting theory, don't be afraid to run with it. It is a simple matter of moving the encounter in Keiran's room to any of the other rooms, to allow the adventure's climax to unfold in a way that will be more satisfactory to your group.

## M. GUEST ROOM—UNOCCUPIED

One of the guest rooms is not currently occupied.

The bed chambers are well-appointed and comfortable, with a large bed and thick, red blankets, a small chest at the foot of the bed, and a wardrobe against the wall. A tall, narrow window looks down upon the streets below, rain streaking across the pane of glass.

The wardrobe does not lock and can be easily opened, but the trunk requires a successful DC 10 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check to open. The window is sealed tight.

## N. GUEST ROOM—HURGIN

This room is occupied, and therefore locked. It requires a key from either Draxkir Farsha or Shuru to open. It can also be opened with a successful DC 16 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check.

The room is similar to the other guest rooms, except that a set of fine clothes in the dwarven style are crumpled on the floor at the foot of the bed. The wardrobe contains another set of clothes, clean and freshly pressed, and there is an empty tankard resting on the locked chest at the foot of the bed. Inside the chest is a simple journal which contains notes and measurements for various buildings in Mulmaster that were damaged in the attack by the elemental cultists and are still in need of repair.

## O. GUEST ROOM—SAERDRIE

This room is occupied, and therefore locked. It requires a key from either Draxkir Farsha or Shuru to open. It can also be opened with a successful DC 16 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check.

This room is appointed in similar fashion to the others, though books and maps lie scattered across the bed and floor. A DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the contents of a locked trunk reveals that hidden beneath the lapel of one of Saerdrie's long jackets, is a small, silver pin in the shape of a harp. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (History) check will reveal this as the symbol used by the Harpers, a group of spies and assassins that has historically been opposed to Thay.

## P. GUEST ROOM—KEIRAN

This room is occupied, and therefore locked. It requires a key from either Draxkir Farsha or Shuru to open. It can also be opened with a successful DC 16 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check.

This room is similar to the other rooms, and at a glance appears to be nearly empty as it lacks the personal effects found in both Hurgin's and Saerdrie's rooms. The only noticeable difference is that the chest at the foot of the bed appears to

have been left open. Once all of the characters have entered the room, read or summarize the following:

The door behind you slams shut, as does the open chest at the foot of the bed. You hear the sliding of a lock followed by the sound of footsteps running down the hall outside the door.

Shuru has locked them inside of the room, setting off a trap as he makes his escape. Any character who succeeds on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check will hear the hissing of gas coming from inside the locked trunk.

## TRAPPED ROOM

*Complex trap (level 1–4, dangerous threat)*

The assassin had all afternoon to rig up a simple, yet elegant, series of traps to harry anyone who might investigate him while setting up for his target. He left Shuru to stand watch in the Guest Hall.

**Trigger.** This trap is triggered when the door is opened and then closed again, which causes a thin wire to snap, closing the lid to the chest and setting off the trap.

**Initiative.** The trap acts on initiative counts 10 and 20 (see actions below).

**Active Elements.** The room fills with several different types of dangerous, poison gases:

**Locked Doors.** The door to the guest hall is closed, locked, and spiked shut.

**Poison Gas (Initiative 20).** Poison gas floods the room from an alchemical trap placed within the locked chest. Each creature in the room must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 4 (1d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Poison Cocktail (Initiative 10).** The chemicals within the concoction are unpredictable and dangerous. Roll a d6 and consult the following table.

## POISON EFFECTS

### d6 Effect

- 1 Hallucinatory gas scrambles the mind and senses. All Intelligence and Wisdom checks made in the room have disadvantage until the end of their next turn.
- 2 Noxious vapors creep from the chest. Each creature in the room must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of their next turn.
- 3 Soporific vapor makes creatures feel sluggish and tired. Each creature in the room must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or have their movement speed reduced by half. A creature that fails this saving throw by 5 or more is rendered unconscious. Both effects end at the end of their next turn.



#### d6 Effect

- 4 Everything is suddenly hilariously funny. Each creature in the room must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or fall prone and incapacitated until the end of their next turn.
- 5 Everyone's vision grows dim. Each creature in the room must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of their next turn.
- 6 The characters must save as though affected by the Poison Gas effect and roll on the chart again (ignoring any further rolls of 6).

