

KEO4-05

A Last Dance at Midnight

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®] Keoland Regional Adventure

Version 2.0

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A puppet of dark forces, the daughter of the Earl of Linth spins and leaps in an empty hall. Within her family's ancient manor, she steps to unheard music and dances with unseen others. How does the magic upon this child threaten the fate of the Empire? And why is her family unable – or unwilling – to help? Can you end her midnight dance? This is the second module in the *Tales of Linth* series. A one-round adventure for character levels 4-12. This module focuses heavily on role-playing and investigative elements.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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Introduction

This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three and a half hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA table tracking form, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least four players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and

the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Gazetteer*.

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts, etc) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this

type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

	Mundane Animals Effect on APL	# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
	6	6	8	9	10
7	7	9	10	11	

- Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
- If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are two things that you can do to help even the score.

- Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
- Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a move action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in Keoland. Characters native to Keoland pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

Adventure Background

The House of Linth has a dark and evil past. One of the most evil of the family's brood was Countess Sera Linth, who ruled the lands of Linth in the early days of the Empire. Sera was raised on tales of the treachery of the Keogh, the Oerdian peoples that comprised the common folk of the land. (The House of Linth, like most noble families of this time, were entirely Suel)

During the period that immediately pre-dated the founding of modern Keoland, the Grand Duke Alane Linth treacherously attacked the native Oerdians in their family's lands. The attack was a disaster, leading to the defeat of the army of the House of Linth, the reduction in status of its ruler to an Earl, and the parceling out of Linth lands to other rulers. Every Linth who was raised in the family's ancestral manor house from that point onward was nursed to hate the Oerdians.

The matriarch of House Linth from -250 CY until her death, Countess Sera was a witch of considerable power, and she had been weaned on tales of how the incursion of the "filthy Keogh immigrants" had brought her family so much misery. She began to seek out ways to increase her family's power in general and in particular a way to use it against the Keogh "parasites."

Her magical research led her to the Crypt of Sekhel. Nestled in the grasslands south of Niolo Dra, near the northern border of the Countess' lands, it was rumored that a cleric who venerated an ancient devil known as Dispater had been buried along with a trove of dark magic. The crypt was uncovered by a cult of debauched devil worshippers and was made their place of worship. The reigning Suel lords of the time sent a small contingent of warriors to destroy the cultists, but they were met by a devil the cultists had summoned and were nearly massacred. The only wizard present cast a spell that collapsed the main entrance to the crypt, and then scribed holy symbols upon the great iron doors in the hopes of sealing the evil and the cultists in forever. The Suel lords were fearful of the panic that might ensue if a nest of evil such as the Crypt were known to be so close to the capital, and the tomb's existence was never revealed.

Sera was only able to discover its existence from the wizard's own journals. She ignored his rambling writing of nightmares and his evident descent into madness; she instead focused on the wizard's report of magic and gold "beyond

counting" gathered by the cultists to sacrifice in tribute to their dark masters. Most promising of all, the wizard mentioned the cultist's possession of the *Nethernight*, an ebony talisman that augmented any wizard's magic with unholy might.

Gathering herself, she set off northward towards the crypt, using magical divinations to guide her to the place where the crypt lay buried. The labor of a pair of summoned earth elementals excavated the site, and the magic of the iron doors was broken using Sera's magic in combination with the ill-fated wizard's own notes about his casting of the spell.

The wizard moved into the darkness, and was immediately beset by the warped undead that were once the cultists. Defeating them, she moved into the crypt itself, where a devil-queen barred her path. The combination of her magic and the brute force of Sera's earth elemental companions allowed her to defeat the guardian devil and finally to have the riches of the tomb to herself. She claimed the *Nethernight* and the riches of the tomb and returned to Linth Manor to plot and scheme. Unknown to Sera was that the *Nethernight* was cursed, and the power it provided its wearer came with a horrific price... but one that would only become evident later.

Countess Sera devised a simple, vicious plan to attack the Keogh of Segor. Using the various librams of necromancy recovered in the Crypt of Sekhel, she created a virulent pox within the city with a spell of *Epidemic*, a spell she had discovered within the crypt.

The spell devastated Segor and condemned thousands of Oerdians to terrible, wasting deaths. The King placed the entire city under quarantine, allowing only the protected paladins in service to Keoland to enter the city and minister to the sick. But the spell's awful power was such that even those shielded from the disease's effects could still be carriers, and soon the sickness had spread within all of the Earldom and even into adjacent provinces, including Niolo Dra.

Countess Sera played the part of the saving angel, announcing at an anxious meeting of the Council that she had devised a way to break the power of the spell. Her "discovery" of a cure went a long way towards lifting much of the stigma against House Linth that had been in place since the Council of Niolo Dra. The Oerdians within Segor were so weakened that the Countess' offers of monetary aid, soldiers to protect against looters, and "future magical warding" against such another

occurrence were met with grateful, open arms. In exchange, the Countess asked the Oerdians to accept the Linth as their rulers, to “demonstrate the trust” between these “former” adversaries. This was made law by the Act of Segor, signed in –235 CY.

With her plan successful, the evil Countess turned inward, locking herself away to study the *Nethernight*. The hideous artifact and her prolonged exposure to it broke even the Countess’ formidable will, and she became totally deranged. Sera accepted an invitation by the Baron of Dilwyth to travel there to rest and recover. But on the sixth anniversary of the signing of the Act of Segor, the evil Countess hung herself from the balcony of the Dilwyth ancestral estate. Her new Oerdian subjects buried her with the reverence and display of grief fit for a Queen.

The *Nethernight* has remained in the Linth family, and is now being worn by the Earl. Lucius is already succumbing to the corruption of the amulet. The *Nethernight*’s purpose seems to be the total destruction of the House of Linth. To this end, the *Nethernight* is attacking the family through its most vulnerable member – Lady Hannah, the future Countess of Linth.

Lady Hannah is a twisted, tormented child. Since her birth, she has been surrounded by the lucre and depravity that so defines her family. She developed the abilities of a medium – that is, she is able to see, hear and communicate with spirits without magical aid. Because of this, many spirits – eager to communicate with the lands of the living – surround her, urgently whispering messages and pleas into her ears. All of this has worked to drive Lady Hannah insane.

The *Nethernight* has brought forth the spirit of Countess Sera Linth from the dark places where she was consigned, and set her against her young descendant. Every other evening at midnight, the Countess possesses Lady Hannah and drives her to dance with manic abandon in the manor’s long unused ballroom. These psychic assaults on Lady Hannah will soon kill her, depriving the Earl of his only direct heir and setting the stage for a power struggle between his other relatives.

Lucius, the Earl of Linth, now finds himself unable to bring a halt to the crazed dancing of his daughter, and other members of his family are eager to see the child die, as it brings them substantially closer the throne. The Earl’s hopes have fallen on a band of adventurers that has recently come to his attention...

Adventure Summary

The adventure begins in the city of Dredstadt. The heroes have been hired (or ordered, in the case of Knight of the Watch PCs) by Loyal Banshee Lugh Narthistle to guard a grain caravan as it travels to the city of Dredstadt. The shipment is one of several arranged by Maressa Linth to travel to Dredstadt under guard of warships provided by her Fiance, Duke Lushen. The city is suffering heavily from the blight that has affected the Earldom of Linth, and the populace is starving.

Once they are in Dredstadt, the Earl will contact the PCs and explain that he has attempted to lock his daughter in her room every night, and every night Lady Hannah somehow escapes. He will describe the manic nocturnal dances and that he fears that the nightly toll of these dances will soon kill her.

Linth Manor is completely detailed in the text, allowing the PCs to wander about, examining the manse and speaking with the other members of the Linth household.

Several horrific things happen, as the Countess and the *Nethernight* attempt to discourage the adventurers from intervening in the midnight dance. The final confrontation for the girl’s life will take place at the stroke of midnight, where the spirit of the Countess and those loyal to her fight the PCs for it.

In Encounter One, The Heroes get a view of Dredstadt and the horrors that the blight has brought to the common man. They receive a summons from Earl Lucius Linth

In Encounter Two, the Heroes arrive at the Linth manor, and have dinner with the Earl and his family.

In Encounter Three, a complete description of Linth Manor is provided for the DM, allowing the party to freely explore the place. This includes the location of the fetters of Countess Sera’s malevolent spirit.

In Encounter Four, various scheduled encounters are detailed.

In Encounter Five, the final battle for Hannah’s soul takes place. Lucius is killed, and if the Heroes are successful, they inadvertently set the stage to fulfill a prophecy that heralds the fall of the Lion Throne.

Special Notes

This module has several things that a DM must pay attention to. The first is the timeline provided for the module. The events that take place will occur whether or not the Heroes are present to see them, and so the DM needs to be aware of any changes that might occur to a location.

This module is not strictly timed, but as a DM, you should be aware of the timing of your game situation. In a timed environment such as a convention, it is advised you advance the timeline by fifteen minutes when the roleplaying or action dies down a bit. In a homeplay environment, you will obviously have more time for roleplaying and investigation.

Finally, there is a special rule for this module based off the location of the action. The Earldom of Linth is suffering from an unnatural blight that is killing all natural wildlife and twisting what it does not kill. The finest sages of the realm have no idea what is causing the blight, but the effects are starting to become more widespread and severe. All the Heroes will feel lethargic and listless to a degree after sleeping a night within the borders of the Earldom. Additionally, Druids and Rangers will be unable to regain spells while in the Earldom. A PC with Druid or Ranger levels and a prestige class that provides spells is only unable to recover their Divine Spells granted by those two classes.

Introduction

For any PC who is not a member of the Knights of the Watch meta-organization, circulate **Player's Handout One**.

For any Knight of the Watch PC, give them **Player's Handout Two**.

Encounter One: A Dark Calling

Blight has come to the lands of Linth. The trees wither and fall. The crops rot in the fields. The animals grow weak and die. That which is strong enough to survive the blight only becomes twisted and cursed. The Knights of the Watch, led by Loyal Banshee Lugh Narthistle, are stretched to the point of breaking in assisting the populace.

For the past two days you have traveled with a caravan bound for the city of Dredstadt, loaded with grain from other provinces, to keep the people from starving, from wasting.

Today, a heavy rain fell, the first rain in many weeks in this area. However, instead of being a saving grace, this rain was viscous and thick, the color of a sea hag's eyes. Where it touched your skin, it itched and burned, leaving small welts. Where it touched the ground, cracks formed. The rain...well, it's safe to say that the rain solved nothing.

The city of Dredstadt used to be a haven, its soaring arches and high peaked cathedrals call out a beacon to the weary travelers of the land. As you approached closer, however, you could see that Dredstadt is now a dying fruit, withering on the vine.

Masses of gaunt people cluster at the steps to the cathedrals, awaiting the supplication of the priests within. The arrival of your caravan sent ripples through the city, and a contingent of heavily armed Knights of the Watch rode with you into the city, to ensure the grain made the final destination.

Now, as you begin to move through the city, a voice rings out.

"Hail travelers!" calls a gruff voice as a single man on horseback canters up to you. The speaker is a pale skinned man in full plate mail, with close-cropped blond hair in a military cut. "I am Penitent Hellhound Simar Catearn and it is a relief to see your caravan arrive safely. When you did not arrive yesterday, we feared the grain was lost." The man nods to you and salutes.

Any hero who has played *KEO3-03 Will of the People* will recognize Simar as one of the Knights of Watch stationed in Linth. He will nod and offer polite intercourse with any hero who recognizes him before continuing on.

"I thank you for riding through the blight with part of the relief effort. I have been ordered to bring you to my Lord, Earl Lucius Linth. He would like to thank you personally."

Assuming no hero protests:

The Watcher leads you through Dredstadt quickly. As you get closer to the center of the city, the situation gets progressively worse. People everywhere eye you hungrily, judging you not by your actions but by the strength of your sword arm and the weight of your pack. In almost every alley bodies lay unmoving, clusters of flies the only thing feasting.

Famine stalks Dredstadt. With Famine rides Pestilence and Death, and the city suffers under the yoke of all three.

Eventually you arrive at your destination, as Simar Cattearn leads you into the courtyard of the Iron Stone Inn.

Heroes who played *KEO3-03 Will of the People* will have stayed at the inn before, as well as met the proprietor and the Earl. The main attraction of the Inn is the black cornerstone of the inn, which is magnetic and will hold and metal item pressed against it. Under no circumstances is this pull strong enough to “stick” anything that wishes to get unstuck.

Inside the Inn, Earl Lucius Linth has set up a temporary “command post” while he waits for the Heroes to arrive. The Inn is empty of common folk, though a small knot of them gather across the street, talking amongst themselves. These are the common folk of Dredstadt, and they are waiting for the Earl to leave their inn.

Once introduced, Lucius will thank the Heroes for their efforts, genuinely pleased with them. He will return the Knights in the room to their duties with the people of Dredstadt and ask the Heroes to sit at a large table.

The Earl settles into his chair with a sigh and speaks.

“Thank you, good people, for your aid with my Niece’s grain shipments. The House of Linth is grateful, and the gratitude of a father is always generous.

The Earl pauses, seemingly uncomfortable then plunges on.

“However, I have before me a matter of utmost delicacy, and I need your further aid. Before I go any further, I need to ask for your word of silence on this matter.”

The Earl will ask any Hero who refuses to swear this oath to leave. Unless these Heroes change their minds, they will be unable to continue with this adventure. Players can bring in other PCs should they have them available; assume that they show up later and speak with the Earl separately.

Seeming slightly relieved by your assurances, the Earl speaks again. “My daughter...Lady Hannah... sees things, and hears things. She speaks and interacts with them as if they were real, but they are not – to mortal eyes and hands, at least. Last year, one of the

chambermaids reported that she had seen my daughter, during the midnight hour, in the grand ballroom of our manor. She was dancing with wild abandon, spinning to unheard music and dancing with unseen partners. Frightened, the chambermaid would not speak of it to me for almost a week.”

