



PREVIEW DRAFT v2.0

This document is literally my draft copy of the Alexandrian Remix of *Dragon Heist*. It's released exclusively to my Patreon backers, warts and all.

Not all of the graphics have been included that will appear on the Alexandrian. You'll also spot lots of places where I've indicated that, for example, links should be included.

I have included the necessary maps.

You will still require a copy of *Dragon Heist* to make full use of this document.

My primary purpose in releasing this in such an unfinished state is that I know many people are already running *Dragon Heist* and want to convert the campaign over to this remix. Many of them simply can't wait any longer for the material to serialize on the website.

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UPDATE 2.0: Minor revisions throughout to fix continuity and structural issues. Major additions are Part 5 and Part 6. Still remaining to be completed:

- Faction Reports on the Grand Game
- Part 7: How the Remix Works
- Addendums

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 1: THE VILLAINS

Recently I reviewed *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist*, the most recent campaign supplement for *Dungeons & Dragons* from Wizards of the Coast. That review highlighted a number of places where, unfortunately, I felt that *Dragon Heist* came up a little short in terms of its design. Since writing that review, I've had several people ask — based in part, perhaps, on my previous experience remixing the *Keep on the Shadowfell* and *Eternal Lies* — if I would “fix” *Dragon Heist* for them. [ADD LINKS]

Short answer: Yes.

Unlike *Hoard of the Dragon Queen* [LINK], for which I received similar requests [LINK], *Dragon Heist* has a lot of really great material in it. Material that's worth bringing to your gaming table. The primary goal of this remix is, in fact, to make sure that you can bring even MORE of this material to your gaming table than the published campaign allows, and to re-structure the material in a way that will make it easy and rewarding for you to run the campaign.

With that being said: If you're expecting something as expansive as my remix of *Eternal Lies* or as mechanically-oriented as my remix of *Keep on the Shadowfell*, I'm afraid you'll be disappointed. My goal with *Dragon Heist* is more narrowly focused, although it will perhaps serve as an exemplar of how I often rework published material in order to create a richer, more dynamic, and (importantly) more robust scenario.

DESIGN GOALS

In remixing *Dragon Heist*, I have three primary goals.

First, I want to make it a **HEIST**. Or, more accurately, multiple heists.

Second, I want to eliminate the original “pick a villain” gimmick and instead restructure the campaign to feature **ALL OF THE VILLAINS**. The goal is to get all of the factions interested in the Vault competing with each other, and then thrust the PCs into the middle of that situation, bouncing around and causing all kinds of chaos.

Third, we'll be doing a general **FIX-UP JOB**. This will include an attempt to clean up the broken continuity in the published campaign and also an effort to make the campaign's scenario structure more robust (by applying the Three Clue Rule [LINK], for example).

Because I don't want to get too consumed with minutia, however, this final point will not take the form of attempting to track down every single continuity error in the scenario. Instead, I'll be looking to perform a broader reorganization of *Dragon Heist*'s back story that will hopefully rearrange its diverse parts into a coherent whole, and then trust the DM to resolve the local continuity appropriately using these broad reference documents as their touchstone.

Even if you don't own *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist*, I hope you'll find some points of interest in my design notes and other discussion. But it probably goes without saying that in order to actually *use* this remix, you'll need to own a copy of the book. [LINK]

We'll begin with the villains.

THE GRAND GAMES

Periodically throughout *Waterdeep's* history the byzantine factions of the city — or some significant subset thereof — will become collectively fixated upon some objective. Thus will begin a Grand Game.

Sometimes the goal of a Grand Game will be arcane. Often it is clandestine, although quite public struggles are not unknown. (On no less than three occasions the Grand Game has revolved around the appointment of the Open Lord.) Whatever the case, the intense rivalries of the Grand Game give birth to all forms of subterfuge, covert activities, deception, and intrigue.

This is very much the case with the current quest for Dagult Neverember's vault. Obliquely referred to by many players of the Grand Game as Neverember's Enigma, the truth of the vault was sought even before the players realized it *was* a vault. At first, it was merely known that the disgraced and ousted Neverember was keeping some momentous secret, and those involved in the Game yearned to discover what the former Open Lord of *Waterdeep* was hiding.

When the vast scope of his embezzlement — a half million gold dragons! — came to light, however, many intuited the truth behind Neverember's Enigma and its pursuit became even more frenzied.

In terms of the *Dragon Heist* campaign, we will focus on five factions participating in the Grand Game:

- Xanathar, a beholder crime boss
- the Zhentarim, a network of assassins and mercenaries
- the Cassalanter, a demon-worshipping noble family
- Jarlaxle Baenre, a drow swashbuckler who is the secret lord of a city, leader of the dark elf mercenary group Bregan D'Aerthe, and has surreptitiously come to *Waterdeep* as the captain of a traveling circus
- the Gralhunds, a minor noble family who is way out of their league

For each of these factions, we will want to know:

- What they're planning to do with the gold (which is largely, with the exception of our revised version of the Gralhunds, dealt with in the original book)

- How they became involved with Neverember's Enigma and what their current strategy for pursuing the Grand Game is
- How the PCs first interact with them and become aware of their involvement in the Grand Game

DESIGN NOTES

The concept of the "Grand Game" was created to give a convenient label to the proceedings. As the PCs are exposed to this label, it will help them conceptualize what they have become a part of. It also elevates the hunt for the vault, tying it into the long history of the city and the rivalry of its factions. As the PCs make the choice to join the Grand Game, it will be clear to them that they have crossed a threshold and become part of something larger than anything they have taken part in before. (And thus they themselves have become more important.)

The terminology of "Neverember's Enigma" is deliberately cryptic. It allows the participants of the Grand Game to speak in code while wrapping their words in elliptical euphemisms, creating a sense of mystery which will invite the PCs to drive forward and discover the truth of what's happening.

XANATHAR

When Xanathar had the *Stone of Golorr* stolen from the Palace of Waterdeep, he only knew that he was stealing an object of great importance to Lord Neverember (i.e., Neverember's Enigma). When he later learned about the missing dragons, he believed that he was now in possession of the whole key to Neverember's Vault. And he was perfectly happy with that. You don't need to actually *hold* the gold if you're the one who controls its location.

What he didn't know was that the *Stone of Golorr* had been blinded by Lord Neverember, who removed its three Eyes. (More on this in Part 4 of the remix.)

Then the Zhentarim came to him with one of the Eyes and said, "We have two different parts of this puzzle. We'd like to make a deal." Xanathar was enraged at both their presumption and his own folly, slew the Zhentarim envoys, and took the Eye they had brought to him.

Thus began the gang war between the Zhentarim and Xanathar. Xanathar was convinced that the Zhentarim had the other Eyes. (They didn't. Although that changes shortly after *Dragon Heist* begins; see below.) The Zhentarim, for their part, wanted both vengeance AND their Eye back (and the *Stone of Golorr* itself for good measure).

The gang war, in turn, became the point at which everyone who knows what's *really* going on in Waterdeep (or likes to think they do) became aware that a Grand Game was in progress. In the process, Dagult Neverember became aware that it was Xanathar who had stolen the *Stone of Golorr* and he reassigns Dalakhar to infiltrate Xanathar's organization and steal the *Stone* back.

ZHENTARIM

The Zhentarim were originally founded as a mercenary force by the wizard Manshoon, but they've been a fractured organization ever since the Manshoon Wars, when multiple clones of Manshoon warred for supremacy.

Most of Manshoon's clones were destroyed during the Manshoon Wars, but yet another has recently returned to Waterdeep (claiming, as they all do, to be the one true Manshoon). When he peeled off a large hunk of the local Zhentarim network that had been established by the Doom Raiders (see p. 198 of *Dragon Heist*), he became aware that Lord Neverember had used the local Zhentarim's resources to embezzle hundreds of thousands of gold dragons from the government.

Manshoon wanted to know where that money has gone. He knew that Neverember didn't actually have it in his possession, so he sent agents to infiltrate Neverember's household in Neverwinter to find out. Those agents weren't able to fully ascertain where the gold was, but they did identify the Eye as the key to getting it. They stole the Eye from the Protector's Enclave and brought it to Manshoon, who through a combination of divinations and other espionage efforts eventually connected it to the *Stone of Golorr* which Xanathar had stolen.

CHAPTER 1 – A FRIEND IN NEED: After he lost his Eye to Xanathar, Manshoon needed to get back in the game. His agents eventually concluded that Neverember's son, Renaer, might have another of the Eyes. They were right, although Renaer didn't know it: His father had given him an elaborate, ivory mourning locket in honor of his mother. The Eye was hidden inside it.

The full dynamic in the first chapter, therefore, is this:

- Zhentarim agents snatch Renaer Neverember and his friend Floon Blagmaar.
- While questioning Renaer in Area Z5, they realize that the Eye is in the mourning locket and take the locket from Renaer.
- Renaer is hauled back down to Area Z2 and tied up next to Floon. Upstairs, the Zhentarim break open the locket (it can still be found in Area Z5), remove the Eye, and give it to a courier to carry to Manshoon.
- Floon is then hauled upstairs for questioning (the Zhentarim want to see if he might be worth a ransom).
- Xanathar's agents storm the warehouse. They immediately find "the prisoner" (i.e., Floon), assume he's Renaer, and several of their agents hustle him out to

their sewer hideout. Meanwhile, Renaer takes advantage of the confusion downstairs to slip his bonds and hide in Area Z2.

- Xanathar’s agents do a perfunctory sweep of the warehouse and then take off, leaving the kenku behind to kill any Zhents who show up.

Renaer will be able to tell the PCs that he was questioned by the Zhents about the half million dragons his father stole from the city; then they ripped off a locket that was very precious to him. If they find the locket and see the (now empty) secret compartment inside it, Renaer can also tell them that he had no idea that the compartment existed or what was stored inside it.

DESIGN NOTES

The opening scenario thus introduces the PCs to both the Zhentarim and Xanathar. It should also become clear that they’re both interested in the money Dagult Neverember stole, but the exact nature of what’s being fought over (i.e., the Stone of Golorr) should remain a mystery at this juncture.

The other thing we’re doing here is cleaning up one of the scenario’s major continuity errors: Why was Renaer kidnapped? At this point in the timeline, the Zhentarim already know that Xanathar has the Stone of Golorr and that the Stone is the only way of finding the vault. Questioning him “about the whereabouts of the Stone of Golorr”, as the adventure suggests, makes no sense.

JARLAXLE BAENRE

As *Dragon Heist* begins, Jarlaxle is unaware of the *Stone of Golorr* or the Grand Game which is being played. His current agenda, as described in the campaign, is to convince the leaders of Waterdeep to support Luskan’s bid to join the Lords’ Alliance. Freshly arrived in his cover identity as Captain Zord of the Sea Maidens Faire, Jarlaxle is coordinating and ramping up his local intelligence operations.

NIMBLEWRIGHTS: One of Jarlaxle’s main objectives right now is the sale of nimblewrights. Built by the technomancers of Luskan, he’s brought several dozen of these constructs with him and is selling them at surprisingly compelling prices.

Why? Because he’s actually harvesting data from them. In Jarlaxle’s stateroom onboard the *Scarlet Marpenoth* (Area U4, see p. 143) there is a specialized *crystal ball* that allows him to look out through the eyes of any nimblewright and even review what they’ve seen. (We might think of this as a “recording”, but Jarlaxle refers to it as a record of witness.)

After the PCs identify that a nimblewright is responsible for the *fireball* in Trollskull Alley, they’ll be able to trace the local nimblewrights back to “Captain Zord”. If they

Speak with Jarlaxle about the nimblewright they're seeking, he'll first want to know why they're looking for it. Following up on whatever the PCs tell him, his agents will discover the hunt for the *Stone of Golorr* (or he'll simply review the record of witness for the appropriate nimblewright and discover the Gralhunds' schemes).

Alternatively, the PCs might decide not to talk to him and instead sneak in and steal his records of sale (or access the records of witness in the *crystal ball* for themselves). Which is great because, bang, you've got a heist pointed at Jarlaxle's ship.

DESIGN NOTES

If the PCs perform a heist on the nimblewright proprietor instead of speaking with Jarlaxle, it's very possible that Jarlaxle won't become aware of the Grand Game and his agents will not become involved in later stages of the scenario. That's fine, though, because we've already gotten maximum bang for our buck from the player-initiated heist, right?

Full details on how the nimblewright-focused investigation is structured will be found in Part 5 of the remix.

CASSALANTERS

The Cassalanters were actually interested in Neverember's Enigma even before they knew that 500,000 dragons were on the line: Lord Neverember was not the first person to hide secrets within the *Stone of Golorr*, and through their demonic researches the Cassalanters have identified a number of other lucrative and powerful lines of inquiry they would like to pursue (see Part 6 of the remix).

They discovered that Neverember had hidden one of the Eyes in the crypt of Lady Alethea Brandath, Renaer's mother. They went to the crypt and extracted the Eye from the magical wards Dagult Neverember had placed around it. (Ironically, they were literally standing on top of the Vault itself and didn't know it.)

When the Cassalanters learned about the embezzled gold, however, their priorities quickly shifted: They saw an opportunity to save their children from the pact they had made with Asmodeus.

A PLEA FOR HELP: After the explosion, during the time that they're investigating the nimblewrights, the PCs are contacted by the Cassalanters, who request an audience. The Cassalanters' own agents were in Trollskull Alley that day because they, too, were tracking the *Stone*, so they know that Dalakhar was trying to bring the *Stone* to the PCs.

When the PCs arrive at the Cassalanter estate:

- They are given an opportunity to “accidentally” meet the Cassalanter’s children, who come running into the Entrance Hall (C1) while the PCs are waiting.
- Lady Cassalanter comes out personally to gather the PCs from the Entrance Hall and shoos the children away. She leads the PCs to the Reading Room (Area C4), where they can look out over the Butterfly Garden (Area C25). The children have scampered through the mudroom and are playing out there now. (Make sure to mention the black dragon head mounted on the wall of the room.)
- Lady Cassalanter introduces her husband and they tell the PCs a modified version of their plight: The twins were cursed at their birth by Asmodean cultists to lose their souls on their ninth birthday. The Cassalanter’s have discovered a ritual which can save them, but it requires them to sacrifice “one shy of a million gold coins”. They are quite rich, but even in leveraging everything they own they still can’t raise that monstrous sum. If they could get their hands on Neverember’s ill-gotten gains, though... Will the PCs please help them?
- And then, of course, Lady Cassalanter turns to gaze wistfully at her children frolicking with the butterflies.

Obviously they don’t tell the PCs that the ritual also involves killing 99 people. (Unless they have some reason to think that the PCs would think that to be a great idea.) They don’t technically need *all* the money, and are willing to cut the PCs in on 10% of it or agree to return the surplus funds to the city.

THE FEAST OF LEIRUIN: If the PCs agree to help and succeed in delivering the gold to the Cassalanter’s, they receive invitations to the feast where Ammalia poisons 99 guests in the garden pavilion and the final ritual is performed.

You may be tempted to have the Cassalanter’s betray the PCs by having them be among the 99, but I actually recommend the opposite: If the PCs have delivered as promised, the Cassalanter’s are more than pleased with their work and are looking forward to a long and prosperous friendship with them. They’re invited to feast in the Banquet Hall (Area C15) where all the non-sacrificial guests are celebrating.

If the PCs haven’t discovered the Cassalanter’s true motives, it will be far more effective for them to be horrified by their implication in the mass murder.

DESIGN NOTES

As far as I can tell, Renaer’s mother has never been given a first name, so I’ve provided one. If I’m in error on this (I haven’t, for example, read the novels the Neverembers appear in) please let me know.

Note that everything the Cassalanter’s tell the PCs is true... from a certain point of view.

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 1B: OTHER FACTIONS

Moving beyond the major villains, the Grand Game also features the participation of any number of other factions (including the PCs).

GRALHUNDS

The Gralhunds are a minor faction (at least compared to the four main villains) involved in the Grand Game. They simply hope to obtain the Vault for themselves, and use its riches to elevate their position in Waterdeep's high society. (As described on p. 213, the Gralhunds believe that Lady Yalah should have been elevated to the Masked Lords years ago following the events in the novel *Death Masks* [LINK].)

Many dismiss the Gralhunds as petty schemers, but the truth is that they have had to be clever and conniving in order to punch above their weight-class in Waterdeep's labyrinthine politics. Even now, as they play the Grand Game, they are struggling to compete with organizations that are far larger and have far more resources.

Thinking outside of the box, they embedded agents in Renaer Neverember's household months ago. Because Renaer was estranged from his father, they knew it was a long-shot, but it paid off: The agents spotted Dalakhar's surveillance of Renaer and identified him as an agent of Lord Neverember. When Dalakhar was abruptly pulled off of that assignment, the agents followed a hunch, followed up, and discovered he had ended up in Xanathar's organization (presumably still on orders from Lord Neverember). The Gralhunds didn't know that Xanathar held the *Stone of Golorr*, but when it was stolen they were among the first to suspect (and then know) that Dalakhar was responsible.

THE NIMBLEWRIGHT: Two days after Dalakhar stole the *Stone*, the Gralhunds located him and dispatched their newly acquired nimblewright to find him. In Trollskull Alley, the nimblewright uses a *fireball* spell to kill Dalakhar and the Zhentarim agents trailing him. The nimblewright then grabs the *Stone of Golorr* from Dalakhar's corpse and flees the scene, returning to the Gralhund Villa with his prize (see Part 2).

DESIGN NOTE

The key decision here was to simplify the Gralhund back story. This quickly eliminates a whole slew of continuity errors from the campaign and simplifies a rather convoluted intrigue that the players are unlikely to ever fully fathom. But we've also simultaneously increased the scope of the Grand Game (by establishing that there are numerous minor factions all wrapped up in the intrigue) and given ourselves the opportunity to dynamically increase the number of factions involved in the Gralhund Villa sequence (see Part 2).

OTHER MINOR FACTIONS

OPEN LORD: The Open Lord of Waterdeep isn't exactly a "minor" faction, but Laeral Silverhand is considerably behind the curve in the current Grand Game. She knows that Lord Neverember embezzled 500,000 dragons from the city, but as *Dragon Heist* begins she is under the belief that he already has the money in Neverwinter. She has agents working to recover it there, but little hope of succeeding (as she believes it has likely already been laundered into Neverember's expansive plans for rebuilding and expanding Neverwinter). She has heard rumors of Neverember's Enigma, but has yet to connect that with the missing dragons, and is also unaware of the *Stone of Golorr* (although she knows that a powerful artifact was stolen from the palace during the confused time period when Neverember was being ousted from power).

The most likely avenue for that to change — and potentially change rapidly — is through information blabbed to the City Watch. This could happen as early as Scenario 1 (depending on exactly what Renaer and/or the PCs report to the watch), but it's quite possible for the Open Lord to *never* fully twig to what's happening.

THE UNSEEN: James Introcaso, one of the original designers for *Dragon Heist*, wrote a supplement for the campaign called *Unseen Waterdeep* [LINK]. It includes a new villain for the campaign — a half-doppelganger, half-illithid hybrid running a small gang of shapechangers who wants the gold in order to fund bribes to discover the identities of the Masked Lords (who he intends to assassinate and replace with his shapechangers).

If you want to crank up the byzantine complexities of the Grand Game by adding in more villainous factions, the Unseen are a great plug-and-play option for that. I'm not going to discuss them at great length, but:

- Consider introducing the Unseen by having them send a doppelganger disguised as a friend or ally of the PCs to politely pump them for information. (They may also be targeting other factions with the same tactic. Their goal is to quickly play catch-up in the Grand Game.)
- I would avoid adding the Unseen to the Gralhund Villa sequence (see Part 2). Partly to keep that complexity of the sequence under control, but mostly because adding them a little later will create the feeling that the Grand Game is attracting more attention and the stakes are ratcheting up.
- However, if the PCs have staged a successful heist on Jarlaxle's ship without tipping him off about Neverember's Enigma, then the Unseen can very easily slip in and fill that vacuum in any sequence where I discuss Bregan D'Aerthe's involvement.

DESIGN NOTES

The Unseen also make a convenient exemplar for how other factions of your own design can be added to the campaign. Note that their method of introduction to the campaign is via a unique vector: The Zhentarim have kidnapped people. Cassalanter asks the PCs for help (perhaps in exchange for

a percentage). The PCs have to ask Jarlaxle for help. The Gralhunds launched a violent assault. The Unseen's introduction comes via social subterfuge and deceit. Similarly, the Unseen are also capable of deploying tactics that the other factions can't. If you're adding a new faction, try to make sure they're bringing something new to the table, and not just rehashing what the current factions already provide.

BONNIE'S DOPPELGANGERS / THE BLACK VIPER: These aren't really factions. They're small, independent operators who almost certainly lack the resources to go up against the big players. (Of course, the same thing could be said of the PCs.)

Whatever the case may be, Bonnie's Doppelgangers and the Black Viper are good examples of small-time players who can get swept up in the Grand Game.

- They might interfere with heists. (Either pursuing the same objective or just coincidentally breaking into the same establishment in pursuit of some other item of value.)
- They might be hired by NPCs to accomplish any number of ends. But, in particular, they might seek to steal the *Stone* and/or the *Eyes* from the PCs.
- They might also offer their services to the PCs (or be found by the PCs if they go looking for such services).

(Bonnie's doppelgangers are described on p. 20 and are part of faction missions on p. 35 and 37. The Black Viper is described on p. 196 and is part of faction missions on p. 39 and 40. She also appears at the Cassalanter Estate, as described on p. 118.)

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 1C: PLAYER CHARACTER FACTIONS

Let's briefly discuss *Chapter 2: Trollskull Alley*. This remix is largely not going to be discussing this chapter of *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist* because it is mostly unimpeachable and almost certainly the best part of the published campaign. To briefly review:

- The PCs are awarded with Trollskull Manor, which they can “refurnish, rebuild, rename, and otherwise personalize.”
- The expectation is that they will reopen the tavern on the first floor, and a number of encounters and mechanics are given for doing so.
- During this time, their recent notoriety also results in them being approached by one or more factions who would be interested in having them join up.
- The factions ask the PCs to perform a series of missions for them, spanning from the time the PCs are 2nd level until they are 5th level.

The faction missions, it should be noted, are clearly intended to be interwoven with the ongoing events of what we're referring to as the Grand Game, but this is one place where the campaign kind of glitches because the heavily compressed timeframe of the primary plot doesn't really leave a lot of breathing room for integrating these missions (or running their new tavern for that matter).

This remix should help address this problem simply by virtue of decompressing the events of the Grand Game: Investigating the Faction Outposts (Part 3) and performing the Eye Heists (Part 4) will expand the timeline and give a little more room for integrating the faction missions.

Beyond that, there are only two tweaks I would suggest for *Chapter 2: Trollskull Alley*:

- Add 1-3 additional urban adventures that overlap with setting up the tavern and running the early faction missions.
- Review the *Running the Game: Tavern Time* [LINK] essay here at the Alexandrian and use it to bring Trollskull Tavern to life.

You might also consider fleshing out the faction missions and putting a little more meat on their bones, but I think you'll largely find that unnecessary: As designed the faction missions will take up perhaps one-quarter or one-third of a session. As such, they'll integrate with everything else that's going on to create a dynamic, multi-faceted session that draws the players ever deeper into the rich life of Waterdeep. If the faction missions expand to take up a full session on their own, some of that effect will be lost.

On the other hand, giving each faction one meaty mission as a diversion or counterpoint to the Grand Game might make for a good change of pace. (That's going to be beyond the scope of this remix, however.)

ALLIES IN THE GRAND GAME

Once the PCs have joined a faction, however, the PCs themselves become a vector by which those factions can become involved with the Grand Game.

The PCs can ask for help. Factions can provide assistance, particularly when it comes to intelligence gathering. If the PCs need help locating a faction outpost or lair, for example, their faction can probably help them with that. Of course, they might ask the PCs to do them a favor (in the form of a faction mission) first.

Have the factions push them for information. “How have you been spending your time?” “We heard you were involved in that fracas at the Gralhund Villa. What was up with that?” “We’ve noticed you haven’t been around a lot lately. We’ve got a vested interest in you now, and we need to know how to find you.”

Intermingle the factions. You can also have a PC’s faction become engaged with a faction of the Grand Game from a completely different direction. For example, maybe the Harpers are interested in exotic poisons which were shipped into Waterdeep (and are destined for the Cassalanter’s ritual). Or the Order of the Gauntlet might be interested in targeting Xanatharian slavers.

If these factions discover the Grand Game and/or the PCs’ role in it, they are likely to bring their own agenda to bear.

Bregan D’Aerthe is, of course, Jarlaxle’s faction and their agenda should be obvious. Look at areas of the campaign where Jarlaxle’s agents are present and consider simply making the PCs those agents (perhaps even giving them a small force of drow to command).

The **Emerald Enclave** actually has no interest in the Grand Game or Neverember’s ill-gotten dragons. They’ll assist PCs who have proven loyal to the faction, but, perhaps refreshingly, will make no demands upon them for the Vault or its contents.

Force Grey is allied to the Open Lord. If members of the Grey Hands or Force Grey bring the Grand Game to their attention, the Open Lord will quickly figure out what actually happened to the missing 500,000 gold dragons and she’s going to want the money back.

The **Harpers** know that the Cassalanter are actually demon-worshippers and, if they realize the PCs have gotten tangled up with them, will quickly warn them of the fact. The Harpers are more than happy to let the PCs keep the gold (although they will encourage them to “do the right thing” and return the money to the citizens of Waterdeep), but they want the *Stone of Golorr*, which they believe contains vital intelligence that can help them in their struggle with the Abolethic Sovereignty. It should be noted that the Harpers of Waterdeep are riddled with Zhentarim double-agents, and anything the Harpers learn about the PCs and their activities can very easily fall into Manshoon’s hands.

The **Lords' Alliance** actually works directly for the Open Lord. If Jalester Silvermane becomes aware of what the PCs have gotten themselves tangled up in, he'll arrange a discreet meeting with Laeral Silverhand as quickly as possible.

The **Order of the Gauntlet** will expect the PCs to tithe at least 25% of the horde.

The non-Manshoonian **Zhentarim** will see an enormous opportunity in the gold: Efforts are under way to reclaim and repair Zhentil Keep, and that money could be used to buy them a seat on the Zhentarim Council that's forming to do so. This could really raise the profile of the local Zhentarim network, and the PCs would basically be buying their way into the local leadership of the Black Network. (Or they could pursue this thread all the way to the ruins of Zhentil Keep if that's their predilection.)

DESIGN NOTE

These interactions serve to tie the material in Chapter 2 more tightly to the wider events of the campaign spine. Using the PCs' factions to demonstrate the wider scope of how the factions involved with the Grand Game are integrated into the life of the city will deepen the scenario, while also providing the opportunity for creative players to find unique vectors for targeting their enemies. Finally, forcing the PCs to make some tough choices between the advantages and obligations of their faction allegiance will make those relationships more meaningful.

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 2: GRALHUND VILLA

The investigation which brings the PCs from the *fireball* in Trollskull Alley to the Gralhund Villa will be fully described in Part 5. For the moment, however, we do need to establish a few key pieces of revised continuity:

- As mentioned in Part 1, the Gralhund's nimblewright and the Zhentarim agents tracking Dalakhar are NOT working together.
- The nimblewright uses a *necklace of fireballs* to launch a *fireball* which kills Dalakhar and most of the Zhentarim agents, with the exception of Urstul Floxin (who barely survives, but is incapacitated).
- The Gralhund nimblewright dashes forward, rifles through Dalakhar's pockets, and takes the *Stone of Golorr*. It then runs off, returning to Gralhund Villa.
- Urstul Floxin is able to identify the nimblewright. The Zhentarim track it back to the Gralhunds and are out for both revenge and the *Stone*.
- Meanwhile, the PCs will have likely tipped off Jarlaxle and pulled Bregan D'Aerthe into the Grand Game. Jarlaxle and his agents will also know who the nimblewright belonged to.
- Xanathar doesn't know that the Gralhunds have the *Stone*, but he has learned that Urstul Floxin, a Zhentarim agent, was present when Dalakhar was killed. The beholder is still not entirely clear who stole the *Stone*, but he has his agents observing Urstul Floxin and those agents have tracked him to Gralhund Villa.

This sets up the quadpartite confrontation (really quinpartite once you add in the PCs) at the Gralhund Villa.

DESIGN NOTES

The simple goal here is to viscerally evoke the cross-faction conflict of the Grand Game: The first scenario of the campaign features two of the factions (although the PCs only encounter one of them). The climax of the second scenario features three of the main factions plus the Gralhunds (and also the Cassalanter if the PCs are working for them at this point) all coming together in immediate conflict. That's the essential story of Dragon Heist being told through action, and it sets the stakes for the rest of the campaign.

OBSERVING THE VILLA

The Villa, for our purposes, exists in one of two states when the PCs arrive: *Before the Zhentarim Raid* and *During the Zhentarim Raid*. The DM can select which scenario is true based on any number of criteria, but I'm going to use a simple metric: If the PCs arrive during the day, then the Zhentarim raid happens that night. If they arrive at night, then the Zhentarim raid is in progress. (And if, for whatever reason, they specifically decide *not* to go to the Gralhund Villa after tracking the nimblewright back to it, I'll

trigger the raid a couple days later and have the PCs hear reports of it – either through broadsheets or contacts or simply gossip in their tavern’s common room.)

Before the raid happens (i.e., if the PCs arrive during the day), the Villa is under observation by up to three different factions. If the PCs scout around the Villa, they may be able to spot these teams. The DC for Wisdom (Perception) tests is noted with each faction.

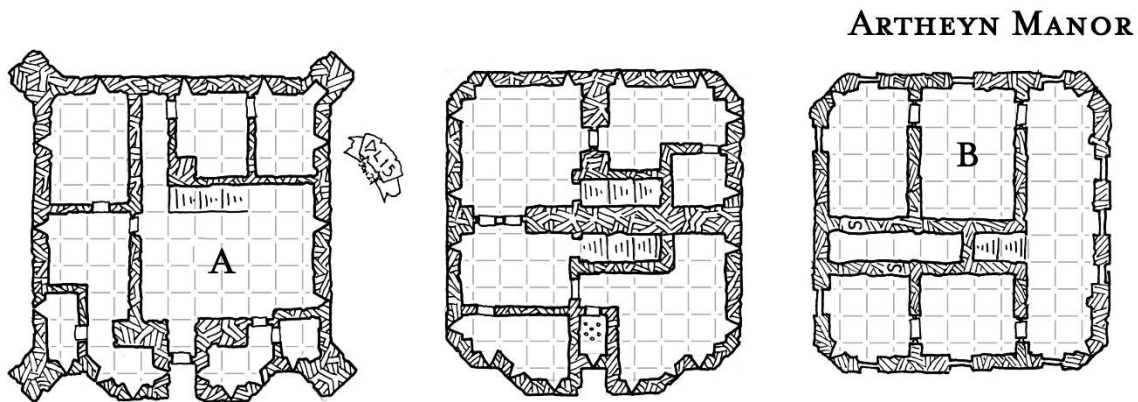
ZHENTARIM WATCHERS (DC 12): Two Zhentarim **thugs** are located on the roofs of the buildings near the estate, stealthily changing their position from time to time. They have been placed here by Urstul Floxin to make sure that neither the nimblewright, the Gralhunds, nor the *Stone of Golorr* leave the villa before the raid begins. They have a black **flying snake** with them to send a message if necessary.

The Zhentarim watchers spotted one of Xanathar’s gazers, but didn’t realize it was watching them (or that it has remained in the area). They are unaware of the presence of Jarlaxle’s team.

XANATHAR’S GAZERS (DC 16): There are four of Xanathar’s **gazers** in the area. At DC 16, the PCs spot one gazer. They spot an additional gazer for each PC who succeeds on the test or for every 2 points of margin of success.