**Countermeasures.** There are a few ways to escape the trapped room.

**Open the Door.** The door to the guest hall can be unlocked with a successful DC 16 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check. Once it has been unlocked, a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check is required to force it open.

**Disable the Poison Gas.** The mechanism releasing the poisoned gas is located inside of the locked chest. The chest can be opened with a successful DC 10 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check. Once the chest is open, a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check or a DC 10 Intelligence (Alchemist's Kit) check can disable the trap.

**Find the Secret Hatch.** There is a second door out of the room, located beneath the wardrobe. It can be located with a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check. If the player mentions looking at the wardrobe specifically, grant them advantage on this check (if they look inside the wardrobe, see "Development" below).

**Open the Window.** The glass window of the room can be broken by dealing 10 damage to it. Any attacks against it hit automatically, and it has vulnerability to bludgeoning damage. If the window is opened, any creature in the room receives advantage on their saving throws against the trap.

#### DEVELOPMENT

Once the characters have disabled the trap and investigated the room, they likely have a pretty good idea of who the assassin is masquerading as. To drive the point home, anyone who looks inside of the wardrobe finds the body of Keiran, crumpled up at the bottom and covered with a black cloak. A pair of muddy boots with a nail in them can also be found in the wardrobe.

If the characters enter the hatch, they will find that it leads to a narrow passageway behind the walls of the lounge. The secret door swings out from behind the portrait of Szass Tam, revealing where the attack is supposed to take place.

#### XP AWARD

If the characters disarm or escape the poisoned room trap, award each character 150 XP.

## PART 2. THE CONFRONTATION

**Estimated Duration:** 30 minutes

This second portion of the adventure is likely to unfold in one of two ways: either the party storms into the Great Hall to confront the assassin directly or the party lies in wait for the assassin to strike. If the characters think to ask Farsha, she would prefer that they wait to catch the assassin in the act, to minimize the risk of fallout with the other guests and any claims that the Thayans were the ones instigating the confrontation.

### CONFRONTATION IN THE GREAT HALL

If the characters descend into the Great Hall to accuse the assassin posing as Keiran directly, read or paraphrase the following:

Keiran sneers at you, “Doesn’t matter, I guess. We’ll just have to improvise.” He draws a dagger blindingly fast and leaps towards his target, Azak Throm.

The dagger assassin (use **swashbuckler** statistics with Sneak Attack) is assisted by two **bandits** to help hold off the guards.

#### SETTING UP THE ENCOUNTER

*Very Weak*

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 54 hp, Init +4  
The assassin does not have Sneak Attack

*Weak*

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 54 hp, Init +4  
The assassin does not have Sneak Attack
- **Bandits (2):** AC 12, 11 hp, Init +1

*Average*

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 66 hp, Init +4
- **Bandits (2):** AC 12, 11 hp, Init +1

*Strong*

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 66 hp, Init +4
- **Bandits (4):** AC 12, 11 hp, Init +1

*Very Strong*

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 78 hp, Init +4
- **Bandits (6):** AC 12, 11 hp, Init +1

#### DAGGER ASSASSIN (SWASHBUCKLER)

- Replace type with *humanoid (half-elf)*.
- Replace alignment with *chaotic evil*.
- Add the following trait:  
**Sneak Attack (1/Turn).** The assassin deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the assassin that isn’t incapacitated, and the assassin doesn’t have disadvantage on the attack roll.

### TRICKS OF THE TRADE

The assassin has a second dagger coated in a venomous concoction harvested from the conservatory. For one attack, on a hit the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking an additional 17 (5d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. He will use this attack, combined with his sneak attack, on Azak Throm the first time he is able. Azak Throm uses **commoner** statistics but has 24 hit points.

### TREASURE

The dagger assassin wears a *ring of mind shielding*. He also has a pouch of gold containing 150 gp, the unspent portion of the down payment for his services.

### DEVELOPMENT

If the characters capture or kill the assassin, the Daggers’ threat has been successfully dealt with ... for now.

### THE HUNTER BECOMES THE HUNTED

If the characters wait, they will see Keiran excuse himself and slip up the stairs. Shortly after, Azak Throm will excuse himself and head towards the lounge with one of his assistants. If the characters either follow Azak Throm or wait in the lounge to spring an ambush, read or paraphrase the following:

The tall painting against the southern wall of the lounge slowly swings forward, and a figure in a long black robe darts into the room, daggers drawn.