“When she finally confessed the incident, I spoke to Lady Hannah about it, but she had no recollection of the incident. At the time, I attributed it to the delicacy of her mental faculties. But the incidents kept happening. The darker the cloud over my house became, the more frequently my daughter would dance at midnight.” He frowns. “These are not simple promenades – these are wild dances that leave my poor daughter pale and shaking when morning comes. The bedclothes she wears are shot through with sweat, and she is so exhausted from her dancing that she often remains bedridden the next day.”

“I have made efforts to keep her sequestered within her room, to keep her safe. I have locked, and even chained, her door from the outside, and yet it is unlocked and the chains broken. A servant that I set to stand watch in the ballroom, found herself unable to remain awake – despite being well-rested before taking up the watch. Another I set to stand guard in her room... he was found dead there the next morning, eyes wide with terror and completely pale, but not a mark upon him.”

The Earl’s face twists with emotion. “The frequency, the length and the passion of her dancing grow ever greater. I fear that if this madness is not halted, my beloved will die. I beg you, heroes. Come to my home, and help me dispel the evil plaguing us there.”

The DM should make no mistake – the Earl is a power-hungry, debauched individual with a minimal number of redeeming qualities. Beneath his diplomatic façade, he and his family represent the worst of racism, bigotry and hedonistic excesses that characterizes the old Sueloise Keoish noble houses. But despite all that, Earl Lucius is a father who genuinely cares for his daughter. It is not because she is the heiress to his throne (although that weighs greatly upon him), but because he is her father.

The Earl is disappointed if any PCs decline his offer, but he harbors them no ill will. He focuses on those PCs that seem sympathetic to his plight. His will also answer any questions that the PCs might

have for him about the situation. Some canned answers to more common or likely questions are provided below.

How old is Lady Hannah? “She will turn sixteen this winter. A delicate young thing, very lovely, and – when her faculties are about her – exceptionally intelligent.”

Who lives in the Manor with you? “The manor is the home of myself and my wife, the Countess Katarina. Also present is my nephew, Sir Averyn. My own sister, Lady Antoinetta also is a resident of our ancestral home. We have four servants that tend to the house full-time – a butler, chamberlain, chef and a chambermaid. Aside from the permanent staff, and rare performances by great minstrels or visits from heads of state, you will be the first in six centuries not of Linth blood within our manse.”

Do any of them have a reason to hurt Lady Hannah? (An awkward pause) “I do not suspect any of them. Having said that... if my direct heir were to be removed, any of my less immediate kin would stand to make a claim for my throne. To be blunt, if my daughter were to die, it might set the stage for a power struggle between my family to take the throne upon my death.”

Do you suspect the anti-Suel rebels have anything to do with this? “I wish the cause was something so mundane. No, I do not.”

Does the manor have a history of hauntings or other supernatural events? “I have heard tell that old places rich with history such as our ancestral home are havens for restless spirits. I know of no incidents or specific happenings, within my home, however.”

Do you or the House of Linth have any enemies? (Chuckles dryly) “Yes. Beyond counting. But none that I suspect that could have a hand in this.”

How much will we be paid for our efforts? The Earl will look dourly at such a question. “I am not hiring you. As the lord of the land in which you find yourselves, I am asking for your aid in a delicate matter of a personal nature. I’m sure we can come to some sort of arrangement when you have solved my problem.”

Are your servants trustworthy? “I would not have hired them should I have thought otherwise. Like many old noble families, we prefer to have servants who are well known to us. In fact, all of the current staff are the children of servants we

have employed in the past. We reward loyalty and good service generously, and the servants are quite content with their place in life.”

Has anything like this ever happened to House Linth in the past? “We have had our share of hardships and bad times, but no, we have never faced anything akin to this before.”

Have you called in a cleric, a wizard or some other outside help? “No. Years ago, we allowed an Oeridian Knight of the Watch into our home. He proceeded to leave the head of the reigning Lord’s firstborn daughter on the floor of the manor. We have closed our home to outsiders since then. I have made an exception with all of you because of your reputation, your actions, the immediacy of your presence, and my great necessity.”

Have you tried to lock her in her room? “Yes. Even when we bound her to her bed, barred the door from the outside, and set a servant to watch her... the morning after, she had managed to escape – without opening the door. And the servant, as I mentioned, was found dead on the floor of her room. Not a mark was upon him.”

Have you tried restraining her to keep her from dancing? “Strange things happen to those who attempt to interfere with her dancing. I once attempted to do so, and blacked out, only waking when she had returned to her chambers. Another time, my nephew Averyn was standing guard when she entered the ballroom. He found no strength in his limbs, and could only stand paralyzed, watching her dance until she fainted.”

The DM should field any other questions as required. The Earl will disclose as much to the PCs as he thinks is needed to complete their task. The Earl won’t “air any dirty laundry” about his family unless it becomes vital for the PCs to know it.

Once the PCs have asked their fill of questions, Lucius will ask them to come to the manor for dinner. The PCs may want to come immediately, but the Earl is adamant that the manor must be prepared for the arrival of its guests (the presentation of one’s home is a huge point of pride for a member of the nobility; the Earl won’t budge on this).

While he harbors no ill will towards any Hero who refuses to help, he will remind them that they are guests in his lands, and that if they will not assist him, he will see them escorted to the border. This is not an idle threat, but one he will pull out only as a last resort.

With that, the Earl will excuse himself and depart.

Questioning the Townsfolk

PCs may ask questions of the townsfolk. The Earl is disliked by many of them, but they hold their tongues among strangers. However, the following rumors and statements can be picked up by PCs (Gather Information check, DC 15):

“The Earl’s daughter, Lady Hannah, is rumored to be insane. I’ve heard it is because the Earl and the Countess, the girl’s mother, are actually related by blood, and that made the girl’s brain soft.” (Mostly false. Lady Hannah teeters on the brink of madness, but she can still be saved. The Countess is not related to the Earl; she comes from an obscure Suel house of minor nobility from Gradsul. However, the Earl is carrying on an incestuous relationship with his sister.)

“Lord Averyn is a paladin of Rao. In the family, he’s considered a misfit because of his purity and idealism. It must sicken him to see the corruption of his kin.” (True)

“Lady Maressa Linth is said to live in Laketowne. Well, I have a cousin who’s a Knight of the Watch in that town, and even he hadn’t heard of the presence of a member of a noble family.” (True. Lady Maressa lives in Laketowne – as the reigning guild-mistress of the *Shadowdark*, the city’s resident thieves’ guild. Except for a small circle of people, her presence in the city is unknown. PCs who played *KEO3-03 Will of the People* unwittingly met Maressa, the queen of thieves in that city)

“This awful blight that has plagued our lands is the result of that family’s magic gone awry. They’ve had many wizards in their family, you know.” (False. It is the result of the *Nethernight*, not any Linth sorcery.)

“Earl Lucius was actually one of a pair of fraternal twins. He had a brother, the first-born, but the lad died when he was just a boy. Lucius’ father claimed that Oerdian assassins killed him. Me, I think that the lad’s father had something to do with it.” (These are wild musings by a townsfolk with a fascination for noble court intrigues – but ironically, this one is true. The history behind this assassination – and the consequences of it upon the current House of Linth – will be detailed in a future adventure.)

“I’ve heard that the Linth Manse is still well fed. They have fresh food magically brought in on a daily basis. They’re not hungry,”

(Partially true. The Linth family is certainly not going hungry, though the peasants are. But no magic is responsible for this other than the magic of money. Let them eat cake!)

Magical Divination

The PCs may also attempt to use divination – either here in Dredstadt, or once they arrive at Linth Manor. The DM should not discourage this, but the DM should also remember the following points:

- The *Nethernight* makes any direct magical divination attempts against the Earl himself useless.
- All of the other inhabitants do not know what is happening to Lady Hannah (aside from the obvious that they have seen or heard) – although in some cases, they are not unhappy to see the girl’s life and sanity threatened (see *Appendix B* for notes about individual residents and their opinions).
- Any spell of divination that asks if the child is being threatened by a member of the Earl’s family will be answered as *true* – Countess Sera is a member (albeit deceased) of House Linth. If the spell is narrowed to refer to a “living” member, the answer will be *false*.
- *Under no circumstances should the DM reveal the magical properties of the Nethernight to the PCs at this time.* This item can shield itself from divination as easily as it does the Earl.

The DM should handle other divination attempts as needed, although you should always keep an eye towards maintaining the intrigue and integrity of the plot with any answers given. A lot of the plotline of the Linth series still remains unclear - don’t hesitate to give a “no response” reply as the *Nethernight* may very well be interfering with some divination attempts.

For the convenience of the DM, common divination questions asked by the playtest group have been replicated and may be found in Appendix C.

Encounter Two: All in the Family

As the *Nethernight* ponders this new turn of events and the imminent interference by the PCs in its plans, Lady Hannah is resting in her room, exhausted by her last dance. Meanwhile, the Earl of Linth informs his shocked family and staff that they are receiving visitors. They prepare for the arrival of their guests.

When envisioning and describing Linth Manor, the DM should envision the old, gothic abodes made so memorable in silver screen horror films. Try to make the PCs see and feel this as well. Everything is over-sized, and with so few in the manor, it makes the place seem emptier. The signs of lucre and luxury are everywhere, and yet things are dusty, cobwebbed and broken-down. Leering gargoyle statuary watches visitors with curiosity. Residents have forgotten the original purpose of some of the rooms in the manor. Indeed, some chambers have not been entered in centuries. Even softly spoken words or footsteps seem to echo through empty halls. Linth Manor feels less like a home, and more like a museum... or, perhaps, a tomb.

Appendix B gives a complete description of each individual present in the manor, along with role-playing notes for the DM.

Linth Manor is illustrated in the DM Aid section. For the player's convenience, this same map has been provided as Player Handout #1. The manor is quite large, and it would be too great a burden on the DM to draw the entire map. This allows the players to handle exploration and movement throughout the manor in a more expedient, more abstract fashion.

The *Nethernight* has decided that with the arrival of the adventurers, it must abandon the slow torture of Lady Hannah and kill her this evening. The Countess Sera Linth can only be summoned from the realms of the dead at the stroke of midnight, so the *Nethernight* must work its own murder and mayhem throughout the halls of Linth Manor in the hours before then. It hopes to wear down the PCs, confuse their efforts and lead them astray.

To this end, a number of happenings will occur throughout the course of the evening, leading up to the midnight hour. The DM is provided with a timetable of events in the DM Aid section. These things will happen whether or not the PCs are present to see them.

The DM must work to keep careful track of events as the day unfolds, and be aware of where the PCs are as events take place. Some of the events

are major, and are described as an Encounter. If the PCs are not present for the Encounter, the DM will need to use the description of the happening and describe what the PCs see if they choose to investigate it after it has happened

The Fetters of Countess Sera

Spirits of the dead often leave behind objects of great importance to them after death. Traditionally, these objects are buried with the deceased, in the belief it kept the soul from becoming restless. But the Countess died away from her home, and there remain in the manor a quartet of objects – her staff, her diary, her spellbook and her holy symbol – that leaves her soul bound to the world of the living and vulnerable to command of the *Nethernight*.

There are clues and evidence that can be uncovered by the PCs during their exploration of the manor that may lead them to uncover the importance, identity and whereabouts of these fetters. Each one can grant power over the restless spirit of the Countess. Possession of all four of them can allow the banishment of the Countess from the manor. Successfully recovering one or more of these items will make the final battle for Lady Hannah's soul much easier for the PCs. The exact powers of each fetter are detailed in **Encounter Five: Clock Strikes**.

The Countess' staff is located in the trophy room, part of a statue built by an Oerdian craftsman to celebrate the life of his Countess. The Countess' diary is located with her earthly remains in her crypt. Her spellbook is located in the Library, where it has been discovered by a member of the house and is disguised as a children's book. Her Holy Symbol is in the family shrine, where it has been incorporated into the altar.

The Arrival

Read the following to the players when the PCs arrive for dinner with the Earl.

You find yourselves before the ancestral manor of House Linth. A blackened wrought iron fence with elaborate latticework rings the building. Standing at the gate is a young man, dressed in fine clothing. Seeing you, he clears his throat and pushes open the portals. With the gates open, he comes forward to greet you. "Good day. I am Averyn, the Earl's nephew." He has a warm smile that seems a stark contrast to the gothic, gloomy manor that sits behind him.

Any PCs who played KEO3-03 *Will of the People* will be familiar with Averyn, and he will likewise greet such PCs warmly. He will wave off any questions, telling the PCs “Uncle awaits us, as does our meal.” He promises to answer any questions the PCs have right after dinner.

Entering the manor is akin to stepping into an old tomb. Gargoyle statuary leers at you from all angles. The two columns flanking the main entry foyer are carved to resemble human faces, but many years of exposure to the elements has left them defaced and deformed. They visages left behind are somehow unsettling. Passing these, you enter a main foyer. A moldy staff and a trio of walking sticks lean against the wall, while empty cloak racks hang from the wall. You are taken aback at the amount of cobwebs and dust that can be found here.

Averyn will offer to take the PCs cloaks before continuing.

Averyn leads you through a large parlor. This place is also dusty and cobwebbed. The ceilings are vaulted, and you wonder if they have ever been cleaned. Heavy drapes and thick gray carpets make the place feel stuffy and warm. There is an enormous amount of wealth here, however. Every archway is decorated with gold leaf, and examples of fine art and valuable relics are everywhere.

Passing through the parlor, you enter a long dining hall. It seems that within this chamber at least, someone has made an effort to do some dusting. Several place settings are ready at the table. At the head sits the Earl, in a high backed chair with faded purple upholstery. A woman sits to either side of him. The woman on his right is frail and sickly looking, with white hair and hands that tremble so badly she can barely hold her fork. Her dull blue eyes remain focused on the plate before her, lending her a timid air. She wears an elegant, but dated, white dress that has yellowed somewhat with age.

The woman on his left is nearly the opposite. She has lush black hair that dangles past her shoulders, and full, sensual red lips. She wears a crimson dress in the latest style, tightly laced in the front, with black silk gloves that reach to her elbows. She sees you and smiles, and you are somehow reminded of a hungry animal by her gaze.