Xanathar’s agents tracked Urstul Floxin and the Zhentarim watchers to the villa when he gave them their instructions. Xanathar isn’t sure exactly what Floxin wants with the Gralhunds, but he’s installed the gazers to find out.

JARLAXLE’S TEAM (DC 14): If Jarlaxle has been tipped off by the PCs, he has a team holed up in Artheyn Manor across the street from the villa.



The Artheys are a mercantile family. Radford Artheyn, the patriarch, has packed up the household and temporarily relocated to the Moonshae Isles in pursuit of a rumored vein of black gold in Alaron. (See *MOON1-3: Black Gold* from the 4th Edition Living Forgotten Realms for more on black gold, although the details aren’t actually important for this scenario.) Drop cloths cover most of the furniture in the three-story house. A

watch team has been stationed by the front door (Area A), which is on the opposite side of the house from Gralhund Villa, and the primary observation team is on the top floor (Area B).

Area A: Fel'Rekt Lafeen (**drow gunslinger**; *Dragon Heist*, p. 201) and 2 **drow**.

- *A Directive from Jarlaxle* lays on a side table. (If the PCs search Artheyn Manor after the raid, Fel'Rekt has carelessly left this behind.) The directive, written in silver ink on black paper and signed by "Jarlaxle Baenre", indicates that Fel'Rekt is to keep a watch on the Gralhund Villa and "seize any opportunity to take possession of the *Stone of Golorr*". Updates are to be sent twice daily via Fenerus Stormcastle, and someone named Krebbyg has been instructed to pick up messages from Fenerus twice daily for the duration of the Gralhund operation.
- *GM Note:* Fenerus Stormcastle's House is a Bregan D'Aerthe outpost, see Part 3.

Area B: Two **drow gunslingers** and 6 **drow**.

Jarlaxle's team are aware of both the Zhentarim watchers and Xanathar's gazers.

THE VILLA – ADVERSARY ROSTERS

Adversary rosters make it easy for a DM to run dynamic locations in which the action spills over from one room to the next. If you're not already familiar with their use, I recommend reviewing this article [[LINK to https://thealexandrian.net/wordpress/38547/roleplaying-games/the-art-of-the-key-part-4-adversary-rosters](https://thealexandrian.net/wordpress/38547/roleplaying-games/the-art-of-the-key-part-4-adversary-rosters)] which discusses them in detail.

To use these rosters, simply ignore any references to NPCs in the published key for the Gralhund Villa. If the PCs enter the villa before the Zhentarim raid has begun, you should also obviously ignore any references to corpses or other signs of violence.

GRALHUND VILLA – PCs ARRIVE DURING DAY

2 Gralhund Guards	Area G1 – Main Gate	
1 Servant (Gardener)	Area G2 - Yard	
Stableboy (Ike) +2 Mastiffs	Area G3 – Coach House	(mastiffs don't obey Ike)
Groundskeeper (Hurv)	Area G3 - Bedroom	(sleeping)
12 Gralhund Guards	Area G4 – Barracks	(8 unarmored, 1d4+1 sleeping)
2 Servants (Head Butler + Cook)	Area G6 – Pantry	
Servant (Head Maid)	Area G7 – Laundry Room	(keys to all locked doors)
4 Gralhund Guards	Area G8 – Great Hall	
1 Servant (Maid)	Area G9 – Parlor	
1 Servant (Maid)	Area G10 – Trophy Room	
Nimblewright	Area G11 – Orond's Study	
Orond Gralhund	Area G12 – Family Library	
2 Gralhund Guards	Area G13 – Upstairs Foyer	
Yalah Gralhund + Hrabbaz	Area G16 – Master Bedroom	
2 Servants (Nursemaids)	Area G18 – Children's Room	
Gralhund Children (Zartan + Greth)	Area G18 – Children's Room	
4 Servants	Area G19 – Servant's Wing	(playing Three-Dragon Ante)

IN THE ZHENTARIM RAID – PCs ARRIVE AT NIGHT

Groundskeeper (Hurv) + 2 Mastiffs	Area G2 – Garden	(in shadow form)
Stableboy (Ike)	Area G3 - Bedroom	(sleeping)
2 Zhent Thugs	Area G8 – Great Hall	
4 Zhent Thugs + 4 Gralhund Guards	Area G13 – Upstairs Foyer	(fighting)
Urstul Floxin	Area G15a – Guest Suite	(wounded)
Orond Gralhund	Area G15b – Guest Suite	
Yalah Gralhund + Nimblewright + Hrabbaz	Area G16 – Master Bedroom	
Gralhund Children (Zartan + Greth)	Area G18 – Children’s Room	
9 Servants	Area G19 – Servant’s Wing	

Note: Yalah Gralhund has the *Stone of Golorr*.

STAT REFERENCE

Groundskeeper (Hurv) – cult fanatic, MM p. 345 or shadow, MM p. 269

Mastiffs – MM p. 332 or shadow, MM p. 269

Servants – commoner, MM p. 345

Gralhund Guards – veteran, MM p. 350

Yalah Gralhund – DH p. 220; noble, MM p. 348

Orond Gralhund – DH p. 213-4; noble, MM p. 348

Urstul Floxin – DH p. 216; assassin, MM p. 343

Zhentarim Thugs – thug, MM p. 350

Flying Snake – MM p. 322

Drow Gunslingers – DH p. 201

Drow – MM p. 126

Gazer – DH p. 203

THE VILLA – MODIFIED KEY

Area G11 – Orond’s Study: The mahogany desk is covered with papers, which consist of the *Gralhund Study of the Grand Game* (see Part 6B).

Area G12 – Library: Orond was studding *A Missive from Castle Ward*. He leaves it laying on the arm of one of the library’s chairs if disturbed (by, for example, a Zhentarim strike team breaking into this house).

- *A Missive from Castle Ward:* “We are now certain that the Second Eye was carried from the warehouse in the Dock Ward to Yellowspire in the Castle Ward. I no longer believe that it remains within Yellowspire, however. After observing the Zhentarim traffic here, I am convinced that they must be using a teleportal within the tower. If we wish to track the Second Eye further, we will need to access that teleportal or otherwise determine where it leads. – Chirada”

Area 15b – Guest Suite: Does not contain a *teleportation circle* or flying snakes.

THE PCs RAID THE MANSION

If the PCs arrive during the day and raid the mansion before Floxin shows up, what happens?

OBSERVATION TEAMS: Check to see if they spot the PCs' infiltration. If they don't, then nothing happens until they do. Then, broadly speaking:

The **Zhentarim** will send their flying snake to Urstul, who will hastily assemble his team and rush over. He still won't arrive for 10+2d6 minutes, though, so it's quite possible the PCs will complete their raid and leave. If that happens and the Zhentarim think they have the *Stone*, they'll leave a message drop for Urstul and attempt to follow the PCs to see where they take it. If they don't think the PCs have the *Stone*, one of the Zhentarim will follow them (to identify who the new players in the Grand Game are) and the other will maintain observation of the villa.

Xanathar's Gazers will continue monitoring the situation, with one or more of the gazers following the PCs when they leave.

Jarlaxle's Team will wait for an opportunity to present itself and then strike at the *Stone*. That might mean attempting to send a team into the compound (probably heading over the roof and entering through Area 17 – The Balcony), or it might mean waiting until the PCs have the *Stone* and then attacking them as they leave.

GRALHUND GUARDS: If the alarm is raised, then

- 2 of the guards from Area G8 – Great Hall will move towards the alarm.
- 1d4 rounds later, 4 armored guards from G4 – The Barracks will mobilize. 2 will head towards the alarm; two will move towards Lord Gralhund.
- 1d4 rounds later, the unarmored guards from G4 – Barracks who were NOT asleep will mobilize with weapons but no armor.
- 1d4 rounds later, the unarmored guards from G4 – Barracks who WERE sleeping will mobilize with weapons but no armor.

(It would take unarmored guards 5 minutes to don their chain shirts. They're not going to wait on it if the villa is under attack.)

Beyond that general response procedure, though, simply use the adversary roster and play the characters appropriately based on the information they have.

OTHER APPROACHES: What about other approaches? For example, what if the PCs knock on the front door? Or bring the City Watch? Broadly speaking, if the compound seems threatened by armed force, similar responses will be taken. If a peaceful approach

is being taken, successful Charisma checks may allow PCs to meet with Lord Orond. (Lady Yalah will not put in an appearance; she stays with the *Stone* upstairs.)

ZHENTARIM RAID TIMELINE

The night-time adversary roster assumes that the PCs *arrive* on the scene during the night, with the Zhentarim raid taking place *in media res*. If the PCs instead arrive during the day and settle down as their own observation team, then they'll be able to watch the raid play out in real time.

FLOXIN'S PLAN: Urstul wants to enter the house quietly through G6 – Pantry, make a rush through G8 – The Great Hall, go up the stairs, and capture Lord Orond, Lady Yalay, and/or the children before the guards can fully mobilize. With hostages in hand, he believes they can negotiate for the *Stone of Golorr* and then leave.

This is what their raid looks like, broadly speaking (assuming the PCs don't intervene):

- Urstul Floxin and 8 Zhents in black leather armor rendezvous with the 2 watchers and then all of them approach along the villa's rear wall and pick the lock to the Pantry (G6).
- Inside they are surprised to discover two servants (the head butler and the cook) using the pantry for an illicit, late night romantic liaison.
- The halfling cook makes a run for the Kitchen (G5), screaming bloody murder. Which is, in fact, what the Zhents do: They murder both servants.
- The cook's screams, however, alert the head maid who was working in the Laundry (G7). She comes to see what the fuss is all about, entering the kitchen to see the Zhents cut down the cook in the opposite doorway. She turns and runs back through the laundry screaming.
- Floxin curses and tells half of his men to chase her down. They catch up with her on the backstairs to the Servant's Quarters (G19) and kill her. A couple of other servants who were coming down the stairs run back up, raising the alarm, and the servants eventually barricade themselves.
- Meanwhile, the head maid's screams have alerted the guards in the Great Hall (G8). One of them runs out the front doors and circles around to the Barracks (G4) to raise the rest of the guard. The other three move into G7 and begin fighting the Zhents there.
- This actually works to Floxin's advantage slightly, leaving the Great Hall (G8) empty. He and his force rush from the Kitchen (G6) into the south end of the Great Hall (G8), but before they can head for the stairs, two guards on patrol in the Parlor (G9) walk out the door. Urstul and his men attack, driving the guards back into G9 and killing them.
- Lord Orond emerges from the Library (G12), where he's been studying late. Urstul, still in the hall just outside G9 sees him, gives a cry. Lord Orond flees up the stairs while Urstul and his men give chase.
- The guards fighting the Zhents in the Laundry (G7) are mortally wounded and fall back almost simultaneously into G8. The Zhents they were fighting give pursuit and kill them.

- Upstairs the guards in the Upstairs Foyer (G13) have already barricaded the doors to the Master Bedroom (G16) where Lady Yalah and the children are. So when Lord Orond comes rushing upstairs, one of the guards ushers him into the Guest Suite (G15). The guard is killed by Urstul Floxin as he shuts the door on his lord.
- Meanwhile, guards are pouring out of the Barracks (G4) and entering the house through both the Great Hall (G8) and the Kitchen (G5). They engage the second Zhent force in G8.
- Upstairs things are looking bad for the Gralhunds, with Urstul's Zhents dispatching the other guard in G13. The Zhents downstairs hold the line and manage to kill a total of eight guards there, but after two Zhents are killed they're forced into a fighting retreat up the stairs.
- A furious melee breaks out at the top of the stairs while Urstul desperately tries to break down the door in the Guest Suite (G15b) to reach Lord Orond and take him hostage. Some of the Zhents manage to break down the door to the Master Bedroom (G16), but are then forced to turn and fight as the guards come pouring up the stairs.

This is the point in time represented by the PCs Arrive At Night roster. At this point, as described in the original adventure key, there are the following corpses:

- G6 – head butler and cook
- G7 – head maid on the stairs up to G19
- G8 – 8 guards, 2 Zhent
- G9 – 2 guards
- G13 – 6 guards, 2 Zhents

(Note: There's nothing special about this point in time. If it seems more dramatically appropriate, you can have the PCs arrive at any point during this timeline, although running things from the key will be slightly more complex as you'll want to adjust the corpses, etc. accordingly in real time. Tracking the PCs attempting a stealthy infiltration from the north at the exact same time that Floxin and his team are infiltrating from the south can be a lot of fun!)

If the PCs haven't interfered (and don't interfere going forward) here's what the rest of the raid looks like:

- Jarlaxle's team goes into motion: Fel'Rekt Lafeen and 6 drow cross the roof of Gralhund Villa, taking up a position immediately above the Balcony (G17). The two drow gunslingers and 2 more drow move across the roofs and take up a position opposite the large windows of the Upstairs Foyer (G13).
- The Gralhund Guards manage to kill the rest of the Zhents. At this point, however, there are only four guards left.
- The drow gunslingers sniper the Gralhund guards through the window. Simultaneously, Fel'Rekt and his team drop onto the Balcony (G17) and break open the doors.
- Lady Yalah flees into the Children's Room (G18). While his drow go to G15 and collect Lord Orond, Fel'Rekt spends 6 rounds dueling Hrabbaz, eventually killing him.

- Lord Orond is dragged into G16 and Fel'Rekt negotiates with Lady Yalah through the door. Lady Yalah eventually breaks and, sobbing, gives Fel'Rekt the *Stone of Golorr*. He and his team flee back the way they came as the City Watch comes bursting into the house on the lower level.

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE PCs?

With all that being said, it's considerably more likely that the PCs will intervene at some point. Once that happens, of course, everything is probably going to change. It's impossible to speculate on that new outcome because the situation is so volatile and there are so many different ways the PCs might go in the confusion and chaos of the situation they find themselves in: Do they help the Zhents? The Gralhunds? Do they end up fighting Fel'rekt's people on the roof and giving the Gralhunds a chance to escape or for the City Watch to arrive? Ultimately, you just have to play and find out!

There are a few points to make, however:

The failure of the **Zhentarim** is not foreordained. If the PCs draw off some of the reinforcements from the barracks, for example, it's quite possible that the Zhents are able to kill the guards and take control of the Gralhund family.

If circumstances change, **Lady Gralhund** may be presented with an opportunity to give the *Stone of Golorr* to the nimblewright and have the construct escape with it.

Jarlaxle's Team will look for an opportunity to intervene in Bregan D'Aerthe's favor. In the default raid that comes quite late, but once the PCs get involved Fel'rekt may decide to have his drow crash the party much earlier. Or they might wait and attack the PCs after they leave.

Xanathar's Gazers will not intervene. But they will attempt to follow anyone and everyone leaving the scene afterwards.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE STONE?

With all that being said, the **EXPECTED OUTCOME** of the Gralhund Villa sequence in this remix is for the **PLAYER CHARACTERS TO HAVE THE STONE OF GOLORR**.

(This is a really significant change to the campaign as published, so I'm putting it in bold here.)

ROOFTOP CHASE: If the PC's DON'T have the *Stone of Golorr*, then it is likely that they've spotted someone fleeing the scene with it. This will probably trigger a rooftop chase, for which you can use the *Rooftop Chase Complications* from p. 72 of *Dragon Heist*.

AND NOW THE GAZERS: If you end up in a rooftop chase – here or anywhere else in the adventure – it will be a really cool visual for the PCs to suddenly see multiple gazers come swooping out of the darkness.

This is the scenario – the *Stone of Golorr* known and in the open – that Xanathar *will* have his gazers get involved. You might use this to cripple those carrying it, allowing the PCs to catch up. If circumstances allow, Xanathar might also be able to send a Response Team (see Part 3C) to intercept the chase, turning it into a three-way brawl for control of the *Stone*.

THE STONE IS LOST: If that fails (or the PCs don't see the *Stone* leave or choose not to pursue it), figure out where it goes. Transport to a Faction Outpost (see Part 3) and then to a Lair (see Part 4) is the most likely outcome for any of the factions.

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 3: FACTION OUTPOSTS

As you may have already ascertained, this remix is simply tossing out most of *Chapter 4: Dragon Season* from the original campaign. The original sequences no longer work with the more dynamic, multi-faction approach we're using for the remix, and I'm simply not that interested in these sorts of pre-scripted, linear, and often railroaded sequences.

We're still going to take advantage of some of the raw material in *Chapter 4*, however, to create a number of Outposts for each faction. (In some ways you can think of this as sort of taking the best version of each location from the campaign.)

BREGAN D'AERTHE OUTPOSTS

FENERUS STORMCASTLE'S HOUSE (Trade Ward, Quill Alley - *Dragon Heist*, p. 63): Fenerus Stormcastle was the founder of the Blood Hawk Posse, a gang of horse-riding brigands that, to this day, harries travelers on the road to Amphail. When he was drummed out of the gang after a botched raid, Fenerus "retired" to Waterdeep and joined the Guild of Chandlers and Lamplighters. He supplements his income by spying for the city of Luskan and providing his contacts with information on the political climate in Waterdeep, as well as juicy bits of news overheard on his nightly rounds through the Trades Ward.

Since the Sea Maidens Faire arrived in Waterdeep, Fenerus has also been acting as a message drop for Bregan D'Aerthe. Fenerus collects messages from various covert drops and brings them back to his house, where they are collected by Krebbyg Masq'il'yr and taken back to Jarlaxle's ship.

Questioning Fenerus: Although he's supposed to be a cut-out, Fenerus once followed Krebbyg after Jarlaxle's lieutenant picked up the messages and knows that they're being taken to the Sea Maidens Faire.

Following Krebbyg: Krebbyg comes to collect messages from Fenerus once every 1d3 days. If the PCs stake out the house long enough, they may also be able to follow him to the Sea Maidens Faire.

Messages: The PCs may be able to capture several messages. These are written in code, requiring an Intelligence test (DC 16) to decipher. (The check is made with advantage if they speak Drow.) The contents of these messages will vary depending on when, exactly, the PCs come to Fenerus' house. Possibilities include:

- Information unrelated to the Grand Game, most likely revolving around attempting to identify Masked Lords, gain blackmail material over them, and/or diplomatic assessments of their support for Luskan joining the Lords' Alliance.
- A report from the Gralhund Villa observation team: "Watchpost established in the manor south of the Gralhund Villa. We have identified members of the Black Network onsite. We have also observed gazers in the area, although we have not

- yet determined which beholders' dark dreams they've sprung out of. - Fel'Rekt Lafeen"
- "Westra Moltimmur is demanding three additional dresses for Sapphiria's Booty. Considerable expense. Rongquan Mystere may need to put in an appearance." (A little research can quickly identify these names as referring to the Seven Masks Theater, see below.)
 - "The Council of Musicians, Instrument-Makers, & Choristers refuses to withdraw their objection to the Sea Maidens Faire as a public entertainment. But I've resolved the matter by getting license from the Jesters' Guild. We only need to make payment to them with claim that we are employing a guild entertainer, even though we're not. The guilds in this city are even more rotten than those in Luskan."
 - "Nimblewright delivery completed to Bowgentra Summertaen. We have eyes up in the Watchful Order." (Summertaen is the leader of the Watchful Order of Magists and Protectors, a guild for wizards and sorcerers in Waterdeep.)

SEVEN MASKS THEATER (*Dragon Heist*, p. 75): Use the description of the Autumn version of the theater from the original campaign. Jarlaxle owns this theater under the false identity of Rongquan Mystere. One of the dressing rooms is kept empty as a safe house for D'Aerthe agents in trouble. Jarlaxle will also use the theater as a "neutral" meeting place with other factions (including the PCs).

Malcolm Brizzenbright: We'll also transplant Brizzenbright's Ghost from the Winter version of the Theater (see *Dragon Heist*, p. 76). He's the founder of the Seven Masks Theater, but has been dead for over thirty years.

- He knows that "Rongquan Mystere" is a fake identity, and he's anxious that his theater not be used for nefarious purposes.
- He can identify the dressing room being used as a safe house.
- He once saw "Rongquan" speaking with drow in the lobby during a performance of *The Mad Mage's Seven Riddles*. They mentioned something called the "Sea Maidens Faire".

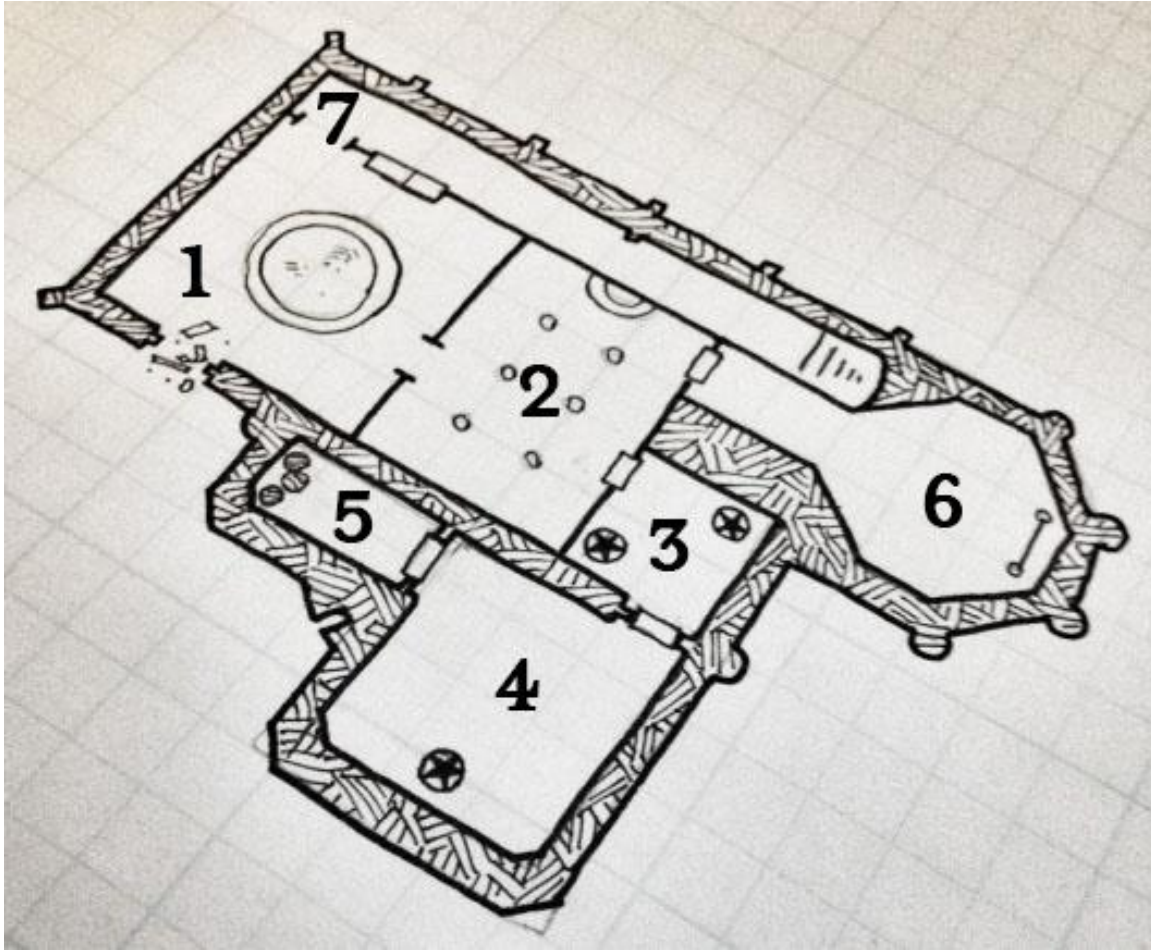
Area P6 – Stage Manager's Office: Amongst the other papers dealing with theater work is a *Letter Regarding Fenerus Stormcastle's House*. Directed simply to "J", it warns him that, "There have been strange eyes fixed upon the house of Fenerus Stormcastle and flights of black snakes have been seen flocking the skies of the Trades Ward. Greater care should be taken when messengers approach the house, and we may want to find an alternative asset. I leave it to your judgment whether or not Fenerus himself should be warned. -K"

- *GM Note*: "J" is Jarlaxle Baenre and "K" is Krebbyg.

CASSALANTER OUTPOSTS

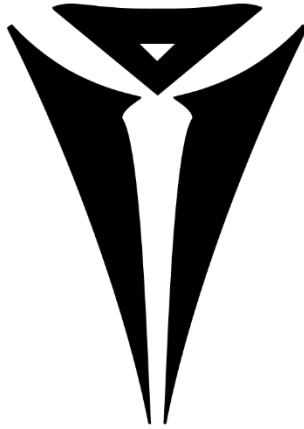
ASMODEAN SHRINE (North Ward, Aveen Street): From the outside, this appears to be a nondescript residence. The entire interior of the house, however, has been converted

into a shrine dedicated to Asmodeus. The Cassalanters discovered the ancient Hell cyst (see Area 8) below the house, bought the property, and installed members of the cult.



Area 1 – Summoning Circle: Demonic sigils have been painted onto the floor to form a summoning circle. Tapping into the power of the Hell cyst, the circle can be used to summon 2 **imps** once every nine days.

Area 2 – Styxian Shrine: Intertwined figures of demons and devils twist about the columns in this room, a visceral depiction of the savage brutality of the Blood War. At one end of the room there is a small font of reddish-gray stone that extrudes from the wall. The cistern is half-filled with grayish water, enchanted to act as the water of the River Styx. Those drinking from it must succeed at a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or lose all of their memories for 8 hours. (The cultists consider this a test of their faith and a sacrament.) On the wall above the font, the symbol of Asmodeus has been painted on the wall in blood.



Area 3 – Demonic Statues: Two large demonic statues – one depicting a kyton (chain devil) and the other a bezekira (hellcat) – face off against each other.

Area 4 – Chapter House: Huge, writhing tentacles seem to erupt from an arcane circle on the far side of this room, but it's just a disturbingly lifelike statue given the semblance of life by an *animate object* spell (50 hp, AC 10, +6 to hit, 2d20+2 damage, Str 14, Dex 10). The tentacles are fastened to the floor and only attack a target within 10 feet if given a command by one of the cultists; otherwise they just writhe artistically.

Two cots are lined up against the wall. A long trestle table runs down the middle of the room with benches to either side.

Under the cot is *Arn's Book of Worship*: This text with a stylized goat's head drawn in blood upon its plain brown cover, contains a number of "high prayers" to Asmodeus and the description of a number of banal demonic rites of worship. On the inside back cover, in simple handwriting, one can read, "This book belongs to Arn Xalrondar, of the Windmill upon Coachlamp Lane.")

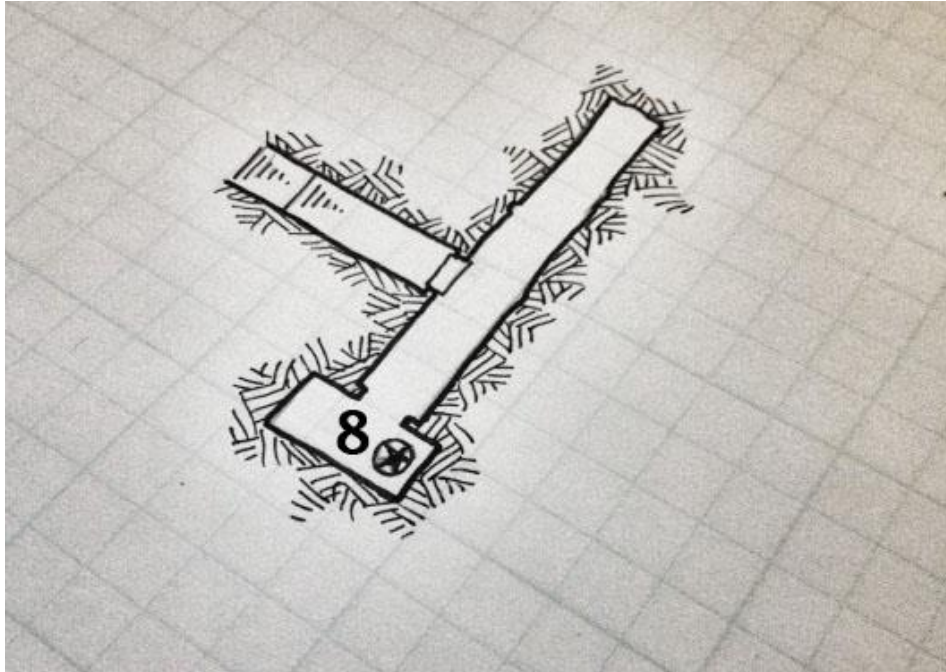
Area 5 – Demonic Jelly: Three large wooden kegs. A mysterious amber jelly within them acts like a *potion of hill giant strength* if rubbed over the body (6 doses per keg).

Area 6 – Mirror of the Fiend: A large mirror with an obsidian frame carved with demonic sigils stands at the far end of this chamber. Anyone seeing themselves reflected in the mirror is bathed in purplish flames which deal 1d6 damage per round to most creatures, but heal 1d6 damage per round for fiends.

- **Noble Sigil:** On the back of the mirror is carved a small rune. A DC 13 Intelligence (History) check reveals that this is a Waterdhavian noble sigil; a practice that was once common in Waterdeep, but which died out over a century ago. A DC 16 check identifies this specific rune as indicating that the mirror belonged to the Cassalanter family.

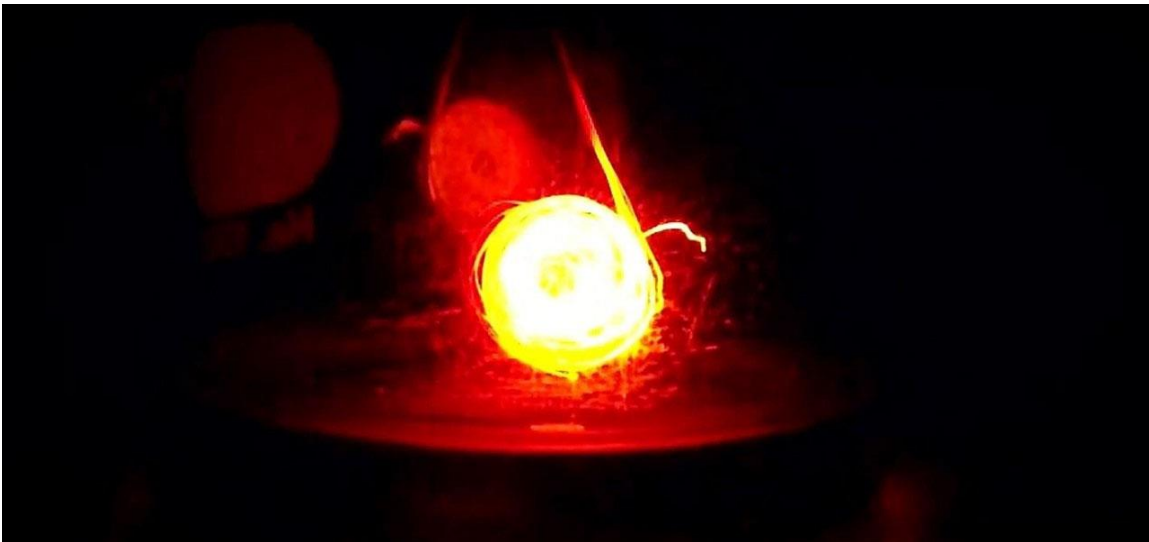
Area 7 – Passage of the Nine Hells: The plaster walls of this long hallway are completely covered in a mural seamlessly depicting the Nine Hells – the desolate wasteland of Avernus; the malefic green skies of Dis; the endless rotting bogs of Minauros; the

magma-ridden valleys of Phlegethos; the frozen sea of Stygia; the cyclopean basalt of Malbolge; the endless, maze-like ruins of Maladomini; the serrated glaciers of Cania. At the far end, above the arch leading to the descending stairs, is depicted the Malsheem, the Citadel of Hell, in Nessus, the Ninth Circle of Hell.



Area 8 – The Hell Cyst: The entire lower level of the shrine is clearly much, much older than the house above it. The walls were once covered in bas relief, but the stone has worn away and the carvings have become unrecognizable.