The dagger assassin (use **swashbuckler** statistics with Sneak Attack) darts into the room to attack Azak Throm. In this scenario, the assassin is unassisted (his thugs are watching the doors for any guards who might try to interfere). Instead, the DM may scale the encounter by further adjusting the statistics of the assassin himself.

#### SETTING UP THE ENCOUNTER

*Very Weak*

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 52 hp, Init +4  
The assassin does not have Sneak Attack

*Weak*

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 66 hp, Init +4  
The assassin does not have Sneak Attack

*Average*

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 66 hp, Init +4

*Strong*

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 80 hp, Init +4

*Very Strong*

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 18 (studded leather), 96 hp, Init +4

## DAGGER ASSASSIN (SWASHBUCKLER)

- Replace type with *humanoid (half-elf)*.
- Replace alignment with *chaotic evil*.
- Add the following trait:  
**Sneak Attack (1/Turn)**. The assassin deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the assassin that isn't incapacitated, and the assassin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

## TRICKS OF THE TRADE

The assassin has a second dagger coated in a venomous concoction harvested from the conservatory. For one attack, on a hit the target must make DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking an additional 17 (5d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. He will use this attack, combined with his sneak attack, on Azak Throm the first time he is able. Azak Throm uses **commoner** statistics but has 24 hit points.

## TREASURE

The dagger assassin wears a *ring of mind shielding*. He also has a pouch of gold containing 150 gp, the unspent portion of the down payment for his services.

## DEVELOPMENT

If the characters capture or kill the assassin, the Daggers' threat has been successfully dealt with... for now.

## XP AWARD

If the characters lie in wait to ensure they catch the assassin in the act, award each character 100 XP.

## REWARDS

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

### EXPERIENCE

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

#### COMBAT AWARDS

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Dagger Assassin	700
Bandit	25

#### NON-COMBAT AWARDS

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Interrogate Chalmer	50
Find Assassin's Package	100
Undamaged Note	50
Undercroft Map	50
Identify Stolen Plants	100
Survive the Poisoned Room	150
Catch the Assassin Red Handed	100

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **900 experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **1,200 experience points**.

### TREASURE

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

#### TREASURE AWARDS

Item Name	GP Value
Assassin's gold	150

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

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

### RING OF MIND SHIELDING

*Ring, uncommon*

This gold ring bears an intricate pattern of polished gems that vaguely resembles a human brain.

This item can be found in **Player Handout 3**.

### REOWN

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

### DM REWARD

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

## APPENDIX. DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following NPCs are featured prominently in this adventure:

**Azak Throm (AH-zak THROM).** A Thayan embassy official who has been working in Mulmaster as a spy since before the infiltration of the Elemental Cults. While not as influential as the ambassador, Azak is well connected and has built a substantial network of local business owners and merchants.

**Chalmer (chal-MUR).** A local boy who has been employed in the embassy to handle menial tasks. Chalmer is hard-working and serious, willing to do whatever it takes to rise above his station.

**Dar'lon Ma (DAR-lon MA).** Zulkir Dar'lon Ma, a member of the Thayan ruling council, has taken up residency in Mulmaster and is the de facto head of Thayans in the city. He is not in attendance at the banquet but may come up in conversation. He has been seen in public with Rastol Shan, the master of the Cloaks (the ministry that oversees magic in the city).

**Draxkir Farsha (drax-KIR FAR-sha).** Farsha is a high ranking Thayan functionary who manages the day to day operations of the embassy. She is serious and stern, with a bright spark of genius. She has little patience for those she considers to be foolish or stupid (which is just about everyone).

**Hurgin Ironbrow (hur-GIN EYE-ern-brow).** A dwarven mason who recently arrived from Glister to assist with the rebuilding effort in Mulmaster. He is powerfully built and has a deep, raspy voice from days spent in dusty work sites and nights spent in smoky bars. He frequently remarks on the quality of architecture, often without realizing he is doing it.

**Keiran Sha (KEY-ren SHAW).** A half-elven merchant from the Dalelands, Keiran is representing the Black Eagle Coster of Ashabenford. While they currently have little business with Mulmaster, they do quite a bit of business exporting foodstuffs to nearby Hillsfar. He is charming and quick with a joke.