Averyn sits down next to the timid looking woman and begins eating. The Earl smiles. “Welcome to my home. I thank you for coming. Hannah is recovering from her ordeal in her bedroom, but she has awoken and wishes to meet with her rescuers.”

“My poor niece,” purrs the woman on his left. “You heroes simply must find a way to break her of this awful magic.” She stabs a piece of sausage on her plate and languidly brings it to her mouth.

“Where are my manners?” asks the Earl. Motioning to his left, he says, “This is Lady Antoinetta, my sister. And this,” he says, motioning to his right, “is my wife, the Countess Katarina.” The Countess does not even look up; in fact, you are not entirely sure that she knows that you are there.

It is possible that a PC might leave the table or somehow sneak away from the encounter area. The DM should use the descriptions of the manor’s interior to provide details to the PC as they move about.

Lunch consists of bread, sausages, tea and cake. From the kitchen, a butler will bring out small silver trays with food upon them. The food is quite good and is safe to eat.

The PCs can attempt to speak with each one of the family members present. Consult Appendix B for information about all of the NPCs present in the room, what they know and what they are willing to share.

Any attempts to speak with the Countess will initially be met with silence. If the PCs persist – or, at some point in the middle of a PC’s question, read the following. (If you can do this and startle the hell out of the players, do so...)

“The spirits! THE SPIRITS!”

With no warning, Lady Katarina abruptly issues a nerve-shattering shriek, throws her hands over her ears and rocks violently in her chair. All the while, she continues her wail. The Earl shakes his head sadly, while Lady Antoinetta smirks and giggles. Averyn rushes to her, and begins calming his aunt with soothing words.

“Excuse us,” he says. He gently gets his aunt on her feet, and helps her out of the dining room. After she leaves, the Earl apologizes. “The Countess is a fragile woman. She is prone to such fits from time to time.”

Have the PCs make Spot checks (DC 13) to notice a small, dangling symbol of Wee Jas around Lady Katarina's neck. If asked, any of the (coherent) family members can verify that Lady Katarina is a priestess of Wee Jas, Suel goddess of death and magic. A Knowledge: Religion (DC 10) will also suffice to identify the symbol. The Earl will dismiss any PC attempts to paint her affliction as actual psychic ability, attributing her behavior to such "fits" and nothing more.

At any convenient point, when the conversation hits a lull or the PCs seem finished with any questions they have, read the following:

Finishing his meal, the Earl rises. "I hope you enjoyed your food, my friends. My home is now your home. Feel free to move about and question any of my family and my staff. I would ask that you respect our privacy where appropriate, however. Please, see if you can uproot the evil that plagues my house. I can usually be found in my study; please keep me apprised of what you find as you proceed."

Lady Antoinetta rises and curtsies to your group, and then kisses her brother before departing. You feel a queer sensation in your stomach as you see that her embrace is something more than familial.

Unless the PCs have any more questions for the Earl or his sister, they will leave. After escorting his aunt back to her bedchamber, Averyn retires to the parlor, not returning to the table.

At this point, the DM should consult the timeline given in DM Aid #2, and should distribute Player Handout #1. It is now 6PM, the starting point of the timeline (located in the Appendices).

Running the Event – Encounters Three and Four

Encounter Three is broken down into subsections (4, 5, etc.) that correspond with numbered areas on your map and the player's handout (Area 4, Area 5, etc.). These provide for the DM details of the area and (if appropriate) boxed text descriptions of it as well. These room descriptions are static – they remain the same all the time, unless the PCs or NPCs change them in some way (moving around or destroying furniture, for instance).

On the other hand, Encounter Four deals with timed events. These are the various happenings in the manor during the day. These events are listed in the order that they occur in the DM's timeline.

Many of these events are not dependent on the presence or absence of the PCs – they will occur whether or not the PCs are there to witness them.

Encounter Three: The Ancestral Manor of House Linth

The PCs effectively have free reign to wander through the manor. Each area of the manse is described here as a *static location*. Subsequent events and actions by the PCs and NPCs can change the appearance of a room. As DM, you will need to adjust some room descriptions on the fly based on actions by PCs and NPCs alike.

A Note on the Traps in Linth Manor:

Linth Manor is home to several traps designed to keep the prying hands of filthy Oeradians away. Any room with a trap in it radiates a faint aura of divination, regardless of whether the trap is mechanical or magical. The divination in this case is a unique spell designed to prevent the triggering of these traps by those of Linth blood. None of the traps in the manse will activate if a member of the Linth family is in the room. The traps are ancient and have never been activated, so that if one does activate and it is brought to the attention of the Linth family, they will all be astounded.

Area One: Entry Foyer

A moldy staff and a trio of walking sticks lean against the wall, while empty cloak racks hang from the wall. A great deal of cobwebs and dust can be found here.

This room is the main way into and out of the manse.

Area Two: Lucius' Study

This chamber is the study of the Earl of Linth. A comfortable looking high-backed chair and square desk sit between a pair of library stacks packed with bound books, sheaves of paper, and the odd scroll or two. A window in the eastern wall gives a commanding view of the outside grounds.

The collection of papers and tomes is actually quite organized. Most of the books and papers have to deal with politics and accounts of family finances. The latter books show that the wealth of the family increases every year, although many credits in the accounting journals are not explained. In particular, large amounts of wealth

coming from the Laketowne holdings are not properly notated.

Area Three: Shrine to Wee Jas

This disconcerting place seems to be a shrine devoted to some death goddess, as a skull motif is everywhere. A woman, presumably the goddess, is enshrined in statue form here. It is an image of a lovely woman with hands outstretched. A simple black marble altar dominates the room. Embedded in the altar is a small golden holy symbol in the shape of a shield, the size of a man's hand.

A simple Knowledge: Religion check (DC 8) identifies the statue as Wee Jas, Suel goddess of death and magic. The altar radiates a general aura of divine magic. The room shows signs of recent and consistent use.

The Holy Symbol is one of the four fetters of Countess Sera. It is inscribed with several symbols of the Suel pantheon, with Wee Jas' symbol in the center.

A **Search** check **DC (10 + APL)** will let a searching hero find two items of note about the embedded shield. The first is that it is designed to be removed, and that there are small gouges in the stone near the symbol, where someone obviously tried to pry it out and failed.

Below the shield is a small engraving of a skeleton key and a door. Written underneath the shield are the words **"Name my eternal enemy and I to release me"** written in Ancient Suel.

This is a reference to the Suel God Dalt. A successful **Knowledge: Religion** check **DC 15** will tell a hero the symbol is his holy symbol. The enemy referred to is the guardian demon Kerzit whom Dalt fought in an epic battle to close a portal to the abyss. This knowledge has been forgotten by almost everyone except Dalt's clergy and the occasional wandering loremaster. A Hero who is a cleric of Dalt may make a **Knowledge: Religion** check **DC 20** to remember the name of Dalt's enemy, and a Bard may make a **Bardic Knowledge** check **DC 25** for the same result. The answer to this riddle can also be found in the book "Treatise on the Suel Pantheon", located in the Library. The correct answer is "Dalt" and "Kerzit." They may be spoken in any language and in either order.

The shield radiates evocation magic. The shield is trapped and the trap is sprung if a hero tries to look for a way to forcibly remove the holy symbol,

or if they stand before the altar and *deliberately* give the wrong answer to the riddle.

APL 4 (EL 5)

Fireball Trap: CR 5; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*Fireball*, 8th level Wizard, 8d6 fire DC 14 reflex save half damage.) Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 25

APL 6 (EL 7)

Burnt Othur Vapor Trap: CR 7; mechanical, location trigger; repair reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 10' x 10' area); never miss; onset delay (3 rounds); poison (burnt othur fumes, DC 18 Fortitude save resists; 1 Con drain/3d6 Con); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 21.

APL 8 (EL 9)

Incendiary Cloud Trap: CR 9; magic device; proximity trigger (attempted removal of holy symbol without speaking trigger words); automatic reset; spell effect (*incendiary cloud*, 15th level wizard, 4d6/round for 15 rounds, DC 22 Reflex save for half damage); Search DC 33; Disable Device DC 33.

APL 10 (EL 11)

Two Summon Monster IX Traps: CR 9; magic device; proximity trigger (attempted removal of holy symbol without speaking trigger words); automatic reset; spell effect (*summon monster IX* to summon a barbed devil, 19th level wizard); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34. **Note:** These traps go off once per round for two rounds after being triggered.

APL 12 (EL 13)

Four Summon Monster IX Traps: CR 9; magic device; proximity trigger (attempted removal of holy symbol without speaking trigger words); automatic reset; spell effect (*summon monster IX* to summon a barbed devil, 19th level wizard); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34. **Note:** These traps go off once per round for four rounds after being triggered.

Area Four: Sitting/Meeting Room

This sitting room is decorated in the trappings of bygone glory. Faded tapestries adorn the walls, and an ancient oaken table sits ringed by well-worn chairs. A pair of decorative

staircases leads up to a balcony, connecting to the second floor.

Several weapon racks line the walls, along with shields emblazoned with the crest of the house of Linth as well as the Keoish standard. Decorative gargoyles leer down at you from the walls and high ceiling. A thick layer of dust coats everything but the table and one of the chairs.

On the stairs to your right is a faded rust brown stain.

Designed as a room for entertaining guests, it has not seen regular use in many years. Lord Averyn actually spends a reasonable amount of time here, going through his daily meditations in the room least used by his kinsmen. The rust brown stain is the spot where the last Linth Countess, Lady Amber, was killed by a rogue Knight of the Watch. A **Knowledge: Local** or **Knowledge: Meta-Region One** or **Bardic Knowledge** check (DC 15) will allow a hero to remember hearing a story of a rogue knight killing a Linth countess years ago, which prompted the Night of Long Lances.

Area Five: Dining Hall

The Dining Hall is large enough to accommodate a huge feast. Several long tables dominate the center of the room, each surrounded by sturdy chairs. Faded cloths cover the tables, and most of the place settings have obviously been sitting unused for quite a while. Once again, a ring of gargoyle statuary peers down at you from the high ceilings of the room.

Again, a martial theme is present, with banners and shields emblazoned with the Linth coat of arms. The upper reaches of the hall are lost in shadows.

This is where the Heroes are left to their own devices. Be sure to play up the brooding architecture that seems to be watching them and the general air of decay that pervades the manse. All major meals shared by the family take place here.

Area Six: Kitchen

This is obviously the kitchen. A large stove dominates the west wall, and several cutting tables lie strategically placed around the room. The excess that permeates the manse does not extend to those areas seen only by the serving staff, as this room has a much more utilitarian

feel to it. A large open window on the west wall strives to combat the gloom of the manse.

The cook, a small man of mixed Suel descent, spends much of his time here, tending to the needs of the manse.

Area Seven: Pantry

The utilitarian feel continues to the well stocked pantry. Slightly submerged, it is cooler than the rest of the manse, and is packed floor to ceiling with dried foods and goods.

The pantry is very well stocked. The Linth family is in no danger of starving, despite the blight.

Area Eight: Atrium/Aquarium

This room seems out of place compared with the dour appearance of the rest of the manse. A large pool, ringed with flat rocks, dominates the center of the room, and four smaller pools nestle in the corners. Potted plants fill the room and a few benches sit here and there. The water in the smaller pools bubbles occasionally as small fish move through them.

This room actually has a rather dark history to it. Years past, this room was a summoning chamber used by Countess Sera in her quest for knowledge. After her death, the summoning circles were torn apart and replaced with pools by her cousin Rena, a druid of the Hool who realized the danger of the circles. Sera used each of the smaller circles to summon elementals from appropriate planes, and the central circle for summoning creatures best left undisturbed.

The pools are all perfectly circular, and the four smaller pools are home to different types of fish, all of which are perfectly healthy. This is in stark contrast to the rest of the wildlife in Linth, and attentive Heroes will notice this fact. The larger pool is empty of life, for no fish live long within the bounds of the former main circle. Anything placed in the center pool dies. This does NOT apply to heroes or NPCs, just animal life.

Any Hero who makes a **Spot** check **DC (10+APL)** will be able to see small metallic objects resting in the bottom of each pool. Each pool is about three feet deep and the water is ice cold. Investigation will reveal the metallic objects to be small pieces of mithral with a rune inscribed on it. The runes are "Earth", "Air" "Fire" and "Water" written in Ancient Suel for the outer pools. The rune on the inner pool is defaced, but can be made out as "Darkness" or "Nether".

The center pool will serve as the focus for a *Scry* spell, if any Hero can cast it. If a hero does attempt to use the pool to scry, see **DM Aid #2**

“Woodsy” heroes will probably feel more comfortable here than anywhere else in the Earldom. The residual energies from the elemental circles, even though they are several hundred years old, keep the room from suffering the same blight as the rest of the Earldom. Any Druid or Ranger sleeping in this room may recover spells normally.

Areas Nine to Twelve: Servant’s Quarters

This room is orderly and neat, and without any ostentatious decoration. It obviously belongs to one of the staff.

Other than a few personal belongings, this room is empty of interest for the heroes.

Area Thirteen: Servant’s Washroom

A small wash tub and mirror betray this room as the servant’s washroom.

Area Fourteen: Grand Ballroom

A pair of staircases leads up to a balcony, which then lead further up to this Grand Ballroom. A circular stair with a black wrought iron rail climbs to the third floor.

In the center of the room dangles a huge chandelier of burning candles. Hanging from the chandelier are hundreds of pieces of polished glass and crystal, and the light from the candles refracts into uncountable rainbows upon the floor and walls.

Standing in the southwest and northwest corners are a pair of statues. One is a severe looking woman in a gown, with a regal expression upon her face and a walking staff in her hands. The other is of a balding man wearing armor and clutching a sword which rests point down between his feet.