In a niche one end of the cramped corridor, the extrusions of stone seem to reach out from the wall and almost cradle a glowing ball of hellish red light which floats in midair.



Those who dare to lean close to the ball will discover that – at a distance of a few inches or so – they can actually peer into it (or perhaps, more accurately, *through* it). Doing so is like peering through a heavily distorted lens into a volcanic hell. (The Hell cyst is actually a pin-prick of Hell co-located onto the Material Plane. There is no way to traverse or communicate through the event horizon of the cyst, but the cyst is nevertheless a literal manifestation of Hell on Earth and can be used as the focus for a number of demonic rites.)

ASMODEAN SHRINE - ROSTER

1 cult fanatic + 2 imps	Area 1	MM p. 345, MM p. 76
1 apprentice wizard + 2 imps	Area 2	DH p. 194, MM p. 76
2 cult fanatics	Area 4	MM p. 345

Questioning Cultists: Successfully questioning the cultists will reveal that rituals are held at a site beneath the Cassalanter Villa. The fanatics will report that their contact there is Willifort Crowell (which might lead the PCs to believe that the Cassalanter are unaware of what’s happening in their own home); the wizard knows better and may be made to reveal as much.

Instructions from Lord Cassalanter: The apprentice wizard carries a note from Lord Cassalanter instructing that the next pair of imps to emerge from the summoning circle should be dispatched to perform surveillance on the Sea Maidens Faire, which he believes to have become of particular importance as a result of recent intelligence which has come into his possession. (The note might mention the PCs by name here if they were the source of this intelligence; otherwise he names Willifort Crowelle.) “The imps should report back to me directly at the villa.”

CONVERTED WINDMILL (Southern Ward, Coachlamp Lane): Use the description of the Summer version of the Converted Windmill (see *Dragon Heist*, p. 88). It’s used as an apartment by Arn Xalrondar (LE male Tethyrian human) and Seffia Naelryke (LE female Tethyrian human), both **cult fanatics**.

Area W7 – Secure Apartment:

- A note can be found under the bed. It reads: “Meeting Ches 17th, the shrine on Aveen Street”.

Area W8 – The Room of Rituals: A pentagram has been painted on the floor in blood. At the points of the pentagram are five black globs of wax — the remains of burned candles — and there’s a variety of writing in charcoal surrounding the pentagram. There is a desk alone one wall, covered in a mass of papers.

- **The Ritual – DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana):** The ritual performed here was a form of weak demonic divination, similar to a *legend lore* or *contact other plane* spell, but more like a weakly amped up Ouija board or similar parlor trick. The runes indicate that this ritual was performed in an effort to find something associated with “Neverember”, “the wealth of Waterdeep”, “Golorr”, and “that

which has been lost to the waters of Lethe” (although the latter appears to be more of a symbolic representation rather than a literal one).

- **Desk:** At the center of the drift of miscellaneous papers is a map of Waterdeep. Strange lines of blood criss-cross the map in bizarre patterns, but one location within the City of the Dead has been picked out from the pattern and circled in black charcoal. Accompanying writing identifies this as the “Brandath Crypt”.
- *GM Note:* This ritual, performed by Seffia, identified the Brandath Crypt as the hiding place of one of the Eyes. It actually only worked, however, because the Vault is actually hidden below the Crypt (making it a much more powerful locus for the conceptual anchors of the ritual), although Seffia didn’t realize that.

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 3B: MORE FACTION OUTPOSTS

XANATHARIAN OUTPOSTS

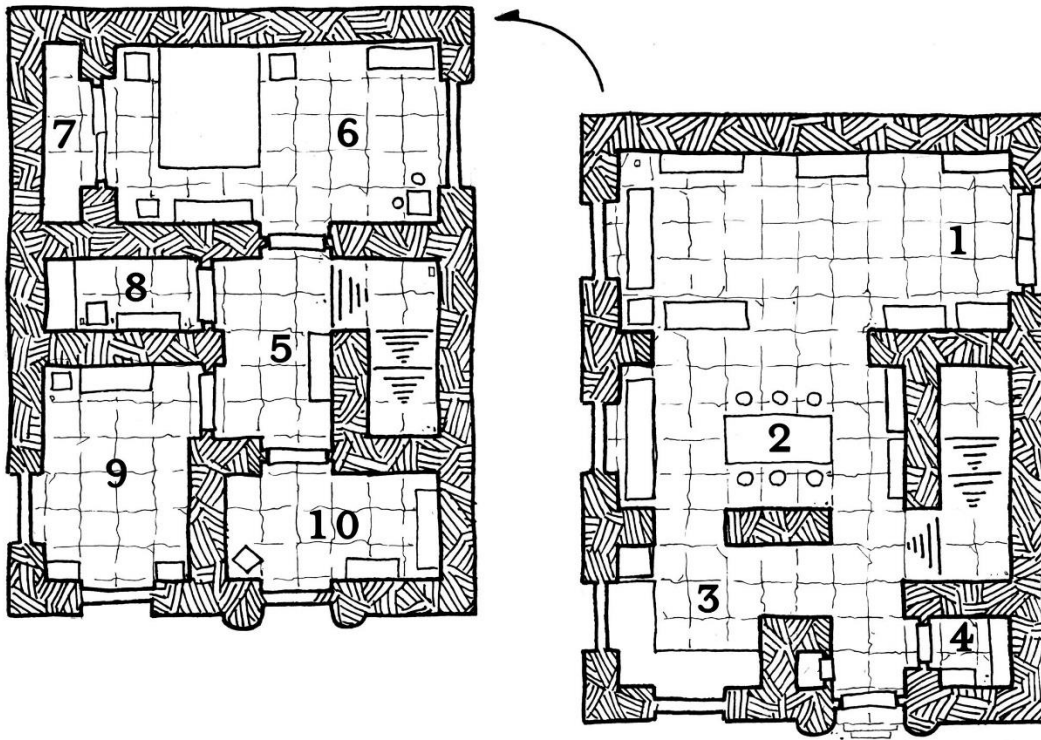
GRINDA GARLOTH: Just use the base description of Mistshore (see *Dragon Heist*, p. 65), ignoring all of the seasonal variants. Grinda is allied with Xanathar, working primarily as a black market armorer: Xanatharian agents can come to Grinda and get outfitted with high quality equipment. Grinda also freelances, renting her equipment (and Xanathar’s equipment) to third parties.

Area D2: Grinda’s chest contains:

- 500 gp
- *A Note Regarding Gladiatorial Weaponry:* “Xanathar wants the full bundle of weaponry delivered to Terasse’s house of healing on Elsambul’s Lane no later than two days from now so that it can be sent down to headquarters with the next gladiatorial audience. Don’t be late! He’s looking forward to seeing some exotic gutting. -Ahmaergo” (*GM Note:* If it becomes notable, this is simple a bunch of vicious-looking oddities — many of them foreign weapons from distant lands — destined for the gladiatorial combats.)

Area D3: Grinda has a wide assortment of mundane arms and armor (including several single-shot pistols). At any given time, she also has 1d4 pieces of magic arms and armor (roll on Table F, DMG p. 146), and 1d4 miscellaneous magic items (roll on Table A or B, DMG p. 145).

TERASSE ESTATE (Castle Ward, Esambul’s Lane): The Terasse Estate is a modest rowhouse residence in the Castle Ward which is secretly owned by Xanathar. It is occupied by a Xanatharian operative named Keln Trigos, a tiefling **priest** (MM p. 348). Keln sometimes provides healing services to injured Xanatharians, but the house is more notable because it’s a designated gladiatorial gathering point: Those who wish to attend the gladiatorial combats in Xanathar’s Lair must go to one of these gathering points (there are several throughout the city, some heading through the sewers to X1, others following the route described below) in order to be escorted, as a group, to the games (and back).



Area 1 – Front Door: Those coming to the Terasse Estate must give a specific knock and an accompanying pass-phrase to be given entrance. There are two different combinations, one for healing services (“I heard the red hand was hot”) and another for the gladiatorial gatherings (“the bawdy star shines bright tonight”).

Area 2 – Dining Room: Those here for gladiatorial gatherings are brought together in this room for light socializing and the enjoyment of various delicacies placed upon the table. (Roasted bulette with rare Shou Louan spices. Rothé carpaccio with vargouille head cheese.)

Area 3 – Kitchen: A large rug of reddish scales covers the floor here. This can be thrown back to reveal a trap door with a narrow staircase leading down to an underground dock. Those heading to the gladiatorial gatherings will be blindfolded before being led down the stairs, and the blindfolds will remain in place until the boat arrive at another secret dock in the caverns near Skullport. This dock connects to a passage which intersects the one leading from Area X4 of Xanathar’s Lair to the Guts & Garter in Skullport.

Area 4 – Storeroom: Trigost’s larder and healing supplies.

Area 5 – Upper Landing: An ancient tapestry on the wall depicts a heavily stylized beholder with several humanoid figures of various races bowing in obeisance before it.

- **Injury Reports:** A logbook hanging on the wall here records those who have been treated here. The names listed are clear pseudonyms designed to keep the

patrons of this house of healing anonymous. One recent entry, however, notes, that a particular wound from an arrow was the result of “incautious observation of the windmill on Coachlamp Lane”. (*GM Note*: This refers to the Converted Windmill, a Cassalanter outpost.)

Area 6-7 – Master Suite: This is Trigos’ bedchamber, with walk-in closet.

- **Desk**: Trigos has a variety of expensive stationaries and writing utensils for performing his correspondence, but he also has a burn-pot that he obviously uses to destroy that correspondence on a regular basis. One recent bit of correspondence he hasn’t had a chance to reply to yet, however, is *A Note Regarding Gladiatorial Weaponry*: “The shipment of special weapons that X requested will be sent by Grinda Garloth in Mistshore. See that they’re bundled up and sent along with the next audience procession. -Ahmaergo” (*GM Note*: If it becomes notable, this is simply a bunch of vicious-looking oddities — many of them foreign weapons from distant lands — destined for the gladiatorial combats.)

Areas 8-10 – Sick Rooms: These bedrooms are used by Xanatharian agents who come to Trigos for his healing arts.

- **An Ill Man’s Note**: On the bedside table of a Xanatharian agent there’s a note which reads: “Orb Confectioners. / Eight small eyes. / How would you like those arranged? / Around an ocular cake.”

XANATHAR SEWER HIDEOUT, TAKE 2: The Xanathar Guild maintains a number of sewer hideouts throughout Waterdeep. This one is a duergar operation run by Korgstrud Uxgulm. Use the Autumn version of the Cellar Complex (see *Dragon Heist*, p. 86).

Orb Confectioners (Southern Ward, : The sewer hideout can be accessed from the cellar (Area B1) of the Orb Confectioners, a shop specializing in sweets fashion like eyes (smallcakes, sweatmeats, sugar plates, candied nuts).

- **Passphrase**: Those asking for “eight small eyes” are asked, “How would you like those arranged?” They are to answer, “Around an ocular cake.” If they do so, they are escorted to the basement stairs.

Area B7 – Mechanical Beholder: Mixed in with the other material in this room is a letter.

- *On the Delivery of a Mechanical Beholder*: “X is outraged that you bungling incompetents couldn’t get his *piece de triumphe* working for the Shipwrights’ Ball! If it isn’t seen swooping over the Feasts of Leirun, he’ll have your guts for garters! See that it’s delivered to Terasse’s house of healing on Elsambul’s Lane by the ninth of Tarsahk or be prepared to pay for it with your heads! -Ahmaergo”

Area B8: Remove the stairs up.

Area B9b – Korgstrud’s Room: The chest at the foot of his bed is a **mimic**. The coffer in a secret compartment under the bed (DC 13 to find) contains 500 gp and *Correspondence with N’arl Xibrindas*.

- *Correspondence with N’arl Xibrindas*: “Korgstrod—It is very important that this be kept in strict confidence. Only you, me, and X know of the smokepowder. It must be brought to the Staircase of Eyes on the night of the 1st at precisely the stroke of eleven. Use disposable muscle. I will mark the sewer tunnels west of your hideout with a red eye to guide your men. – N’arl Xibrindas.”
- *GM Note*: N’arl’s guildsign leads to Area X1 of Xanathar’s Lair (the secret entrance). See *Part 5B: Finding Floon* for guidelines on following guildsign. Due to its age, this guildsign requires DC 15 checks to follow and the final check is DC 17 because N’arl deliberately tried to destroy the symbols nearest Xanathar’s lair. If the PCs fail three times before succeeding, it indicates that time and/or N’arl have done too much damage and they’ve lost the trail.

ZHENTARIM OUTPOSTS

ZHENTARIM INTERROGATION HOUSE (Trade Ward, Brindul Alley): Avareen Windrivver (LE female Illuskan human **spy**) and Zorbog Jyarkoth (NE male Turami human **thug**) maintain this combination safe house / covert interrogation center.

- Use the Map for house L1 on p. 62 of *Dragon Heist*.

Front Room: Avareen and Zorbog live here. A nest of three black **flying snakes** (used by the Zhents for sending messages) nest in a corner near the ceiling.

- Avareen carries a pass-amulet for Kolat Tower (see Part 4).
- As the PCs are exploring the house, a **flying snake** arrives with *A Directive to Zorbog*. Signed by “Manshoon”, it exhorts Zorbog to “gather the usual gang” and kidnap “Fenerus Stormcastle, who lives on Quill Alley”, a “known associate of these new meddlers in the Grand Game”. Zorbog is to squeeze Fenerus until he reveals everything he knows about these new participants.

Backroom: The backroom has a rack and several other instruments of torture, along with an arcane circle painted on the floor in the corner. Currently strapped into the rack is Ott Steeltoes, a shield dwarf wearing a leather skullcap stitched with fake beholder eyestalks. Ott is a Xanatharian agent captured by the Zhentarim.

Rescuing Ott:

- Ott: “They kept asking me about where Xanathar kept the Eye! I don’t even know what that is!”
- Ott: “I knew Xanathar would send someone to rescue me! ... You’re not with Xanathar? Well, thank you for saving me! We could use a few more good people like you right now with what those filthy Zhent bastards are doing! I could take you back to HQ and make some introductions if you’d like to sign up!”
- Or maybe the PCs can convince him they *are* Xanatharian agents and have him lead them back to Xanathar’s lair. Ott managed to resist torture for a long time, but in his immense gratitude he makes some errors in judgment.

YELLOWSPIRE (Castle Ward): Use the Winter version of the Old Tower (see *Dragon Heist*, p. 79). It is occupied by Amath Seccent (LE female Mulan **priest**), a Banite priestess allied with Manshoon, and her four **acolytes**.

- Seccent is friends with Agorn Fuoco (see *Part 3C: Response Teams*), and he may also be found visiting here.
- *GM Note*: The permanent teleportation circle in Yellowspire is one method of accessing Manshoon's lair.
- *GM Note*: If the Gralhunds are still active in the Grand Game, one of their agents, Chirada, may be keeping Yellowspire under observation from a small apartment across the street. (See "A Missive from Castle Ward" in Area G12 of the Gralhund Villa.) Alternatively, following Chirada's advice, the Gralhunds may be mounting an expedition to raid Yellowspire, access the teleportal, and try to find the Second Eye.

Area O2 – Ground Level: A crumpled note has been carelessly tossed to one side.

- **Crumpled Note**: "Seccent—I have nothing but contempt for what you have done. I don't know what foul rites you hope to perform, but the more traditional rites of Brindul Alley would have surely wrung any information this broadsheet publisher might have had. Nonetheless, Manshoon's word is my command, and so I present to you Shan Chien. May you choke on him. – Avareen"

USING THE OUTPOSTS

These Outposts are fairly flexible in their utility. The DM should be actively playing each faction, and these outposts are some of the tools they can use while doing so. (No different than playing a PC and using their equipment list.) Structurally speaking, however, they're primarily designed to be pit stops or side quests for the PCs as they head for each faction's Lair (see Part 4), allowing them to gather intelligence (including, for example, the actual location of hidden lairs and/or the means of accessing them).

Here are some ways to use the Outposts:

- If the PCs want to find a faction by doing general research, point them at the Outposts first. (The Outposts contain clues that point to the Lairs.)
- In some cases, the Outposts will also include vectors accessing Lairs that are difficult to access. (For example, the teleportation circle in Yellowspire or the gladiatorial audience caravans leaving from the Terasse Estate.)
- The PCs are invited to meet with a faction. (This is particularly true for Jarlaxle's theater, for example.)
- The villains have kidnapped a friend or ally of the PCs. They're being held in one of the Outposts and the PCs need to either rescue them or go to the Outpost and pay their ransom.
- Villainous operations targeting the PCs or other factions will be based out of the Outposts, giving the PCs an opportunity to track or backtrack them. (For example, a Xanathar raid targeting Jarlaxle's ship might be based out of Grinda Garloth's, perhaps even with the Apparatus of Kwalish coming into play.)

From the very beginning of the campaign, keep an eye out for opportunities to point the PCs at the Outposts from unusual angles. For example, maybe they go looking for a supplier of magic armor. Send them to Grinda Garloth's. Or maybe they're sent to Fenerus Stormcastle as someone who can help them unravel some guild trouble. Even if these opportunities don't immediately lead the PCs to investigate these Outposts, it opens the door for them to be reincorporated [LINK] later when they crop up as part of the Grand Game.

Also refer to *Part 5: Clues and Timelines* to see the revelation lists which will result in the PCs moving between and through the Outposts.

USING THE CASSALANTER OUTPOSTS

Because the PCs may end up working for the Cassalanters, the use of their Outposts deserves some special consideration.

If the PCs *don't* agree to help the Cassalanters, the dynamics of the Cassalanters' involvement in the campaign will completely change. This is discussed in more detail in *Part 3C: Response Teams*.

On the other hand, if the PCs agree to help the Cassalanters, then the Cassalanters are generally going to want to keep them at arm's-length from the rest of their operations. (They recognize that the risk of outing themselves as devil-worshippers and losing the PCs' support is too high.) In this scenario, the PCs may be able to follow clues from some of the other factions to Cassalanter operations and figure out that something isn't right, but the odds are low.

The DM, therefore, needs to make a decision: Do they want to make it likely that the Cassalanters will get away with it and pull one over on the PCs? Or do they want the PCs to discover what kind of alliance they've made half-way through the Grand Game?

If it's the former, simply do nothing: With the PCs working for them, the Cassalanters probably don't have to do *anything* to get what they want. And they're smart enough to sit back and do exactly that.

If it's the latter, have the Harpers or a similar organization tell the PCs that they've discovered evidence of devil-worshippers active at a site in the North Ward and send the PCs to investigate the Asmodean Shrine: Once there, they have fairly good odds of discovering evidence that implicates the Cassalanters.

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 3C: RESPONSE TEAMS

In remixing *Dragon Heist* as a dynamic campaign, it becomes necessary for the DM to be able to respond dynamically to the players' actions. As I mentioned in the description of the Faction Outposts, the DM needs to be actively playing each faction. Response teams are the other half of that equation, providing small, proactive units for each faction that can be deployed as necessary.

These response teams are your primary proactive nodes for *Dragon Heist*. If you're unfamiliar with the use of proactive nodes, they're discussed as part of *Advanced Node-Based Design* [LINK to <https://thealexandrian.net/wordpress/8176/roleplaying-games/advanced-node-based-design-part-2-node-navigation>]. The short version is that the proactive nodes are the ones that come looking for the PCs. (As opposed to, say, the lairs and the outposts, which the PCs are most likely to go looking for.)

A few examples of what you can use response teams for:

- Competing onsite with the PCs during the Eye Heists (see Part 4), seeking to seize the prize before they can. (Or take it from them after they've gotten it.)
- Sent as negotiators to the PCs.
- Attempting to steal the *Stone* and/or Eyes from the PCs (break-ins at Trollskull Manor, attempted muggings on the street, etc.).
- Waylaying the PCs on their way to the Vault.
- Interfering with the PCs' efforts to remove the gold from the vault.

But, ultimately, you're thinking about what the factions know and thinking about how they would respond and then you're going to use the response teams to do that.

GM Tip: If you're new to this sort of thing and struggling to come to grips with it, there are a couple of things you can do.

First, take 5 minutes between sessions to think about what each faction is going to do next. Some of those things won't affect the PCs; some will. Make a list of those and when they'll happen: Gorath will come to Trollskull Manor at 5pm on the 10th. Souun Xibrindas will target one of the PCs for assassination with a sniper team at 10am on the 11th. And so forth. You can do the same thing during a mid-session break. Eventually, you'll be able to do it in real-time while playing.

Second, as you're ready to make that transition, make a simple list of the response teams. Stick it to your GM screen as a Post-It note or otherwise keep it handy. When you feel a need to respond to what the PCs are doing, glance at the

list and go. You don't have to keep all this information in your head simultaneously: Make cheat sheets.

COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE: Awhile back I designed skill guidelines for counter-intelligence [LINK to <https://thealexandrian.net/wordpress/7496/roleplaying-games/skill-use-counter-intelligence>] — if you're asking questions about certain people or organizations, there's a real risk that they'll find out that you've been asking questions. Those guidelines were designed for 3rd Edition, but you shouldn't find it too difficult to adapt them to 5th Edition.

Once the PCs know that they've gotten themselves tangled up in a Grand Game, you may also want to tell the players about the counter-intelligence procedures. Partly because it'll give them the opportunity to guard their own intelligence-gathering efforts, but more importantly because it will give them the opportunity to perform counter-intelligence: When the factions are trying to figure out who the PCs are or who they're working for or what they're up to, if the PCs are vigilant they may catch wind of that. And that may provide an alternative avenue for investigation (usually taking them to one of the Faction Outposts).

BREGAN D'AERTHE RESPONSE TEAMS

Bregan D'Aerthe's response teams all follow a common profile:

- 1-2 **drow gunslingers** (DH p. 201)
- 4-8 **drow** (MM p. 126)

One of the **drow gunslingers** is likely to be one of Jarlaxle's lieutenants (DH p. 201-202):

- Fel'rekt Lafeen
- Krebbyg Masq'il'yr
- Soluun Xibrindas

Later in the campaign, you might have a team with all of the surviving lieutenants show up for a climactic battle.

Note that Fel'Rekt is also the lieutenant leading the Bregan D'Aerthe team at Gralhund Villa (see Part 2). All of them have quarters on Jarlaxle's ships.

FEL'REKT LAFEEN

- *A Recommendation for Materiel:* A note written in silver ink on black paper. "Regarding the need for alternative sources of materiel, make contact with Grinda Garloth of Mistshore. Use all caution and do not reveal your true heritage, as she is allied with the beholder and that poses certain risks for us now. - J"

KREBBYG MASQ'IL'YR

- *Sealed Letter to Fenerus Stormcastle*. A simple missive addressed to “Fenerus Stormcastle, of Quill Alley” thanking him for his service. It is written in silver ink on black paper and signed “J”. It is attached to a velvet pouch containing 100 gp.

SOLUUN XIBRINDAS

- Carries a bloodstained playbill from the Seven Masks Theater, belonging to a performance of *Blood Wedding* which took place several nights earlier. (In the play, according to the playbill, a young woman is brought to a castle by a count, only to fall in love with his younger brother, a man of faith. Her betrayal eats away at the jealous count. He murders his brother on his wedding day and pursues the bride, who hurls herself off the castle battlements in despair. The count is cursed by the gods and transformed into a creature of darkness, damned to live in his castle and feed on blood.)
- *GM Note*: Soluun has taken to attending plays at the Seven Masks Theater and then stalking and murdering elven and half-elven members of the audience after the show.

CASSALANTER RESPONSE TEAMS

If the PCs have agreed to help the Cassalanters, then the Cassalanters will generally be fairly passive in their activities. (The PCs are their agents in the field.) If the PCs request assistance from them, however, the Cassalanters might dispatch Seffia Naelryke and her team (either to gather intelligence and deliver it to them, or to fight at their side).

If the PCs turn down the Cassalanters, then the whole shape of the campaign will shift:

- Imps summoned at the Asmodean Shrine will try to keep the PCs under constant surveillance, keeping the Cassalanters apprised of what the PCs are doing and learning.
- Add Seffia’s team to the Eye Heist at Xanathar’s. They’ll be aiming for the same goal.
- Willifort Crowelle will attempt to assassinate Jarlaxle. He’ll fail, but a few days later he’ll target the PCs in a similar attempt. This may prompt Jarlaxle to reach out to the PCs and propose an alliance against the Cassalanters.

SEFFIA NAELRYKE: Seffia is a loyal Asmodean cultist. She lives at the Converted Windmill outpost with Arn Xalrondar.

- Seffia Naelryke (**cult fanatic**, MM p. 345)
- 2 **spies** (MM p. 349)
- 1 **veteran** (MM p. 350)
- 1 invisible **imp** (MM p. 76)

Seffia’s Letter: Seffia carries a letter from Lord Cassalanter. It reads: “Seffia—Lady Ammalia and I are both deeply moved by what your ritual accomplished. It speaks to your true faith in the power of our Master, and you have clearly been blessed by him. As you suspected, we did, in fact, find Neverember’s Third Eye in the crypt of Lady Brandath. Thank you for all that you have done. — Lord Victoro”.

- *GM Note:* This is a prized possession for Seffia and she keeps it with her at all times. She will cry out with anguish and rage if it is taken from her.

WILLIFORT CROWELLE: “Willifort” is supposedly the elderly tiefling valet of the Cassalanters. In truth he is a doppelganger and their most trusted lieutenant. Willifort might approach the PCs disguised as a friend or ally in order to pump them for information; or he may try to burn the PCs’ bridges by disguising himself as one of them and doing something to piss off powerful people. And when the Cassalanters definitively need a problem solved, Crowelle is the one they’ll send in with a team of demonic enforcers.

- “Willifort Crowelle” (**doppelganger**, MM p. 82)
- **bearded devil** (MM p. 70) or 2 **cult fanatics** (MM p. 345)
- 3 **cultists** (MM p. 345)

XANATHAR RESPONSE TEAMS

GORATH: Gorath is the leader of a small team of duergar. His team is sent in one when someone needs to be taught a lesson.

- 4 **duergar** (MM p. 122)

KORGSTROD UXGULM: If Gorath is taken out, Korgstrod is sent out from the Xanathar Sewer Hideout (see Outposts) to send a stronger message.

- Korgstrod Uxgulfm (**duergar**, MM p. 122)
- 3 **duergar**
- **half-ogre** (MM p. 238)
 - *Orb Confectioners’ Note:* The half-ogre carries a note which reads, “Orb Confectioners. Say: ‘Eight small eyes.’ ‘Around an ocular cake.’”
- **gazer** (DH p. 203)

NOSKA UR’GRAY: Noska, a shield dwarf, is another of Xanathar’s enforcers.

- Noska Ur’gray (DH p. 213)
- 6 **bugbears** (MM p. 33)
- **gazer** (DH p. 203)

A DIRECTIVE FROM N’ARL XIBRINDAS: The first or second Xanathar response team the PCs encounter should carry *A Directive From N’Arl Xibrindas*, instructing the leader of the response team to get “properly outfitted” by Grinda Garloth. (If it’s the second response team they’ve dealt with, it might specify that “these gutter-scum upstarts already took out [insert name here], so you’ll want to make sure you’ve got something a little extra to deal with them.”)

- This team has a *potion of healing*, *potion of greater healing*, and a +1 weapon. (They were, in fact, outfitted by Grinda.)

ZHENTARIM RESPONSE TEAMS

Manshoon’s response teams consist of:

- 1 lieutenant (Vevette, Urstul, or Agorn)
- 3-4 **thugs**

All of Manshoon's lieutenants carry pass-amulets to Kolat Towers (see Part 4), but will attempt to destroy them if it looks as if they are being captured. (Except Agorn, that feckless weasel, who will attempt to barter it for his own life.) They leave their *teleport rings* with Sidra Romeir when journeying outside Kolat Towers. (If they're slain by the PCs, Sidra will give them to Kaevra; see Part 4E.)

TO THE INTERROGATION HOUSE: Any Zhentarim response team sent to attack the PCs will have been instructed to take them as prisoners to the Zhentarim Interrogation House. If questioned, they'll be able to point the PCs in the direction of the house in Brindul Alley in the Trade Ward.

VEVETTE BLACKWATER: When she was a young girl, Vevette was abused by her mother. A Zhentarim agent came to her when she was twelve, put a blade in her hand, and asked if she wanted to take control of her life. She did. And she's been in the Black Network ever since.

Vevette's past manifests itself in a deep streak of cruelty and ruthlessness, but to most outward appearance she is a charming *bon vivant*. She has fiery red hair with two streaks of brilliant platinum, which can actually glow in the dark on her command.

Stats: CE female Tethyrian human **swashbuckler** (DH p. 216)

Notes:

- Vevette carries *Seffia Naelryke's Visiting Card*. It gives Seffia's address as "the Windmill on Coachlamp Lane". (*GM Note:* Seffia approached Vevette in order to open a discrete line of communication between the Cassalanter and Manshoon, but her overtures were rebuffed. After their experiences with Xanathar, the Zhentarim suspected a trap.)

AGORN FUOCO: Agorn made such a good impression on Manshoon that he was elevated quickly through the ranks of the organization, but his life was full of disappointment otherwise. He has not achieved the fame he craved nor earned the wealth he felt he was entitled to. He has adopted the Zhentarim credo that power comes to those who deserve it. In fact, he believed it so much that he murdered his own mother in order to "escape" her poverty. He has come to see the Black Network as a new family of sorts.

Agorn is a hollow coward. When engaging with the PCs, he will generally send the thugs under his command to attack while he remains at a safe distance. If his men are being slaughtered, he will bravely run away as quickly as possible in order to save his own worthless hide. As noted above, he will offer up his pass-amulet to Kolat Towers in exchange for his own life.

Agorn is friends with Amath Seccent (see Yellowspire in *Part 3B: Faction Outposts*), but he will gladly sell her out, too, revealing the existence of the teleportation circle in Yellowspire.

Stats: NE male Turami **bard** (DH p. 195)

Notes:

- Agorn carries a *Report to Agorn Fuoco*. “Korgstrod Uxgulum’s outfit is based out of the Orb Confectioners’ on Rising Ride just off Caravan Court. Not sure how the backroom can fit them all, but there’s no question that Xanathar’s duergar come in and out of there on the regular.”

URSTUL FLOXIN: Urstul is a thuggish man who notably leads both the Zhentarim attempt to capture Dalakhar (and gets blown up for his trouble) and their operation at the Gralhund Villa. If he survives the latter, he can crop up later leading a response team.

Stats & Background: DH p. 216

Notes:

- Urstul carries the *Directive to Urstul Floxin*: “Any prisoners taken from the other players of the Grand Game should be delivered to Avaareen in Brindul Alley. – By Order of the Zhentarim”

DESIGN NOTE

Vevette Blackwater and Agorn Fuoco are supposed to appear in Appendix B of Dragon Heist. As far as I can tell, however, they’re missing in action, so I’ve provided more detailed backgrounds for them here.

Note that the Zhentarim response teams are generally weaker than the response teams from the other factions. This probably means the Zhents won’t be taken as seriously by the PCs as the other factions, but it also makes them a good selection if you want to or need to hit the PCs when they’re already weakened.

Also check out the “Secret Simulacrum” option on page 162 of Dragon Heist for another Zhentarim response option.

OTHER RESPONSE TEAMS

GRALHUNDS: Depending on how *Part 2: Gralhund Villa* resolves itself, the Gralhunds might remain engaged with the Grand Game. They’ll know that the only way to re-establish their position will be to take possession of Golorr artifacts, and they’ll probably identify any artifact(s) held by the PCs as the most vulnerable. (But they are likely to use covert means to obtain it if possible.)