**Saerdrie Cielar (sir-DREE see-LAR).** A moon elf sage from Shadowdale who has traveled much of the North and does a brisk trade in scrolls and potions. She is secretly a Harper, and her presence in a stronghold of the hated Thayans makes her more than a little nervous, but she couldn't pass up the opportunity to glean as much information as possible to pass along to her superiors. Despite this, Saerdrie has a rock-solid alibi, as she has been with either Hurgin or Azak Throm since she arrived at the embassy, and both are willing to vouch for her whereabouts.

**Shuru (shoo-ROO).** An elderly servant who has worked for the Thayan Embassy for several years.

Shuru was forced into servitude when his tribe was defeated in battle and has played the part of diligent servant ever since. Secretly, however, he has been plotting the downfall of his Thayan masters.

## APPENDIX. MONSTER/NPC STATISTICS

### BANDIT

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

**Armor Class** 12 (leather armor)

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

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

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**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

### ACTIONS

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

**Light Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80 ft./320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

### COMMONER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 10

**Hit Points** 4 (1d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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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 XP

### ACTIONS

**Club.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

### SWASHBUCKLER

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

**Armor Class** 17 (leather armor)

**Hit Points** 66 (12d8 + 12)

**Speed** 30 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

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**Skills** Acrobatics +8, Athletics +5, Persuasion +6

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Lightfooted.** The swashbuckler can take the Dash or Disengage action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

**Suave Defense.** While the swashbuckler is wearing light or no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Charisma modifier.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The swashbuckler makes three attacks: one with a dagger and two with its rapier.

**Dagger.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

**Rapier.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Source: *Volo's Guide to Monsters*

## APPENDIX. ENCOUNTER SETUP

### CONFRONTATION IN THE GREAT HALL

#### VERY WEAK PARTY STRENGTH (700 XP)

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 54 hp, Init +4  
The assassin does not have Sneak Attack

#### WEAK PARTY STRENGTH (750 XP)

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 54 hp, Init +4  
The assassin does not have Sneak Attack
- **Bandits (2):** AC 12, 11 hp, Init +1

#### AVERAGE PARTY STRENGTH (750 XP)

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 66 hp, Init +4
- **Bandits (2):** AC 12, 11 hp, Init +1

#### STRONG PARTY STRENGTH (800 XP)

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 66 hp, Init +4
- **Bandits (4):** AC 12, 11 hp, Init +1

#### VERY STRONG PARTY STRENGTH (850 XP)

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 78 hp, Init +4
- **Bandits (6):** AC 12, 11 hp, Init +1

#### DAGGER ASSASSIN (SWASHBUCKLER)

- Replace type with *humanoid (half-elf)*.
- Replace alignment with *chaotic evil*.
- Add the following trait:  
**Sneak Attack (1/Turn).** The assassin deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the assassin that isn't incapacitated, and the assassin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

### THE HUNTER BECOMES THE HUNTED

#### VERY WEAK PARTY STRENGTH (700 XP)

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 52 hp, Init +4  
The assassin does not have Sneak Attack

#### WEAK PARTY STRENGTH (700 XP)

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 66 hp, Init +4  
The assassin does not have Sneak Attack