On the southern end of the room is a dust covered and sadly neglected organ, and three rows of old chairs set up to face it. Large stained glass windows on the east and west walls would allow an expansive view of the grounds, if they had been cleaned within the last fifty years. The window on the east wall is tinged bright blue, while the west window is bright red.

The Grand Ballroom hasn’t seen any use in many years, with the exception of Hannah’s nightly dancing.

The Statues are of Countess Sera Linth and Prince Alane, and have small plaques naming them under each of them. A motto on each of the statues reads “Scuto Amoris Divin”, emblazoned on the Linth family shield. Translated from Ancient Suel, this means “The Divine Shield of Love”, and is the Linth family motto.

The chandelier is home to a hundred *Continual Flame* spells and prisms. The Grand Organ is dusty and disused, but appears to be in working order.

Area Fifteen: Nobles’ Washroom

This immaculately kept washroom is obviously intended for use by the nobility.

Static Event: If a hero moves to look through the room, they will catch sight of themselves in the mirror. They will see themselves as a skeleton with blood dripping from their empty eye sockets, and then the mirror will fall to the floor and shatter.

There is nothing of interest here.

Area Sixteen: Lord Averyn’s Chamber

This large chamber is well-appointed, but seems little used. An armor rack holds a finely crafted suit of Full Plate embossed with heart-shaped masks. A writing desk has several small books piled upon it, and a large bed sits, its’ bedcovers thrown back haphazardly. A trio of gargoyle faces is carved into the ceiling above the bed.

Averyn sleeps here, but finds the overall ambience gaudy and disturbing, so he spends much of his time downstairs. The books on his desk are holy texts of Rao and a book on the history of house Linth. Several bookmarks in the history book highlight some important events in Linth history.

Player Handouts Five and Six are the two most interesting bookmarks in the history book.

Area Seventeen: Lady Antoinetta’s Chamber

This sumptuously appointed room obviously is the home of a female occupant. A large four poster bed dominates the room, hung with red silk canopies. A small writing desk holds a variety of neatly arranged perfume bottles as well as a small silver platter with a decanter

and two wine glasses. Finally, a pair of large trunks rest against the wall.

This room belongs to Antoinetta, and access to it is granted grudgingly or without her knowledge at all. There is nothing amiss with the bed or with the perfume bottles. The trunks are unlocked and contain various personal effects and clothes. At the bottom of one of the trunks is an unusual find. A children's book, with the binding ripped off, sits at the bottom. The title is embossed on the first page, "The Road of Challenge"

The importance of this book is detailed in the Library.

Area Eighteen: Lady Hannah's Chamber

This room has all the amenities you would expect from a room belonging to the only daughter of one of the richest houses in Keoland. A small bed occupies one corner, covered in thick blankets and stuffed animals. A child-sized table and chairs sits in the middle of the room, home to a silver tea service.

Several chests of drawers are in the room, all filled to overflowing with clothing fit for a small princess. A large toy chest sits closed on the north wall. Finally, a large bay window dominates the east wall. The window appears to be solidly shut, and the air in the room is a bit musty and cold. The faint smell of something unpleasantly sweet and cloying lingers around your nostrils.

This is the room where Hannah starts her night, but rarely ends it. The room is devoid of clues, except for one into the personality of Hannah. Inside the toy chest is the source of the smell, which comes from several dead animals that Hannah occasionally uses to host 'Tea Parties' with. The animals are all very dead and starting to rot. No one in the manse is aware of Hannah's collection or how she came by it.

Area Nineteen: Master Bedroom

This opulent room is clearly the master bedroom. A large four poster bed occupies the east wall, as do a pair of nightstands. A pair of overstuffed chairs face a fireplace on the west wall. A small writing desk and large armoire complete the furnishings. In each corner of the room squats a small gargoyle statue, crouched like unearthly sentinels. Unlike the rest of the gargoyles you've seen, these are chased with gold inlay and have eyes of darkest onyx.

The desk contains many of Lucius' private writings. On top of a pile of suggestive correspondences from his sister is a hastily scribbled note, which is **Player Handout Seven**. This is the Prophecy of Azmarender, seer and founder of the Knights of the Watch. (Any PC that played KEO3-03 *Will of the People* has a copy of this prophecy right on their AR). Until recently, this prophecy has been known to only the inner circle of the Knights of the Watch. Only the events of KEO3-03 have brought the prophecy to the notice of the Earl.

Also, a small keyring can be found here, with a single key on it. The words "Scuto Amoris Divin" are embossed on the key. This key opens the crypt.

Area Twenty: Duchess Maressa's Room

This guest bedroom is decorated in much the same manner as you have seen previously. A nicely appointed bed is stood watch over by four gargoyle statues perched in the upper corners of the room. It appears as though preparations have been made to receive a guest here, but no clothes or traveling trunks are in evidence.

Lady Maressa was supposed to be here, but was unavoidably detained. The room is awaiting her arrival.

Areas Twenty-One to Twenty-Seven: Guest Room

This guest bedroom has obviously not seen use in many years. Dust coats many of the furnishings and wall carvings.

Areas Twenty-Eight and Twenty-Nine: Guest Washroom

This small vanity lies covered in the dust of years.

Area Thirty: Third Story Balcony

This area is the top half of Area Fourteen. A small balcony rings this area, and the chandelier hangs from sturdy supports in the middle of the room. It is a 10' fall to the grand ballroom from here.

Area Thirty One: The Library

Opening these double doors reveals an immense library, two stories in height and taking the entirety of the wing. Racks upon racks of books and scrolls fill the shelves, and ladders allow access to a small catwalk with

the second story of books. On the southern wall, a massive tapestry map of the sheldomar valley hangs

The Library is divided into seven sections, and every section has a small golden plaque above the books detailing what can be found within.

Section One is titled "History and Religion" and contains a comprehensive, if Suel slanted, view of the history of the Sheldomar Valley. Additionally, there are several books on the major pantheons of gods, with a three volume set entitled "*Treatise on the Suel Pantheon*". Any hero who specifically reads the *Treatise* looking for information on Dalt can find the answer to the riddle in the Altar room.

Section Two is titled "Warfare" and has hundreds of volumes on the arts of war, tactics, and strategy.

Section Three is titled "Geography" and has several atlases of the world and detailed histories on man distant lands.

Section Four is titled "Family History" and has dozens of tomes on the Linth family history and their deeds. Several tomes are missing from the series, and are in Lord Averyn's room. Available here is **Player Handout Four**.

Section Five is titled "Natural Studies of Linth" and is full of books on the ecology of the land as well as some of the more dangerous species that have been known to live in the area.

Section Six is titled "Children's Books" and is lightly populated. The book of most interest here is titled "*The Road of Challenge*" and is actually Countess Sera's spellbook, disguised by Lady Antoinetta. Several months back, Antoinetta discovered the book but did not want to draw attention to it so she secretly had the bindings of this children's book ripped out and replaced with the spellbook. She would have preferred a more innocuous book, but this was the only one whose dimensions fit exactly.

The Spellbook is one of Countess Sera's fetters, and can be taken without any ill effects.

Section Seven has no title above it, and is mostly empty. Contained within are a pair of books on magical theory, and a pair of scrolls of *Comprehend Languages*.

Static Event: When a hero goes near the tapestry, a lightning bolt will strike outside, illuminating the tapestry. In the flash of light, it will appear that a massive red hand and eye are

interposed over the entirety of the valley. After the lightning bolt, the image will linger for a second or two, then fade away.

Area Thirty Two: Art Gallery

This room is pitch black. The windows appear to be boarded over, and a large cloud of dust swirls as you open the door.

Once the heroes produce a light source, or a character with darkvision enters:

This room appears to be a monument to the Linth family. Portraits line both the east and west walls, and a small statue stands in front of each. On the far south wall a portrait double the size of any other hangs covered by black cloth, and four statues stand beneath it.

This room is the resting place of Sera's staff, one of the four fetters. It rests in the hands of one of the statues under the covered portrait. The black cloth covers a huge portrait of Sera Linth. The other portraits and statues all bear small engravings naming each member of the Linth line, and times of birth and death.

Static Event: When the heroes pull the cloth down off the portrait, the sound of a flock of crows cawing will reverberate through the room, and then quickly die away.

The portrait depicts a stern looking woman with fine blonde hair and a haughty expression on her face sitting on a throne in a great hall while dark skinned men bow their heads and offer up gifts. Red sunlight streams on to her features and a massive chandelier hangs from the ceiling behind her. Expensive looking rings sit on the fingers of her outstretched hand and an ebony necklace clasps around her pale neck. She is obviously in the act of speaking to the men. A small engraving written in Ancient Suel at the base of the portrait reads:

"Give me your crutches and be free. – Countess Sera Linth, Defender of the Throne and Light of the Land"

This is a hint to the two-part puzzle of how to release the staff from its' resting place.

The four statues at the foot of the portrait are all obviously of the woman in the portrait, and are exactly the same statue that rests in Area Fourteen: The Grand Ballroom. The statues here, however, are clutching staves made of wood, whereas the statue in the ballroom was clutching a staff of stone.

One of the four statues is holding Sera's staff; the other three are holding imitations. All four staves radiate a faint magic of evocation.

The four statues face the four cardinal points of the compass, with their backs to each other. In the center of the four statues is a small pedestal with a sheet of parchment upon it. Written in Common on the parchment is:

"Face me from the direction of the dying and do as you must."

The two part puzzle is thus: the heroes must find out which statue is holding the correct staff, and get the statue to release the staff. The inscription on the portrait, as well as the portrait itself provides a clue. The portrait was painted in the grand ballroom of this manse, while sunlight streamed in through the western stained glass window and onto the proceedings. To get the proper staff, a hero must face the western statue, and offer a crutch of some sort as a gift.

The statue will accept any sort of crutch as a substitute, be it physical or emotional. A hero could hand it a staff (perhaps taken from the foyer) or something physical that they rely upon, depending on their core class.

Barbarian: Any weapon they have used to slay an enemy.

Bard: Any instrument or piece of written music.

Cleric: A holy symbol of their faith.

Druid: Any animal or plant.

Fighter: Any weapon they have used to slay an enemy.

Monk: Any weapon sacred to their order or writing of their order's doctrine.

Paladin: Any weapon they have used to slay an enemy or a holy symbol of their faith.

Ranger: Any weapon they have used to slay a favored enemy.

Rogue: Any tool of their trade. (i.e. lock picks, etc)

Sorcerer: A drop of their blood.

Wizard: Any spellbook or tome of knowledge.

If a hero does this correctly, the offered item will disappear (and be gone until the end of the module!) with a brief flash of red light and the statue will release the staff, which will clatter to the floor. **Make a note of which PC offers the**

"crutch" as this PC alone will be eligible for the "A Crutch Sacrificed" AR item.

If a hero offers the wrong type of item, or does so to the incorrect statue, the statue will lash out at the hero with its staff.

APL 4 (EL 4)

Statue Staff Trap: mechanical; touch trigger, automatic reset; Atk +8 melee (8d6/x3, staff) Search DC 18, Disable Device DC 18

APL 6 (EL 6)

Statue Staff Trap: mechanical; touch trigger, automatic reset; Atk +12 melee (12d6/x3, staff) Search DC 20, Disable Device DC 20

APL 8 (EL 8)

Statue Staff Trap: mechanical; touch trigger, automatic reset; Atk +16 melee (14d6/x3, staff) Search DC 22, Disable Device DC 22

APL 10 (EL 10)

Statue Staff Trap: mechanical; touch trigger, automatic reset; Atk +20 melee (16d6/x3, staff) Search DC 24, Disable Device DC 24

APL 12 (EL 12)

Statue Staff Trap: mechanical; touch trigger, automatic reset; Atk +24 melee (16d6/x3, staff) Search DC 26, Disable Device DC 26

It is important to note that this is a magical trap, and as such can only be detected with the appropriate roll. The trap can be disarmed as per PHB rules, with a Disable Device check of DC 20 + APL.

Alternately, the statues can be broken apart by brute force or magic – House Linth certainly won't appreciate such actions, however. Every attack or spell meant to free a staff from a statue will cause that statue to lash out at its attacker, as per above. The statues are not ambulatory, so clever Heroes can do this from a distance away and suffer no ill effects.

The statues have hardness 10 and 20 hp in the areas they need to be broken.

Area Thirty Three: The Curiosium

This room is filled with the trophies of a rich and decadent household. A boar, stuffed and mounted, battles a bear similarly treated. Pennants and banners of defeated forces hang

on the walls, as do broken shields and weapons. A large fireplace sits on the south wall, and a dark blade hangs in a place of honor above it. A small pedestal with a book upon it rests open next to the fireplace.

In the southwest corner is a privacy screen. Behind the screen you see the shadow of a man, clutching a sword. He stands, immobile, waiting.

This is obviously the Linth trophy hall. Two things of interest are here, the first being the sword hung over the fireplace. It is a longsword forged of black iron with a mithral guard and pommel shaped into the wings of a female demon. A large plaque below the weapon reads:

“Behold Kinstevaler, sword of the Red Knight Nils Perris. Foe to the Lion throne, May all such meet his fate.”

The sword is *sword of life stealing* and as such radiates necromancy and evocation. Since the Linth family has no need to fear casual theft, the weapon is unsecured and can be taken at any point.

A small tome rests on a pedestal next to the fireplace. A bookmark opens to **Player Handout Eight**.

The second thing of interest is the figure behind the screen. It does not respond to any verbal cues. When the heroes approach it:

Slowly rounding the privacy screen, you are startled at what you see. A man with dark hair and dark eyes, clutching a greatsword above his head, stands on a marble block.

It takes you a second to realize that the man is unmoving, and no threat to you. His eyes are unseeing, and his sword is still.

On the marble block is inscribed the words “Oderint Dum Metuant”, and beneath that “Milo”.

The first sentence translates from Ancient Suel as “Let them hate, so long as they fear.”

The body on the marble block is Milo, an anti-Suel rebel from KEO3-03 *Will of the People*. It has been painstakingly preserved and is whole. If any enterprising hero attempts to raise Milo from the dead, they will be unable to make contact with his spirit when they cast *raise dead* or *resurrection*.