If the Gralhunds have somehow managed to retain possession of the *Stone*, they may be emboldened by their success and more actively pursue the Eyes. It's more likely, however, that they will eventually realize that they're out of their depth and use whatever Golorr artifact(s) they've managed to obtain as collateral for forming an alliance with another player in the Grand Game. Any of the four major factions can make enticing offers to them, but another possibility is that the Gralhunds simply decide to cut their losses and approach the Open Lord: They won't get a cut of the money that way, but if they can spin it the right way they may get a lot of political capital out of their "material assistance to the realm".

Their response team is modest, consisting of:

- Hrabbaz, Lady Yalah's bodyguard (DH p. 205)
- A **spy** (MM p. 349)
- A **martial arts adept** (DH p. 209)

GM Tip: Remember that the Gralhunds also have agents in Renaer Neverember's home. If the PCs keep Renaer in the loop about their activities, those agents become a potential vector of information back to the Gralhunds.

OPEN LORD: Laeral Silverhand has the entire apparatus of Waterdeep's government at her command. If she wants something from the PCs, that command will trickle down through the bureaucracy and be executed by a local team of city watchmen:

- 1 **veteran** (MM p. 350)
- 4 **guards**
- Possibly accompanied by an **apprentice wizard** (DH p. 194)

DESIGN NOTE

The initial team sent by the Open Lord is designed to be a Medium encounter for the PCs. Which means that the PCs can totally take them in a fair fight (or have very good odds of running away successfully). This intentionally gives the PCs the option of doing so. (Once they do, of course, they're probably living on borrowed time because the Open Lord has much deeper — and much more powerful — resources to call upon.)

This also means that the City Watch can easily be pitted against response teams from the other factions without trivially overwhelming them.

UNSEEN

If you're using the Unseen (from Introcaso's *Unseen Waterdeep* [LINK], see Part 1B), they'll most likely make their presence primarily felt through proactive response teams. (Sort of a, "Player Unseen has joined the game!" kind of thing.)

THE ILLUSIONISTS: Aila and Dalia Illmatti are twin sisters and also illusionists. They actually perform a stage act using their skills, and you might consider adding them to the Seven Masks Theater, with the Unseen infiltrating Jarlaxle's operation there. If pursued, one of their favorite tricks is to have one of the sisters create an illusion of the other (giving them an opportunity to escape with whatever they've stolen).

- Aila and Dalia (**illusionists**, *Unseen Waterdeep* p. 29)
- Kelso Fiddlewick (a **wererat** who disguises himself as a vagrant child, MM p. 209)
- 2 **thugs** (MM p. 350)

STRIKE TEAM: As detailed on p. 4 of *Unseen Waterdeep*, this is a generic strike team that can be used to achieve any number ends.

- **Doppelganger** (MM p. 82)
- *01-50*: 2 **spies** (MM p. 349)
- *51-75*: 2 **thugs** (MM p. 350)
- *76-00*: a second **doppelganger**

[Kelso belongs to the same pack as Gallo and Ferra, see p. 14 of *Unseen*]

THE THREE URCHINS

The Three Urchins are detailed in a sidebar on p. 63 of *Dragon Heist*:

- **Nat** is a lanky, 10-year-old deaf Illuskan girl with a wooden toy sword. She is the leader of the group and communicates using a sign language that she invented and taught her friends.
- **Jenks** is a portly 9-year-old Turami boy with a cloak, a toy wand, and a stuffed owlbear "familiar". He's shy around strangers but brave when it comes to helping his friends.
- **Squiddly** is a slim 9-year-old tiefling boy with an eye patch, a small bow, and a quiver of toy arrows. He rarely thinks before he talks or acts.

It may be odd to think of the Three Urchins as a "response team", but they are a proactive node that the GM can bring onscreen as desired. A few things I'd consider:

- **Introduce the Urchins in Trollskull Alley**, possibly even as part of the first scene where the PCs arrive at Trollskull Mansion. (They might be inside the abandoned building, rampaging around, pretending to fight trolls and such, and offering all kinds of stories about the ghost of a troll skull which haunts the building.)
- Have them **follow the PCs**. They "fancy themselves as adventurers of sorts, and they are quick to idolize and emulate real-life ones."

- Have them **interfere with faction missions** (most likely while trying to help, unless the PCs have pissed them off).
- Let them be **valuable sources of information**. They can show up in the streets around Gralhund Villa, familiar with the neighborhood. Nat might know Agorn because she grew up in the same neighborhood he lived in (and knows that he murdered his mother). And so forth.
- Have them **eavesdrop on the PCs** and **volunteer to help**.

If you're content to just have these kids as friendly, rambunctious supporting characters, that's more than enough. They'll be a charming and lovely part of your campaign.

But if you're willing to go a little darker, there are a couple of additional options:

- If the bad guys are looking for someone to **kidnap** in order to gain leverage over the PCs, one or more of the Urchins makes a great target. (Going to rescue them and discovering that they've already broken out of their cell and are causing huge headaches for the bad guys by sneaking around the outpost or lair where they're being held also offers great comedic opportunities.)
- As I will discuss at further length in Part 5, I think it necessary to give the PCs a stronger motivation to investigate the *fireball* that kills Dalakhar beyond "it happened sort of near us and it's obviously a plot hook, so we should just go for it." One way to provide that motivation is to **kill** someone the PCs care about as collateral damage. If it won't be a deal-breaker for your group, I guarantee that killing one of the Urchins after the PCs have become friends with them will set them permanently on the warpath no matter how many city officials tell them to back off.

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 4: THE EYES OF THE STONE

After hiding the secret of the Vault's location in the *Stone of Golorr*, Lord Neverember chose to further secure it by blinding the *Stone*: He removed the *Stone*'s three eyes, robbing it of the ability to both see and communicate its secrets, and hid those Eyes in different places.

In order to discover the location of the Vault, someone needs to restore the Eyes to the *Stone of Golorr*. (Which is simply a matter of having both in the same location and placing an Eye within an empty socket.) As described in Part 1, the Eyes are currently held by the Cassalanter, Manshoon, and Xanathar. Each of these Eyes have been secured in their respective lairs, and if the PCs want to restore the *Stone of Golorr*, discover the location of the Vault, and end the Grand Game, then they're going to have to go into those lairs and get them.

HEIST STRUCTURE

This part of our remix, therefore, restructures the four villain lairs so that the PCs can run exciting and successful heists in them. This includes providing adversary rosters and explicit heist frames for each lair, along with minor tweaks and the like where necessary.

Before we dive in, let's take a moment to discuss the structure of a heist scenario. It superficially resembles the location-crawl [LINK] (usually featuring a room-and-key design), but with the – very important! – distinction that the PCs are expected to know the floor plan and some (or all) of the defensive measures present before the actual heist begins. In this it also closely resembles the raid structure [LINK to <https://thealexandrian.net/wordpress/39950/roleplaying-games/scenario-structure-challenge-1-raiding-the-death-star>], but the difference is that, whereas in the raid scenario the PCs can quickly figure out the floorplan and defensive measures largely through observation in the immediate moment, in the heist discovering these elements usually requires additional effort during the prep phase of the heist.

The heist structure is heavily player-driven, but if the players haven't done proper heists before, they can prove unusual enough that the DM should let the players know that they have opportunities they might not normally consider viable. (This is particularly true specifically *because* of the heist's similarity to the dungeon crawl: Players may assume that they're "supposed" to engage the heist in the same way that they engage a traditional dungeon.)

The heist structure consists of five steps.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE SCORE. For the purposes of *Dragon Heist*, this means identifying where the Eyes are (i.e., the lairs of the villains). Part 5 will have the revelation lists with all the clues the PCs can follow to figure this out.

STEP 2: GATHER INFORMATION. The next step is for the PCs to gather information on their target. This should include being able to gain access to some or all of the **blueprints** and **defensive measures** in the targeted complex. It may also include an **event schedule**, which will often feature one or more opportunities for performing the heist (by either providing unique access to the target and/or providing cover for the operation).

The descriptions of the lairs below will include brief descriptions of what form the Gather Information phase might take for each lair, but the GM should always remain open to alternative thinking from the PCs.

Re: Blueprints. You may benefit from high-quality player versions of the maps. These are not, unfortunately, available in the book as printed, and due to copyright reasons I'm not going to produce them here. They are available in the Fantasy Grounds pack for *Dragon Heist*, and I believe they're also available from D&D Beyond.

You may want to prepare:

- A full blueprint (i.e., the entire player's map).
- A version with secret areas removed.
- Partial versions, particularly reflecting the limited knowledge of certain underlings who might be questioned. (Although it may be easier to simply sketch these out *ad hoc* as they come up during play.)

Be aware of the lack of windows in all of these maps. Place them logically or be prepared to tell the players where they're located.

It's important for the DM to remember that, in a heist scenario, the expected outcome is for the PCs to succeed in getting this information. That doesn't mean it's guaranteed: The expected outcome of combat in D&D is for the PCs to win, but that doesn't mean it always happens. But DMs can sometimes get a little too enamored of keeping their cards close to their chest, and you may need to consciously remind yourself to fight that instinct: 90% of the fun in a heist scenario comes from seeing a problem and coming up with a solution for it. Only about 10% comes from being surprised by the unknown in the middle of the heist (and that'll usually arise organically as the heist plays out).

STEP 3: ONSITE SURVEILLANCE. After the initial gathering of information, most heist stories will give the protagonists an opportunity to conduct onsite surveillance *before the heist happens*. This surveillance allows them to gain information they missed or were unable to gather earlier, clarify the information they already have, and/or discover that some of their information was inaccurate or outdated (and now they have a whole new set of problems to solve!).

One really easy division is to make it easy to obtain floor plans of the target, but to only be able to ascertain limited information about the security measures in place without onsite surveillance.

Each lair will detail at least one **surveillance opportunity** that the PCs can take advantage of.

STEP 4: PREP WORK. Possibly running in tandem with the onsite surveillance, the team will also need to make preparations for the job. Prep often takes the form of *altering* the information the PCs have received — creating new entrances, blinding security cameras, subverting guards, etc. It may also involve creating bespoke resources (or simply shopping for necessary supplies).

STEP 5: THE OPERATION. Finally, the operation itself. The PCs try to carry out their plan.

In running the operation, there may be one or more pre-planned **twists**: Unexpected circumstances that the PCs didn't anticipate or that they missed in their research. These will often evolve organically from earlier missed checks. Lean into those. Gotchas that the PCs had no way of anticipating and which create unexpected complications for the job ("Oh crap! Mrs. Johnson came home early!") are also great in moderation, but gotchas that automatically scuttle the entire job and negate all the PCs' planning generally suck and should be avoided.

Successfully executing a heist will usually involve a series of skill checks. A single failed check should not cause the entire plan to immediately fail. Use fail forward techniques [LINK] that generate **complications on failed checks**.

These complications on failed checks are also why you can get away with giving the PCs perfect information during Step 2 and Step 3: Among other things, you can use complications to introduce "oh fuck, he got a new safe" obstacles that effectively alter or reveal gaps in the information the PCs acquired on-the-fly.

(The difference between a gotcha and a complication is that the former are things which you, as the DM, plan to have happen before the heist starts. The latter arise as the heist is happening.)

FLEETSWAKE & WAUKEENTIDE

As a final note here, this remix is set in the Springtime, during the back-to-back festivals of Fleetswake (Ches 21st thru 30th) and Waukeentide (Tarsakh 1st thru 10th). There are a couple reasons for this.

First, these festivals are filled with gold- and wealth-filled events, which is very thematically appropriate for the dragon-fueled pursuit of Lord Neverremember's Vault.

Second, and more importantly, these festivals provide wide opportunities for social events – parties, galas, gladiatorial games, etc. – to take place at each of the villains' lairs. These provide both surveillance opportunities and access for the operations themselves.

The broad date range (and multiple events) give us a lot more flexibility in terms of how this section times out: If we instead aimed for just Trolltide on Klythorn 1st, for example, and the PCs do things a little slower than we anticipate, then we could easily miss the holiday entirely. If they go a little slower in our case, then we just slide into the next slate of events during the dual festivals.

This long festival season can also explain why Jarlaxle has chosen this moment to appear in town with the Sea Maidens' Faire: It's the perfect cover for his traveling carnival.

FLEETSWAKE: This festival is the beginning of the Spring Social Season in Waterdeep. Celebrating the sea, maritime trade, and the gods of the sea, navigation, and weather, it spans the last tenday of Ches, and includes a series of **boat races** and **guild-sponsored galas** at the Copper Cup festhall. According to custom, the winners of the various competitions don't keep their trophies and earnings, but deliver them to the priests of Umberlee at the Queenspire, her temple on the beach by the east entrance to the Great Harbor, at the conclusion of the festival (see below).

- **Ches 21 – Selûne Sashelas:** A celebration of Selûne, goddess of the moon and navigation, and Deep Sashelas of the Seldarine, elven god of the sea. It is supposedly based on a mangled legend dating back to the time when the elven city of Aelinthaldar stood where Waterdeep does today and telling of a time when the elves of the sea said farewell to their brethren upon the land and moved into the deep ocean. The elves largely declare this to be a bunch of hogwash, but nevertheless the “historical event” is commemorated by the Twin Parades: A huge line of ships (varying greatly in size) proceeds from the harbor, loops up the coast, and returns. Simultaneously, a land-based parade proceeds from the Docks and through the streets of Waterdeep.
- **Ches 25 – Shipwrights' Ball:** Held at the Shipwrights' House, what was once a guild celebration has turned into one of the biggest social events of Fleetswake.
- **Ches 29-30 - Fair Seas Festival:** Much feasting on seafood, the harbor is strewn with flower petals, and the City Guards go from tavern to tavern to collect offerings for Umberlee. Collection boxes also appear at large festival gatherings. Upon sunset of the final day, the collected coin is placed in chests and dumped into the deepest part of the harbor. (See *Dragon Heist*, p. 185 for anyone who thinks they should try to loot it.)
- **Ches 30 – Highcoin Balls:** When Lord Peirgeiron was High Lord of Waterdeep, he threw the Highcoin Ball on the 30th of Ches which would last all through the last day of the Fair Seas Festival. It was considered the absolute necessity for those intending to be on the scene that season, and those who missed it became an afterthought for the rest of the year. After Lord Peirgeion's passing, a number of noble families tried to pick up the tradition. The result are the Highcoin Balls, which now generally begin *after* sundown (when the ceremonies of Umberlee's Cache take place). It's not unusual for guests to wander from one party to the next.

WAUKEENTIDE: This festival has long gathered a number of older holidays under one name, stretching those celebrations and rituals into a holiday season that lasts a tenday in homage to Waukeen, the goddess of wealth and trade.fs

- **Tarsahk 1 – Caravance:** This gift-giving holiday commemorates the traditional arrival of the first caravans of the season into the city. Many parents hide gifts for their offspring in their homes, telling the children that they were left by Old Carvas – a mythical peddler who arrived with the first caravan to reach Waterdeep, his wagon loaded down with toys for children to enjoy.
- **Tarsahk 5 – Goldenight:** This festival celebrates coin and gold, with many businesses staying open all night, offering midnight sales and other promotions. Some celebrants and customers decorate themselves with gold dust and wear coins as jewelry.
- **Tarsahk 7 – Guildsmeet:** On this holiday, guild members gather in their halls for the announcement of new policies and a celebration of business concluded for the year. These gatherings culminate in a gala festival and dance sponsored by several guilds, which lasts from dusk till dawn and overruns the Market, the Cynosure, the Field of Triumph, and all areas in between.
- **Tarsahk 10 – Leiruin:** In times long past, Waukeen caught Leira, the goddess of illusions and deception, attempting to cheat her in a deal, and buried her under a mountain of molten gold as punishment. A commemoration of that event, Leiruin is the day for guild members to pay their annual dues and for guildmasters to meet with the Lords of Waterdeep and renew their charters for another year. In the evening, the Leiruin Feasts are held, in which gold coins (and other golden treasures) are baked into random items of food to be won by those who are lucky enough to receive them.

HOLIDAYS AT THE TAVERN: See the notes on hosting the Deadwinter Day Feast at Trollskull Manor on page 162 of *Dragon Heist* for some light, adaptable notes on how the various holidays of Fleetswake and Waukeentide can come home to roost.

DESIGN NOTES

The Highcoin Balls are derived from this wiki [LINK to http://oakthorne.net/wiki/index.php?title=Waterdhavian_Social_Season]. I've sought for an original source in all the Waterdeep lore I own and have been unsuccessful, leading me to suspect that it may be an original creation of Joseph D. Carriker, Jr. for his campaign.

NOTES ON THE LAIRS

The notes on the various lairs below include revisions made to some of the keyed areas in those lairs. After years of doing this, I've discovered that, rather than attempting to simply annotate the changes to an area, it is usually easier to just "overwrite" the entire area. (That way, as the GM, you only need to check to see if any area has been updated. You don't have to simultaneously try to combine and interpolate text across multiple sources.)

Therefore, that's the approach I've taken below. If an area appears in the notes below, you can simply ignore the original key entry in *Dragon Heist* and use the entry as found here. (Unless noted otherwise.)

Remember that NPCs now appear on the adversary roster and should be ignored when they appear in the *Dragon Heist* room keys.

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 4B: BREGAN D’AERTHE – SEA MAIDENS FAIRE

As the PCs become embroiled in the Grand Game, Jarlaxle does not control an Eye. Nevertheless the Sea Maidens Faire and his ships are likely to become a target for a heist before the campaign is done:

- As noted in Part 1 and Part 5, Jarlaxle sold the nimblewright which murdered Dalakhar and can identify the purchasers. PCs may break into the ships in order to steal his shipping records or to access the *crystal ball* connected to the nimblewrights.
- The Bregan D’Aerthe team at Gralhund Villa (Part 2) successfully take possession of the *Stone of Golorr*.
- Jarlaxle’s agents may come into possession of an Eye at a later date, either by stealing it from the PCs or by beating them to the prize in Xanathar’s Lair (see below).

Therefore, we’re going to break down the heist structure for this lair, just like all the others.

It’s also an unusual lair because it really consists of four distinct areas:

- The docked ships *Hellraiser* and *Hellbreaker*
- The Sea Maidens Faire carnival which is erected on the pier between the two ships
- The flagship *Eyecatcher* anchored in the harbor

BLUEPRINT NOTES

Unlike a city building, there won’t be any plans of Jarlaxle’s ships readily available. However, it’s relatively easy to keep them under surveillance. I recommend preparing a player’s copy of the ship maps which includes the upper decks and the portholes on the lower decks.

EVENT SCHEDULE

CARNIVAL PARADES: The Sea Maidens Faire carnival goes on five different parades during its stay in Waterdeep.

- Ches 10th, announcing its arrival
- Ches 21st, participate in the Twin Parades of Selûne Sashelas
- Ches 25th, parade to Shipwrights’ House and then set up local attractions for the evening as part of the Shipwrights’ Ball (Jarlaxle’s agents happily use the occasion to infiltrate this important social event)
- Tarsakh 1st, join the Caravance holiday parade
- Tarsakh 5th, a special midnight parade during Goldenight

During the parades, the Sea Maidens Faire attractions are shut down and the ships themselves are depopulated (see the Parade adversary roster, below).

ZORD’S BUSINESS: At irregular intervals, Jarlaxle (as “Captain Zord”) will leave the *Eyecatcher*. On these occasions his rowboat can be seen docking at the Sea Maidens Faire pier, and then he and his group will move off into the city on various errands (often splitting up).

During these times, the following characters should be stricken from the *Eyecatcher*’s adversary roster:

- Jarlaxle
- Margo Verida & Khafeyta
- Any lieutenants who would otherwise be present on the ship
- 1d3 mates
- 1d6+2 sailors

Although these expeditions cannot be easily planned for, when they occur the *Eyecatcher* will be substantially less guarded than under normal circumstances.

END OF THE SEA MAIDENS FAIRE: On Tarsakh 20th, the Sea Maidens Faire packs up and sails out of Waterdeep harbor. (If the business of the Grand Game has not been concluded, then it’s likely that Jarlaxle will remain behind with a team of operatives.)

SURVEILLANCE OPPORTUNITY

The drow generally don’t bring strangers onto the ship, and although it may seem like there’s a lot of chaos where the carnies are concerned, the truth is that they’ve been journeying together long enough that everyone pretty much knows each other on sight. Other than becoming one of Jarlaxle’s “romantic” conquests, the PCs are unlikely to get onboard any of the ships under any sort of legitimate pretenses in order to conduct surveillance. However, there are a couple of options which can offer comparable information.

SEA MAIDENS FAIRE: The carnival itself, operating on the pier between the ships, runs from mid-morning until late into the night. This provides the perfect cover for those interested in keeping the *Heartbreaker* and *Hellraiser* under surveillance. This surveillance position is able to:

- Identify the total number of crew on each ship — 1 captain, 3 mates, 17-18 sailors, 16 carnies (when they’re not working on the dock; a handful onboard taking breaks at any given time when the carnival is operating)
- Find opportunities to peer in through portholes and get some knowledge of the interior layout of the ship(s)
- Intuit that the *Heartbreaker* and *Hellraiser* are virtually identical in layout, suggesting that the same is also likely true of the *Eyecatcher*
- Note that the *Eyecatcher* goes on full alert when a local yacht steers too close, but has no reaction to rowboats from the *Heartbreaker* or *Hellraiser* approaching

THE DRAGON ZELIFARN: As described in *Dragon Heist* on p. 145, the dragon Zelifarn is a curious **young bronze dragon** who wants the PCs to investigate the submarine attached to the bottom of the *Eyecatcher* and learn nothing in particular about it for no particular reason.

We're going to swap that up a bit: If Zelifarn spots the PCs surveilling Jarlaxle's ship, he'll approach them with a request for help. (If the PCs spot Zelifarn watching Jarlaxle's ship without being detected themselves, they might also choose to approach the dragon.)

Zelifarn's mother was, in addition to being a dragon, a master crystalmancer. Jarlaxle and his agents killed his mother, Asphosis, and stole from her the special *crystal ball* that he uses to spy through the nimblewrights. Zelifarn doesn't know exactly what the *crystal ball* does, but he wants it back so that he can restore his mother's horde. Zelifarn knows that Jarlaxle keeps it in the *Scarlet Marpenoth*, but hasn't been able to figure out a way to get it by himself.

By default, Zelifarn would prefer to pay the PCs to do the work for him. They may be able to convince him to actively assist in their raid on the *Eyecatcher* with a Charisma (Persuasion) check.

(This counts as a surveillance opportunity because the PCs can learn about the existence of both the submarine and the *crystal ball* from Zelifarn.)

SPECIAL EVENTS: These events may be observed if the PCs are keeping the Sea Maidens Faire under long-term surveillance.

- Escaped Bear (DH p. 146) – evening
- Lieutenants Meet with Laeral (DH p. 145) – night

THE SHIPS

Area J18 (Eyecatcher Only) – Nimblewright Storage: Each of these cabins contain 4 deactivated nimblewrights.

- *GM Note:* These are the nimblewrights which Jarlaxle has not yet sold. The process for activating them can be intuited with 5 minutes of work and a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) test. Jarlaxle and his lieutenants all know the procedure and can activate one of the nimblewrights with a single action.

Area J29 (Eyecatcher Only) – Guest Cabin: A small bag of multihued dragon scales has been strewn across the bed (or is kept in a small bag in the bedside table). Jarlaxle uses them like other people might use rose petals.

Area J30 – Zardoz Zord's Cabin: In addition to the normal entry for this area, a **small desk** contains a variety of papers. Among these is the *Ledger of Nimblewright Sales* (see Part 5) and, if Jarlaxle has become involved in the Grand Game, *A Report on the Cultists of Asmodeus*.

- *Report on the Cultists of Asmodeus*: This report compiles information from a number of different sources – most contemporary, although a few surprisingly historical – exploring indications that there is a well-established cult of Asmodeus “which has infiltrated the highest strata of Waterdhavian society”. After what appears to be a considerable amount of legwork, the report identifies a house on Aveen Street in the North Ward as being a secret front for one of the cult’s shrines. This does not appear to be the center of worship, however. That distinction, according to references in some of the documentation captured from the Asmodean cultists over a century ago, appears to belong to an ancient site of worship located below the Sea Ward. A recommendation is made that gaining access to the records of the Suveyors’, Map-, and Chart-makers’ Guild might prove useful in identifying this site, although likely only if its location could be narrowed down.
- *GM Note*: The house on Aveen Street is the Asmodean Shrine (a Cassalanter outpost). The “ancient site of worshgip” lies beneath Cassalanter Villa.

Area U3 – Soluun’s Stateroom: The footlocker contains *A Letter from N’arl*.

- **A Letter From N’arl**: “Brother—I hope this letter finds you in good spirits. Thank you for the evening at the Seven Masks last tenday. A delightfully bloody affair. I think it wonderful that Jarlaxle has decided to purchase the theater, even if his intentions are not purely artistic. It was quite a joy to escape from Xanathar’s lair for a few hours and remember who I truly am. It’s a pity that we can’t do it more often, but the risk of X discovering my true allegiance is simply too great. On that note, I have taken some pains to arrange assurances for myself. When the time comes, I’ll be able to bring this whole wretched ant’s nest down on that floating fool’s head. – N’arl Xibrindas”

Area U4 – Jarlaxle’s Stateroom: In addition to the normal entry for this area, a **crystal ball** sits upon a plush cushion of black velvet on a pedestal at the foot of the bed. This is the *Nimblewright Crystal Ball* (see Part 5).

ADVERSARY ROSTERS

HEARTBREAKER (CARNIVAL ANIMALS)

1 mate + 3 sailors	Area J1 – Main Deck
2 mates	Area J3 – Mates’ Cabin (off-duty, unarmored)
4 sailors	Area J4 – Crew Cabins (1 per cabin, off-duty, unarmored)
Cook (Commoner)	Area J5 – Gallery
6 sailors + 1d4 carnies	Area J7 – Dining Cabin
2 sailors	Area J9 – Aft Castle (Lower)
Captain* + Nimblewright	Area J10 – Captain’s Cabin
2 sailors	Area J11 – After Castle (Upper)
1d8 carnies	Area J14 – Carnies’ Cabins (resting, 16 sleeping at night)
1 sailor (25%)	Area J15 – Brig (in cell)
1d2 Animal Handlers (Commoners)	Area J20 – Creature Pens (animals present only at night)
2 drow gunslingers	Area J23 – Gunslingers’ Hold

HELLRAISER (PARADE FLOATS)

1 mate + 3 sailors
 2 mates
 4 sailors
 Cook (Commoner)
 6 sailors + 1d4 carnies
 2 sailors
 Captain* + Nimblewright
 2 sailors
 1d8 carnies
 1 sailor (25%)
 2 drow gunslingers

Area J1 – Main Deck
 Area J3 – Mates’ Cabin (off-duty, unarmored)
 Area J4 – Crew Cabins (1 per cabin, off-duty, unarmored)
 Area J5 – Gallery
 Area J7 – Dining Cabin
 Area J9 – Aft Castle (Lower)
 Area J10 – Captain’s Cabin
 Area J11 – After Castle (Upper)
 Area J14 – Carnies’ Cabins (resting, 16 sleeping at night)
 Area J15 – Brig (in cell)
 Area J23 – Gunslingers’ Hold

EYECATCHER (FLAGSHIP)

1 mate + 3 sailors
 2 mates
 4 sailors
 Cook (Commoner)
 6 sailors
 4 giant spiders
 2 sailors
 Captain* + Nimblewright
 2 sailors
 Random response team (25%)
 1 sailor (25%)
 8 Nimblewrights
 Margo Verida + Khafeyta + Jarlaxle (25%)
 Jarlaxle (26-50%) + Nimblewright
 5 attack mannequins
 Jarlaxle (51-00%)

Area J1 – Main Deck
 Area J3 – Mates’ Cabin (off-duty, unarmored)
 Area J4 – Crew Cabins (1 per cabin, off-duty, unarmored)
 Area J5 – Gallery
 Area J7 – Dining Cabin
 Area J17 – Lower Cargo Hold MM p. 328
 Area J9 – Aft Castle (Lower)
 Area J10 – Captain’s Cabin
 Area J11 – After Castle (Upper)
 Area J14 – Cabins (resting)
 Area J15 – Brig (in cell)
 Area J18 – Storage (deactivated)
 Area J29 – Guest Cabin
 Area J30 – Zardo Zord’s Cabin
 Area J31 – Training Area
 Area J32 – Jarlaxle’s Sauna

* Has key to captain’s trunk and all doors on their ship.

SCARLET MARPENOTH

Soluun Xibrindas (50%)
 Fel’Rekt Lafeen (50%)
 Krebbyg Masq-il’yr (50%)
 3 gnome engineers +2 mates
 4 gnome engineers

Area U3 – Soluun’s Stateroom
 Area U5 – Fel’Rekt’s Stateroom
 Area U6 – Krebbyg’s Stateroom
 Area U7b – Command Center
 Area U8 – Engineers’ Staterooms

[replace the prisoners on one of the ships with someone from another faction]

ADVERSARY ROSTER – DURING PARADE

HEARTBREAKER (CARNIVAL ANIMALS)

1 mate + 1 sailor
 2 mates
 4 sailors
 Cook (Commoner)
 2 sailors

Area J1 – Main Deck
 Area J3 – Mates’ Cabin (off-duty, unarmored)
 Area J4 – Crew Cabins (1 per cabin, off-duty, unarmored)
 Area J5 – Gallery
 Area J9 – Aft Castle (Lower)

Captain* + Nimblewright
2 sailors
 1 sailor (25%)
2 drow gunslingers

Area J10 – Captain’s Cabin
Area J11 – After Castle (Upper)
Area J15 – Brig (in cell)
Area J23 – Gunslingers’ Hold

HELLRAISER (PARADE FLOATS)

1 mate + 1 sailor
2 mates
4 sailors
 Cook (Commoner)
2 sailors
Captain* + Nimblewright
2 sailors
 1 sailor (25%)
2 drow gunslingers

Area J1 – Main Deck
Area J3 – Mates’ Cabin (off-duty, unarmored)
Area J4 – Crew Cabins (1 per cabin, off-duty, unarmored)
Area J5 – Gallery
Area J9 – Aft Castle (Lower)
Area J10 – Captain’s Cabin
Area J11 – After Castle (Upper)
Area J15 – Brig (in cell)
Area J23 – Gunslingers’ Hold

EYECATCHER (FLAGSHIP)

1 mate + 3 sailors
2 mates
4 sailors
 Cook (Commoner)
 4 giant spiders
2 sailors
Captain* + Nimblewright
2 sailors
 Random response team (25%)
 1 sailor (25%)
 8 Nimblewrights

Area J1 – Main Deck
Area J3 – Mates’ Cabin (off-duty, unarmored)
Area J4 – Crew Cabins (1 per cabin, off-duty, unarmored)
Area J5 – Gallery
Area J17 – Lower Cargo Hold MM p. 328
Area J9 – Aft Castle (Lower)
Area J10 – Captain’s Cabin
Area J11 – After Castle (Upper)
Area J14 – Cabins (resting)
Area J15 – Brig (in cell)
Area J18 – Storage (deactivated)

SCARLET MARPENOTH

Soluun Xibrindas (50%)
Fel’Rekt Lafeen (50%)
Krebbyg Masq-il’yr (50%)
3 gnome engineers +2 mates
4 gnome engineers

Area U3 – Soluun’s Stateroom
Area U5 – Fel’Rekt’s Stateroom
Area U6 – Krebbyg’s Stateroom
Area U7b – Command Center
Area U8 – Engineers’ Staterooms

* Has key to captain’s trunk and all doors on their ship.