#### AVERAGE PARTY STRENGTH (700 XP)

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 66 hp, Init +4

#### STRONG PARTY STRENGTH (700 XP)

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 17, 80 hp, Init +4

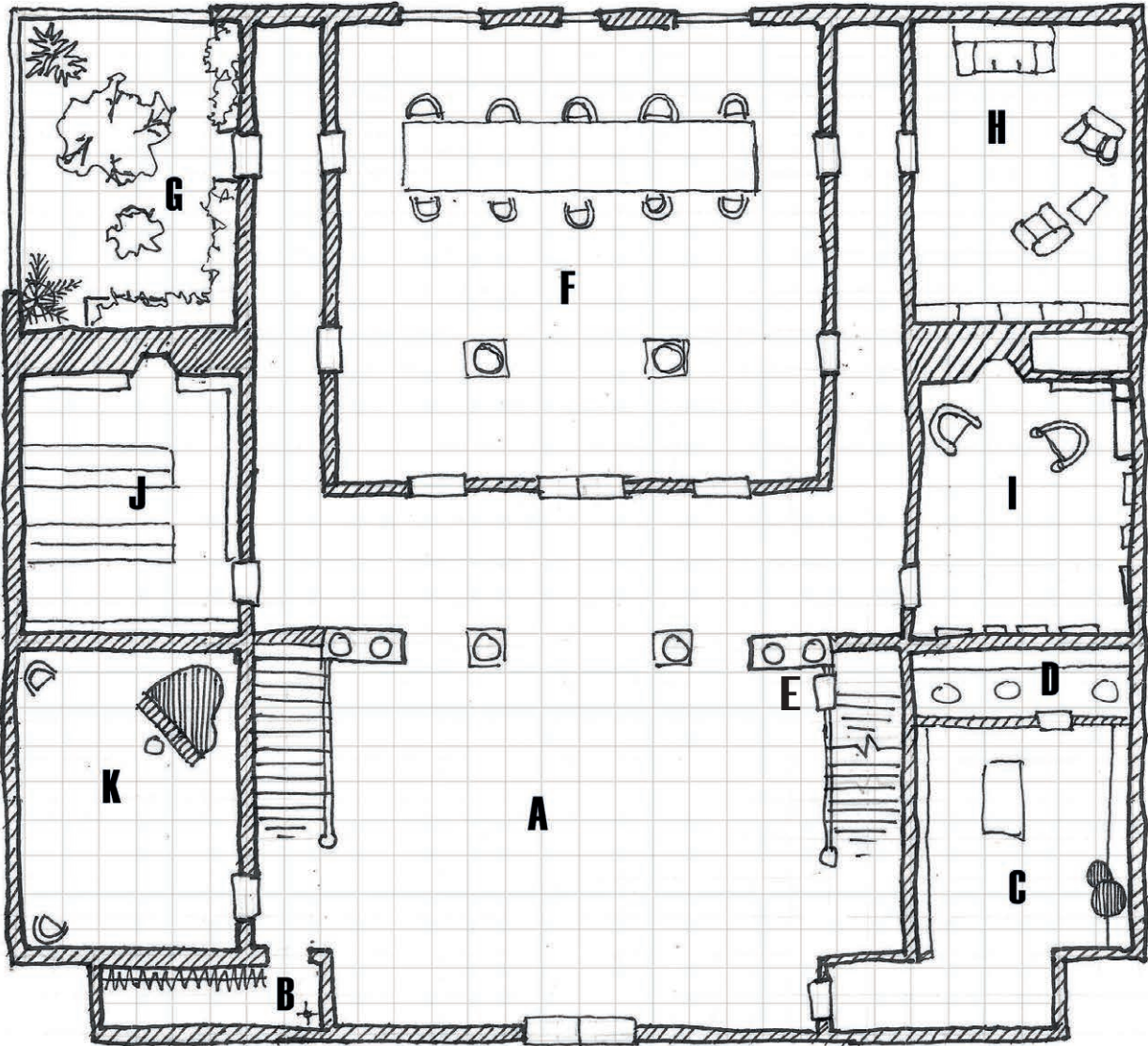
#### VERY STRONG PARTY STRENGTH (700 XP)

- **Dagger Assassin:** AC 18 (studded leather), 96 hp, Init +4

#### DAGGER ASSASSIN (SWASHBUCKLER)

- Replace type with *humanoid (half-elf)*.
- Replace alignment with *chaotic evil*.
- Add the following trait:  
**Sneak Attack (1/Turn).** The assassin deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the assassin that isn't incapacitated, and the assassin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

# APPENDIX. EMBASSY MAP





## PLAYER HANDOUT 1. ASSASSIN'S NOTE (INTACT)

Remember, do not move against Throm until after dinner, so that the poison we have slipped into the wine has had time to take effect. With his death, we will be one step closer to showing the Thayan lich worshipers that they will never be safe in our town, and to sending them back to their own blighted lands.

Lathander smiles upon your holy task, brother.