Area Thirty Four: The Observatory

This room is quite unlike any other you have seen here in the manse. It is immaculately clean and bereft of gaudy decorations. The entire western and northern walls are given over to a series of floor to ceiling windows, each with a balcony outside them. A variety of metal tubes sit upon tripods at various angles. A comfortable and well used bed sits in the southwest corner. Next to it, a small table sits, a pair of wineglasses upon it.

The tubes are telescopes. Lucius spends much of his time here, and uses this room to carry on his dalliances with his sister. If the heroes look through the telescopes, they will see a variety of sites picked out around the grounds, seemingly at random.

Area Thirty Five: The Armory

The walls of this room are covered with the trappings of war. Blades of all shapes and sizes adorn them, and suits of armor stand rigid guard in the corners. Several of the weapons have small plaques underneath them, as do several shields hanging on the eastern wall.

On the southern wall, a series of blades hang in a circle, all points inward. From here you can see that one is missing. A pedestal stands underneath them.

The plaques under the shields and weapons are small tales of how they were used and by whom. The circle of blades consists of six weapons, all longswords. One is missing.

The pedestal contains the names of the weapons:

“Bluefall; Slayer of the Dragon Vyweandyr”

“Lucullus; Slayer of the Jotunlord Etren”

“Silver Bell; Savior of the Lion Throne, Ghosthunter”

“Fiorino; Slayer of the Dread Bandit Sencal”

“Penates; Imprisoner of the Unfaithful”

“En Passant; Slayer of the Red Knight”

The swords are all magical, and all radiate evocation. They have no particular bearing in this module, but can be used if the Heroes are in dire straits. They are all *+1 longswords*, with the exception of “Silver Bell”, as described below. All the swords are engraved with the ancestral crest of house Linth and are exceptionally well made.

The missing sword is “Silver Bell”, which is the sword Averyn is currently carrying. It is a +1 *ghost touch longsword*, and Averyn carries it at all times. Silver Bell is the ancestral sword of House Linth, and as much as Lucius dislikes Averyn at times, he recognizes his right to bear the sword.

Area Thirty Six: The Crypt

A small trapdoor sits at the top of these circular steps. A rusty looking padlock hangs from it. The Linth family crest is burned into the wood of the trapdoor, along with the words “Scuto Amoris Divin”.

The lock is **DC (12 + APL)** to open, and is trapped. Alternately, the keys can be found in the master bedroom. Using the key automatically bypasses the trap.

APL 4 (EL 4)

Trapdoor lock blade Trap: mechanical; touch trigger, automatic reset; Atk +8 melee (4d6/x2, wall blade) Search DC 22, Disable Device DC 18

APL 6 (EL 6)

Trapdoor lock blade Trap: mechanical; touch trigger, automatic reset; Atk +12 melee (6d6/x2, wall blade) Search DC 24, Disable Device DC 20

APL 8 (EL 8)

Trapdoor lock blade Trap: mechanical; touch trigger, automatic reset; Atk +16 melee (8d6/x2, wall blade) Search DC 26, Disable Device DC 22

APL 10 (EL 10)

Trapdoor lock blade Trap: mechanical; touch trigger, automatic reset; Atk +20 melee (10d6/x2, wall blade) Search DC 28, Disable Device DC 24

APL 12 (EL 12)

Trapdoor lock blade Trap: mechanical; touch trigger, automatic reset; Atk +24 melee (12d6/x2, wall blade) Search DC 30, Disable Device DC 26

When the heroes open the trapdoor:

The dust of ages rests here, in drifts and piles. The room appears to be storage of some sort. Four enclosures have wooden doors barring them. Stone boxes lay piled on top of each other in neat piles.

The Linth family stores their dead here, for two reasons. The first is that they venerate some of the more borderline dogma of Wee Jas, and raise

their dead above them in a place of honor. The second is that the family feared for the Oerdians pillaging their crypts. The piles of stone boxes are sarcophagi, sealed. The first one the Heroes examine reads:

“Jerelai Linth. 303 CY – 322 CY”

Every sarcophagus in the main room bears a simple inscription with a name and date of birth and death. The four enclosures hold the remains of the more illustrious members of the Linth family, Prince Alane, Countess Sera, Drushus, and an oubliette. Each enclosure with a body in it has an elaborate plaque on the door.

Enclosure One: Prince Alane, “The Reaver”

This crypt is home to the resting place of the founder of the Linth line. The crypt itself is not locked, but the sarcophagus is sealed. It can be opened with a **DC: 15** Strength check, or other appropriate means. The corpse inside is completely mummified and bedecked in gold and jewels. Nothing radiates magic. The entire body shows horrific old burn wounds.

Enclosure Two: Drushus Linth

This crypt holds a child sized coffin. The lid is marked with the Linth crest, and sealed tight. If shifted, the sarcophagus feels full. If the heroes attempt to pry the top off the sarcophagus, they will set off a trap.

APL 4 (EL 5)

Fireball Trap: spell; touch trigger, automatic reset (sealing of the sarcophagus); spell effect (*Fireball*, 6th level wizard, 6d6 fire, DC 14 reflex save half damage) Search DC 22 Disable Device DC 20

APL 6 (EL 7)

Fireball Trap: spell; touch trigger, automatic reset (sealing of the sarcophagus); spell effect (*Fireball*, 8th level wizard, 8d6 fire, DC 14 reflex save half damage) Search DC 24 Disable Device DC 22

APL 8 (EL 9)

Fireball Trap: spell; touch trigger, automatic reset (sealing of the sarcophagus); spell effect (*Fireball*, 10th level wizard, 10d6 fire, DC 16 reflex save half damage) Search DC 26 Disable Device DC 24

APL 10 (EL 11)

Delayed Blast Fireball Trap: spell; touch trigger, automatic reset (sealing of the sarcophagus); spell effect (*Delayed Blast Fireball*, 12th level wizard,

12d6 fire, DC 18 reflex save half damage) Search DC 28 Disable Device DC 26

APL 12 (EL 13)

Delayed Blast Fireball Trap: spell; touch trigger, automatic reset (sealing of the sarcophagus); spell effect (*Delayed Blast Fireball*, 14th level wizard, 14d6 fire, DC 20 reflex save half damage) Search DC 30 Disable Device DC 28

Inside, there is no body. Bags of sand weigh the sarcophagus down.

Enclosure Three: Countess Sera Linth

This enclosure is different from the others. A pair of statues carved into the likeness of half-naked female warriors stand beside the door. Each of the statues bears a long, slender sword.

As menacing as the description sounds, these statues are not caryatid columns. They are simply decoration, and will undoubtedly provide a tense moment or two for a group of heroes who might be metagaming a bit. If they are at all nervous, feel free to play up how lifelike the statues appear and how cramped the quarters of the crypt area suddenly feel.

This is the location of one of Sera's fetters, her diary.

This crypt has been recently disturbed and the sarcophagus' lid is unsealed but closed. The sarcophagus is trapped.

APL 4 (EL 5)

Fireball Trap: spell; touch trigger, automatic reset (sealing of the sarcophagus); spell effect (*Fireball*, 6th level wizard, 6d6 fire, DC 14 reflex save half damage) Search DC 18 Disable Device DC 20

APL 6 (EL 7)

Fireball Trap: spell; touch trigger, automatic reset (sealing of the sarcophagus); spell effect (*Fireball*, 8th level wizard, 8d6 fire, DC 14 reflex save half damage) Search DC 20 Disable Device DC 22

APL 8 (EL 9)

Fireball Trap: spell; touch trigger, automatic reset (sealing of the sarcophagus); spell effect (*Fireball*, 10th level wizard, 10d6 fire, DC 16 reflex save half damage) Search DC 22 Disable Device DC 24

APL 10 (EL 11)

Delayed Blast Fireball Trap: spell; touch trigger, automatic reset (sealing of the sarcophagus); spell effect (*Delayed Blast Fireball*, 12th level wizard, 12d6 fire, DC 18 reflex save half damage) Search DC 24 Disable Device DC 26

APL 12 (EL 13)

Delayed Blast Fireball Trap: spell; touch trigger, automatic reset (sealing of the sarcophagus); spell effect (*Delayed Blast Fireball*, 14th level wizard, 14d6 fire, DC 20 reflex save half damage) Search DC 26 Disable Device DC 28

Inside, a yellowed dress lays, half covering a book.

Static Event: When a Hero reaches for either the dress or the book, the dress will sit up and then float up to the rafters, hanging about three feet below it. A low wail and choking sounds will be heard and then the dress will crumple to the sarcophagus.

The book is Sera's journal, and is one of the fetters that bind her to this plane. **Player's Handout Three** details some of the interesting passages from the journal.

Enclosure Four: The Oubliette

The stone walls of this enclosure house no coffin. Instead, four heavy sets of chains are bolted into each wall. The room smells faintly of sweat and despair. In the center of the room is a circle inscribed with magical looking symbols. A small marble block, pure white in color rests on the opposite side of the room from the door. From here, you can see something inscribed upon it.

In ages past, the Linth family would forget about their problems here.

Static Event: If a hero moves to investigate the marble block, all the chains will suddenly pull taut and low moaning voices will fill the room. Then just as suddenly, all sound will cease and the chains will grow limp.

On the marble block is inscribed the words "Oderint Dum Metuant", which translates from Ancient Suel as "Let them hate, so long as they fear."

Encounter Four: Time-Specific Events

This section is not an encounter per se, but rather a collection of timed events and the locations in which they occur. Many of these events are the direct result of the *Nethernight* attempting to make the heroes jumpy and throw them off course. The *Nethernight* cannot strike at the heroes directly, so it is attempting to wear them down and make sure they do not find the fetters of Countess Sera.

These events take place at the listed times in game.

6 PM – Conclusion of Encounter Two and the start of active manor exploration by the PCs.

7 PM – The house guards all disappear. This is likely to go unnoticed for a while, as all the guards are stationed outside.

8 PM – All shutters in the house simultaneously slam shut and bar themselves.

8:30PM – If no hero has noticed, Averyn notices that the house guards are all missing

9 PM –The organ in the grand ballroom starts playing scales, as if someone were warming it up.

9:30 PM – The five remaining swords in the armory float off the wall, and a dust devil floats up around them. The swords float to the location of the heroes, then fall to the ground around one of the heroes and embed point first. No amount of non-magical assistance can remove them. The hero can step over the sword prison easily enough, but as he or she does, a female voice will scream “GET OUT! GET OUT OF MY HOUSE!”

10 PM – A suit of armor from the armory walks to the balcony and flings itself off, landing in the middle of the ballroom with a tremendous clatter.

10:30 PM -- The dead animals in Hannah’s toy chest become animate and force their way out. They proceed to have tea and try to run when discovered. Hannah will scream as she sees this.

11 PM – Small bloody footprints lead from Hannah’s room to the ballroom. The prints are not made by Hannah and dance about the ballroom in a number of steps before disappearing.

Midnight – The grand organ breaks into full song, and the battle for Hannah’s soul begins.

Fetter-related events

The following events take place whenever the Heroes take a fetter into their possession. Not only do these events signal that the heroes are on the right track, but that the timeline for Hannah’s dance is advancing.

First Fetter – A woman’s voice can be heard screaming inside the Atrium. The middle pool has turned to vinegar when the Heroes arrive.

Second Fetter – A pair of apparitions appear in Area Four. One is a noble woman, the other a Knight in full regalia. He silently strikes the head from her shoulders, where it lands on the bloodstained stairs. Everything fades away, except for a skull left on the bloodstain. Averyn will begin screaming when he sees the apparitions appear, and they will stand until the heroes arrive and witness the beheading.

Third Fetter – All the dust from the guest rooms gathers into the shapes of people and runs through the house and out the front door, screaming. The rooms are immaculately cleaned.

Fourth Fetter – The gargoyles in the main lobby detach from the walls and move to separate locations, blocking the stairs. As the heroes arrive, Encounter Five begins.

Encounter Five: Clock Strikes!

This encounter takes place at the stroke of midnight or when the heroes have acquired all four fetters. The final battle for Hannah’s soul is about to take place, and the fate of many rests upon the fulcrum.

Without warning, the manse is filled with a cacophony of sound. In the Grand Ballroom, the organ starts playing of its own accord, belting out a somber dirge. The echoes of the sound reach into every room in the manse, and doubtless for miles around into the countryside. As you hear the music, you are infused with the certain knowledge that this will be the last dance Hannah will ever perform in this ballroom, one way or the other.

It is likely that the Heroes have attempted to take measures to ensure that Hannah will not dance this evening. Unfortunately, these will all be for naught. The *Nethernight* is a powerful artifact, and it will see its will done this evening. Regardless of what precautions the heroes take, Hannah gets up and walks to the Ballroom.

It is important to note that Lucius will refuse permission to remove Hannah from the house in any way should a hero request it of him. He wants this resolved tonight, here. Furthermore, the *Nethernight* will stymie any and all attempts – physical or magical – to bring the girl out of the

house. DMs should feel free to use *fiat* when adjudicating this – the unholy amulet is an *artifact*, created by an ancient arch-devil with Epic-level powers and capabilities.

When all the Heroes are in the Ballroom:

The dirge quickly takes on a haunting tone; both figuratively and literally, as a chorus of transparent figures start to materialize within the ballroom. A young girl gently sets her head down on the organ stool and then sits at the organ. As she prepares to touch the keys, the organ stops playing of its own accord.

The transparent figures quickly file through the room, and begin seating themselves in the chairs on the southern wall. The hubbub of hushed conversation fills the room as the spirits begin conversing amongst one another. You watch as the living members of the Linth household become glassy eyed and take seats amongst the spirits. The familial resemblance is uncanny.

Suddenly, the statue of Countess Sera Linth on the balcony uproots itself. The dust of ages washes from it as it stalks up the stairs, its eyes glowing as red as a furnace. The mouth moves and a voice as cold as a grave speaks.

“Hannah, come to me. You are not worthy of my lands and title. Dance with me one last time.”

