

## Adventure Seeds

### *The Ancient Reborn*

While in Impiltur, the PCs are informed about a temple dedicated to Orcus hidden in the hinterlands and operated by the Fraternity of Tharos. With the hints they are given by a young girl that managed to escape from the cult, the PCs are able to dispatch the cultists relatively quickly. However, the battle is complicated a bit by its strong affinity towards elemental fire which increases the radius of all fire-based powers, which will most likely catch the PCs off-guard.

The temple is a real treasure trove. Formerly dedicated to the primordial Kossuth, it is filled with gilded statues depicting various fire genasi. One of the statues is cast in the image of Belos, who brought fire to the ancient people of the Northern Sea of Fallen Stars. Amazingly enough it has an uncanny resemblance to General Gandaros, leader of the highly popular fire-themed demon hunter company called the Sons of Fire. When confronted with this information, Gandaros will act quite surprised.

Possible scenarios:

- Gandaros is really a mummified Belos and is charged with secretly recruiting troops to defend Burning Amruthar. Any attention will disrupt his mission and he will try to silence the PCs. He is not the greatest diplomat and while reluctant to kill the PCs, he will set them a trap and try to capture them. If the misunderstandings can be resolved, he might be a useful ally for the PCs. If the PCs kill him, they will have helped Szass Tam, who enjoys the irony and sends them a note of thanks.
- Gandaros is Belos. However, Belos is no longer an elemental but instead has been drawn into the Abyss during the Spellplague. He is now faking demon hunts and has thus gained the trust of many demon hunters. This inside information has greatly helped the Fraternity of Tharos.
- His followers believe that Gandaros is Belos but he really is a doppelganger impostor. Gandaros took the form of the young girl to draw the PCs to the temple (where they only met token resistance) and he will have a huge “coming out” using the PCs as witnesses. Gandaros is using this thing as a money-making scheme, asking locals for monetary support for the war against the demons but planning to disappear with the money.
- Gandaros is a reincarnation of Belos but does not know about this fact. If the PCs help him, he will be able to tap his buried powers and will become a much more powerful fighter against the demon cult. Grind, the Dragonborn lieutenant of Gandaros knows all this and is charged by his true masters to keep Gandaros in the dark. While Gandaros is a powerful enemy of the demons, killing him is only a last resort – his death would lead to a reincarnation in an unknown location, leading to greater problems in the long term. The reawakening will require a ritual in the very temple the PCs cleansed and both the Fraternity of Tharos and Grind are not happy to let them use it, harassing them wherever possible.

## ***Infernal Music***

A local noble gives a party in honor of the PCs. Proudly he presents his new retainer, a scald of impressive skill with the harp. Also invited are other noble houses, some of which have very frigid relationships as is immediately obvious. As the party progresses and the beautiful music lulls the PCs senses, suddenly a fight breaks out. The sons of two feuding nobles start a duel over a trivial insult and a general melee ensues that the PCs have to break up without killing anybody.

The scald comes to talk to the PCs the next day, deeply disturbed. His master was killed by a masked stranger. He claims that the stranger seems to be after him as well and asks them for their protection. The only payment the musician can offer is to entertain them every evening with his lovely music. Unfortunately, every time the scald plays, tempers flare and fights break out.

Possible Scenarios:

- The scald has stolen his harp from a demonic musician. While it greatly enhances the player's skill it also stirs bloodlust in the hearts of the listeners. The demon musician wants its harp back and will attack at night when it is the strongest.
- The scald got the harp out of a deal with a demon. It amplifies emotions, which is the reason why the music it produces is so fantastic. The mysterious stranger is a demon hunter who wants to destroy this threat. He does not want to kill anybody, so he acts with great care. The death of the scald's patron was an accident for which the stranger feels guilty.
- A hag cursed the scald after he seduced her beautiful daughter. His music now causes strife, with the curse becoming ever stronger. The hag and her daughter now observe the mother's work from the shadows. The only way to lift the curse is to kill the hag or to marry the scald to her daughter.

## ***Death of an Unloved***

When a strange old hermit is killed in rural Aglarond, evidence is found that he was a Red Wizard of Thay who kept his identity secret. No one is willing to investigate the killing. In fact most locals are happy to see the strange old man dead – there are many rumors of his strange experiments and many are sure that he was a spy.

However, the local midwife, a widow, comes to see the PCs. She reluctantly admits her secret love affair with the wizard and begs the PCs to find his killers offering a ridiculously low amount of money – all her savings, in fact. During the investigation, everything points to the elves of the Yuirwood.

Possible scenarios:

- The wizard was just an old man trying to hide his past. His personal belongings show that he had to flee from Thay. However, the radical elves have little patience with suspicious foreigners. During the investigation they will continue attacking expatriates and sooner or later also the PCs.
- The expatriate wizard was killed by Thayan undead because he posed a (minor) danger to Szass Tam. As nobody investigates his death, the people are completely unaware of the large band of undead that lurks in their land, ready to neutralize

any threat to Thay. The undead hide in the large artificial fish ponds near the town and only the decreasing quality of fish indicates their presence.