Ariast

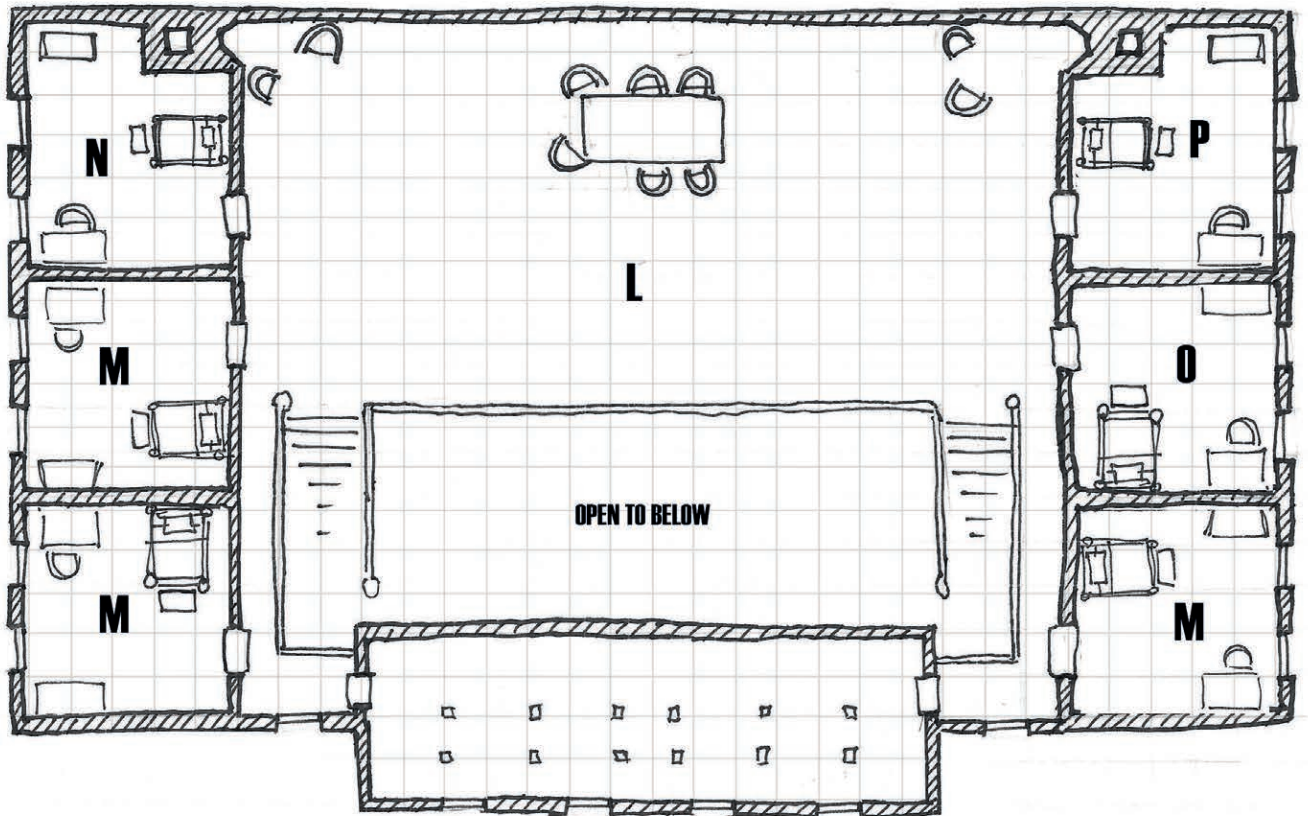
## PLAYER HANDOUT 1B. ASSASSIN'S NOTE (DESTROYED)

Remember, do not ... against Throm ... dinner, so that the ... the wine has had time to take effect. With his death, we will be one step closer to showing the Thayan lich worshipers ... never be safe in our town, and to sending them back to their own blighted lands.

... upon your holy task, brother.

Ariast

## PLAYER HANDOUT 2. ASSASSIN'S MAP



## PLAYER HANDOUT 3. MAGIC ITEM

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

### RING OF MIND SHIELDING

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*Ring, uncommon*

While wearing this ring, you are immune to magic that allows other creatures to read your thoughts, determine whether you are lying, know your alignment, or know your creature type. Creatures can telepathically communicate with you only if you allow it.

You can use an action to cause the ring to become invisible until you use another action to make it visible, until you remove the ring, or until you die.

If you die while wearing the ring, your soul enters it, unless it already houses a soul. You can remain in the ring or depart for the afterlife. As long as your soul is in the ring, you can telepathically communicate with any creature wearing it. A wearer can't prevent this telepathic communication.

This gold ring bears an intricate pattern of polished gems that vaguely resembles a human brain.

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