In mid-stride, the statue grinds to a halt and a translucent shape flows out of it. Floating in midair is the returned spirit of Countess Sera Linth, mass murderer and demon summoner. Her eyes alight over all of you, and her features contort in sheer rage.

Her mouth opens incredibly wide and an unholy scream issues from Sera. It washes over everything living in the room. You see Lucius clutch his chest and crumple from his seat. Averyn is similarly affected, but you see him move weakly after he hits the floor. Katarina and Antoinetta both cry out in terror, eyes bulging from their skulls before both slump forward and crash into the floor, dead.

Hannah moves to the middle of the ballroom, where Sera waits for her, arms outstretched. Sera cries out “The Dance begins!” Without warning, every light on the chandelier is extinguished and the organ kicks into a manic ditty.

Nearly all of the members of House Linth present have been slain, and thanks to the efforts of the *Nethernight* will be beyond restoration. Averyn and Hannah yet live – but Sera intends to rectify that soon enough.

Possession of the Fetters:

The holders of the fetters will find themselves understanding how the fetters can be used against Sera; perhaps some god of good (most likely Rao, whom Averyn serves) has not yet turned all eyes away from House Linth.

The heroes' success or failure in this combat depends largely on how many of Countess Sera's fetters they discovered. Each fetter they have provides them with a grade of protection from Sera's powers, and each individual fetter provides a weapon to use against Sera.

One fetter: Protects all PCs from Sera's **Wail** supernatural ability.

Two fetters: As above, and protects all PCs from Sera's **Horrific Appearance** supernatural ability.

Three fetters: As above, and lowers the DC on the save for Sera's **Charisma Drain** supernatural ability to **(10 +APL)**

Four fetters: As above, and lowers Sera's SR to 0.

Individual Fetter Powers:

Sera's Staff: This staff is treated as a +1/+1 *ghost touch* weapon when used against Sera. It has no special qualities against any other incorporeal.

Sera's Spellbook: Any arcane spell cast by the hero that has the spellbook in their possession is cast at level +2, but only if it directly targets Sera. Additionally, Sera's SR is reduced to **(10 + APL)** against the holder of the spellbook.

Sera's Diary: Allows use of Bardic Music against Sera. Additionally, it radiates a *Bless* effect at all times it is being held.

Sera's Shield/Holy Symbol: Adds +2 to the level of any divine spell cast by the hero that strongly presents the symbol, but only if it directly targets Sera. Additionally, Sera's SR is **(10 + APL)** against the holder of the symbol. It is important to note that using this holy symbol will cause a crisis of faith for any PC cleric who uses this and does not worship a member of the Suel pantheon.

All APLs (Untiered)

Countess Sera Linth, female banshee: see Appendix C. The banshee will have a number of hit points equal to (APL x 10).

Tactics: Sera is interested only in dancing with Hannah, and will do so to the exclusion of all other events until a hero successfully harms her or has a successful spell effect against her. At that point, Sera will use her next action to wail, then her horrific appearance, then fall into hand to hand against the heroes that are doing the most damage to her. If a full round passes with no hero affecting Sera, she will return to dancing with Hannah.

Under *NO CIRCUMSTANCES* will Sera fight through the walls or the floor. Her main goal is Hannah, and the *Nethernight* will force her back to her task.

Hannah is frail and weak from her repeated dances with Sera. Every round that Sera dances uninterrupted with Hannah, she will lose ¼ of her Constitution. If Sera dances with Hannah for four rounds, Hannah will die and Sera will laugh and disappear.

Conclusion

Conclusion A: A House Decimated

The Heroes receive this conclusion if they fail to save Hannah from Sera.

You can only watch in terror as the shade of Sera Linth latches onto the vibrant young form of Hannah Linth and proceeds in a manic dance. Hannah screams and wails, but to no avail. With a sickening plop, Hannah is absorbed into the form of Sera. Her flesh melts from her face as she screams, but no sound emanates from Sera's shell. Horribly, Sera's form grows more and more solid, and finally takes on full opacity.

With a shudder, Sera Linth draws breath and disappears with a flash. In her place lies the shriveled form of Hannah, lifeless in the fetal position.

The news quickly travels the countryside. With no clear immediate heir to the Earldom, civil war beckons. Anti-Suel elements quickly start organizing against the hated Suel Knights of the Watch and within a few days the sky is filled with vultures, preparing to feast.

What a meal it will be.

The heroes valiant efforts will not receive as much reward as they may have. Although they receive no monetary reward or loot, they will receive the *Invitation to Join the Shadowdark* (if applicable), and access to *Silver Bell* and *Lionward*.

Conclusion B: A House Divided

The Heroes receive this conclusion if they succeeded at rescuing Hannah from Sera.

Screaming, you send the shade of Sera Linth down beyond the spheres of mortal understanding. As she falls away, Hannah Linth regains her color and her vitality. Cognizance returns to Hannah's eyes and she sees the crumpled forms of her mother and father. With barely a whimper, she collapses unconscious.

At the end of that Tenday, you stand as an honor guard in Niolo Dra, saviors of Hannah Linth. You are lauded as heroes and gifted by the nobility of the land. You are accorded a position of honor as you watch Hannah Linth approach the Lion Throne and King Kimbertos Skotti.

Dressed in a pure white dress with white gloves and a white train, Hannah looks almost the part of a bride. The only ornamentation she wears is a darkly beautiful obsidian necklace studded with tiny black opals – her father's. She kneels before King Kimbertos Skotti and is ascended to the throne of Linth.

The tales quickly circulate. Hannah Linth will not seek a consort until her lands are stabilized. As she has put it,

"I am married to the land - and to my people."

The new Countess of Linth rewards the heroes that saved her life with gold and gems (enough to reach the gp maximum by APL for each PC) as well as the *Favor of House Linth* item. The PCs gain access to the *Invitation to Join the Shadowdark* (if applicable) and *Silver Bell* and *Lionward* as well.

The End

Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total

value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter Three

Avoiding/disabling the trap in the Shrine (Area 3):

APL 4 – 150 xp.

APL 6 – 210 xp.

APL 8 – 270 xp.

APL 10 – 330 xp.

APL 12 – 390 xp.

Avoiding/disabling the *fireball* traps in the Crypt (Area 36) (award per trap):

APL 4 – 150 xp.

APL 6 – 210 xp.

APL 8 – 270 xp.

APL 10 – 330 xp.

APL 12 – 390 xp.

Encounter Six

Defeating the banshee

APL 4 – 180 xp.

APL 6 – 240 xp.

APL 8 – 300 xp.

APL 10 – 360 xp.

APL 12 – 420 xp.

Story Award

Saving Hannah Linth

APL 4 – 135 xp.

APL 6 – 180 xp.

APL 8 – 225 xp.

APL 10 – 270 xp.

APL 12 – 315 xp.

Total Possible Experience

APL 4 – 675 xp.

APL 6 – 900 xp.

APL 8 – 1125 xp.

APL 10 – 1350 xp.

APL 12 – 1575 xp.

Treasure Summary

During an adventure, characters come upon treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a “treasure” section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter’s treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. In the case of potions, they may use Spellcraft to identify them. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Conclusion B:

- APL 4: L: 0 gp; C: 650 gp; M: 0 gp.
- APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 900 gp; M: 0 gp.
- APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 1300 gp; M: 0 gp.
- APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 2300 gp; M: 0 gp.
- APL 12: L: 0 gp; C: 3300 gp; M: 0 gp.

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

- APL 4: L: 0 gp; C: 650 gp; M: 0 gp.
- APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 900 gp; M: 0 gp.
- APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 1300 gp; M: 0 gp.
- APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 2300 gp; M: 0 gp.
- APL 12: L: 0 gp; C: 3300 gp; M: 0 gp.

Special

“A Crutch Sacrificed”

This character has given of themselves, and through their selfless actions saved Hannah Linth from a fate worse than death. Some unknown source smiles upon this character, and he or she has learned to rely upon themselves fully. For one year following the real-world date that this adventure was played, this character may, once per module, add a +2 luck bonus to any one saving throw they are about to make. The use of this ability must be declared before any dice are rolled. This only applies to the character who sacrificed a crutch to the statue of Sera Linth.

Favor of the House of Linth

Your efforts at aiding the House of Linth in their time of need have not gone unnoticed. Lady Hannah will use her considerable influence and that of her family to find and procure an item of value for the PC in question. For every *Favor of the House of Linth* and/or *Favor of Lucius, Earl of Linth* expended at the end of any module, the PC may buy (*Access: Any*) any single item listed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The item may be chosen from DMG Tables 7-7, 7-8, 7-16, 7-18, 7-25, 7-27, 7-28 or 7-29 ONLY. Magical ammunition of any sort is excluded. The maximum value of the item chosen is equal to the sum of the expended Favors times the character level of the PC at the time it is expended times 500 gp.

Thus, an 11th level PC that played KEO3-03 *Will of the People* and KEO4-05 *A Last Dance at Midnight* and earned both Favors could purchase

any single item, excluding magical ammunition, and limited to one of the tables noted above, of a value less than or equal to 11,000 gp. PCs may expend favors individually to gain access to more than one (but less valuable) item. PCs may not “pool” favors or expend a favor on behalf of another PC. Place an “X” through these Favors when they are expended.

Invitation to Join the Shadowdark

If the PC has earned both the *Favor of the Shadowdark Guildmistress* and the *Favor of the House of Linth*, the PC may join this most notorious of thieves' guilds. At the end of any Keoland regional adventure, the PC may elect to expend 6 TUs (expenditure of the prerequisite favors is not required) to be inducted into the guild. The PC must pay 4 TU each additional year of membership. You may not currently be a member of a thieves' guild when you pay these TUs, nor may you subsequently join another thieves' guild while you are a member. Should you join the Shadowdark and then leave without permission (granted out-of-game by the Keoland Triad) your PC is marked for death.

This guild of thieves operates exclusively out of the Earldom (now County) of Linth. PCs that join the organization begin initially as Apprentices, and gain the following benefits:

Access to the following Prestige Classes: Dread Pirate (actually Privateer, thanks to the influence of the Guildmistress with the Keoish admiralty), Spymaster. Additionally, membership in the Shadowdark fulfills the special prerequisite of the Thief-Acrobat prestige class.

Access (Regional) to the following items from *Arms & Equipment Guide*: Ascender/slider, bolt cutters, earplugs, elven rope, false book, finger blades, glass cutter, gnome crossbow sight, grappling hook (collapsible), grappling ladder, hacksaw, housebreaker harness, jeweler's loupe, knife vest, magnet (small), marbles, periscope, quiver scabbard, sheaths (boot and wrist), silent shoes, smuggler's boots, sparker, spider poles, and thieving helmet.

Access (Regional) to some Shadowdark-specific equipment: “Breakers” (favored by the Guildmistress, six of these shuriken cost as much as masterwork thief's tools and combine the functions of both items), and their reversible skeletal bodysuits (makes the wearer look like a skeleton in poor lighting; when reversed, functions as a black bodysuit from *Arms & Equipment Guide*).

You may be called upon to perform special tasks in the course of certain Keoland regional, and you are expected to report all information of importance to the guild back to your superiors. To leave the guild or betray its secrets is to be marked for death. Membership may have additional benefits – or drawbacks – in the future. Chances to advance in rank in this organization will be made available in the future.

New members should notify the Keoland Triad of their joining this organization.

“Lionward”

This +2 *heavy steel shield* is an heirloom of Keoland’s House of Linth. It bears the Linth family crest upon it, a lion with a unicorn’s horn. The wielder of *Lionward* receives a +4 morale bonus to saving throws against fear effects.

For purposes of additional weapon upgrades, *Lionward* is considered to be a +3 weapon, with subsequent upgrades possibly adding to this level as usual.

Faint abjuration; CL: 9th; *Prerequisites*: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *remove fear*. *Market Price*: 9170 gp; *Weight*: 15 lbs.

“Silver Bell”

This +1 *ghost touch longsword* is the ancestral sword of House Linth in Keoland. Carried by the paladin Averyn Linth, he has seen fit to make it yours for saving the life of Hannah Linth. He asks only a donation equal to its value to the Church of Rao on behalf of the starving masses of Linth. (In game terms, the PC must pay for the item; it is not gifted outright.)

You may upgrade this weapon (*Access: Regional*) with any of the following enhancements, as the Linth family uses its considerable influence in the Kingdom to arrange it: *Bane* (undead only), *merciful*, and *spell storing*.

When within 60’ of any undead, this weapon makes noise that sounds like wind blowing through wind chimes. While Silver Bell need not be in hand, the weapon must have line of effect to the undead to have this take place. This effect can be suppressed with a free action by the wielder.

Moderate conjuration; CL: 9th; *Prerequisites*: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *detect undead*, *plane shift*. *Market Price*: 9000 gp; *Weight*: 3 lbs.

Items for the Adventure Record

Item Access

APL 4-12:

- ❖ *Lionward (Regional; see above)*
- ❖ *Silver Bell (Regional; see above)*

Appendix A:

Members of the House of Linth

Earl Lucius Linth

Description: The Earl is dressed in magnificent, almost decadent, robes made of the sheerest silk of different hues of silver and black not sewn, but woven, in a lattice-like fashion. The Earl is Suel, in his mid-fifties, and is somewhat portly. He has piercing blue eyes. A single silver circlet holds his wispy blond hair neatly in place. He wears little jewelry, but the pieces that you see appear to be of great value. The most notable is an amulet of dark beauty, made of obsidian and studded with tiny black opals.

What he knows: That his daughter is slowly dying, and that she is his only direct heir. Without her, the lands would be ripe for anti-suel rebels to cause strife. His sister has recently found an old spellbook and is studying it, but it is nothing more than the latest in her dabbings. Antoinetta lusts for power, but will never have any in this family.

What he will tell the heroes: Anything that will save the life of his daughter.

What he wants: The safety of his daughter and the continuation of his line.