STAT REFERENCE

Jarlaxle Baenre – DH p. 206
Margo Verida – female Amnian human bard (DH p. 195)
Khafeyta – female Mulhorandi human swashbuckler (DH p. 216)

Captain – drow mage, MM p. 129 (prepare *sending* instead of *fly*)
Mates – drow elite warrior, MM p. 128
Sailors – drow, p. 128
Carnies – commoners, MM p. 345

Gnome Engineers – apprentice wizards, DH p. 194

- NG, Small, 7 (2d6) hp
- *Racial Traits:* Advantage on Int, Wis, Cha saving throws vs. magic. Walking speed 25 ft. Darkvision 60 ft. Speak Common and Gnomish.
- *Names:* Lorella Middenpump, Tervaround Waggletop, Anverth Levery, Cockaby Fapplestamp, Ellywick Fiddlefen, Gerbo Reese, Zaffrab Horcusporcus

Nimblewright – DH p. 212

Drow gunslingers – DH p. 201

QUESTIONING CREW

- **Captains:** *Dragon Heist*, p. 132
- **Sailors:** *Dragon Heist*, p. 132
- **Carnies:** *Dragon Heist*, p. 132
- **Margo / Khafeyta:** *Dragon Heist*, p. 140
- **Gnome Engineers:** *Dragon Heist*, p. 141-142

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 4C: CASSALANTER VILLA

As *Dragon Heist* begins, the Cassalanter control one of the Eyes. (They stole it from the crypt of Lady Alethea Brandath, Renaer's mother.) If the PCs are working with the Cassalanter, however, it is quite likely that they will have no need of performing a heist to obtain this Eye: If the Cassalanter are kept apprised of the PCs' progress, they'll inform them that they possess one of the Eyes and turn it over to them once they've secured the other two.

The Cassalanter *will* want the *Stone of Golorr* once the PCs have used it to locate the Vault. If the PCs turn it over and later come to regret that action, they may need to carry out a belated heist at a later date.

BLUEPRINT NOTES

As the PCs discovered when renovating Trollskull Manor, nothing gets done without the guilds getting involved. This very much includes the construction of expensive villas by noble families, and many of those guilds will have the original construction on file. (Getting access to them may require some fast-talking, a few well-placed bribes, or perhaps a little mini-heist in its own right.)

Guilds that are likely to have useful plans:

- Carpenters', Roofers', and Plasterers' Guild
- Cellarers' and Plumbers' Guild
- Guild of Stonecutters, Masons, Potters, and Tile-makers
- Surveyors', Map-, and Chart-makers' Guild

If it would be interesting, feel free to split up the useful plans across multiple guilds: The Stonecutters might have the outer walls and first floor (where detailed carvings were done). The Roofers might have a detailed plan of the upper floor. The cellar might only appear in the records of the Cellarers. And the Surveyors' might have a very old map of the region showing that there was a sizable underground construction on the site before the Cassalanter Villa was constructed (suggesting the presence of the Temple of Asmodeus without providing any meaningful detail of it).

In preparing blueprints for your players to obtain, I recommend the following alterations:

- The hatch between C22 and C23 was not initially concealed and will likely appear on any blueprints the PCs obtain.
- C28 and C29 were not part of the original construction. They are unlikely to appear on any blueprints the PCs obtain.
- It is quite likely that C27 will be prominently identified as a highly secure VAULT.

EVENT SCHEDULE

CHES 30th – HIGHCOIN BALLS: See surveillance opportunities, below.

TARSAHK 1st – CARAVANCE: During this gift-giving holiday, the Cassalanterers give most of their staff the night off. Presents are hidden throughout the house and the Cassalanterers celebrate with their children by hunting the presents down. (The Cassalanterers are taking one last chance to share joy with their children before possibly losing them forever.)

The only people left in the Villa during this time, beyond the Cassalanterers themselves, are:

- The guards
- Willifort Crowell
- The imps guarding Osvaldo Cassalanter

This makes it an excellent opportunity to perform a heist onsite, particularly if the PCs can learn that it's happening ahead of time from the servants.

Later in the evening, however, after the Cassalanter children go to bed, Asmodean cultists arrive onsite for a ritual in the Temple. (See the Cult Gathering roster below.)

TARSAHK 9th – LEIRUIN FEAST: This is the feast at which the Cassalanterers poison 99 guests and perform the ritual necessary to save their children's souls (assuming they've managed to secure the gold from the Vault). If they haven't secured the Vault and are, thus, unable to rescue their children, their plans for this feast are abruptly canceled.

TARSAKH 11th – THE TWINS' BIRTHDAY: The twins' ninth birthday, on which Asmodeus will claim their souls.

SURVEILLANCE OPPORTUNITY

The PCs will have an opportunity to observe some of the household's regular routine when they are first invited to the Villa to hear the Cassalanterers' plea for help. And they may be able to conduct similar surveillance on future meetings with the Cassalanterers (which are likely to take place in different areas of the house).

The best general surveillance opportunity, however, is the **Highcoin Ball**. The house will be swarming with upper class guests, and if the PCs can somehow swing an invitation, join the retinue of someone who has an invitation, or otherwise slip their way in, they'll be able to get a good sense of the place.

THE VILLA

Area C4 – Reading Room: A black dragon's head is mounted on the wall as a hunting trophy.

Area C6 – Victoro’s Office: In addition to the normal entry for this room, the Eye is secured in the hidden compartment in Victoro’s desk. The locked drawer also contains a *Report from Seffia Naelryke*.

- *Report from Seffia Naelryke:* “Milord—There are fresh eyes everywhere. We had a watcher keeping an eye on the Coachlamp Lane windmill, but I sent a message by way of arrow. They survived, and I think we can be fairly certain they work for Xanathar, as Arn followed them back to Terasse’s house on Elsambul’s Lane. – Seffia Naelryke”

ADVERSARY ROSTERS

CASSALANTER VILLA

Willifort Crowelle (75%) or Servant	Area C1 – Entrance Hall	
1 guard	Area C2 – Garden Mudroom	
Victoro Cassalanter (0125%)	Area C4 – Reading Room	
2 guards	Area C5 – Foyer	
Victoro Cassalanter (26-50%)	Area C6 – Victoro’s Office	
Jandar Chergoba + 6 chefs	Area C10 – Kitchen	
Victoro Cassalanter (51-75%) + 1 guard	Area C12 – Smoking Room	
Mimic	Area C15 – Banquet Hall	
Laiba “Nana” Rosse (25%)	Area C17 – Playroom	(or with the children)
Tissina Khyret	Area C19 – Sitting Room	(attendant to Lady Cassalanter)
Victoro (75-90%) + Ammalia (01-25%)	Area C21 – Master Bedroom	
Ammalia Cassalanter (26-66%)	Area C22 – Ammalia’s Study	
Victoro (91-00%) + Ammalia (91-00%)	Area C24 – Osvaldo’s Prison	
2 imps + Osvaldo Cassalanter	Area C24 – Osvaldo’s Prison	
Ammalia Cassalanter (66-90%)	Area C25 – Butterfly Garden	
4 servants	Guest House	

TEMPLE OF ASMODEUS (CULT GATHERING)

1 bearded devil	Area A3 – Anterior Vestibule	
5 cultists	Area A6 – Secret Vestry	(up to 1 hour before gathering)
3d10 cultists + All Named NPCs	Area A7 – Ceremonial Hall	

MEALTIME:

- Cassalanter are all located in Area C9 (Dining Room).
- 10 servants located in Area C8 (Covered Porch).

THE CHILDREN: Roll 1d6 to determine where Terenzio and Elzerina are. (They are generally accompanied by Nana Rosse, unless she is determined to be in Area C17 on the roster above.)

- 1 Area C3, playing on the sliding ladders.
- 2 Area C16, practicing piano.
- 3 Area C17, playing with toys while Nana Rosse knits.
- 4 Area C18, playing make-believe in costumes (see area description).
- 5 Area C25, playing in the garden.
- 6 Children are in two different areas; roll again twice ignoring this result.

STAT REFERENCE

Cooks – commoners, MM p. 345
Cultists – MM p. 345
Guard – MM p. 347
Servants – commoners, MM p. 345

Imps – MM p. 76
Oslando Cassalanter – chain devil, MM p. 72

Jandar Chergoba (Head Chef) – tiefling cult fanatic, MM p. 345 (DH p. 117)
Laiba “Nana” Rosse (Tutor/Caretaker) – tiefling cult fanatic, MM p. 345 (DH p. 117)
Tissina Khyret (Chief Housemaid) – tiefling cult fanatic, MM p. 345 (DH p. 117)
Willifort Crowelle (Head Butler/Agent) – doppelganger, MM p. 82 (DH p. 116)

Victoro Cassalanter – DH p. 218 (has gold key which opens desk in his office)
Ammalia Cassalanter – DH p. 193

QUESTIONING STAFF

The risk of questioning the Cassalanter’s staff is that there is a 10% chance that they’re asking someone who is a secret member of the cult. Cult members are virtually certain to report the questioning to their masters as soon as possible, and may also mislead PCs by providing false information.

Likely information that can be provided by servants, however, include some subset of:

- A general layout of the areas of the villa they’re familiar with (generally the first three floors).
- Victoro keeps valuables locked in the desk in his office.
- There’s a vault in the basement.
- When working on the third floor once, they heard horrible screams coming from above them on the roof. (*GM Note: That was Oslando on a particularly bad day.*)
- The servants are periodically asked to gather in one area of the house or another; it’s an open secret that this is done so that the Cassalanter’s can host secret guests.
- Ammalia is worried sick about her children, although they seem in perfect health.
- They once saw a number of people go down into the wine cellar. They waited around for twenty minutes before Willifort shoed them away, but nobody came back up.
- There’s a secret orgy room under the guest house. (*False*)

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 4D: XANATHAR’S LAIR

Xanathar stole the *Stone of Golorr* from Lord Neverember and he stole one of the three Eyes from the Zhentarim. Then he lost the *Stone* when Dalakhar took it from him.

As a result, once the PCs become truly involved with the Grand Game, it is likely that Xanathar is on a level playing field with Manshoon and the Cassalanter, holding but a single Eye.

EVENT SCHEDULE & SURVEILLANCE OPPORTUNITY

Throughout the festival season, Xanathar hosts gladiatorial games every 2-4 days. As noted in Part 3B, those interested in attending the fights must learn the secret pass phrases and go to gladiatorial gathering points throughout the city.

In addition to the arena itself (X6), those attending these fights are allowed to congregate in areas X2, X17, and X18. Servants circulate through these areas, serving drinks and food. Additional guards are placed in the entrance to hallways X21 and X22, however, to turn guests away. (See the *Tournament* adversary roster, below.)

Panopticus Dwarves: The panopticus dwarves in Area X16 keep the following areas constantly under surveillance:

- Area X2 – Entrance Hall
- Area X6 – Arena
- Area X18 – Audience Chamber
- Area X23 – Antechamber of Madness
- Area X32 – Downstairs Hallway

Identifying the function of the ghostly eyes during onsite surveillance is probably crucial to carrying out an effective heist. Their function can be determined with a DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check, making it clear that there must be a panopticus circle somewhere nearby being monitored by a number of watchers equal to the number of ghostly eyes. A *detect magic* spell combined with a DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check will allow the caster to follow the magical lines of force between the eyes and the panopticus circle, effectively triangulating the location of the circle if they can observe at least two eyes.

In addition, as described in Area X16 below, the panopticus circle can be suborned.

DESIGN NOTE

Note that the list of areas surveilled by the panopticus dwarves is deliberately altered. The easiest access to Xanathar’s Sanctum (X19) is through the door in Area X18. By placing a scrying sensor there, it more or less forces the PCs to either suborn the panopticus or find an alternative route to Area X19.

BLUEPRINT NOTES

There are no blueprints of Xanathar's Lair to be found. Questioning Xanatharian agents might give the PCs an opportunity to piece out information, but convincing them to do so when the consequence is Xanathar's displeasure is not an easy task.

Far easier is contacting one of the many people who have attended the gladiatorial games to describe what they've seen. In general their recollections will be limited to the "public" areas listed above, but:

- There's one halfling who remembers seeing some of Xanathar's personal guard come through the secret door between X17 and X16 ("I was looking at this fresco of a leafless tree that had lidless eyes embedded in its branches and suddenly – presto! – the whole wall swung back and some of those shifty-eyed bugbears came through"). She didn't see how the door operates.
- If they get particularly lucky, they might track down a foolhardy couple who snuck through the door from the Audience Chamber (X18) into Xanathar's Sanctum (X19) and can describe what they saw there.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

As described on p. 101-102 of *Dragon Heist*, there are a number of other powerful factions throughout the city that are aware of Xanathar's Lair and can reveal the secret entrance to Area X1.

There is a magical portal to Xanathar's Lair in the Guild Sewer Hideout in *Chapter 1: Finding Floon*. It's possible (although unlikely) that the PCs already gained access to the lair at that time. If not, they could theoretically put the hideout under surveillance, ambush Nihiloor, and use his amulet to activate the portal and enter the lair.

If Ott Steeltoes is rescued from the Zhentarim (see Part 3B), he may also be gulled into leading the PCs to this secret entrance.

PLAYER TWO ENTERS THE GAME

Whenever the PCs choose to launch their actual heist, it turns out that Jarlaxle is simultaneously attempting to do the exact same thing.

The Team: Jarlaxle's team consists of himself, one of his lieutenants, and a Bregan D'Aerthe response team (see Part 3C).

Entrance: Generally speaking, there are three methods of entry to Xanathar's Lair. You can come in the secret entrance (X1), you can try to sneak in from Skullport (X4), or you can be brought in as part of the audience for the gladiatorial games (also via X4, but almost certainly arriving in X6 before you'll have a chance to slip away).

I recommend having Jarlaxle's team use a method of entry which the PCs *didn't*. So if the PCs came in through X1, for example, then Jarlaxle's team arrived from either Skullport or as part of the crowd for the gladiatorial tournament.

Jarlaxle's Plan: The ace in the hole for Jarlaxle is that he's aware of the secret passage (X14) leading to Xanathar's Sanctum. How, exactly, he gains access to the passage is heavily dependent on the circumstances in which the heist takes place. (And, dramatically speaking, the DM should ideally make it cross the path of the PCs' heist as much as possible: Seeing Jarlaxle or his lieutenants from across a crowded room or at the far end of a deserted hallway about their business will be a satisfying complication. This will also be easier to do if Jarlaxle's team includes someone the PCs have seen before during the Grand Game, if that's not Jarlaxle himself.)

Jarlaxle's *modus operandi* will generally be using secondary teams to create distractions in order to draw people (including Xanathar) away from where he wants his primary team to be. For example, if the heist is going down during a gladiatorial match, Jarlaxle's plan might look something like this:

- One of his men picks a fight with the guards blocking entrance to hallway X21. This draws the guards preventing entry to X22 away from their posts.
- Jarlaxle's lieutenant and two more of his men slip into X22 and down the stairs to X32. They make their way to the Recreation Hall (X28) and throw smoke bombs through the door.
- Men from X28 rush to the Audience Chamber (X18), causing the guards on the door there to rush out to X8. Jarlaxle and his remaining men slip through the door behind them and then through the secret door to X19.
- After locating the Eye, they go down the emergency escape route to X21. Jarlaxle uses his *hat of disguise* to don the appearance of Ahmaergo, orders the guards to assist in the commotion downstairs, meets up with the rest of his team as they emerge back up the stairs and through Area X22, and then heads for the exit.

Nar'l Xibrindas: Nar'l is an agent of Bregan D'Aerthe, but his ability to directly assist Jarlaxle during the heist is limited due to the presence of the grell bodyguard Xanathar has placed on him. Jarlaxle would also prefer to keep him *in situ* as a valuable source of intel until the Grand Game has concluded.

However, once the distractions start causing turmoil, Nar'l might contribute to Jarlaxle's plan in subtler ways. (For example, by ordering key guards out of the way on plausible pretexts at the right moment.)

Effect on the PCs: The presence of Jarlaxle's team will almost certainly cause complications for the PCs' plans, but the PCs' actions are also likely to cause complications for Jarlaxle. It will be most satisfying if you let *both* those things play out naturally, and keep in mind that it's equally possible for the PCs to *benefit* from security holes Jarlaxle opens for his own team (and vice versa).

DESIGN NOTE

Competing with a second crew trying to pull off the same job is a really exciting situation that opens up a lot of unique tactical choices and dramatic situations. But there's another reason for including Jarlaxle's crew here: Xanathar's Lair is probably the hardest nut to actually crack. If things get out of hand, the presence of Jarlaxle's crew gives the DM a tool to either (a) easily pull heat off of the PCs or (b) steal the Eye, prompting an easier heist at the Sea Maidens Faire.

THE LAIR

X7 – Cell Block: See *Dragon Heist* for full description.

- **Questioning Samara:** XXX Manshoon information vector XXX

X16 – Panopticus Station: In addition to the normal entry for this room, it is possible to suborn the panopticus network. A DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check can determine that altering two specific runes in the circle will create an “echo” in the vision provided by the ghostly eyes. (In other words, yes, they can loop the video feed.) Doing so will require sneaking past the dwarves, but that's not too hard because they're only half-aware of their immediate surroundings.

X18 – Audience Chamber: In addition to the normal entry for this room, there is a ghostly eye scrying sensor.

X19 – Xanathar's Sanctum: In addition to the normal entry for this room, Xanathar keeps the Eye in Sylgar's fishbowl.

X28 – Guild Recreation Hall: In contradiction of the normal entry for this room, there is no scrying sensor in this room.

X35 – Nar'l Xibrindas' Office: In addition the normal entry for this room, the desk contains a *Report on the Seven Masks Theater*.

- **Report on the Seven Masks Theater:** A letter Rostrum Feilcook of the Fellowship of Innkeepers, a guild which also oversees local theaters, confirms “your exalted suspicion” regarding the new ownership of the Seven Masks Theater, insofar as the purported owner – “Rongquan Mystere” – is actually being funded by another source, most likely with money originating from outside Waterdeep. A second letter, dated two days later, reports that Rostrum has identified Rongquan's mysterious patron as “Captain Zord of the Sea Maidens Faire” with his money “originating from Luskan”.
- *GM Note:* Nar'l Xibrindas stole these letters and hid them before Xanathar could see them.

ADVERSARY ROSTER

XANATHAR'S LAIR

beholder zombie + 4 gas spores animated armor	Area X2 – Watched Hall	
Xanathar (01-25%)	Area X5 – Horror’s Alcove	telepathically summoned by X if X present, see <i>A Private Fight</i>
Noska Ur’gray (01-25%) + Prisoners	Area X6 – Arena	see p. 104 for prisoner list
10 bandits	Area X7 – Cell Block	not present during <i>A Private Fight</i>
Noska Ur’gray (25-50%) + Rust Monster	Area X9 – Guild Barracks	
Ahmaergo (01-50%)	Area X10 – Noska’s Quarters	
Thorvin Twinbeard	Area X11/X12 – Ahmaergo’s Quarters	
Panopticus Dwarves	Area X13 – Thorvin’s Workshop	
Xanathar (25-50%)	Area X16 – Panopticus Station	observe through ghostly eyestalks if X present, see <i>A Public Audience</i>
Xanathar (51-75%, with Ott Steeltoes)	Area X18 – Audience Chamber	talking to his fish
Xanathar (76-00%, sleeping)	Area X19 – Xanathar’s Sanctum	
1 kuo-toa whip + 6 kuo-toa	Area X19 – Xanathar’s Sanctum	
Nihiloor (01-50%) + drow prisoner	Area X23 – Antechamber of Madness	
Nihiloor’s Prisoners	Area X24 – Extraction Chamber	
Nihiloor (51-00%) + 4 intellect devourers	Area X25 – Food for Thought	
3 kuo-toa whips + prisoners	Area X26 – Spawning Pool	
10 bandits +2 goblins	Area X27 – Nihiloor’s Prison	see p. 111 for prisoner list
2 gazers + 7 chefs	Area X28 – Recreation Hall	
Halfling Cook	Area X30 – Gourmet Kitchen	
Nar’l Xibrindas	Area X31 – The Other Kitchen	
	Area X35 – Narl’s Office	

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS: When entering any public area, there is a 1 in 10 chance of having a random encounter.

d4 Encounter

- 1 Flutterfoot Zipswiggle (see DH p. 104)
- 2 Ahmaergo (conducting a routine inspection)
- 3 N’arl Xibrindas + Grell bodyguard
- 4 Ott Steeltoes

A PRIVATE FIGHT

- Xanathar (invisible in southeast alcove)
- Ahmaergo
- Noska Ur’gray
- 10 bandits + 5 bugbears as an audience
- 2 goblins serving salted rat intestines and stirge meat pies
- 1d4 random combatants from Area X7

A PUBLIC AUDIENCE

- Xanathar, using psychedelic light display to deliver an incoherent, self-aggrandizing speech to a group of sycophantic underlings who have never seen his true form
- Nar’l Xibrindas
- Grell Bodyguard
- 10 bandits
- 2 duergar

TOURNAMENT

During a tournament, there will be gathered an audience of 30-60 people. This crowd will either be in the Arena (X6) or congregating socially in Promenade (X17) and Audience Chamber (X18).

Guards: Xanathar's bandits act as guards. (These numbers are included in the adversary roster below.)

- **X6:** 2 guards at either end of the audience.
- **X17:** 2 guards are stationed at the exits to X2, X21, and X22.
- **X18:** 2 guards on all three doors.

Xanathar: Xanathar enters the Audience Chamber (X18), gives a short speech extolling how wonderful it is that he's doing this for everyone, and then floats through the Promenade (X17) to the Arena (X6), where he sets up court in the southeast corner.

The Arena Crowd:

- Xanathar
- Ahmaergo
- Thorvin Twinbeard (01-50%)
- Nihilor (01-50%)
- Ott Steeltoes
- Nar'l Xibrindas (01-50%)

In the Arena: See *Dragon Heist*, p. 114 for details on participating in the tournament.

beholder zombie + 4 gas spores	Area X2 – Watched Hall	
animated armor	Area X5 – Horror's Alcove	telepathically summoned by X
Arena Crowd + 4 bandits	Area X6 – Arena	
Noska Ur'gray + Prisoners	Area X7 – Cell Block	see p. 104 for prisoner list
Noska's Rust Monster	Area X10 – Noska's Quarters	
Thorvin Twinbeard (51-00%)	Area X13 – Thorvin's Workshop	
Panopticus Dwarves	Area X16 – Panopticus Station	observe through ghostly eyestalks
6 bandits	Area X17 – Promenade	
6 bandits	Area X18 – Audience Chamber	
1 kuo-toa whip + 6 kuo-toa	Area X23 – Antechamber of Madness	
Nihiloor (51-75%) + drow prisoner	Area X24 – Extraction Chamber	
Nihiloor's Prisoners	Area X25 – Food for Thought	
Nihiloor (76-00%) + 4 intellect devourers	Area X26 – Spawning Pool	
3 kuo-toa whips + prisoners	Area X27 – Nihiloor's Prison	see p. 111 for prisoner list
4 bandits + 2 goblins	Area X28 – Recreation Hall	
2 gazers + 7 chefs	Area X30 – Gourmet Kitchen	
Halfing Cook	Area X31 – The Other Kitchen	
Nar'l Xibrindas (51-00%)	Area X35 – Narl's Office	

STAT REFERENCE

Ahmaergo – DH p. 193

Flutterfoot Zipswiggle – DH p. 104

Thorvin Twinbeard – dwarven commoner, MM p. 345 (DH p. 216)

N'arl Xibrindas – drow mage, MM p. 129 (DH p. 211)
Noska Ur'gray – shield dwarf thug, MM p. 350 (DH p. 213)
Ott Steeltoes – dwarf cultist, MM p. 345 (DH p. 214)

Bandits – MM p. 343
Bugbears – MM p. 33
Duergar – MM p. 122
Grell – MM p. 172
Kuo-toa / Kuo-toa whip – MM p. 199-200

Chefs – kobolds, MM p. 195
Halfling Cook – commoner, MM p. 345

QUESTIONING THE HENCHMEN

Any member of the Xanathar Guild will be fairly familiar with all of the public spaces in the lair.

- Xanathar is even more paranoid than usual right now and hasn't left his lair in weeks. That isn't likely to change as long as the gang war with the Zhentarim is ongoing.
- Xanathar has some kind of machine that “wakes him up in emergencies”. (*GM Note: This is a mangled version of what his dream machine (X20) is actually for.*)
- Virtually all of the Xanatharians steer clear of the mind flayer's demesne (X23-X27). It's not unheard of for even loyal members of the Guild to disappear over there. As a result, they don't know much about the layout or what's there (although they know prisoners are delivered over there). Conniving Guild members might try to convince the PCs that this is where whatever it is they're looking for is located (with the expectation that Nihiloor will eat their brains).
- Xanathar doesn't allow anyone to enter the Area X33 and most don't even know what's in there, but some know that there's a secret door connecting the Arena (X6) and “whatever Xanathar has hidden down there”.

N'arl Xibrindas knows more than most. He's even snuck into the Crypt of Xanathars Past (X33). But he'll also suspect that anyone questioning him is actually an agent of Xanathar trying to reveal him as a double agent.

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 4E: ZHENTARIM – KOLAT TOWERS

Although Manshoon lost the original Eye he had obtained, as *Dragon Heist* begins the Zhentarim seize possession of the Eye unwittingly carried by Renaer Neverember. This Eye is then immediately taken back to Kolat Towers and secured.

Unlike the other lairs in *Dragon Heist*, Kolat Towers operates more like a fortified bunker. This creates a very non-typical heist scenario which, in some respects, will play more like a raid or dungeoncrawl scenario. The primary heist-like aspect of the scenario, in fact, is simply gaining access to the Towers in the first place.

Kolat Towers is structured like an onion:

- You need to obtain a **pass-amulet** in order to pass through the force field surrounding Kolat Tower. A pass-amulet is a silver disc with the initials “DK” (for Duhlark Kolat) written in Espruaran runes on either side of a small, central blue gemstone. Someone holding a pass-amulet, or touching someone holding a pass-amulet, can simply walk through the force field as if it wasn’t there. (Other methods for bypassing the force field are described on pages 148-149 of *Dragon Heist*.)
- You need to obtain a **teleporter signet ring** in order to reach the inner sanctum., as described on page 157 of *Dragon Heist*. These brass signet rings have a stylized M. written upon them.

SURVEILLANCE OPPORTUNITY

Barring unusual circumstances or out of the box thinking, the PCs are unlikely to have a surveillance opportunity inside Kolat Towers.

More traditional surveillance (i.e., simply watching the Towers from a nearby building) reveals the crucial point of data required, however: The use of pass-amulets by anyone entering or leaving the tower. (They may glimpse some taking them out from their shirts and holding them aloft, although that’s not strictly necessary. They may also note the strange habit of those accompanying pass-amulet holders of touching them as they move through the force field.)

In addition, most of the Towers’ inhabitants will simply assume that anyone who has bypassed the force field must have a pass-amulet and, therefore, must have legitimate business there. Their incredible security system has, ultimately, made them somewhat lax when it comes to actual security, and PCs who are smart enough to lean into that assumption can effectively seize a surveillance opportunity for themselves mid-heist.

BLUEPRINT NOTES

The original tower which stood on this site was a small library owned by the Watchful Order of Magists & Protectors. The Kolat brothers purchased the site, altered the original tower, and built a second tower. Buried deep in its records, the Watchful Order still has

copies of the original plans drawn up when they acquired the tower as part of a deceased wizard's estate. These plans, however, only show the Tower as it existed before the Kolat brothers began their renovations. It:

- Consists of only of the Main Tower.
- Does not include areas K7, K8, K12, K13, or K14.
- Level 6 is a single room.

It should be noted that Xanathar has a superior set of blueprints for the Towers, obtained by his agents (see Part 4D).

THE TOWERS

Area K14 – Servants' Quarters: Sidra Romeir also bunks in this room (in a larger bed opposite the four bunk beds used by the thugs she bunks with). She keeps her *teleporter signet ring* in the locked drawer in the bedside table.

Area E9 – Library: Alabaster shelves line the porphyry walls and jut out into the center of the room. On one wall, an arcane rune has been carved into the porphyry and filled with some form of bright green metal.

- **Books:** 10 particularly rare books have bookplates identifying them as belonging to Duhlark Kolat are laid out on a small table with a notebook nearby showing that someone has been studying them and taking notes; they are worth 50 gp each. The entire collection is worth 5,000 gp.
- **Rune:** This rune is the keymark for an astral vault bloodlocked to Manshoon. By design, Manshoon (and only Manshoon) can trace a specific set of patterns on the rune, causing the wall to temporarily phase out of existence and grant access to a small astral vault. In practice, *dispel magic* can disable the bloodlock or a *disguise self* (or similar illusion) can fool it, while an Intelligence (Arcana) or Dexterity check can figure out the pattern (defeating it like any other lock).
- **Inside the Astral Vault:** The vault contains the Eye, 5 *pass-amulets*, a dozen *teleporter signet rings*, and XXX.

ADVERSARY ROSTER

KOLAT TOWERS

Sidra Romeir + 2 thugs	Area K2 – Dining Room	(playing Three-Dragon Ante)
Manafret Cherryport*	Area K3 – Kitchen	
2 gargoyles	Area K4 – Musty Library	
Yorn the Terror*	Area K7 – Reading Room	
Lady Gondafrey	Area K13 – Holding Cell	
4 thugs	Area K14 – Servants' Quarters	
3 apprentice wizards* + bargura	Area K15 – Summoning Chamber	(chanting ritual; cannot be disturbed)
animated armor	Area K16 – Construct Workshop	
spectator + 4 flying snakes	Area K22 – Teleportation Circle	
Kaejva Cynavern*	Area E3 – Guard Station	(can see into Area E1)
Urstul Floxin*	Area E5 – Laboratory	

Manshoon Simulacrum*	Area E7 – Simulacrum
Vevette Blackwater* + Agorn Fuoco*	Area E8 – Reading Room
Havia Quickknife* + Mookie Plush*	Area E10 – Audience Chamber
	Area E11 – Zhent Quarters (Kaevoja, Vevette, Agorn, Havia, Mookie)
Manshoon (01-50%)*	Area E12 – Manshoon’s Quarters
Manshoon (51-00%)*	Area E13 – Manshoon’s Study

* Has a *teleporter signet ring*.

STAT REFERENCE

Sidra Romeir (LE female Callishite human) – veteran, MM p. 350
 Manafret Cherryport – lightfoot halfling mage, MM p. 347; see DH p. 149
 Yorn the Terror – half-orc thug, MM p. 350; see DH p. 150
 Lady Gondafrey – gargoyle, MM p. 140; see DH p. 152
 Kaevoja Cynavern (female Mulan human) – mage, MM p. 347; see DH p. 158
 Urstul Floxin – assassin, MM p. 343; see DH p. 216
 Vevette Blackwater (CE female Tethyrian human) – swashbuckler, DH p. 216
 Agorn Fuoco (NE male Turami human) – bard, DH p. 195

Havia Quickknife / Mookie Plush (LE lightfoot halfling) – martial arts adepts, DH p. 209

- Lawful Evil
- 49 (11d6+11) hit points
- *Racial Traits*: Small, walking speed 25 ft., move through the space of a Medium or larger creature, advantage on saving throws vs. being frightened.
- Speak Common and Halfling.

Manshoon Simulacrum – DH p. 209

Manshoon – DH p. 209

Thugs – MM p. 350

Apprentice Wizards – DH p. 194

Animated Armor – MM p. 19

Barlgura – MM p. 56

Spectator – MM p. 30

Flying Snakes – MM p. 322

QUESTIONING THE ZHENTARIM

Thugs know the general layout of the tower:

- They’ve been told not to enter the Outer Tower or go above the third level of the Main Tower.
- Manshoon’s lieutenants wear special rings that let them access Manshoon’s sanctuary atop the Outer Tower (although they don’t know that this is actually an extradimensional space; they think he just lives up there).

Apprentice wizards know the same, but also know:

- That Manshoon lives in an extradimensional sanctum.
- He protects his valuables in an astral vault hidden somewhere in the sanctum. His former fourth apprentice tried to gain access to it and was *disintegrated* when Manshoon caught him.
- That the *Stone of Golorr* was blinded and Manshoon is attempting to find its three Eyes. He already has one. He once had another that was stolen by Xanathar. And he has recently identified that a local noble family has the third. (They don't know the identity of the noble family.)