- The wizard has faked his death to be able to move freely through the forest. Only due to the investigation of the PCs is this fact realized. The wizard is undergoing a metamorphosis deep in the Yuirwood, getting ready to kill the captain of the local fort.

## ***Shadows of Undumor***

The grim fortress city of Undumor is a thorn in the side of Aglarond and the PCs are asked by the simarch council to assess the situation. Shortly after they arrive, disturbing news reaches them. Within Aglarond's line of defense, people are found dead, their necks showing suspicious punctures. Yet, the PCs immediately realize that these are not bite marks but the result of a fork-like implement. Somebody seems to try giving the impression that a vampire is loose in the city.

Possible Scenarios:

- All of the dead were rich merchants and suspiciously enough, some of their money is missing. A local crime syndicate is using the presence of the enemy to conveniently cover up their crimes.
- A powerful ritual is putting the idea into people's heads that they are vampires. Those who resist are too scared to talk about their strange dreams. Those poor creatures that do not have instead built artificial teeth and act out the role they are forced into. Soon the PCs are assailed by the same dreams and have to find the local amplifier that allows the ritual to work over the great distance.

## **Plot Fragments**

- A mighty ruler in the PCs home nation has died and as lauded heroes they are asked to escort him. Horribly, Thayan agents plan to animate his corpse as an undead monster. Will the PCs become aware of the plot or will they have to destroy their beloved master in front of a grieving populace?
- A priest of Illmater comes to town and preaches nonviolence and rejection of martial practice at a time when the armies of Thay are stirring. Is this prophet for real or an agent of the enemy? Even when his good intentions become clear, will the PCs protect him from those who wish to silence him?
- A powerful group of merchants in High Imaskar wants to reestablish slavery to allow citizens to dedicate their time to national defense. The discussion is highly controversial and tempers flare. The PCs are offered good money to support the cause verbally as well as money to uncover evidence that the merchants are doing foul play (which is more a break-in than real research). Which side will they be on?
- A deadly mist drifts towards the city of XYZ in Aglarond. Each village in its wake is doomed, its denizens turning into ghouls hungering for human flesh. Villagers unable to fight their former loved ones are cut down. The PCs must

- organize the defense of Aglarond and find a way to dissipate the cloud. Will the mysterious air genasi be willing to help?
- PCs surprise hobgoblins pushing a waggon towards a cliff. Surprisingly the passengers are already dead. When they come to the next town, a merchant is wondering aloud where his brother and his family are. Unsurprisingly, the merchant gets a huge inheritance and the hobgoblins are his henchmen.
  - A criminal cartel uses a time of siege to kill their local enemies and put the blame on undead marauders. However, the “life draining effects” can be identified as a magic spell of cold and the bite wounds look somewhat artificial.
  - A powerful artefact of nation XY is due to be shown in a gigantic procession next week but there are rumours that it is gone. Reluctantly the temple admits but the item was destroyed by a demonic cult. However, it soon comes out that a paladin of the temple hid it. He did it because the item started to “misbehave”, blurting out dark prophecies that broke down morale. Will the PCs help cover up the crime or will they bring the truth to light with whatever consequences that has?
  - A loveable scoundrel, friend of the PCs is visited by an angelic creature and henceforth split into two halves – a gregarious and generous half and a evil cruel one. The PCs must find a way to reunite the two halves before one of them is killed. In order to do so, they must convince both halves to work together and atone for a past sin.
  - Thayans perform a terrible crime that is blamed on expatriates in Aglarond, leading to lynchings. However, the real goal was to weaken the borderlands defense in order to send invading armies. The PCs must convince key leaders to avoid internal strife that would weaken the nation. This is especially hard with the elven isolationists in the forest who were never fond of the foreigners.
  - Thayan spies use undead rats as tools for espionage and message sending.

## Place Seeds

A list of places that might come in handy during adventure design.

- **A grid of artificial ponds.** The ponds are linked by floodgates and make a good hiding place for constructs, aquatic monsters, undead and stolen items. Battle within swarms of well-fed fish could be interesting.
- **A flooded cellar used to grow shellfish.** It shares most of the properties of the artificial ponds but is darker and creepier and filled with placid but disgusting creatures more dead than alive. It might be filled with warm sulphurous water from the elemental chaos coming through a rift.
- **A miniature replica map of a specific world area.** Illusion magic fills in some details and it shows armies amassing near the border.
- A house filled with **bee hives**.
- **Cramped underground tunnels created by oversized insects.** The creatures themselves are a threat but the criminals hiding in there even more so.
- **A water drainage system.** Currently it is only moist but any rainfall could turn it into a death trap.

- **A temple that has been rededicated.** Originally, it belonged to a primordial lord, now it is dedicated to a god. The old, elemental-themed ornaments are still visible under the new decoration.