Countess Katarina Linth

Description: The Countess is a timid looking and fragile woman. She has long wispy blonde hair usually worn up in a tight spiral and watery blue eyes. She wears a holy symbol of Wee Jas around her neck.

What she knows: The Countess has been seeing some of the spirits that have been dredged up by the Nethernight as of late, including Countess Sera. She recognizes Sera from the statuary and fears for the life of Hannah. She knows that Antoinetta has been spending a lot of time in the library, and is starting to think that she and Lucius are carrying on an affair. She fears for her life. She knows Sera's Crypt is on the fourth floor and will admit to having heard noises coming from there in recent weeks.

She also knows that Sera's fetters can offer the heroes some protection from her, but can only point them towards her crypt as a possible starting point to look. She knows about the holy symbol in the shrine but is unaware that it is a fetter. She knows the answer to the shrine riddle. If the heroes are stumped about the location of the fetters, or what the fetters do, Katarina will clue the heroes in as to the possibility of the fetters and the fact that there might be a restless undead spirit causing the troubles.

What she will tell the heroes: Anything and everything. Katarina is a bit unhinged, prone to fits of mumbling and rocking back and forth uncontrollably.

What she wants: The safety of her daughter and nothing more.

Lady Antoinetta Linth

Description: A woman of middling height, Antoinetta is strikingly beautiful, with dark hair and eyes. She moves with sensuality and grace, and the stride of a predator.

What she knows: Hannah is beset by the ghost of Sera Linth. Antoinetta has found Sera's spellbook and studies it so that she may gain the same power Sera had. She also knows that Sera is entombed on the fourth floor and that the crypt was recently disturbed, but not by whom. While praying to Wee Jas, she has seen the holy symbol embedded in the altar suddenly shed light and then shed darkness. She knows that the holy symbol releases from the altar, but has been unable to release it herself.

What she will tell the heroes: Next to nothing. She will laugh away their questions, playing them off, since she is only a guest here. If questioning gets too serious, she will attempt to deflect the questions by making advances on the person (male or female) who is applying the most pressure to her. She will offer to answer questions in private to allay any suspicions.

What she wants: Sera's power, Lucius' love, and the Linth throne. In any order. Hannah's got to die, and these heroes could be trouble.

Lord Averyn Linth

Description: Suel, clean-shaven, with pale skin and light hair. He is dressed in a suit of plate and wears a tabard across his armor bearing a coat of arms of the House of Linth. He is in his middle Twenties, with a wiry build and handsome features.

What he knows: That something evil occasionally stalks the halls of Linth Manor. He has never seen this evil, but he has felt its presence several times. He believes that some kind of spirit threatens Hannah, despite Earl Lucius' protests. He has a premonition that something horrible is going to happen in the foyer, and so he has taken to carrying the ancestral sword of House Linth at all times and lingering there.

What he will tell the heroes: Anything, though he knows little.

What he wants: For the evil that haunts the manse to be stopped.

Lady Hannah Linth

Description: A young wisp of a sixteen year old girl, Hannah is truly sweet and beautiful looking. Fine blonde hair hangs to her shoulders, and her face is lightly freckled. Her eyes are blue, and often appear bloodshot. Her fet and ankles are deeply scarred from her midnight dancing.

What she knows: She sees the ghosts of her family calling her. She dances with a woman every other night, but can never remember anything afterward. She knows that she is more and more tired, and every night she dances she sleeps longer the next day.

What she will tell the Heroes: Nothing of value. She's frightened, spoiled and rich.

What she wants: For all this to stop - and maybe to find a nice dalliance in the process.

Appendix B: New Rules

New Monsters

Banshee (as presented in the *Monster Manual II*)

Medium-Size Undead (Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 26d12 (169 hp)

Initiative: +7

Speed: Fly 80 ft. (good)

AC: 16 (+3 Dex, +3 deflection), touch 16, flat-footed 13

Attacks: Incorporeal touch +16 melee

Damage: Incorporeal touch 1d8/19-20 plus 1d4 Charisma drain

Face/Reach: 5 ft. / 5 ft.

Special Attacks: Charisma drain, horrific appearance, wail

Special Qualities: *Detect living*, incorporeal subtype, SR 28, stunt plants, undead traits

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +19

Abilities: Str --, Dex 17, Con --, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 17

Skills: Balance +5, Hide +32, Jump +2, Knowledge (nature) +32, Knowledge (religion) +32, Listen +33, Search +32, Spot 33, Tumble +32

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fighting, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (incorporeal touch), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Spring Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary, pair or brood (3-4)

Challenge Rating: 17

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: 27-52 HD (Medium-size)

A banshee is the spirit of a strong-willed, selfish individual of a humanoid race. Because of its rage at the loss of its own life, it delights in bringing death to any living creature it encounters.

This creature appears as a translucent image of the form it held in life. With the passage of time, the banshee's image tends to become blurred and indistinct, though the creature remains recognizable as a humanoid.

The very presence of a banshee creates a pall over the landscape. Its ability to stunt the growth of plants combined with its deadly wail eventually reduces the surrounding territory to blasted heath and wasteland. Largely for this reason, many cultures consider a sudden blight upon the land to be an omen of death.

A banshee speaks the languages that it knew in life.

Combat

Banshees hate all living things with an unholy fury, and they readily attack anyone foolish enough to trespass within their territories. A banshee typically uses its horrific appearance to drive off less powerful foes, then employs its howling wail one or more times to damage any intruders that remain. Finally, it finishes off intruders with its Charisma drain in melee. If overmatched, the creature flees into the earth, into a grave-like lair that it maintains beneath the surface.

Charisma Drain (Su): Any individual struck by a banshee must make a Fortitude save (DC 26) or permanently lose 1d4 points of Charisma (or 2d4 points on a critical hit). The banshee heals 5 points of damage (10 on a critical hit) whenever it drains Charisma, gaining any excess as temporary hit points.

Horrific Appearance (Su): Any living creature within 60 feet that views a banshee must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 26) or permanently lose 1d4 points of Strength, 1d4 points of Dexterity and

1d4 points of Constitution. A creature that successfully saves against this effect cannot be affected again by the same banshee's horrific appearance for 24 hours.

Wail (Su): During the night, a banshee can loose a deadly wail. This attack can slay up to eighteen living creatures within a 30-foot spread centered on the banshee, or within a 60 foot cone extending from the banshee, at the creature's option. A successful Fortitude save (DC 26) negates this effect. Once a banshee wails, it must wait 1d4 rounds before it can do so again, and it can wail no more than three times per day.

Detect Living (Sp): This natural ability functions like the *commune with nature* spell, except that it detects only living creatures and the range is one-half mile. The banshee can use *detect living* up to three times per day.

Incorporeal Subtype: A banshee can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities. The creature has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source, except for force effects or attacks made with ghost touch weapons. A banshee can pass through solid objects, but not force effects, at will. Its attacks ignore natural armor, armor and shields, but deflection bonuses and force effects work normally against them. A banshee always moves silently and cannot be heard with a Listen check if it does not wish to be.

Stunt Plants (Su): Once per day, a banshee can stunt all normal plants within a one-half mile radius. This ability otherwise functions like the stunt version of a *diminish plants* spell (caster level 18th).

Undead Traits: A banshee is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. It is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. A banshee cannot be raised, and resurrection works only if it is willing. The creature has darkvision (60 ft. range).

Player Handout One

Attention Adventurers!

The Lion Throne calls out for your aid! The Earldom of Linth requires those stout of heart and strong of back to guide grain shipments to the city of Dredstadt. Prestige and rewards will be yours upon successful completion. Those interested should report to any captain of the guard in Nirole Dra for assignment.

Via Virtus!

Player Handout Two

Brother,

Your orders are as follows:

You are to travel to Niole Dra with all due haste and report to Charitable Jackal Sigmund Volson, where you will travel with a grain caravan to the city of Dredstadt. The blight that has struck the Earldom of Linth has pushed our brethren within the Earldom beyond their limits to render aid. As such, it is vital that your caravan suffer no ill events. Remember that the lives of many people are at stake. Protect the people and the Earl at all costs.

In Arms,

Loyal Banshee Lugh Narthistle

Player Handout Three

Excerpts from the journal of Countess Sera Linth

...The Keogh spread across my family's lands like a plague. I have watched since the days of my youth as they whittle and whittle at our fortunes. We lose status at court, reduced to a minor house, and these filthy beggars are to blame. By Dalt, I will find the key to reversing our fortunes. I will make them pay, and they will kiss my feet for it.

I have left the clergy of Wee Jas. I am finding the binding of the Gods to be too restrictive. I still pay homage to the dread lady, but my holy symbol no longer adorns my chest.

(Several Pages Later)

My training in the Art progresses well. Magister Henren says he has never seen a student progress through the mundane work as quickly as I have. He has no idea what drives me.

(Several Pages Later)

...Cleaning Henren's library, I found the diary of one of the Red Lion mages, a court wizard of some type I've never heard of. It started off lucidly but devolved into rambling rather quickly. "Gold beyond counting" exists in a sealed crypt near Niolo Dra, but it is filled with demons and their worshippers...

...Believe I've located the crypt. Already preparations are underway to mount a small expedition.

(Several Pages Later)

...Found the crypt, as described. The Red Lion mage had sealed the entrance, but I was able to use his notes to dispel the warding. Inside were the animated remains of some type of cultist. They had unholy symbols of some serpent god. The diety must have been busy when I opened the tomb, because his minions were destroyed easily enough by my summoned elementals. More worrisome was the she-devil they had managed to trap inside with them. Fortunately I won out, and my servants have returned the treasures in the crypt to my estates. There are many tomes I have recovered that bear studying, and the most unusual necklace. It radiates the most powerful magic I have ever felt, and I cannot fathom its purpose.

(Several Pages Later)

Success! My laborious translation of the tomes from the crypt has borne fruit. I have discovered a powerful spell which I believe I can use to cause a plague upon the Keogh parasites. The land will grow fallow and their flesh will rot on their bones. I will let them die by the thousands, and then I will save them only to become their master.

Vengeance is a dish best served cold.

(Several Pages Later)

The spell is cast. The drain was more than I could bear. This buzzing in my head will not cease. Have I gone too far? No. No, I must doubt now. Is that a voice?

(Several Pages Later)

Our strength has returned, but slowly. The Keogh bodies pile up and the Epidemic spreads. The King searches for an answer, but only we have it. Tomorrow we will meet with a council and we will offer the cure.

(Several Pages Later)

We are victorious! The Keogh have sworn fealty to us. In the setting sun of our own hall we received the parasites and we took their oaths as they offered us their most important possessions as tribute. Farmers gave tools, scholars gave pen and ink, and the holy men gave their icons. Symbolic and petty, yes, but they need to know that they only thing they need is us.

The plague recedes and they bless us. We are at peace.

(Several Pages Later)

We are unable to think. Sleep eludes us. Our thoughts are jumbled. Baron Prisper of Dylwitch has sent his regards, and invited us to stay there for a spell. Perhaps the burden of leading has gotten to us. We have accepted his offer.

(Several Pages Later)

It is lovely here, and we wish we had come earlier. Something vexes us, however. We have sent several letters to Linth, requesting our spellbook, staff and holy necklace of Wee Jas. Nothing has arrived. Do they not understand how important these things are to us? We will flay the skin from their bones and make a fine stew after we return.

Player Handout Four

From *The Reconstruction of Linth Manor*

...AND AFTER THE DEATH OF THE COUNTESS, HER COUSIN RENA, DRUID OF THE HOOL, SAW FIT TO REMAKE SECTIONS OF THE MANOR. THE ROOM THAT BECAME HER PRIZE WAS THE ROOM WHERE THE COUNTESS STUDIED HER MAGICS LONG AND HARD. THUS IT WAS THAT THE CIRCLES WERE RETURNED TO THE NATURAL ORDER, AND BALANCE RESTORED ON THE GROUNDS OF THE MANSE.

AFTER THAT DAY, NEVER AGAIN DID A CREATURE OF INFERNAL ORIGIN TROUBLE THE MANSE. RENA'S WARDS WERE SUCH THAT THE MAGIC OF THESE CREATURES WERE UNABLE TO PENETRATE INTO OUR REALM.

Player Handout Five

The following is from a primer of the Linth family histories.

“...the dark times our family underwent were reversed through the persistence and might of one woman, Countess Sera Linth, Defender of the Throne and Shield of Linth. It was she that bent her powers to defeating the Emerald Pox that was laying waste to the lands. The people were so overjoyed that they pledged fealty to her and her family forever more. The Linth family was escalated back to a place of honor near the right hand of the Lion Throne.

Whispers of marriage with house Neheli passed around during those times, but they never came to be. It was feared that the Linth family would grow too strong and attempt to wrest the throne from the monarchs, but we are an honorable family, and we know that the right paw of the Lion is as feared as the maw.”

Player Handout Six

The following is from a small volume of the Linth family histories.

“...One of the greatest tragedies to befall our family came that dark day which became known as the Night of Long Lances. A Knight of the Watch was invited into our manse, and he came with humility and respect, but he also came with malice and treachery.

The young Knight, a filthy Oerdian by birth, entered our estate and kneeled before his lord and master. He said the correct words, mouthed the platitudes, biding his time. Finally, he was introduced to the rest of the family, including the young Lady Amber, who was to be Countess.

Filled by whatever betrayal his gods demanded, the Knight bowed to the firstborn daughter, drew his greatsword and struck her head from her shoulders with a single blow. She died on the stairs of our manse, and her blood has never come clean.

Enraged, the house guard swept out into the lands and began the slaughter of the Oerdians. Hundreds died that night, in an act of vengeance. Since that day, all Knights of the Watch serving within the borders of Linth have been Suel.

Player Handout Seven

The Prophecy of Azmarender

This work is hastily written and in a cramped hand.

In a dark house stained with Oeridian blood
Two women carry the fate of the valley
The first by hate, consumed and was consumed
Beneath the fields, from a devil's womb
From within the darkness, it is darker still
She brought the artifact that sealed her doom
A curse was placed upon her house
The next Countess will slay the Lion
She brings the Empire to ruin and flame
Keogh against Suel, peasant against lord
The curse ends only with the house.