Manshoon's lieutenants know what the apprentice wizards know, but also:

- The layout of the extradimensional sanctum, including the location of the astral vault.
- That the Cassalanter are the noble family who possess the third Eye.

THE DEMON

If the PCs encounter the summoning ritual in Area K15 and *don't* disrupt it, then eventually the apprentice wizards succeed in binding the barlgura and Manshoon is able to send it on a mission. Options to consider might include:

- Attacking the PCs at Trollskull Manor.
- Sending it as part of an operation to steal back "his" Eye from Xanathar, possibly inflicting damage in Xanathar's Lair. (This could easily happen in the middle of the PCs attempting their heist there.)

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 5: CLUES AND TIMELINES

In this penultimate section of the Remix, we're going to use the principles of node-based scenario design [LINK] to retrofit the campaign's fundamental structure. This work can broadly be divided into three parts:

- Strengthening the Three Clue Rule for *Finding Floon* (Chapter 1)
- Heavily revising the *Nimblewright Investigation* that leads to the Gralhund Villa (Chapter 2)
- Linking together all of the elements of the Grand Game (primarily the faction outposts and lairs)

This will primarily consist of revelation lists, the use of which is discussed in the original *Three Clue Rule* essay [LINK].

Where the clues on these revelation lists can be integrated into the material we've treated at length in the Remix, I've done so. In these cases, the revelation lists can be used strictly for their normal function: As a reference for helping the GM to understand and track the structure of the scenario.

In some cases, however, clues are added to other sections of the campaign which we haven't visited in detail as part of the Remix. (This is particularly true for the material in *Part 5B: Finding Floon*, for example.) These clues will be called out, and the GM will need to use the revelation lists to make sure that this material is properly incorporated into those sections of the campaign.

THE REFERENCE TIMELINE

Before diving into the revelation lists, however, we're going to organize all of the back story of the campaign (revised and otherwise) into a single reference timeline. This partly exists in order to eliminate the myriad continuity errors found in the original campaign, but mostly to provide an easy reference for the GM while they're actually running the campaign.

RISE AND FALL OF LORD NEVEREMBER

- 1451 DR: Neverwinter is destroyed when a small adventuring party (including Jarlaxle Baenre) awoke the primordial Maegera beneath Mount Hotenow.
- 1467 DR: Lord Dagult Neverember, Open Lord of Waterdeep, proclaims himself ruler of Neverwinter and begins the New Neverwinter movement to rebuild the city.
- Lord Neverember begins embezzling money from the Waterdeep treasury.
- Lord Neverember discovers the *Stone of Golorr* in Neverwinter.
- When Lady Alethea Brandath (Lord Neverember's wife) dies, Lord Neverember learns of the existence of an ancient dwarven vault beneath the Brandath Mausoleum.
- Lord Neverember gains access to the old Melairkyn Vault beneath the Brandath Mausoleum. He begins storing the embezzled money (eventually totaling half a

million gold dragons) in the Vault and uses the *Stone of Golorr* to hide its existence.

- As an additional security precaution, Lord Neverember blinds the *Stone of Golorr*: Leaving the *Stone* in Waterdeep Palace, he keeps one of the Eyes with him in Neverwinter, secretly gives one to his son (hidden inside a mourning locket), and hides the last within the Brandath Mausoleum.
- During this time, various factions become aware that Lord Neverember is engaged in some grand scheme, of which only the contours are known. The phrase “Neverember’s Enigma” is coined.
- 1489 DR: Laeral Silverhand returns to Waterdeep and Lord Neverember is deposed.
- In the confusion of the transition of power, Lord Neverember sends agents to retrieve the *Stone of Golorr* from the palace. As those agents leave the city, they are ambushed by Xanatharian agents who steal the *Stone*.

THE GRAND GAME

- The Cassalanters retrieve what they believe to be Neverember’s Enigma — but is actually just one of the Eyes — from the Brandath Mausoleum. Their research quickly reveals that it is part of the *Stone of Golorr*.
- Lord Neverember sends a network of agents into Waterdeep. Many of these agents are attempting to locate the *Stone*. One of them, Dalakhar, is assigned to keep a watchful eye on Dagult’s son, Renaer. (Dalakhar isn’t told this, but Lord Neverember’s primary concern is that the Eye unwittingly carried by Renaer is kept safe until he can regain the *Stone*.)
- Manshoonian Zhentarim steal the Eye from the Protector’s Enclave in Neverwinter.
- Laeral Silverhand’s auditors discover Lord Neverember’s embezzlement. The news soon leaks.
- Zhentarim go to Xanathar to propose an alliance. Xanathar kills the embassy and takes their Eye. A gang war breaks out between the Guild and the Black Network.
- Lord Neverember discovers that Xanathar stole the *Stone*. Dalakhar is sent to infiltrate Xanathar’s organization and steal the *Stone* back. (At this point Lord Neverember believes that Xanathar has the *Stone* and that the Zhentarim still have the Eye they stole from him. To maintain the original siloing of information, Dalakhar is not told about the Eyes and doesn’t know to look for the one Xanathar now holds.)
- Jarlaxle Baenre arrives in Waterdeep and begins selling nimblewrights.
- 1492 DR: Today.

DRAGON HEIST BEGINS (1492 DR)

- With Dalakhar’s network removed from watching over Renaer, he’s exposed. The Zhentarim kidnap Renaer and take the Eye hidden in his mourning locket. (The PCs then presumably rescue Renaer.)
- Ches 20th: Dalakhar successfully steals the *Stone* from Xanathar.
- Ches 22nd: Dalakhar’s attempts to leave town are unsuccessful. (Xanathar tracked down and killed his extraction team before he could rendezvous with them, and he

has agents surrounding Renaer Neverember's house.) Dalakhar attempts to meet Renaer at Trollskull Manor, but by this time he's being actively tracked by the Gralhund, Zhentarim, Cassalanter, and possibly others. Dalakhar is killed by the Gralhund Nimblewright. (See Part 2 and Part 5C.)

REVELATION LIST: THE STONE OF GOLORR

The first part of *Dragon Heist* is procedurally driven by investigations which are, structurally, unrelated to the *Stone of Golorr*: The PCs can solve the mysteries of Floon's kidnapping and Dalakhar's assassination without necessarily understanding what the ultimate motivation behind those crimes was.

Thus, the key turning point in the campaign is when the PCs realize what's truly at stake and, importantly, begin to proactively drive the Grand Game.

REVELATION: DALAKHAR WAS CARRYING THE STONE OF GOLORR

- Casting *speak with dead* on Dalakhar or the dead Zhentarim (see *Dragon Heist*, p. 46, but note that we're specifically adding that the Zhentarim knew that Dalakhar was carrying the "Stone of Golorr").
- Questioning any number of people involved in the Grand Game (Urstul Floxin, the Gralhunds most likely, but also members of Xanathar's Crime Guild or, later, Bregan D'Aerthe lieutenants).
- Observing Jarlaxle's nimblewright recordings. (*Sea Maidens Faire*)
- A Directive from Jarlaxle (*Gralhund Villa – Arthen Manor*)

REVELATION: WHAT IS THE STONE OF GOLORR?

- Researching the *Stone of Golorr* (see Part 6A)
- Any significant player in the Grand Game (lieutenant or up within any faction) will know that the *Stone of Golorr* is the key to finding Lord Neverember's Enigma
- Faction Reports on the Grand Game (see Part 6B)

REVELATION LIST: THE THREE EYES

The PCs need to figure out that (a) the *Stone of Golorr* is missing three Eyes and (b) where those Eyes are being held, so that (c) they can go steal them. This is basically the core structure of the campaign.

REVELATION: THERE ARE THREE MISSING EYES

- Studying the *Stone of Golorr*
- Gralhund Study of the Grand Game (*Gralhund Villa*)
- Jarlaxle's Report on the Grand Game (*Sea Maidens Faire*)
- Cassalanter Report on the Grand Game (*Cassalanter Villa*)
- Xanathar's Report on the Grand Game (*Xanathar Lair*)
- Manshoon's Report on the Grand Game (*Kolat Tower*)

REVELATION: CASSALANTERS' EYE

- If the PCs are working for them, the Cassalanters provide their Eye once they have the other two.
- Jarlaxle's Report on the Grand Game (*Sea Maidens Faire*)
- Manshoon's Report on the Grand Game (*Kolat Tower*)
- Seffia's Ritual & Seffia's Note (*Converted Windmill / Resposne Team: Seffia*)

REVELATION: XANATHAR'S EYE

- Gralhund Report on the Grand Game (*Gralhund Villa*)
- Jarlaxle's Report on the Grand Game (*Sea Maidens Faire*)
- Cassalanter Report on the Grand Game (*Cassalanter Villa*)
- Manshoon's Report on the Grand Game (*Kolat Tower*)

REVELATION: ZHENTARIM'S EYE

- Gralhund Report on the Grand Game (*Gralhund Villa*)
- Jarlaxle's Report on the Grand Game (*Sea Maiden's Faire*)
- Xanathar's Report on the Grand Game (*Xanathar's Lair*)
- Questioning Samara (*Xanathar's Lair*)

REVELATION LIST: THE VAULT KEYS

- Examining and researching the vault entrance (*The Vault*)
- Cassalanter's Report on the Grand Game (*Cassalanter Villa*)
- Vision of the Vault (*Stone of Golorr*)
- Questioning Kalain (*Backtracking Dalakhar*)

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 5B: FINDING FLOON

Dragon Heist launches with the PCs being hired by Volothamp Geddarm to find his missing friend Floon Blagmaar. Unfortunately, the scenario structure for this investigation is quite fragile, being formed from long sequences of linear clue-finding. There are also several continuity problems that we're going to straighten out.

VOLO'S HIRING SPEECH

There are several problems here.

First, if the PCs don't fight the troll or stirges that emerge from Undermountain, Volo has no reason to hire them. So if the PCs decide that discretion is the better part of valor here, the whole campaign never happens. (This is relatively low risk, but something you might want to give some thought to.)

Second, the adventure oddly claims, "Volo is embarrassed to admit he might have gotten his friend Floon in trouble, and he resists providing all the details of what happened the night Floon disappeared." That must be some vestige from a previous version of the scenario, because in the published version of the scenario he does, in fact, tell the PCs everything that happened and has absolutely no reason to think he's responsible for Floon's disappearance. (Just ignore this continuity error.)

Third, when Volo hires the PCs, his hiring speech sets up a timeline of events which doesn't line up well with the events described in the rest of the chapter. (According to Volo, Floon was kidnapped by the Zhentarim two nights ago, but "before the interrogation could begin", the Xanathar Guild kidnapped him from the Zhentarim, and when the PCs arrive at the Xanathar sewer hideout, their interrogation of Floon has just begun. Where did the missing day go?)

We're going to clear this up (and prelude a later clue) with two new chunks of boxed text:

The figure who approached you strokes his mustache, adjusts his floppy hat, and tightens his scarf. "Volothamp Geddarm, chronicler, wizard, and celebrity, at your service. I am most impressed by your derring-do, and the truth is that I fear I have misplaced a friend amid the odious violence which has recently been seizing the streets of this fair city, and I could use your assistance in finding him. You'd be well paid, of course."

PAYMENT:

- 100 gp per character, with 10 gp per character up front.
- *DC 10 Wisdom (Insight)*: Volo is stretching the truth about how much he can pay immediately. (Currently low on cash, Volo is awaiting royalty payments from *Volo's Guide to Monsters* and he's currently endeavoring to finish *Volo's Guide to Spirits and Specters*, for which he is certain receive a handsome advance.)

FLOON: Once the job is taken, Volo identifies his missing friend.

My friend's name is Floon Blagmaar. He's got more beauty than brains, but he's a great drinking companion. Last night he accompanied me to the Skewered Dragon, a dark, bawdy tavern in the Dock Ward. I called it an early night, but Floon remained – drinking and merrymaking.

His wife tracked me down here in the Yawning Portal half an hour ago and told me that Floon never came home last night. This was doubly surprising, as I had not previously been aware that he was married.

Floon is a handsome man in his early thirties with wavy red-blond hair. He is not difficult to pick out of a crowd, however, for he insists on always wearing a gaudy, 6-inch bas relief of a unicorn's head on a chain of blue pearls around his neck.

(The necklace is a holy symbol of Lurue. It was Floon's mother's, but he'll tell any of a dozen different stories for how he got it.)

TO THE ZHENTARIM WAREHOUSE

Tracking Floon from the Skewered Dragon to the Zhentarim warehouse is restructured as a two-part investigation.

BLOOD IN THE STREETS: Make sure to frame the “Blood in the Streets” incident on the way to the Skewered Dragon.

- Mention that the three men who have been arrested each have a black tattoo of a flying snake (one on the hand, two on their arms).

REVELATION #1: Floon was kidnapped by men with flying black snake tattoos.

- *Canvassing the Neighborhood:* Several people Floon and another man (Renaer) waylaid in front of the Old Xoblob Shop (see *Dragon Heist*, p. 23). Xoblob the Gnome can describe the attack (see *Dragon Heist*, p. 24). Searching outside Xoblob's shop will turn up a gaudy, 6-inch bas relief of a unicorn lying in the gutter (see below).
- *Questioning at Skewered Dragon:* As the PCs arrive, the evening regulars are probably rolling back in. Several of them will remember Floon and be able to describe how he drank with Volo, Volo left, and then he was joined by another man, a “spoiled, rich noble who likes to rub our noses in it!” (*Note:* Berca, the bartender, knows that the other man was Renaer Neverember, the son of Waterdeep's previous Open Lord, Dagult Neverember, but she won't be free with that information.) Floon and the other man left around midnight. They were followed out by several men, one of whom had a tattoo of a flying black snake on his neck.

(*Note:* Contrary to the published scenario, the patrons of the Skewered Dragon do NOT know that the “flying black snake” men can be found on Candle Lane. Some of them may be able to identify them as Zhentarim gangsters at the GM’s discretion.)

REVELATION #2: Floon was taken to the Zhentarim warehouse on Candle Lane.

- *Canvassing the Neighborhood (Looking for Tattoos):* Several locals have seen men with flying black snake tattoos “up by the candle on Candle Lane” (see *Dragon Heist*, p. 24). Surveying the lane identifies the correct warehouse because it had a black winged snake painted above the front door’s handle. Asking workers at the other warehouses along Candle Lane can also point them at the right warehouse, and may also reveal that there was some kind of “ruckus” over there early this morning, with large groups of people coming and going.
- *Questioning the Prisoners:* The PCs may backtrack to the “Blood in the Streets” crime scene and figure out a way to talk to the Zhentarim agents being held by the city watch. (They’re likely to speak with Captain Renaer, see *Dragon Heist*, p. 27). If they can convince these agents to talk, they’ll learn that they aren’t local, but were told to report to the warehouse as a safe haven after performing the hit on the Xanatharians.
- *Tracking Floon’s Beads:* Floon kept his wits about him as he and Renaer were being kidnaped. Breaking the necklace around his neck, he let the blue beads drop into the streets and alleys as they were carried to the warehouse. PCs who find the unicorn’s head in the street outside Xoblob’s may be able to track the trail of beads back to the Zhentarim warehouse.

PROACTIVE FAILSAFES: If the PCs’ investigation is running aground, consider using these proactive elements.

- Zhentarim hear that the PCs are asking questions about Zhentarim agents, safe havens, or both. A number of Zhent **thugs** (MM, p. 350) equal to the number of PCs comes to intimidate them into going away. (Adroit PCs can turn the tables, question them, and learn the location of the warehouse.)
- A small squad of Zhentarim agents arrives at the Zhentarim warehouse. The kenku lying in ambush attack them, and the fight spills out into the street right in front of the PCs.

AT THE WAREHOUSE

As initially described in Part 1, after he lost his Eye to Xanathar, Manshoon needed to get back in the game. His agents eventually concluded that Neverember’s son, Renaer, might have another of the Eyes. They were right, although Renaer didn’t know it: His father had given him an elaborate, ivory mourning locket in honor of his mother. The Eye was hidden inside it.

The full dynamic in the first chapter, therefore, is this:

- Zhentarim agents snatch Renaer Neverember and his friend Floon Blagmaar.

- While questioning Renaer in Area Z5, they realize that the Eye is in the mourning locket and take the locket from Renaer.
- Renaer is hauled back down to Area Z2 and tied up next to Floon. Upstairs, the Zhentarim break open the locket (it can still be found in Area Z5), remove the Eye, and give it to a courier to carry to Manshoon.
- Floon is then hauled upstairs for questioning (the Zhentarim want to see if he might be worth a ransom).
- Xanathar's agents storm the warehouse. They immediately find "the prisoner" (i.e., Floon), assume he's Renaer, and several of their agents hustle him out to their sewer hideout. Meanwhile, Renaer takes advantage of the confusion downstairs to slip his bonds and hide in Area Z2.
- Xanathar's agents do a perfunctory sweep of the warehouse and then take off, leaving the kenku behind to kill any Zhents who show up.

DEAD SNAKE: A black flying snake lies dead in the lower yard, pierced by an arrow. (*GM Note:* The Zhentarim tried to send it as a messenger during the attack, but a Xanatharian watcher shot it down.)

RENAER: Renaer will be able to tell the PCs that he was questioned by the Zhents about the half million dragons his father stole from the city; then they ripped off a locket that was very precious to him. If they find the locket and see the (now empty) secret compartment inside it, Renaer can also tell them that he had no idea that the compartment existed or what was stored inside it.

TO THE XANATHAR GUILD HIDEOUT

Once the PCs realize that Floon was taken by members of the Xanathar Guild, they'll need to track them back to the Xanathar Guild Hideout in the sewers.

TRACKING: The Xanatharians exited the warehouse through the yard on the lower level and accessed the sewer half a block away down the alley. A DC 11 Wisdom (Survival) check easily tracks them that far.

Once in the sewers, it requires three successful DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) checks. On a failure, the PCs waste considerable time needing to backtrack and pick up the trail. If the PCs fail the test three times, they've wasted too much time: When they arrive at the hideout, they find it abandoned except for the goblin watchers in Q2 and Zemk, the usual keeper of the hideout, in Q5. Floon's dead body lies in Q7. (Zemk will toss it into the sewer later in the day when he gets around to it.)

However, each time the PCs roll a tracking check, whether it's successful or not, they can also make a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) test to notice the guildsign (see below).

(*Note:* Even if the PCs only manage to recover Floon's dead body, Volo, albeit a little disappointed with them, will still reward them for completing their mission.)

QUESTIONING THE KENKU: As described on page 25 of *Dragon Heist*, questioning the kenku may reveal the existence of the guildsign in the sewers (see below). Beyond that, the kenku are largely incapable of describing where the hideout is located. However, they can lead the PCs there (although they'll be looking for opportunities to lead them into traps or otherwise betray them).

GUILDSIGN: Symbols scrawled in yellow chalk – a stylized representation of Xanathar – is marked at each tunnel intersection in the sewers, indicating the path which should be followed by the direction the main eye is looking. Once the PCs are aware of the guildsign, they can simply follow it back to the hideout.

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 5C: THE NIMBLEWRIGHT INVESTIGATION

In *Chapter 3: Fireball*, an explosion kills nearly a dozen people in Trollskull Alley not far from the PCs' front door. Their investigation takes them to Gralhund Villa, which is described in Part 2 of this remix.

WHAT HAPPENED:

- Dalakhar was attempting to meet with Renaer Neverember at Trollskull Manor. He was being tracked by the Gralhund, Zhentarim, Cassalanter, and possibly others.
- A small team of Zhentarim agents led by Urstul Floxin attempted to waylay Dalakhar as he came down Trollskull Alley.
- The Gralhund nimblewright, observing the scene from a nearby rooftop, used a *necklace of fireballs* to launch a *fireball* which kills Dalakhar and most of the Zhentarim agents, with the exception of Urstul Floxin (who barely survives, but is incapacitated).
- The Gralhund nimblewright jumped off the roof, dashed forward, rifled through Dalakhar's pockets, and took the *Stone of Golorr*. It then ran off, returning to Gralhund Villa.

MOTIVATION: A core problem in this scenario is that (a) the PCs are not strongly motivated to investigate the explosion, (b) they are explicitly encouraged to NOT investigate the explosion, but (c) if they don't investigate the explosion, the rest of the campaign doesn't happen.

My recommendation is simple: Kill someone they care about in the explosion.

Who you choose to kill is going to be heavily idiosyncratic to your campaign. It's really difficult to predict exactly which NPCs are going to resonate most strongly with the players during actual play. Honestly, it's just as likely to be some random person that you improvised off-the-cuff. But here are a couple of possibilities:

- Renaer Neverember. As described below, he arranged with Dalakhar to meet at Trollskull Manor. In this scenario, however, Renaer spotted Dalakhar on the street as they both arrived, approached him, and they were both killed in the explosion. (If you go this route, I recommend having a note from Dalakhar in Renaer's pocket for the PCs to discover that will cover at least some of the information Renaer would otherwise impart.)
- One of the Three Urchins (see Part 3). If it's not a deal-breaker for your group, introducing the cute little urchin kids and then killing one of them is virtually guaranteed to set the PCs on the warpath.

STRUCTURE: Generally speaking, this investigation will break down into three phases.

- First, the questioning of witnesses to the explosion. The primary revelation here is that a nimblewright was responsible.

- Second, finding and investigating known owners of nimblewrights. The primary revelation here is that they're being purchased from Captain Zord of the Sea Maidens Faire.
- Third, either speaking with Captain Zord (aka Jarlaxle) or performing a heist (see Part 4B) to retrieve his customer information. If they perform the heist, they might also stumble across the *crystal ball* Jarlaxle is using to spy through the nimblewrights. Either way, the information will lead them to the Gralhunds.

THE CRIME SCENE: The crime scene is described on p. 44 of *Dragon Heist*.

- Add black flying snake tattoos to the Zhentarim corpses.
- *Tracking the nimblewright?* Physically tracking the nimblewright is not really feasible, its trail being quickly obliterated in the crowded streets of Waterdeep.
- *Speak with dead?* See p. 46 of *Dragon Heist*, but tweak answers to fit revised continuity where necessary. The key revelations from Dalakhar is that he was carrying the *Stone of Golorr*, what the *Stone* does (although he doesn't know it's been blinded), that he stole it from Xanathar, and that he was coming to meet Renaer. The key revelations from the Zhentarim is that they were seeking something that Dalakhar was carrying, they worked for Urstul Floxin, and they came from Yellowspire (see Part 3: Faction Outposts).

REMINDER!

During this investigation...

Don't forget to **have Renaer show up at the scene of the crime**, probably 15-30 minutes after the explosion. When he does so, he'll be able to tell the PCs:

- That he had arranged to meet with Dalakhar at Trollskull Manor. The gnome had sent him an urgent message requesting the meeting and Renaer chose Trollskull Manor as the location.
- That Dalakhar was an agent working for his father.
- That his father had assigned Dalakhar to "keep an eye on me. He would skulk around and I would see him everywhere." A few weeks ago, though, he abruptly disappeared and Renaer doesn't know where he's been. (If the PCs ask, it happened just before Renaer was kidnapped by the Zhentarim.)
- That he doesn't know what Dalakhar wanted. "His message simply said that he was carrying something valuable for my father, was unable to deliver it, and was hoping that I could help."

Don't forget to **have the Cassalanters contact the PCs** and ask for their help in saving their children. It's strongly recommended that this occur before they reach the Gralhund Villa.

PHASE 1: QUESTIONING WITNESSES

There's generally three types of witnesses:

- Those who didn't see anything, and merely relate their personal experience. (Heard a huge explosion, rushed into the street. Saw a friend immolated in front of their eyes and the heat of the flame on their face. All their windows blew out. Et cetera.)
- Those who saw the nimblewright throw a bead from a *necklace of fireballs*. (Variation: As described on p. 45, young Martem Trec recovered the spent *necklace* from where it fell in a rain barrel after the nimblewright tossed it away.)
- Those who saw the nimblewright approach Dalakahar's body, take something from it, and run away. If the PCs inquire about which direction it went, the answer is between two buildings and heading east. (Variation: Some people may have also seen the nimblewright leap down from the roof from which it launched its attack.)

Which witnesses saw which events doesn't really matter. The key revelation is that a nimblewright was responsible for the attack.

BONUS CLUE – THE HOUSE OF INSPIRED HANDS: One of the witnesses who saw the nimblewright remembers seeing a similar automaton participating in the Twin Parades yesterday as part of the Temple of Gond's procession. (Following up on the Temple of Gond will lead to the House of Inspired Hands, see below.)

Option: There's no reason the PCs couldn't attend the Twin Parades themselves (see Part 4). If they do, you can describe several impressive processions participating in the parade, including the nimblewright who was operating a number of wondrous mechanical contraptions. (If you want to force it, arrange for one of the PCs' faction missions to require action during the parade.)

DESCRIPTION OF THE NIMBLEWRIGHT:

- A construct made of both burnished copper and pale wood.
- Wore a red robe and foppish red hat with a feather.
- A long, stylized Van Dyke beard. (This is unique to the Gralhunds' nimblewright and may help identify it to Captain Zord later.)
- You can see its clockwork mechanisms constantly whirring and pistoning under its rune-etched skin-plating.

POTENTIAL WITNESSES

- **Fala Lefaliir**, owner of Corellon's Crown (*Dragon Heist*, p. 32)
- **Tally Fellbranch**, owner of the Bent Nail (*Dragon Heist*, p. 32)
- **Rishaal**, owner of the Book Wyrms' Treasure (*Dragon Heist*, p. 33)
- **Jezryne Hornraven**, client of Vincent Trench (*Dragon Heist*, p. 45)
- **Martrem Trec**, 12-year-old boy and friend to the dead halflings (*Dragon Heist*, p. 45)
- **Emmek Frewn**, owner of Frewn's Brews and rival (*Dragon Heist*, p. 42).
- **Shard Shunners**, gang hired by Frewn to interfere with the PCs' business (*Dragon Heist*, p. 42)
- **Ulkoria Stonemarrow**, regular at Trollskull Manor (*Dragon Heist*, p. 42)

- **The Three Urchins**, particularly if one of them was killed (see Part 3C)

WITNESS – USTRUL FLOXIN: Urstul Floxin obviously survived the explosion, but he was badly hurt and will attempt to leave the area as quickly and surreptitiously as possible. If the PCs respond to the explosion quickly, however, they may have the question to briefly question him (particularly if they immediately move to assist the wounded).

- Somewhat disoriented, Urstul will give his real name if questioned.
- He'll claim to have come to Trollskull Alley in order to (he glances around and points at a storefront) the Book Wyrms' Treasure. He doesn't know what happened; there was just a bright light and a lot of heat and he's pretty sure he was knocked out.
- A DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) test suggests that he's not being entirely truthful. If pushed, he'll say, "Look, I must have been hallucinating. But just after the explosion, I could have sworn I saw a mechanical angel of death moving among the bodies. I thought he was going to come for me next, but then it turned and ran away." (*GM Note:* Urstul doesn't actually believe it was an "angel of death", but he wants to present himself as a confused rube who just happened to be passing by.)

Note: Urstul also has a black flying snake tattoo, but his is located on his left breast and is not visible unless the PCs somehow (and for some reason) strip him down.

THE WATCH ARRIVES: See *Dragon Heist*, p. 44-45.

DESIGN NOTES

The witness list has been expanded here specifically to reincorporate NPCs the characters may have been interacting with during Chapter 2. Accent the list with any other familiar faces the PCs might recognize, although not everyone in the area should be someone the PCs know.

Note that the in the published version of the campaign Urstul is the one to steal the Stone of Golorr from Dalakhar's corpse, but in this continuity the nimblewright steals the Stone (and it's the nimblewright's trail the PCs will be following). This also means Urstul can still be onsite, allowing the PCs to encounter him face-to-face before interacting with him at the Gralhund Villa.

PHASE 2: ON THE MATTER OF NIMBLEWRIGHTS

Once the PCs have the description of the mechanical man responsible for the attack, the next step is to figure out exactly what it was and where it came from.

RESEARCH: A DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) can reveal that it was a nimblewright, most likely built by the technomancers of Luskan and based on ancient Calishite designs of the Shoon Imperium. They had not previously been seen in Waterdeep and the Luskan technomancers have been reticent about sharing their secrets. If they succeed at DC 17, however, they learn that Bowgentra Summertaeen, Lady Master of the Watchful Order of Magists and Protectors, is known to have recently come into possession of one.

Following up on the Luskan angle is possible, with a DC 17 Charisma (Investigation) check revealing that the Sea Maidens Faire carnival ships recently came to Waterdeep from Luskan and the performers might know more.

CANVASSING: A DC 13 Charisma (Investigation) check reveals two owners of nimblewrights (see below). For every two points of margin of success, they discover an additional owner.

OTHER APPROACHES: Perhaps the PCs approach their faction for information on the mechanical man. Or they could easily come up with some completely unanticipated idea. If the approach seems plausible, default towards providing them 1-2 nimblewright owners.

THE BONUS CLUE: The bonus clue, described above, will also point the PCs towards one of the nimblewright owners (the Temple of Gond).

DESIGN NOTE

The PCs aren't meant to find all the owners of nimblewrights here. The intention is for them to trace the nimblewrights to Jarlaxle. If they do so and then steal Jarlaxle's records of sale, they'll find a list of all the owners, including those on the list below that they didn't already identify + the Gralhunds.

(This path is actually more difficult than just asking "Captain Zord" for help – because the PCs have to (a) steal the records and then (b) investigate all the different buyers before identifying the Gralhunds. But it has the advantage of not tipping off Jarlaxle, possibly eliminating an entire faction from the Grand Game.)

The bonus clue will preferentially point the PCs towards the fully developed Temple of Gond from the published scenario. If you want to open things up a bit, give the PCs two owners via the bonus clue. For example: "I think I saw a similar automaton in the Twin Parades yesterday. He was part of the Temple of Gond's procession." And then a bystander pipes up, "Hey! You're right! I've seen something like it

before, too! It was dueling down at the City Armory!” Or whatever owner you want to evoke.

OWNERS OF THE NIMBLEWRIGHTS

Jarlaxle has sold 9 nimblewrights. His asking price is just 25,000 gold dragons – which is a lot of money, but shockingly cheap as far as constructs go. That’s because he’s selling them at loss. His interest is not in making a profit from selling mechanical constructs: The nimblewrights have *clairvoyance crystals* built into them, allowing Jarlaxle to use a special *crystal ball* to capture “records of witness” through the eyes of each nimblewright, which he can review at his leisure. (See “Nimblewright Crystal Ball”, below.) He simply wants to get nimblewrights positioned in as many advantageous households and organizations as possible, collecting intelligence and blackmail opportunities.

TEMPLE OF GOND: The House of the Inspired Hands is described on p. 46 of *Dragon Heist*. The nimblewright they’ve named Nim has, much to their surprise, proven remarkably adept at interacting with and even creating their mechanical marvels. (He does not, however, have a nimblewright detector.)

- *Appearance:* Its “hair” consists of multi-layered, overlapping metal feathers.

BOWGENTRA SUMMERTAEN: Lady Master of the Watchful Order of Magists and Protectors, a guild for wizards and sorcerers in Waterdeep. Her nimblewright is serving as a majordomo-cum-curiosity piece at the Order’s guildhouse.

- *Appearance:* The nimblewright’s head is featureless – no eyes, no mouth, no nose, no ears, no hair. (This does not impede its senses of sight or hearing.)

LORD LABDAR ADARBRENT: Head of a noble Waterdhavian family who owns the fourth-largest shipping fleet in the city and has strong ties with the Master Mariners’ Guild. His nimblewright stands as a guard in his front hall, replacing the human guard who once stood there.

- *Appearance:* Its eyes are black onyx and its face is fixed in a permanent, rictused scowl. It wears the tabard of House Adarbrent.