Some notes in a more relaxed script follows:

Milo Astra – Renegade Knight of the Watch and would-be killer of Estren the Minstrel. Prophecy seems to relate to our family. But how did Milo simply walk away from the Knighthood? How did he know about an ancient prophecy of the Knights' founder when he was a turncoat-turned-assassin? And why is it that even Lugh tells me he knows nothing of the man? I hope Astra enjoys his new place of honor in our home...

Player Handout Eight

The History of the Red Knight, Venomous Adder Nils Perris

As told in A Young Linth's Primer

...And the Red Knight Nils Perris, Venomous Adder in the Knights of the Watch, returned from his quest to slay the One-Eyed Drearbeast Kellen. Laden with jewels and gold from the beasts' lair, and also with a dark blade of mysterious origin, he passed through Niole Dra, where he learned of the illness of the Earl of Linth.

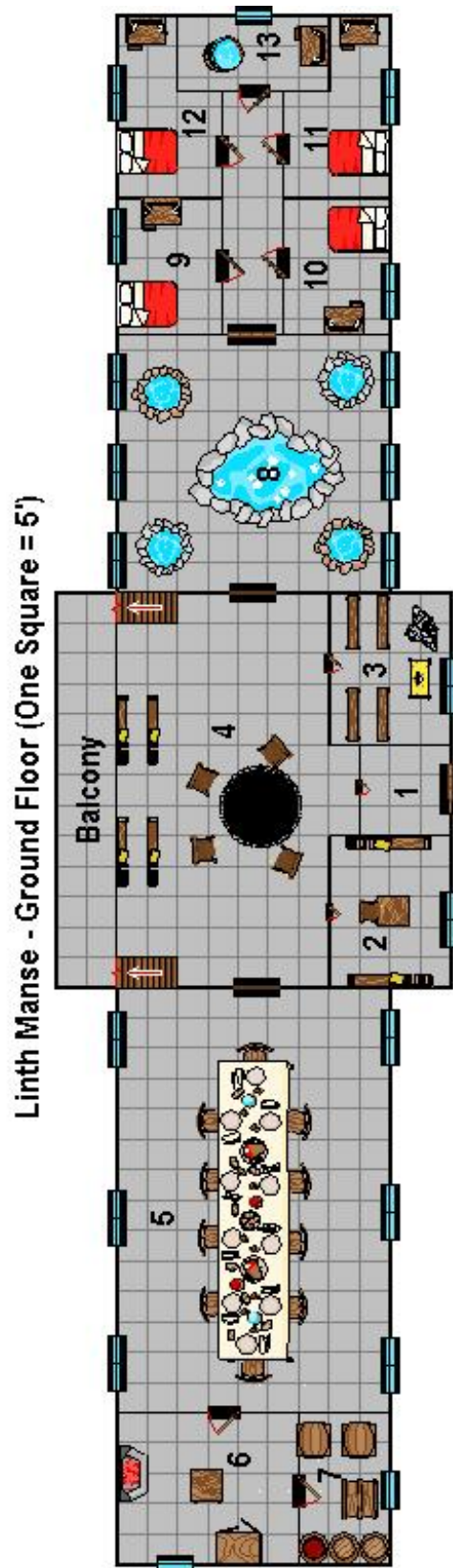
Moved by forces he did not understand, the knight traveled to the Linth manse. In an act of betrayal, he struck down the daughter of the Earl with the sword named Kinstealer....

Appendix A: NPC Location Grid

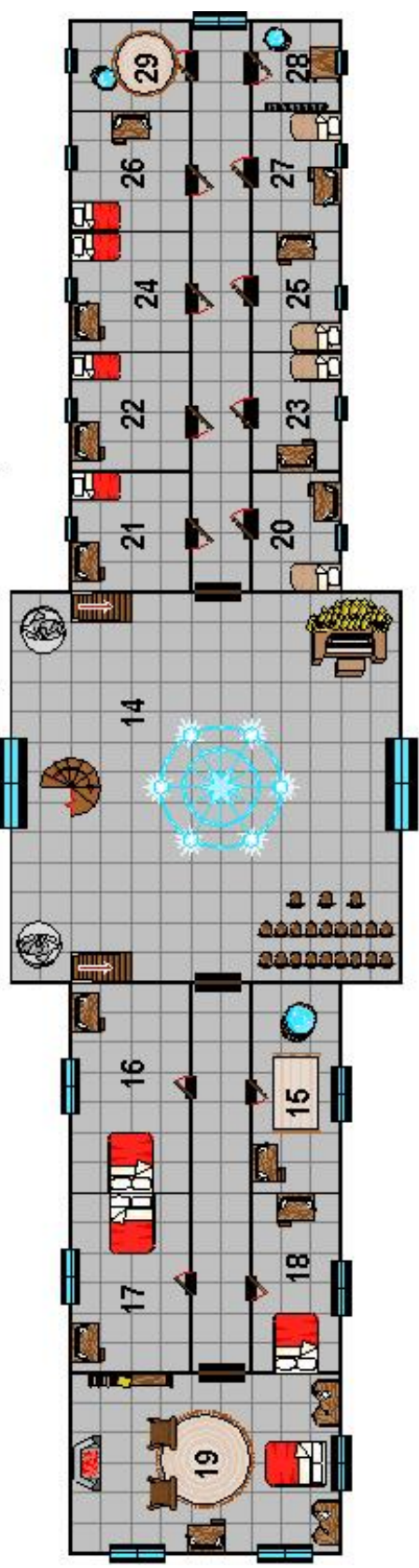
(Note: Subject to change based on PC actions)

TIME	Lucius	Katarina	Antoinetta	Averyn	Hannah	Celestina	Harlan the Chamberlain	Winfred the Butler	Elias the Chef
6PM	His Study	Master Bedroom	Her bedroom	Parlor	Her Bedchamber	Her Bedchamber		Exterior grounds	Kitchen
SUNSET									
6:15									
6:30	Observatory		Library				Kitchen, cleaning		
6:45									
7PM	Antoinetta's Bedchamber		Her Bedchamber		Library	Kitchen, Cleaning			
7:15									
7:30									Pantry
7:45	Master Bedchamber		Library – Sees Maressa and leaves					Grand Ballroom	
8PM		Shrine	Atrium			Guest Bedchambers, Cleaning	Guest Bedchambers, cleaning		
8:15									
8:30	Atrium	Master Bedchamber		Exterior Grounds – Notices Guards are all gone. Finds Lucius and alerts him.	Her Bedchamber				His bedroom
8:45								His Bedroom	
9PM		Library		Grand Ballroom	Grand Ballroom				
9:15									
9:30									
9:45									
10PM		Master Bedchamber							
10:15									
10:30	Responding to Hannah		Responding to Hannah	Responding to Hannah	Her Bedchamber. Screams as her animals animate.	Responding to Hannah	Responding to Hannah		
10:45						Cleaning Hannah's Bedchamber	Cleaning Hannah's Bedchamber		
11PM	Master Bedchamber		Her Bedchamber	Parlor	Parlor, staying near Averyn				
11:15									
11:30									
11:45									
Midnight!	Grand Ballroom	Grand Ballroom	Grand Ballroom	Grand Ballroom	Grand Ballroom	Fleeing the Manse	Fleeing the Manse	Fleeing the Manse	Fleeing the Manse

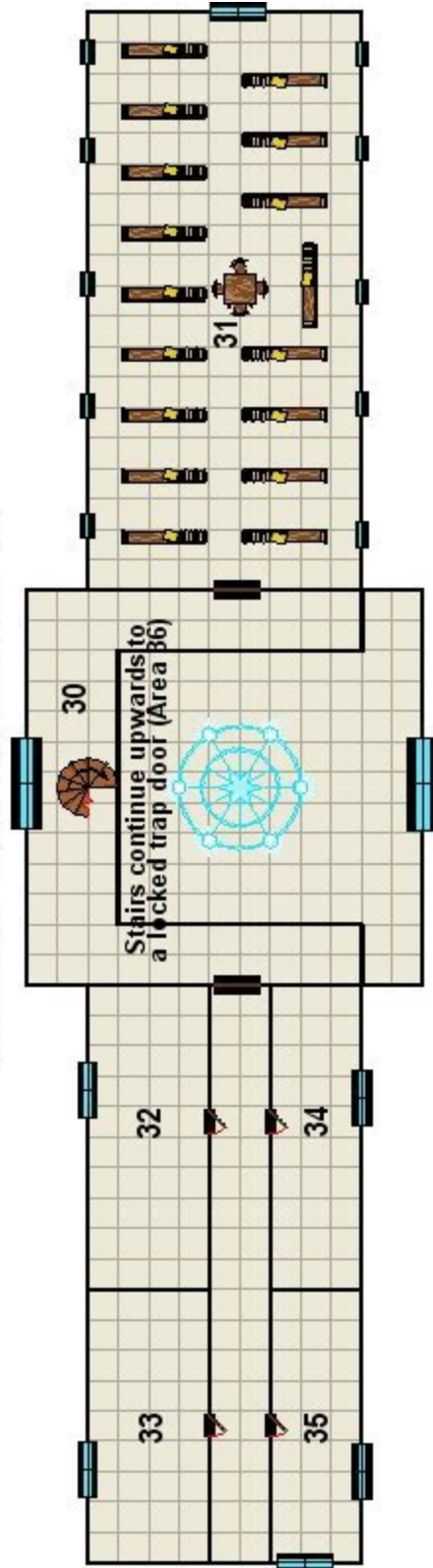
Appendix B: Maps (Distribute to players)



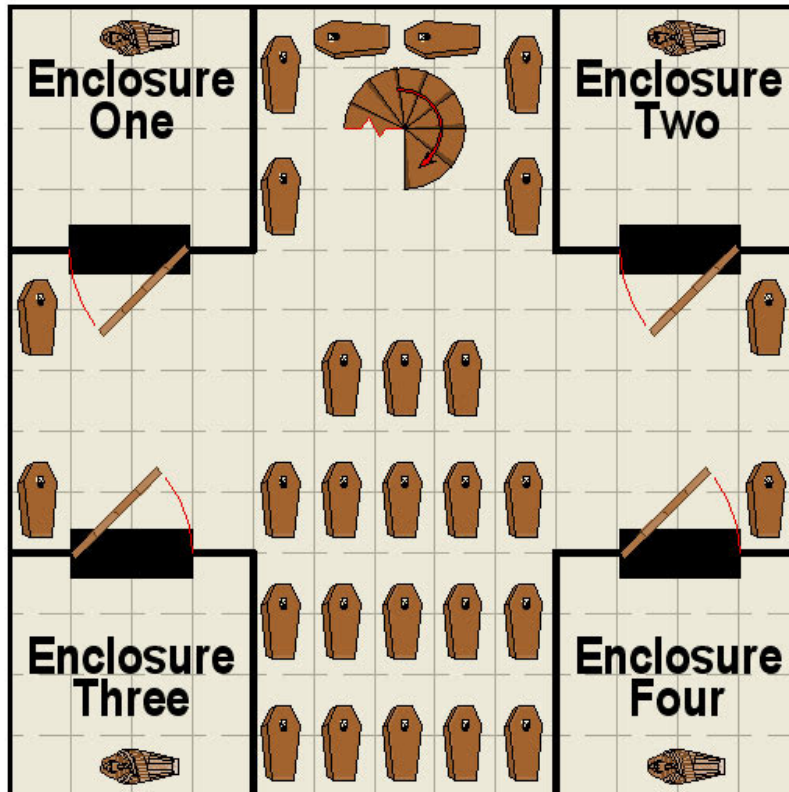
Linth Manse - Second Floor (One Square = 5')



Linth Manse - Third Floor (One Square = 5')



Linth Manse - Fourth Floor (Area 36 - Roof Crypt)



Appendix C

Common *divination* questions and answers

Is Hannah Linth possessed? No. (She isn't at *present*; a question asking if she has been possessed *while dancing* will return a "Yes.")

Is Hannah Linth associated with the Prophecy of Azmarender? Yes.

Is Hannah Linth one of the women mentioned in the Prophecy of Azmarender? Yes.

Is the artifact mentioned in the Prophecy of Azmarender here within the Manse? No answer. (Remember that the *Nethernight* cancels divination spells relating to itself)

Will Hannah Linth die at midnight? Possibly. (This depends wholly on the actions of the PCs.)

Is Hannah Linth cursed? No. (She hasn't taken possession of the *Nethernight* as yet. If the same question is posed with regards to Lucius, the answer will be "Yes." If a subsequent question asks *what* is the cause of his possession, the answer will be "No Reply" – the *Nethernight* again shielding itself.)

Is the "lion" mentioned in the Prophecy King Kimbertos Skotti? No.

Is Hannah Linth's condition tied to the blight? No.

Will curing Hannah Linth end the blight? No.

Is Maressa Linth / Antoinetta Linth / Katarina Linth one of the women mentioned in the Prophecy of Azmarender? No.

Must all of House Linth die to end the curse? No.

Is Hannah speaking to anyone besides herself? Yes.

Critical Event Summary (MEPACon Fall 2004)

Please complete and return to the Keoland Triad ASAP.

Did the PCs manage to save Hannah Linth? If not, and she was not slain by the banshee, please elaborate as to the reason for her demise.

Which of the following Fetters (if any) were recovered by the PCs? (Circle all that apply)

Holy Symbol

Journal

Spellbook

Staff

Did any of the PCs use Kinsteler in combat?

In your estimation, did the PCs recover **all**, **most**, **some** or **none** of the “dirty laundry” available about House Linth in the module (journal entries, NPC interrogation, etc). (Circle one of the bolded words)

Were any PCs at the table members of the Knights of the Watch, Knights of the Malagari (Darkwatch) or Knights of the March? If so, please list their player name, character name, RPGA #, and the *player's* home region (i.e. to what region's Triad are they were or are turning their Reporting Forms).