LORD CORIN DEZLENTYR: The wizened, half-elven head of the Dezlentyr family. They first rose to prominence in the 13th century as caravan masters, traders, and explorers. They own a villa in the Sea Ward (\$51 on the 3rd Edition *City of Splendors* map). The nimblewright was actually purchased by his headstrong, swashbuckling daughter, Hermione Dezlentyr.

- *Appearance:* Its right eye is a green gemstone which glows faintly. Hermione has dressed it in traditional swashbuckling gear – the hate, the doublet, and so forth. (This lends it an appearance quite similar to the Gralhunds’ nimblewright, although it lacks the Van Dyke beard.)

HOUSE OF WONDER (TEMPLE OF MYSTRA): Jarlaxle may have gotten a little cocky here. The servants of Mystra obtained the nimblewright in the hope of unraveling

the secrets of its construction. They have not done so (at least not yet), but they did discover the *clairvoyance crystal* and have successfully removed it from their nimblewright. (If you want to complicate things, send a Bregan D'Aerthe response team to reclaim the compromised nimblewright.)

- *Appearance*: Feminine in appearance, dressed in a simple white robe. Silver “hair” has been carved to resemble a bob cut.

[LINK to https://forgottenrealms.fandom.com/wiki/House_of_Wonder]

MOTHER TAMRA’S HOUSE OF GRACES: A finishing school catering to young ladies of ambitious families located on Mendever Stret in the Castle Ward. Their nimblewright is serving as a housecleaner.

- *Appearance*: Eight halos of different previous metals circle the nimblewright’s head at strange, intersecting angles.

CITY ARMORY: Located in the Sea Ward (\$75 on the 3rd Edition *City of Splendors* map), the members of the Armory Guard have a nimblewright who serves as a fencing partner. They appropriated the funds to purchase the nimblewright without really having proper authorization.

- *Appearance*: Simple, generic facial features, but this nimblewright has additional plates of gleaming metal positioned around its body to resemble a stylized breastplate and greaves.

THE GRALHUNDS: The guilty party.

FACTION MEMBER: A prominent member of one of the factions the PCs belong to. Possibly their direct contact, but it’s arguably more effective to have it be someone they’re not personally acquainted with yet: It will make the outcomes of the investigation less certain, raise more questions in their mind, and have wider-ranging consequences in terms of deepening (or radically changing) their relationship with the faction.

INVESTIGATING THE OWNERS

As the PCs track down and question the owners, their stories and interactions will all be different, but make sure to establish the key revelations:

CORE REVELATION: The nimblewrights were all purchased from Captain Zord of the Sea Maidens Faire. His carnival ships are currently docked at a rented pier.

SECONDARY REVELATION: Captain Zord is selling the nimblewrights for a shockingly low price.

NIMBLEWRIGHT APPEARANCE: It’s important to note during these visits that the nimblewrights all look different from each other. While they share certain key features (a slight, nimble build; construction from thin, curved plates of burnished metal and pale wood; their visible clockwork mechanisms), each is a bespoke creation with distinct,

unique features. If you slip up and describe the nimblewrights as all being identical to each other (and, particularly, identical to the Gralhunds' nimblewright), the PCs will have no way of figuring out who the guilty nimblewright belongs to and their investigation is likely to turn into a muddle.

THE JARLAXLE CONNECTION

Once the PCs have tracked the nimblewrights back to "Captain Zord", there's generally three directions their investigation can take.

TALKING TO ZORD: If the PCs simply seek a meeting with Captain Zord, it's relatively easy to obtain. If they ask him about the ownership of a particular nimblewright, he'll first want to know *why* they're looking for it. His curiosity satisfied, he'll excuse himself for a few minutes, and then return to tell them that the nimblewright they're looking for was purchased by the Gralhunds. He can even give them an address.

Easy-peasy. (Except for the part where they've inadvertently tipped off Jarlaxle and brought him into the Grand Game.)

ZORD'S RECORDS OF SALE: If the PCs stage a heist to steal Zord's records of sale, they'll find the *Ledger of Nimblewright Sales* in Area J30 of the *Eyecatcher* (see Part 4B). This ledger records all the current owners of nimblewrights in Waterdeep.

THE CRYSTAL BALL: If the PCs discover the existence of the *nimblewright crystal ball* (see below), this can be found in Area U4 of the *Scarlet Marpenoth* (see Part 4B). If PCs stage a heist to access or steal the *crystal ball*, they can review the records of witness and easily discover that the nimblewright responsible for the *fireball* was sent by the Gralhunds.

THE NIMBLEWRIGHT CRYSTAL BALL

The *nimblewright crystal ball* is actually a rare and incredibly powerful crystalmantic artifact that's not inherently associated with the nimblewrights: It is attuned to specially created *clairvoyant crystals*, and is capable of not only perpetually scrying through those crystals, but also creating and storing records of witness. Basically, it allows you to not only view "live feeds" from any attuned *clairvoyant crystals*, you can also review everything those crystals have "seen" in the past.

Jarlaxle and his agents killed the dragoness Asphosis and stole the *crystal ball* from her horde. The technomancers of Luskan have been creating attuned *clairvoyance crystals* and building them into the nimblewrights. Thus, the *crystal ball* is currently capable of seeing out through the eyes of any nimblewright.

STUDYING THE NIMBLEWRIGHTS: The *clairvoyance crystals* are very carefully hidden deep inside the nimblewrights' clockworks (and, at least initially, appear to be an integrated part of their operation; they're not just wedged in there randomly). If several

hours can be taken to carefully study a nimblewright (including at least partially disassembling it), a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check will discover the *crystal*'s superfluous nature and then normal efforts can be used to identify its function.

The attunement between *crystal* and *crystal ball* can be traced. A *detect magic* spell combined with a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check is sufficient to identify that the *crystal* is attuned to something onboard the *Eyecatcher* (assuming the trace is followed to the harbor).

DESTROYING A CLAIRVOYANCE CRYSTAL: A *clairvoyance crystal* is actually quite delicate and will shatter like glass if appropriate physical force is employed.

CREATING A CLAIRVOYANCE CRYSTAL: Players who take possession of the *nimblewright crystal ball* have a very powerful and versatile tool. Attuned *clairvoyance crystals* can be scavenged from the nimblewrights (both those “in the field” and also those still located in Jarlaxle’s ships), but if they want to create more crystals, they’ll need to visit Luskan and perform a raid on the technomantic workshops there.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU SEE? In addition to identifying the Gralhunds’ nimblewright, the PCs can access records from all of the other nimblewright owners. This is a vast body of knowledge that is either banal or essential.

You might even include older records of witness from before the time that Aphosis took possession of the *ball*. These might be fragmentary and incomplete, but their study could reveal any number of adventure seeds for the PCs.

Perhaps there’s even a very old crystal that remains attuned to the *crystal ball* and located somewhere within Undermountain.

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 5D: BACKTRACKING DALAKHAR & KALAIN

BACKTRACKING DALAKHAR

Once the PCs identify Dalakhar as the primary target of the explosion, they may want to try backtracking his activities.

A successful DC 13 Charisma (Investigation) check can track him back to the Inn of the Dripping Dagger [LINK to https://forgottenrealms.fandom.com/wiki/Inn_of_the_Dripping_Dagger], located in the Trades Ward (location T3 on the 3rd Edition *City of Splendors* map). He rented his room for one night and then left.

HIS ROOMS: Inspection will reveal that his room was scrubbed clean in a very professional fashion. A DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check will reveal ash in the base of the room's oil lamp suggesting that a piece of correspondence was burned. (It can't be reconstituted through non-magical means, but it was Renaer's response to Dalakhar's original missive setting up the meeting at Trollskull Manor.)

Laying out in plain sight on the pillow, however, is a round disk of black stone painted with Xanathar's stylized beholder sigil. It's a death mark, left here as a threat after Xanathar's minions tracked Dalakhar here.

XANATHAR RESPONSE TEAM: The room is also being watched by a Xanathar response team (see Part 3C). If they see the PCs enter the room, they'll most likely accost them and see what they know about Dalakhar.

If it's been more than a day since Dalakhar was killed, the response team has been briefed on that and is also aware that "the boss knows a guy name Floxin – one of those Zhent bastards – was following that gnome dungbag; the boss has got eyes on Floxin now".

(This might give the PCs an alternative route to the Gralhunds by tracking down and following Urstul Floxin. Putting in some more legwork might discover that Floxin is currently operating out of Yellowspire (see Part 3B), and they might be able to follow him from there to the Gralhund Vila.)

If it's been more than three days since Dalakhar's death, the response team is pulled from this location.

THE LETTER: Four days after Dalakhar's death, a letter arrives at the Inn of the Dripping Dagger for him.

Dalakhar,

I had to give considerable thought to your request. But you were always kind to me even when your demonic master was not. If you are still in need of my aid, you may claim whatever sanctuary I can offer.

Kalain of the Nine Waters

Before he was killed, Dalakhar was thrashing around trying to find whatever aid he could. He was even desperate enough to contact Kalain, a former mistress of Lord Dagult's. Inquiries can identify Kalain's place of residence in the Sea Ward.

KALAIN'S TOWER

Kalain lives in a dilapidated tower in the Sea Ward. See *Dragon Heist*, p. 88, although the Vault is not secretly located there.

AREA W8 – KALAIN'S STUDIO: Here are Kalain's most recent paintings, documenting her descent into madness.

- **DOCUMENT LOCKBOX:** A document lockbox with three drawers sits on one of the tables (DC 13 Dexterity check to unlock). One of the drawers contains love letters she exchanged with Lord Dagult. Another drawer contains similar letters, but these have been torn to confetti. (She periodically removes a letter from one drawer, rips it to shreds, and deposits it in the other.) The third drawer contains a number of work papers left behind by Lord Dagult (see below).

KALAIN

Appearance: A beauty ruined by tragedy; lines of sadness are etched into her face. Long black tresses are streaked with silver turning to gray.

Roleplaying:

- Believes everyone is secretly an assassin sent by Dagult Neverember to murder her.
- Forgetful. Loses track of the conversation and abruptly starts talking about completely different subjects.
- Rubs her cheek with her hand with increasing vigor as she becomes distressed.
- Will activate creatures from her smaller, older, more peaceful paintings to assist her (fetching small objects, etc.).
- Sees Dagult, Waterdeep, and the monsters of her newer paintings as all being the same thing; will refer to them interchangeably.
- Speaks of Neverwinter as if she were a red-headed maiden who seduced Lord Dagult from her arms. Occasionally confuses Neverwinter and Alethea Brandath.

Background: Kalain, a famous Waterdavian painter, was commissioned to paint a portrait of Lord Dagult Neverember, then Waterdeep's Open Lord, in 1475 DR. Her meeting with Neverember marked the beginning of a torrid affair that lasted over a year.

Their relationship faltered as Dagult's visits to Neverwinter became more frequent and extended. He made promises to Kalain that he failed to keep, and when she raised the subject of a faithful commitment, he treated her poorly, for his true love was Neverwinter. Kalain became enraged after Dagult's rejection and turned to painting monsters that, in her mind, represented him. Her power to harness the Weave clings to the fabric of her works, giving her the ability to bring these monsters to life on her command.

Ultimately Neverwinter left Kalain a little over four years ago. He used his influence to ruin Kalain and divorce her from Waterdeep's high society. She was allowed to keep her home, but her works and her reputation were destroyed, slowly and methodically. Kalain's spirit was broken, leading to the onset of madness. Now she locks herself away, content to let time erode the last of her conscience.

Key Info:

- She knows that Dalakhar was a spy working for Lord Dagult Neverember. He sent a letter requesting her help, but she waited several days before replying due to her bitter history with Neverember.
- If told that Dalakhar was killed, she will blame the PCs for killing him on Neverember's orders and then rapidly escalate to concluding they're here to kill her (unless they quickly talk her down)!
- During their final days together, Lord Neverember was obsessed with a "Melairkyn ceremonial temple or religious vault or something like that. He was always more focused on anything else rather than me. Rather than us." If questioned, she can provide the papers described above.
- If asked if she knows where the "vault" is located, she will become quite distressed: "I should know this. He was fixated on it. It would make me so angry... so very, very angry... And now I can't remember why." (She was irrationally jealous because it was his ex-wife's tomb, but because of the *Stone of Golorr* she can't remember that any more. No one can.)
- If specifically asked, she will recount speaking with the Lord Victorio Cassalanter about Lord Neverember and the vault a few weeks ago, but she won't otherwise volunteer the information.

Stat Block: CE half-elf bard (DH p. 195).

- **Art Imitates Life:** Kalain touches one of her paintings and causes its subject to spring forth, becoming a creature of that kind provided its CR is 3 or lower. The creature appears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the painting, which becomes blank. The creature rolls initiative when it first acts. It disappears after 1 minute, when it is reduced to 0 hit points, or when Kalain dies or falls unconscious.

LORD DAGULT'S PAPERS

These papers mostly concern minor (and now thoroughly outdated) affairs of the city. There are a few pieces of unusual interest, however:

- A list of otherwise banal, crossed out tasks includes “move the dragon to the Melairkyn ceremonial vault.”
- Correspondence with Hammond Kraddog of the Vintners’, Distillers’, and Brewers’ Guild making it clear that Kraddog gave Lord Dagult large bribes to cover up a scandal involving contaminated liquor in the Dock Ward.
- Notes apparently pertaining to a “ceremonial vault” built by the Melairkyn dwarves beneath Waterdeep centuries ago. The notes detail that such vaults were built by worshippers of Dumathoin, the Keeper of the Mountain’s Secrets. The dwarven cult believed that Dumathoin encoded his secrets in the veins of ore and precious stones he placed in the mountains he raised from the earth for the dwarven people. In their mining, the dwarves would release Dumathoin’s secrets into the world. This angered Dumathoin and there was a period of discord between the dwarves and the Mordinsamman (the council of dwarven gods). In order to appease Dumathoin and to protect his secrets, the cult would mystically bind the “secrets of the mountain” into items of finely-wrought dwarfcraft and then make offering of it to Dumathoin by securing them within ceremonial vaults. Such vaults, according to an ancient source, can be opened by “standing before Dumathoin’s doors and striking the scale of a dragon with a mithral hammer in the place where the sun’s light should fall.”
- An unsigned letter written to Lord Neverember four years ago stating that “the last of the three Eyes has been secured.”
- A letter from Dalakhar also dating to four years ago, reporting on his unsuccessful efforts to infiltrate the Enclave of Red Magic in the Castle Ward. (*GM Note: This is literally a red herring. Dalakhar’s assignment four years ago has nothing to do with present events. The Red Wizards of Thay use the Thayan embassy as a cover for their local operations; it’s connected to the Thayan enclave in Skullport via a portal.*)

DESIGN NOTE

I found Kalain to be a really fascinating character. For a long time, unfortunately, I couldn’t figure out how to fit her into the Remix. I eventually struck on the idea of having Dalakhar write to her for assistance so that the PCs could backtrack him and find a trail to her. Originally, I thought this would be a dead end: The PCs would meet an interesting character and get filled in a little bit more on the back story of the scenario, but there was nothing Kalain could offer towards their current investigation.

And then, in one of those glorious instances where creative thoughts heap one atop the next, I realized that there WAS a way that Kalain could contribute materially to the scenario. (It also allowed me to link to her from the Cassalanter, too, making it more likely that any given group will encounter her.)

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 5E: OUTPOST AND LAIR REVELATION LISTS

The PCs will spend a significant portion of this remixed campaign engaged with the other factions of the Grand Game: Investigating them, reacting to them, targeting them, getting pissed off at them, etc. Much of that activity will be structured around investigating the factions' outposts and lairs, following the web of connections between them.

The revelation lists for each outpost and lair below adhere, at a minimum, to the Three Clue Rule. But you should remain alert for opportunities to dynamically generate clues in response to the PCs' actions.

DYNAMIC CLUE – RESEARCHING A FACTION: If the PCs want to find a faction by doing general research, point them in the direction of one of the faction's outposts. (Each outpost will contain clues that point to the Lairs, which are generally their ultimate goal.) [LINK to Rulings in Practice]

DYNAMIC CLUE – TRACKING BAD GUYS: Or backtracking them. Lean towards these trails leading to/from outposts, too. If the PCs are tracking the bad guys *from* an Outpost, though, it can be toss-up whether they're heading to another outpost or a lair. In some cases, of course, simple logic about what the NPCs are likely to be doing will override this structural guidance, in which case you should go with the logical option.

DYNAMIC CLUE – INTERROGATION: Similar guidance applies when the PCs start interrogating faction members. If these are mooks they've found in the field, the interrogation will usually lead back to the outpost they're based out of. If they're interrogating people in an outpost, on the other hand, they're more likely to spill the beans on the faction's lair. Again, use common sense (particularly when it comes to established NPCs like Urstul Floxin or Nihiloor).

DESIGN NOTE

In distributing clues, my general rule of thumb for any given outpost was to include one clue in a different outpost of the same faction, one clue in a lair or outpost of a competing faction, and one clue with a response team. For the lairs, I included one clue in each of the faction's outposts and then also includes at least one clue with a competing faction.

This was not a formula I followed slavishly and you'll find a number of exceptions, but as a guiding principle it helped make sure that I didn't over-cluster the clues and inadvertently create structural cul-de-sacs.

BREGAN D'AERTHE LOCATIONS

FENERUS STORMCASTLE'S HOUSE

- Letter Regarding Fenerus Stormcastle's House (*Seven Masks Theater*)
- A Directive to Zorbog (*Zhentarim Interrogation House*)
- Sealed Letter to Fenerus Stormcastle (*Response Team: Krebbyg Masq'il'yr*)
- A Directive from Jarlaxle (*Gralhund Villa – Artheyn Manor*)

SEVEN MASKS THEATER

- Message regarding “Westra Moltimmur” and “Sapphiria’s Booty” (*Fenerus Stormcastle’s House*)
- Report on the Seven Masks Theater (*Xanathar’s Lair*)
- Playbill for the Seven Masks Theater (*Response Team: Soluun Xibrindas*)
- Letter from N’arl (*Sea Maidens Faire*)

LAIR: SEA MAIDENS FAIRE

- Report regarding guild difficulties relating to the Sea Maidens Faire. (*Fenerus Stormcastle’s House*)
- Following Krebbyg or Questioning Fenerus. (*Fenerus Stormcastle’s House*)
- Speaking with Malcolm Brizzenbright (*Seven Masks Theater*)
- Report on the Seven Masks Theater (*Xanathar’s Lair*)

CASSALANTER LOCATIONS

ASMODEAN SHRINE

- Arn’s Meeting Notification (*Converted Windmill*)
- Report on the Cultists of Asmodeus (*Sea Maiden’s Faire*)
- Proactive: Harpers hire the PCs to investigate the shrine. (see “Using the Cassalanter Outposts”, Part 3B)

CONVERTED WINDMILL

- Seffia Naelryke’s Visiting Card (*Response Team: Vevette Blackwater*)
- Arn’s Book of Worship (*Asmodean Shrine*)
- Injury Report (*Terasse Estate*)
- Report from Seffia Naelryke (*Cassalanter Villa*)

LAIR: CASSALANTER VILLA

- Proactive: Invitation from the Cassalanters
- Bregan D’Aerth’s Report on the Grand Game (*Sea Maidens Faire*)
- Questioning Cultists (*Asmodean Shrine*)
- Noble Sigil on the Mirror of the Fiend (*Asmodean Shrine*)
- Instructions from Lord Cassalanter (*Asmodean Shrine*)

XANATHARIAN LOCATIONS

GRINDA GARLOTH

- Note Regarding Gladiatorial Weaponry (*Terasse Estate*)
- A Recommendation for Materiel (*Response Team: Fel’rekt Lafeen*)

- A Directive from N'arl Xibrindas (*Any Xanathar Response Team*)

TERASSE ESTATE

- A Directive Regarding Materiel (*Grinda Garloth*)
- On the Delivery of a Mechanical Beholder (*Xanathar Sewer Hideout 2*)
- Report from Seffia Naelryke (*Cassalanter Villa*)

XANATHAR SEWER HIDEOUT, TAKE 2

- Orb Confectioners' Note (*Response Team: Korgstrod Uxgulum*)
- Report to Agorn Fuoco (*Response Team: Vevette Blackwater*)
- An Ill Man's Note (*Terasse Estate*)

LAIR: XANATHAR'S LAIR

- Gralhund Report on the Grand Game (*Gralhund Villa*)
- Rescuing Ott Steeltoes (*Zhentarim Interrogation House*)
- A Note Regarding Gladiatorial Weapons (*Grinda Garloth*)
- Gladiatorial Gathering Point (*Terasse Estate*)
- Correspondence with N'arl Xibrindas (*Xanathar Sewer Hideout 2*)

ZHENTARIM LOCATIONS

ZHENTARIM INTERROGATION HOUSE

- Directive to Urstul Floxin (*Response Team: Urstul Floxin*)
- Crumpled Note (*Yellowspire*)
- Questioning the Zhentarim Response Teams (or being captured by them)

YELLOWSPIRE

- Tracking Urstul Floxin before the Gralhund Villa operation (*Response Team: Urstul Floxin*)
- Threatening Agorn Fuoco; he'll sell out his friend to save his own life (*Response Team: Agorn Fuoco*)
- A Missive from Castle Ward (*Gralhund Villa*)
- Questioning Samara (*Xanathar Lair*)

LAIR: KOLAT TOWERS

- Xanathar's Report on the Grand Game (*Xanathar's Lair*)
- Cassalanter's Report on the Grand Game (*Cassalanter Villa*)
- Teleportation circle (*Yellowspire*)
- Capturing Agorn Fuoco (*Response Team: Agorn Fuoco*)
- Questioning Samara (*Xanathar's Lair*)

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 6: GOLORR ARTIFACTS

The *Stone of Golorr* is described on p. 192 of *Dragon Heist*. What many people don't realize, however, is that the *Stone of Golorr* previously appeared as part of WotC's Stream of Many Eyes event and a tie-in ARG:

The Sage of Shadowdale hath hid on Earth a stone, of great power and imminent import. Its guardian, an exile from my realm, was spirited to Earth with this in tow; to keep it safe and secret 'ere its prophesied return.

[LINK http://dice-camera-action.wikia.com/wiki/Stone_of_Golorr]

The continuity of the Stream of Many Eyes features a number of elements from *Dragon Heist*, but although it seemed to lead directly into the published scenario, that promise didn't really come to fruition. The *Stone of Golorr* as it appeared here had a different back story, different properties, and even a prophesied destiny.

[LINK <http://emmettfurey.com/portfolio-item/no-stone-unturned/>]

Since I found a number of elements in the Stream of Many Eyes continuity for the *Stone* intriguing, I attempted to blend the two continuities together. This effort, however, quickly went awry: Rather than simply combining the two continuities, I ended up riffing on the basic conceptual ideas and ended up basically reinventing the *Stone*.

There are no principles of design or anything like that which led me down this path; it's a purely idiosyncratic creative response to the raw material. Maybe you'll end up liking what you'll see here, and maybe you won't. If you do, great. If you don't, the good news is that you can generally just use the *Stone of Golorr* as it appears in *Dragon Heist*. The only element you'll need to pick up from here are the Three Eyes.

WHAT THE STONE IS

The *Stone of Golorr* is an artifact that once belonged to the Abolethic Sovereignty. For millennia it was held in a vault within the ancient floating city of Xxiphu on the world of Abeir, but it was lost during the Wailing Years.

According to some histories, it was brought to Abeir-Toril when Xxiphu first plummeted to the world and settled deep below what is now the Sea of Fallen Stars. According to others, an aboleth who came to Abeir-Toril before the arrival of Xxiphu created the *Stone*; or perhaps he fled to Abeir-Toril carrying the stone and Xxiphu came in pursuit of their prize. Some versions of the tale claim that the *Stone* was forged during the primeval battles between Shar and Selûne, in the very moment that the world of Toril was formed.

Whether the *Stone* predates or co-dates the creation of Toril, in arcane terms this gives the *Stone* a position of primacy, making it capable of effects which no magic item or artifact created in these younger days could possibly duplicate.

HOW THE STONE WORKS

When the proper ritual is performed, the *Stone* magically eliminates a memory or piece of knowledge from everyone on Toril except for the person who is attuned to the *Stone*.

PERFORMING THE RITUAL: The use of the *Stone* to erase memory is a special ritual-form of *legend lore* which takes 12 hours to cast. Performing the ritual requires:

- The ability to cast *legend lore*.
- Knowledge of the ritual modifications to the spell.
- The use of a second abolethic artifact, a small tetrahedron of red jade. (This artifact is still in Lord Neverember's possession.)
- Special incenses suffused with the blood of an aboleth (2,500gp cost) and four ivory strips worth at least 50gp each.

During the ritual, the burning of the incense causes the four sides of the tetrahedron to unfold, revealing slots into which the ivory strips are then inserted. The *Stone* is then placed within the tetrahedron and the sides closed around it.

As the ritual completes, the tetrahedron opens once more, revealing the *Stone of Golorr* as it releases a burst of psionic energy. This energy attempts to refract through the person attuned to the *Stone*, forcing them to make a Wisdom saving throw with a difficulty commensurate to the scope of the memory or knowledge they are seeking to eliminate. (The memory of something with little significance and known to very few people would have a smaller DC than something of great significance or known to a large number of people.)

A group of people can attempt to perform the ritual together in order to reduce the difficulty of this saving throw by -2 per additional person (by spreading psionic refraction between them). The number of characters participating in the ritual is limited by the level of the character leading the ritual (i.e., a 5th level character could lead a ritual with up to 5 people), and *all* participants must succeed at the saving throw in order for the ritual to be successful.

On a failure, the ritual member fails to refract the psionic energy and the memory they were seeking to erase is eliminated only from their mind. If a particularly significant piece of knowledge was being targeted, the failure might also invoke a general fugue state for minutes, hours, or days (at the DM's discretion).

On a success, the knowledge is eliminated: Wiped clean from scrolls and inscriptions. Removed from all living memory except for those attuned to the *Stone* or participating in the ritual.

Note, however, that:

- This is very specific. For example, Neverember only eliminated the knowledge of the Vault's *location*, which is why other lore regarding the Vault (like its

existence and the keys required to open it) can still be found. As if reality had become a poorly expurgated book, you can still see where the “text” has been snipped out if you know where to look.

- This only destroys current knowledge, not the subject of the knowledge nor the ability to learn that knowledge in the future. Making everyone forget Bob, for example, doesn’t stop Bob from saying, “Hi! I’m Bob!”

USING THE STONE: Communicating with the *Stone*, receiving knowledge from the *Stone*, or performing the knowledge-erasing ritual requires the user to be attuned to the *Stone*. This can be a somewhat unpleasant process as the attunement takes the form of your thoughts slowly becoming compatible with the utterly alien, abolethic thoughtforms of the *Stone*.

THE STONE BLINDED

As *Dragon Heist* begins, the *Stone of Golorr* has been blinded by Lord Neverember; he has removed its three Eyes. This is not a physically difficult procedure: If someone is attuned to the *Stone*, an Eye can simply be physically popped out (or popped in). With the Eyes missing, however, the capabilities of the *Stone* are limited.

A simple physical examination of the *Stone* will make it clear that the three Eyes are missing.

BLINDED: The *Stone* is inert.

1 EYE RESTORED: With one Eye restored, the *Stone* can communicate, but still not see the secrets it once contained.

2 EYES RESTORED: Although still crippled, the *Stone* (and a character attuned to it) can now “see” the location of the remaining Eye and the immediate area around it. (This routes around a potential failure to figure out the location of the third Eye, and also speeds up the procedure of the third Eye Heist by essentially allowing the PCs to skip the normal surveillance requirements.)

3 EYES RESTORED: The *Stone of Golorr* is fully restored and operates normally once again.

SECRETS OF THE STONE OF GOLORR

The *Stone of Golorr* is a sentient magic item with an Intelligence of 18, a Wisdom of 16, and a Charisma of 18. It has hearing and darkvision out to a range of 120 feet. It can communicate telepathically with the creature that is attuned to it, as long as that creature understands at least one language. In addition, the *Stone* learns the greatest desires of any creature that communicates telepathically with it.

Speaking with the *Stone* is difficult as its thought processes are alien. As a result, the information it provides is often cryptic or vague.

Legend Lore: The *Stone of Golorr* has a maximum of 3 charges and regains 1d3-2 expended charges daily at dawn. While holding the *Stone*, you can expend 1 of its charges to cast the *legend lore* spell.

Using one of these charges, the *Stone* can share with its attuned holder the secrets which have been hidden inside of it, either through speech or through a telepathic burst of imagery and sensation. Its holder can direct this towards a particular secret if they are aware of its existence; otherwise the *Stone* will provide a secret according to its own perverse whim and alien predilection.

Examples of such secrets, ranging from the banal to the profound, include:

- Any number of horrible racial slurs.
- The elvish word *essylathir*, which means the beauty of eyes which are the color of a storm-tossed sea.
- The existence of a race of tawny-haired bipeds known as “fuzzies” that live in the High Forest.
- The Kingdom of Otheria, which ruled a demesne from the Sword Coast to the sands of Anauroch approximately 500 years ago.
- The name “Anu-Devan,” which was once the most popular male elven name.
- The Aurunean Invasion. Strange invaders wearing insectile helmets of mithral-and-gold came from a continent far to the west and invaded Faerûn. Apparently the *Stone* was used to eradicate all knowledge of the war, thus ending the conflict (since it also eradicated the navigational charts the Auruneans had used to reach what they called the Eastern Shores).
- The location of 16 bars of silver, buried in the rear yard of a tavern in Murann in 916 DR.
- The location of the Nexus (see *Book of Eldritch Might III*).
- An atrocity performed during the Crown Wars. [LINK: https://forgottenrealms.fandom.com/wiki/Crown_Wars_timeline] Although history has long-maintained that the dark elf Ilythiiri attacked the smaller kingdom of Orishaar on the thinnest of pretenses to begin the Second Crown War, it turns out that the Orishaari actually betrayed the Ilythiiri at a wedding which was to unite their two people and slaughtered most of the Ilythiiri royal family. The knowledge of this was wiped from history by the *Stone of Golorr*, leaving the official histories to record only that the dark elves went to war “in supposed retaliation for Aryvandaar’s aggression against the Miyeritari. Considering that the moon elves of Orishaar had no connection with Aryvandar beyond a trade alliance, and the Ilythiiri had little to do with the beleaguered elves of Miyeritari, this was a thinly veiled excuse for the Ilythiiri to seize some land from the moon elves.” (*Lost Empires of Faerun*)
- The spells *blacksteel* (see <https://www.dmsguild.com/product/266279/Spell-Compendium-I>) and *midnight shroud* (*Spells of Light and Darkness*)
- The ritual required for the creation of a Hell cyst (see Part 3).

- The existence of the Shadowdusk family, and their holdings on Level 22 of Undermountain. (Or perhaps some other hook to *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*.)

Perceptive PCs may notice that many of these secrets were likely secured on Toril at a time when the *Stone of Golorr* was supposedly being held in a vault on Abeir. If they inquire on this topic, the *Stone* will reveal that when Abeir and Toril were reunited, it was ripped back in time to the point where the two worlds were sundered and then “skipping” through time, appearing in Toril at various, discontinuous points through history.

Memory’s Passing: If you lose attunement with the *Stone* you must attempt a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or the memories you shared with the *Stone* (i.e., the lost knowledge you gained from it) will begin to fade from your mind

DESIGN NOTES

Another option I looked at here was to allow each secret encoded within the Stone to be locked with a passphrase. To access the secret you would need both Stone and passphrase. (The passphrase for the Vault’s location would have been “Brandath,” which would be seeded throughout the campaign with the Three Clue Rule.)

Passphrases might be vulnerable to certain divinatory attempts; or maybe it’s a requirement that the passphrase be recorded on a stone disc. If they’re NOT vulnerable to divinatory “hacking,” the use of passphrases would allow you to control exactly what information the PCs can pull out of the Stone. And the hunt for a passphrase can become an adventure in its own right (many times over).

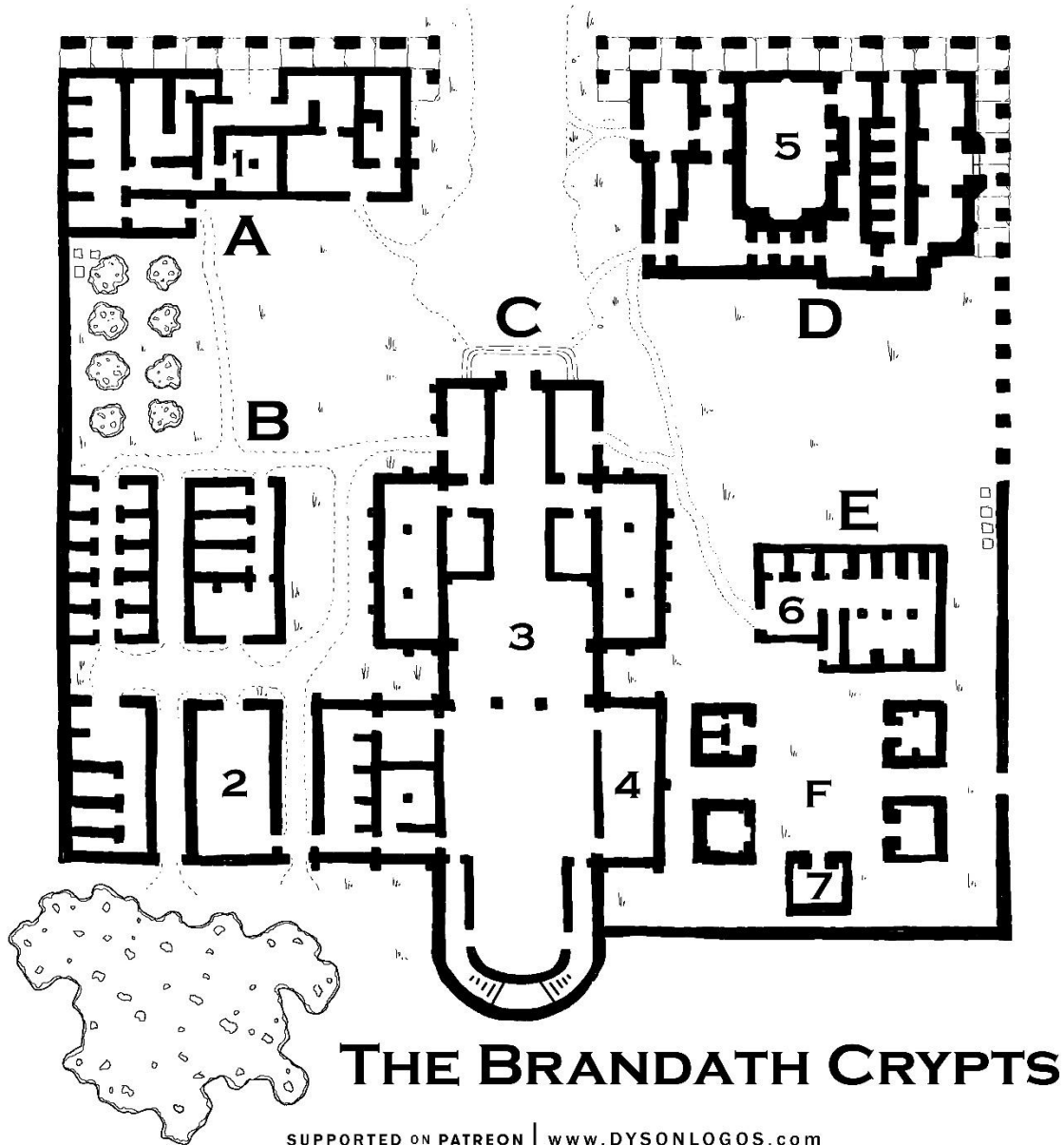
I decided the use of passphrases was just an extra layer of complexity that Dragon Heist didn’t need, however, and so opted not to implement it. If you do, I’d recommend that the Cassalanter have a list of several passphrases they’re interested in feeding into the Stone.

WHERE IS THE VAULT?

Those seeking Neverember’s Enigma from the *Stone* will receive that information in two simultaneous streams of information:

- A tangled barrage of imagery: Twisted underground tunnels lit by strange lights. An endless field of corpses. Halls of stone. A golden dragon, aging so rapidly that scales shed from its skin. The sound of a silver hammer striking stone. A beam of sunlight in a darkened room. A chisel carving Dethek (dwarven) characters which transform themselves into two words: BRANDATH CRYPTS.
- A cryptic riddle: *Where laid his wife to rest ‘midst bones of son’s blood sealed, there where Anri laid himself to rest lies that which Open Lord concealed.*

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 6B: THE BRANDATH CRYPTS



The vault in which Lord Neverember hid his stolen wealth was, in fact, constructed by the Melairkyn dwarves thousands of years ago and, today, lies beneath the Brandath family crypts.

Clan Melairkyn were the first to begin excavating beneath what is now Waterdeep. The earliest portions of Undermountain were, in fact, the Underhalls in which they made their homes and wrought their mithral-craft.

Near the Underhalls, they also built a ceremonial vault. The Melairkyn were worshippers of Dumathoin, the Keeper of the Mountain's Secrets. Their cult believed that Dumathoin

encoded his secrets in the veins of ore and precious stones he placed in the mountains he raised from the earth for the dwarven people. In their mining, the dwarves released Dumathoin's secrets into the world. This angered Dumathoin and there was a period of discord between the dwarves and the Mordinsamman (the council of dwarven gods). In order to appease Dumathoin and to protect his secrets, the cult would mystically bind the "secrets of the mountain" into items of finely-wrought dwarfcraft and then make offering of it to Dumathoin by securing them within ceremonial vaults.

After the Melairkyn civilization fell before an invasion of dark elves, the vault was looted and abandoned, its secrets – whatever they may have been – scattered to the corners of the world. The entrance was eventually buried by the passage of time. Nearly a millennia passed before the city of Waterdeep was founded, and the area near the vault became used as a burial ground which would expand to become the City of the Dead.

The Brandath family eventually constructed a mausoleum on the site. A hundred years later, as the mausoleum was being expanded, the excavations broke through into antechambers of the Melairkyn vault. Struck by the grand and mysterious beauty of the vault, the Brandaths of the time concealed the vault's existence and used it as a site for performing ritual mummery based loosely on the original Melairkyn rituals as part of a secret fraternal order known as the Brothers of the Maroon Pin. A scandal eventually saw the Maroon Brotherhood shut down, and the vault lay largely forgotten under the Brandath mausoleum.

When Lady Alethea Brandath died, however, her husband, Lord Neverember, discovered the existence of the vault while making preparations for her internment in the old mausoleum. Gaining access to the inner vault, he realized it would be a perfect place to store the money he was embezzling from the city.

Once the money was safely ensconced, Neverember concealed the location of the vault using the *Stone of Golorr*. After blinding the *Stone*, he hid one of the Eyes in a crypt near his wife's. His logic was that no one knew where the Vault was located except him, so no one would look there.

Lord Dagult, however, had not counted on the perseverance of the Cassalanters. They performed an exhaustive survey of sites associated with Lord Neverember, including his wife's tomb. There they discovered the hiding place of the Eye and took it. (Ironically, they never realized they were standing almost directly above the vault.)

THE CITY OF THE DEAD

In 1250 DR, when Waterdeep's graveyard had become hopelessly congested with the dead, the city began constructing public mausoleums and the character of the City of the Dead was permanently changed. Today much of it is a public park, dotted with mausoleums and crypt-complexes. (See *Dragon Heist*, p. 179.)

DUSK: At dusk, hundreds of driftglobes make their way from the inhavited part of the city and congregate in the City of the Dead. They spend the night here and then disperse, returning to the waking city at dawn. No one knows the reason for this.

NIGHT: At night, the City of the Dead is closed. Two city **guards** are stationed at each entry gate. It requires a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check to slip over the walls.

GUARDIANS

SIR AMBROSE EVERDAWN (LG male human Tethyrian knight): An aging servant of Kelemvor (god of the dead), patrols the cemetery from sunset to sunrise, chasing off grave robbers and making sure the dead stay buried. Characters who creep around the cemetery in the dark have a 30 percent chance of running into him. If that happens, he escorts them out and alerts the City Guard if they refuse to leave.

BRANDATH TREANT: The largest tree growing by the main entrance to the Brandath Mausoleums is a **treant**. It awakens when one or more creatures approach and growls, “Only those of Brandath blood are welcome here! Begone!”

If someone other than a Brandath attempts to enter a mausoleum, the treant will animate two trees and attack. The treant and its animated allies are too big to enter all but the main chambers of Mausoleum C.

If Renaer Neverember (of Brandath blood) is present, the treant allows him and his companions to pass unmolested. It says to Renaer in passing, “Your mother was a lovely person.”

MAUSOLEUMS

The first small mausoleum built on this site was expanded with various antechambers and new crypts to hold additional members of the Brandath family. Other single-occupant mausoleums were added around the original structure, although many of these were subsequently razed to make way for the larger structures which now form the rambling crypt-complex of the Brandath family.

GENERAL FEATURES:

- **Doors:** The stone doors of the mausoleums are generally locked (DC 15 Dexterity check to pick the lock; DC 25 Strength (Athletics) check to force it).
- **Coat of Arms:** The Brandath coat of arms can be found upon the floor of each mausoleum. An DC 15 Intelligence (History) check can determine, based on the variations and progression of the heraldry, which of the buildings is oldest. (D is the oldest, followed by F, B, A, C, and E.)

MAUSOLEUM A – CELESTIAL STATUES: When this mausoleum was built, the popular style was for each grave to be marked with a statue of the deceased rendered as if they had been reborn as a celestial: Wings, glowing eyes (by way of persistent spells),

and halos are common. One is carved as if they were an Empyrean – although the statue is life-size, it is surrounded by faceless, miniature people suggesting that its true scale is much larger. Others are accompanied by couatl, pegasi, and the like.

- **AREA 1:** The statue in this chamber was enchanted to sing when mourners drew near. Over the centuries, however, this enchantment is fading and the voice fades and cuts, creating an unsettling and atonal melody.

MAUSOLEUM B – THE OSSUARIES: These four buildings in the southwest corner of the crypt-complex have been transformed into (or were built as) ossuaries. Some were “buried” by having their bones directly placed in these ossuaries, but in other cases bodies were moved here in order to make room for new arrivals elsewhere in the crypt-complex.

- **AREA 2:** The floor-to-ceiling shelving that once held the bones in this ossuary has collapsed, filling the entire building with tumbled piles of bone. 6 **crawling claws** (MM, p. 44) scurry among and tunnel through the bones (leaping out from unexpected angles).

MAUSOLEUM C – THE GRAND CRYPT: This two-storey tall building was built at the height of the Brandath family’s power and influence. Constructed of marble and porphyry, its Doric architecture is redolent of 13th century Illuskan revivalism. The name BRANDATH is carved in Thorassian (common) letters above the doors.

- **AREA 3:** The vaulted main hall of the grand crypt is perpetually lit by three chandeliers with blue *everburning candles*. Plaques upon the floors and walls indicate where dozens of people have been laid to rest seemingly behind every wall. Bas reliefs serve as strange death masks.
- **AREA 4:** This side chamber is taken up almost entirely by the bom of Sir Jom Shiaon Brandath, a half-giant. Carvings around his titanic sarcophagus indicate that he died seeking vengeance against “Lord Bombur,” who had “cruelly butchered” Sir Jom’s family with a cowardly assault upon his keep while Sir Jom was on campaign in the First Dragonspear War (1356 YD).
- **SECOND FLOOR:** The stairs at the south end of the building lead up to a second floor of tight, claustrophobic passages lined with crypts.

MAUSOLEUM D – THE FIRST CRYPT: This building is the oldest in the crypt-complex. BR_N__TH CRY_TS is carved in faded letters of the Dethek alphabet above the eastern doors. Age-worn stone can be seen everywhere, along with clear signs of repeated renovation. Individual crypt sites have been renovated, moved, and even removed over hundreds of years.

- **AREA 5:** This room was the original mausoleum on this site. See “Lady Alethea’s Tomb,” below.

MAUSOLEUM E – ULD’S CRYPT: Despite being the newest construction in the crypt-complex, this mausoleum is in very poor repair. Part of the roof has caved in, crushing several of the tomb sites within.

- **AREA 6:** A gravemarker identifies the sarcophagus here as belonging to Uld Brandath, a Waterdhavian magister who died in a freak accident years ago. (A

gargoyle broke off the corner of a government building and fell on Uld, crushing him.) One corner of his sarcophagi has been staved in by the collapsed ceiling. Uld's skeletal corpse wears a *headband of intellect*.

- **CRAWLING CLAWS:** Six **crawling claws** (MM, p.44), made from the hands of murderers who were sentenced to death by Uld, escaped from his sarcophagus and now infest the building.

MAUSOLEUM F – SMALL MAUSOLEUMS: Originally there were several dozens of these smaller mausoleums located in the Brandath crypt-complex, each containing a single body (or perhaps a small family unit). Many were raised in order to build the Grand Crypt and, more recently, Uld's Crypt.

- **AREA 7:** One of the small mausoleums is obviously of much newer construction than the others. The name "LORD ANRI BRANDATH" is carved above the door. On the relatively plain sarcophagus inside, two dice appear to have been carelessly tossed (reading snake eyes). Lord Anri is, in fact, buried here. Lord Dagult had this mausoleum built and transferred Lord Anri's body here when he renovated Lord Anri's original resting place (see "Lady Alethea's Tomb").
- *GM Note:* Combined with the vision granted by the *Stone of Golorr*, this will likely function as a red herring for PCs who believe the Vault lies beneath Lord Anri's tomb.

LADY ALETHEA'S TOMB

This room was actually the first Brandath mausoleum and it was the burial site of Lord Anri, who rested here undisturbed for many hundred years while his descendants lived, died, and were buried around him.

The ego of Lord Dagult Neverember, however, manifests in myriad ways. When his wife, Lady Alethea Brandath, died, Lord Dagult wished to exult her in death. Lady Alethea, however, had requested a simple tomb in the Brandath Crypts. Nevertheless, Lord Dagult got what he wanted by refurbishing Lord Anri's tomb and burying her there, giving her a place of primacy.

LADY ALETHEA'S SARCOPHAGUS: Clearly newer than the rest of the crypt, a bouquet of wilted flowers lies atop her sarcophagus (which is sculpted in her likeness).

- *GM Note:* The flowers were left by Renaer.

PORTRAIT ON THE CEILING: A faded, chipped portrait of Lord Anri adorns the the plaster ceiling. He is identified in the portrait with a labeled banner. Fresh script around the perimeter of the painting reads, in four languages, "The beauty of our age, in death, is watched over by the spirits of her ancestors."

- **DC 14 Intelligence (History):** The portrait was actually added to the crypt several centuries after Lord Anri's time. In the portrait, he is wearing an alexandrite-tipped pin and is holding a distinctive dwarven compass in his left hand. (**DC 17:** These are symbols of the Maroon Brotherhood, an obscure fraternal order that was once active in Waterdeep but not longer exists.)

- *GM Note:* Lord Anri was not a member of the Maroon Brotherhood; the painting was commissioned by the brotherhood and added the symbolism retroactively.

SECRET PASSAGE: A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) test discovers that the southern wall of the crypt is false, disguising the staircase leading to the old crypts beneath the mausoleum.

THE OLD CRYPTS

See the map on p. 71 of *Dragon Heist*.

STAIRS DOWN: Sconces for torches are placed on the walls, but there are no torches within them. The air is dry. There is a thick coating of dust, but a large amount of fairly recent traffic has disturbed it up and down the main hall.

- **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation):** The top step is scorched by a recent explosion. A DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check identifies this as the remains of a triggered *glyph of warding*. (*GM Note:* Triggered by the Cassalanter team that removed the Eye.)

AREA M2: One of the sconces has been ripped from the wall here and tossed to the floor.

- **DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation):** The remnants of a *glyph of warding* can be found on the floor here. It's been rendered inactive by someone blotting out several key strokes of the *glyph*.
- **Sconce:** There was a secret compartment behind the sconce. It's empty now. (*GM Note:* This is where Lord Neverember hid the Third Eye, which the Cassalanter then stole.)

TO THE VAULT: The collapsed eastern end of the tunnel is actually an illusion that conceals an intact archway filled with a heavy door of steel.

- **The Arch:** The keystone of the arch is decorated to appear like a mountain with a purple alexandrite gemstone in the middle of it (a variation of Dumathoin's holy symbol). The voussoir have various symbols carved in them in alternation with dwarven runes: A dwarven compass, a serpent's forked tongue, a scarabaeus, a brain with two tentacles (Ilsensine's holy symbol), a broken arrow (Laduguer's holy symbol). (*GM Note:* These are all symbols of the Maroon Brotherhood.)
- **The Door:** Obviously much more recent than the surrounding stonework (it was installed by Lord Dagult to provide some actual physical *security* for the vault), and has actually damaged some of the ancient symbols on the arch. It's a 2-foot-thick vault door, with a DC 22 lock. There's an *alarm* spell on the door, but it's keyed to Lord Dagult and, assuming he's still in Neverwinter, he's too far away to get the ping.
- **Beyond the Door:** A 10-foot-wide hallway that slopes down to the Vault (see Part 6C). A *glyph of warding* has been placed so that it triggers on anyone stepping through the door.

DESIGN NOTES

Pretty much everything I'm doing here is aimed at giving the conclusion of the campaign enough weight to feel meaningful. Exploring the mausoleums and their history isn't a particularly meaty interaction, but it invests the player into a specific place with specific meaning before they crack open the Vault. It also provides a nice thematic loop with the beginning of the campaign, which started with the PCs rescuing Renaer Neverember and getting drawn into his family's drama.

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 6C: THE VAULT

The entries here modify or replace those found on p. 94-97 of *Dragon Heist*. They reference the map on p. 95.

THE HALL OF SECRETS

About 15 feet down the sloping hallway, the stone construction changes. To anyone knowledgeable about such things, the lower portion of the hall is clearly dwarven construction.

Roughly 50 feet beyond that, the walls of the hall are covered with what appear to be dwarven graffiti — some painted on the walls, others carved. Each records a secret, most of them banal (“my beard quivers for Lorlai of the stonecutters,” “I tasted pixy dust in the third hall,” “I use rotgrub paste to dye my beard”).

This continues for another two hundred feet before the hall ends in Area V1.

DOOR OF THE CEREMONIAL VAULT

AREA V1 – ANTECHAMBER: The antechamber is twenty feet wide and twenty feet high. It seems to resonate with a silent stillness, suggestive of its great age. The far wall is dominated by a massive pair of adamantine doors bearing dwarvish runes taller than a grown man. In the center of the floor there is a bronze bas relief of a stylized sun, six feet across. Words have been carved into the floor in a circle around the bas relief.

- **The Doors:** The dwarvish runes read, “All that lies within belongs to the Silent Keeper.” The doors cannot be forced open or damaged in any way, and attempts to circumvent them with magic short of a *wish* spell fail automatically.
- **The Sun:** The script running around the sun is in Chondathan (the local human tongue) and, upon inspection, clearly a more recent addition to the antechamber. The inscription reads, “Know ye the hidden truth.” It’s repeated three times.
- **Opening the Doors:** It’s a ceremonial vault and opening the doors requires the performance of a ceremony: A single dragonscale must be laid upon the bas relief of the sun and then struck while lit by sunlight. Once that is done, the doors slide back into the walls and remain open for 15 minutes before sliding shut again. (They can be opened from the inside by simply placing a hand upon them.)
- **GM Note:** The “Silent Keeper” is a title belonging to Dumathoin. The Chondathan inscription was placed here by the Maroon Brotherhood.

SUNLIGHT? Certain magical effects can bring sunlight here (the *sunbeam* spell, for example, or Manshoon’s *sunglobe*). PCs could also set up a series of mirrors; this requires twenty large steel mirrors (20 gp each) and 2d4+2 hours of work get their alignment just right.

DRAGON SCALES? The type of scale doesn’t matter. They’re rare on the market, but can be found in specialty shops for 1d6 x 300 gp. The PCs might also recall running into

sources for dragon scales at various points during the campaign (Zelifarn, Jarlaxle's bedroom, the Cassalanter's study).

MITHRAL HAMMER? Doesn't have to be a particularly large one. It can be commissioned from local craftsmen for 150 gp.

LEARNING THE CEREMONY: Clever PCs may be able to guess the necessary ritual from the vision granted by the *Stone of Golorr* when they asked for the Vault's location. If they cast an additional *legend lore* specifically pertaining to the doors, they'll be told, "Three keys ye seek. Strike scale of wyrm in light of day. As the vault bears witness, so shall it ope to mithral's strike." The notes pertaining to the Melairkyn vault held by Kalain (see Part 5C) also reveal the necessary ritual. Alternatively, the PCs may

RESEARCHING THE VAULT DOOR: Researching Dumathoin with a DC 15 Intelligence (History) test reveals the existence of the ceremonial vaults and the ceremony the Melairkyn dwarves would perform to open the doors.

RESEARCHING THE MAROON BROTHERHOOD: Researching the Maroon Brotherhood's symbols or the phrase "Know ye the hidden truth" will provide a general precis of the Brotherhood's history:

- They were a secret brotherhood, primarily centered in Waterdeep and most likely founded during the 12th century (although they often obfuscated that date in order to present themselves as a more ancient lineage).
- In the early 14th century they became caught up in the Shadow Thief Affairs, their members were implicated in an assassination attempt, and the group was broken up by Open Lord Lhestyn.
- Rumors persisted for the better part of a century that the Brotherhood of the Maroon Pin had actually survived the purge and were secretly controlling Waterdeep (or even all of the newly formed Lords' Alliance), although these claims eventually faded into legend and conspiracy theory.
- Court records from the time period indicate that a large number of the brotherhood's members were part of the Brandath family.
- The rituals of the brotherhood largely remained secret even after – or perhaps because – their end was so precipitous. It is clear, however, that the brotherhood had accumulated any number of arcane rituals, symbols, and the like. These included the namesake pins of alexandrite, dwarven compasses (often hidden within works of art), a serpent's forked tongue (representing the telling of secrets), scarab beetles, and the like. They seemed particularly fond of appropriating imagery from ancient or exotic civilizations.
- One example of this, found beneath the picture of a broken arrow, is the enigmatic phrase: "In beam of sun, strike dragon's scale with mithral true upon the anvil sun." Mid-14th century scholars exhausted great amounts of work trying to puzzle out what the imagery of "anvil sun" alluded to, with most concluding it must refer cryptically to a site somewhere within Calimshan, possibly dating back to the lost empire of Coramshan. Debates raged endlessly about exactly which site (or sites)

the passage might refer to, until Maroon Brotherhood conspiracy scholarship faded away by the end of the 14th century.

INSIDE THE VAULT

GENERAL FEATURES: Hidden somewhere within each room of the vault (except V6, V7, and V8) is a cartouche bearing the dwarven runes “HN” (see, also, Area V5).

AREA V2 – ENTRANCE FOYER: The three niches on the far wall (instead of holding fake doors) contain chipped frescoes of:

- Dumathoin placing glowing gems into a range of mountains (which appear to be a primeval representation of the Sword Mountains).
- Dumathoin visting the Illithid god Ilsensine (manifested in its form as a disembodied emerald brain) and bathing with it in the greenish psionic energy of the maze-like Caverns of Thought.
- Dumathoin, Ilsensine (in the form of an Illithid avatar), and Laduguer, the god of the duergar, with hands clasped in a circle of friendship.

AREA V5 – THE SECRETS ROOM OF HARLSNOD DARKSHINE: Dwarven runes upon the wall read, “In these halls which his craft has wrought, the master architect Harlsnod Darkshine lays his secrets.”

- *GM Note:* Harlsnod Darkshine designed and built the ceremonial vault. The treasure represents his own personal “secret offerings” to Dumathoin; whether the practice of sealing secrets into such offerings is literally true (and those secrets can somehow be extracted or simply whisper into the wind if the treasure is removed from the vault) is up to you. Harlsnod’s tomb can be found on p. 183 of *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*.

AREA V6 – HAMMER AND ANVIL:

- **Frescoes:** The frescoes in this room depict the construction of the Temple of Dumathoin and the Heart of the Mountain (Level 6, Areas 15 and 16 of Undermountain, see p. 86-87 of *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*). In addition to the hammer inset into the wall, there is a secret compartment behind that hammer (DC 12 Intelligence to find if you’ve removed the hammer, DC 17 otherwise). The compartment contains maps of Level 6 of Undermountain, along with detailed notes showing the calculations used to determine the location of the Heart of the Mountain and the divinatory properties which resulted from “the whisper of the Keeper of Secrets Under the Mountain”.

AREA V8 – DUMATHOIN’S TRUTH: This entry replaces the original room key.

- Set into the floor is an adamantite trap door with a pull ring.
- The walls are covered with frescoes depicting Dumathoin, Ilsensine, and Laduguer working together on some arcane project; not only are they surrounded by papers covered in dwarven runes, but strange, glowing diagrams fill the air around them. Dumathoin has turned from the work and seems to stare into the center of the room.

- **Trapdoor:** The trapdoor is false and cannot be lifted. Anyone who touches the trapdoor or its pull ring must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or be struck by rays of magical fire that spring from the painted Dumathoin's eyes, dealing 4d10 fire damage. The trap doesn't trigger if the target has total cover.
- **Frescoes:** A DC 15 Intelligence test reveals that work depicted in the frescoes seems to focus on dwarven anatomy.

DESIGN NOTE: THE MAIN VAULT

You can run the main vault exactly as written. Personally, I found the back story of Aurinax and the dragonstaff of Aghairon to be a fairly convoluted bit of continuity to introduce at literally the last moments of the scenario. I considered trying to drop some lore into earlier sections of the scenario regarding Aurinax and his relationship with Lord Dagult, but it still ended up feeling like an unneeded complication. So when I run the campaign I'll simply be dropping a red dragon down there. A straight, uncomplicated dragon fight to end Dragon Heist!

If your players are familiar with the Idle Champions of the Forgotten Realms video game, however, they might get a kick out of the familiar face.

THE BROKEN CIRCLE OF GODS

The images found throughout the vault, if revealed to (and believed by) the dwarven public, would be like dropping a *fireball* into the doctrine of the Morndinsamman (the council of dwarven gods). The events they depict predate the falling out between Laduguer and Ilsensine, and the breaking of the friendship these three gods once shared.

In the official lore, both the strange concord between Dumathoin and Ilsensine as well as the exact details of the falling out between Ilsensine and Laduguer are mysteries. Introducing these images into your campaign will peel back one layer of this mystery, although it may only result in even more questions being asked.

If you (or your players) choose to pursue this, this is my rough canon for this history:

- When the world was much younger than it is today, Dumathoin and Laduguer explored the roots of the world together. There they met Ilsensine. Or, at least, one of his ganglion – the “tentacles of infinite length” that stretch from Ilsensine throughout the many worlds.
- In doing so, they may (or may not) have been responsible for mind flayers coming to Faerûn for the first time.
- In any case, the three of them became friends, joined by a common interest in the secret paths of knowledge, the hyper-mental patterns by which knowledge itself is birthed into the world, and the deep places of the world.
- At a much later point in time, Laduguer approached his two friends with thoughts on how the dwarves Moradin had created could be improved. To perfect these ideas still needed much work, and the three friends fell to work.

- When the Morndinsammar discovered what they were doing, however, they were outraged. Laduguer covered for Dumathoin, but he and his daughter, Duerra, were cast out of the Morndinsammar.
- Laduguer continued his work, straining his relationship with Dumathoin. Things fell apart completely, however, when Laduguer discovered that Ilsensine had appropriated “his” work and actually begun having his illithids experiment on captured populations of dwarves. (This would eventually lead to the creation of the duergar.)
- Laduguer felt betrayed, the gods fell to war, and the acrimony between them became irreparable. During their conflict, Duerra was secretly captured by the illithid and became part of the duergar experiments.

The history which followed, in which the duergar became a slave race only to eventually lead at least one rebellion against their illithid overlords (one of which may or may not have involved Deep Duerra leading an army which captured an illithid city, see *Polyhedron* #110), is a mixture of legend and truth which I leave to someone else to untangle according to their need.

DESIGN NOTE

GM Tip: Encourage any players creating dwarf PCs to choose Dumathoin as their god. It'll let the revelations of the Vault land heavily.

AFTER THE VAULT

The total horde of 500,000 gold coins weighs 10,000 pounds. Transporting it out of the Vault is not a simple task. And, if the PCs are planning to keep it, the question of where to store it is not an insignificant one. (The sum will raise eyebrows and call a lot of attention if they simply try to deposit it at a bank, for example.)

If the PCs are working for the Cassalanter, their noble patrons are able to literally throw a mass of manpower at the problem. They arrange for a dozen carts loaded with empty barrels and several dozen trusted servants to arrive at the Brandath Mausoleum, rapidly load the gold into the barrels, and then cart it back to their estate.

If all else goes quiet in the Grand Game, the remaining response teams are likely to be assigned to watch the PCs. Whatever plan they came up with for moving the gold (whether it involves the Cassalanter or not), don't be afraid to use whatever response teams are remaining to complicate their scheme. A running battle through the streets of Waterdeep sounds like a lovely way to wrap the campaign up.

On that note, if the PCs do something to alert Laeral Silverhand that they have the money (and she knows or can easily conclude where it came from), she will politely ask them to return it in exchange for a 10% finder's fee. But she'll only ask once.

The PCs might strike on the idea that the vault is perfectly safe where it is, and they'll just make small withdrawals whenever they find themselves in need of funds. They might

even use the *Stone of Golorr* to make it even more secure by wiping out everyone's memory of the Grand Game and/or the embezzled gold and/or the PCs' involvement. That sounds incredibly clever, and unless they make some mistake to draw considerable attention to themselves you should probably let them get away with it.

Which is my final note here: The published adventure advises the DM go to extraordinary lengths to strip the treasure away from the PCs. My recommendation is not do that: Enforce logical consequences. Have people ask the PCs for help if they become aware that they have a windfall. But if the PCs get away with the ultimate heist... well, that's just awesome.

DRAGON HEIST REMIX – PART 6D: FACTION REPORTS ON THE GRAND GAME

[use different nomenclatures for the Eyes... For example, the Gralhunds refer to First, Second, and Third Eye. Cassalanter report based on the original origin of the Eyes. Bregan D'Aerthe names them by their current holders.]

Gralhund Study of the Grand Game

- First Eye with Xanathar
- Second Eye with Manshoon (but they aren't sure where it is)
- Reveal that Xanathar's Lair can be accessed from teleportal sites in his sewer hideouts (and the key mechanism for attuning)
- Until recently, Xanathar held the Stone of Golorr — the key to solving Neverember's Enigma! But it was stolen by one his trusted lieutenants, a gnome named Dalakhar who the Gralhunds identified as an agent of Lord Neverember

Bregan D'Aerthe Report

- has recognized that the factions are playing for both the Stone and the Three Eyes
- knows Xanathar, Manshoon, and the Cassalanter have eyes

Cassalanter Report

- Have their eye (and the story of how they got it)
- Know that Xanathar took the Zhentarim Eye (and know Manshoon is in Kolat Tower; know you need a pass-amulet to access it)
- Research into the Melairkyn ceremonial vault, including hints at the entrance ritual

Xanathar Report

- Knows Zhentarim got another Eye from Renaer
- Knows Kolat Towers (and has blueprints of them; knows you need a pass-amulet to access it)

Manshoon's Report

- Knows Xanathar has an Eye
- Knows Cassalanter have an Eye (based on interrogation reports)

Xanathar's Eye was stolen from the Protector's Enclave by the Zhentarim
Zhentarim's Eye was taken from Renaer's mourning locket
Cassalanter's Eye was taken from the crypt of Lady Alethea Brandath