

Nine of Hearts

The Burning of Vallaki



A Netbook by the fraternity of Shadows

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A RAVENLOFT® Adventure
for 4-6 characters of level 5-8

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Introduction

N*ine of Hearts* is a Ravenloft adventure set in the small town of Vallaki, in Barovia. Amid a harvest celebration and the eventual fire that burns half the town, the heroes of this adventure must solve a supernatural murder mystery to prevent the desecrated resurrection of a long-dead lover into undeath.

This adventure is designed for a party of four to six characters of 5th to 8th level. Good investigative skills are required from the PCs, as *Nine of Hearts* concentrates more on intellect and less on combat prowess. Unless you as the DM will it so or incorporate *Nine of Hearts* into a campaign of your design, Count Strahd von Zarovich, darklord of Barovia, will take no part whatsoever in this adventure.

Adventure Background

Every fourteen years, when the Harvest Moon gleams a bloated orange, Gallan Heitmeyer awakens into undeath to reap hearts from the chests of the living.

In life he was a successful Falkovnian merchant, a man focused only on the acquisition of wealth and the finer things that the world had to offer. A humble Barovian seamstress by the name of Mara Perlova had caught his eye, and with the ruthlessness only a Falkovnian could have, he took her as his own against her will.

On the night before their wedding, Mara tore away from her egotistic husband-to-be and fled to a temple deep within the Barovian woods, seeking solace with a cleric who was her true love. Locked in a passionate embrace, both of them sought to flee Barovia, to start their lives all over in some other land that would welcome them.

But such a future filled with hope would never pass for the two lovers. Gallan had followed Mara's trail, and in a fit of rage and jealousy killed them where they lay, their blood flowing under a full moon. Gallan's vicious crime of passion would not be hidden for long: having confessed to the gruesome murders, he was hung by the gallows. Roped by the neck at the door of Death, his stifled breath uttered one last name: Mara Perlova.

Fate, however, was not through with Gallan. Within thirty years Gallan awoke from his slumber, an ancient dead horror bent only on

reuniting with his prize. He returned to the temple where he killed her, now abandoned and left to the elements. Scrounging within he unearthed the *Book of Sacrifices*, a magical tome kept away from common hands. Gallan was elated to find within the tome the elements of a blood sacrifice, a Rite of Soulcalling to resurrect Mara and make her his love slave, beyond the boundaries of life and death.

The next night, under the Harvest Moon, Gallan had completed the first phase of the Rite by killing three innocents and carving out their hearts.

Twenty-eight years and six hearts later, another Harvest Moon rises over Vallaki. Gallan patiently awaits in the shadows amidst a revelry. Soon the Rite of Soulcalling shall be complete, and he and Mara would be inseparable in undeath.

Adventure Outline

Nine of Hearts begins as the PCs enter Vallaki after receiving invitations to celebrate the Harvest season. After the gruesome murder of a reveler whose heart was torn out shocks the community, the characters may decide to help authorities investigate by gathering information from people all around: the burgomeister, the bookkeeper, the local priest, even the mysterious Vistani who have set up camp outside town. They also discover the victim's Halan roots, and may seek out the wisdom of a Halan witch who lives nearby.

A second similar murder three nights later outside Vallaki spurs the characters to a place called Midway Haven, home to the Celestines, a cult of eccentric star-worshippers. The cult leader is accused of the double murders and arrested, but he retains his innocence despite all evidence so far pointing to him.

By sunset of the Harvest Moon festival, the characters stumble upon an old copy of the *Book of Sacrifices* and read the Rite of Soulcalling within. However, a series of large explosions suddenly engulf Vallaki in a maelstrom of fire. Amidst the flames the PCs catch their first glimpse of the undead Gallan hovering over his final victim. The PCs follow his trail deep within the woods of Barovia to the ruins of the Crystal Chapel, where they must

finally confront and defeat him before the moon waxes full.

Chronology of Events

October 27, 699: Gallan Heitmeyer is hanged for the murder of Diego Rastoska and Mara Perlova.

October 30, 729: Gallan, returning as an ancient dead, discovers the *Book of Sacrifices*, a necromantic tome, buried beneath the ruins of a temple to the ancient Barovian moon goddess.

October 31, 729: After exhuming Mara's remains, he uses the *Book of Sacrifices* to kill three Vallaki townsfolk and complete the first phase of a ritual to wrench her soul back into the realm of mortals and turn her into an ancient dead bride.

October 743: Gallan successfully completes the second phase of the soulcalling ritual by murdering three Vallaki townsfolk.

The following dates take place in 757 BC (Barovian Calendar), the year this adventure takes place.

October 26: Gallan Heitmeyer takes the life of Ryland Berchestone, a Harvest Moon reveler.

October 27: Ryland Berchestone's body is secretly brought to Megan Llewelyn, who owns the Halan hospice outside Vallaki, where it is cremated.

October 30: Gallan murders Edric Rumwall within the grounds of the Midway Haven Observatory. In the afternoon of the same day, Primus Druinor d'Yantra is taken into custody by authorities for questioning.

October 31: The town of Vallaki burns in a fire that lasts for hours. Gallan attempts the final ritual to call Mara Perlova back from the dead in the Crystal Chapel.

Chapter One

Invitation to the Harvest

The adventure begins with the assumption that the players are outside Barovia. Invitations to the Vallaki *Samhaina* festival are delivered to the PCs ten days prior to the celebrations on October 31st, 757, so the PCs have relatively ample time to prepare. It is up to the DM to decide from whom the invitations come from: perhaps a family member of a PC, or (most likely) a friend or ally. If for some reason the PCs have neither friend nor family in Vallaki, the DM could choose to make certain NPCs spread rumors of the festival around the Core that could convince the PCs to go.

Regardless of where the PCs get the information, they must be persuaded to come at least three days early, so they could avoid the early Balinok snows and the winter caravans that clog the mountain passes with traffic, and also to avoid the proverbial holiday rush.

A Knowledge (religion) check (DC 10) or a successful Bardic Knowledge check (DC 12) would identify Samhaina as a secularized holiday celebrating the Harvest season.

Into Vallaki

Anytime the PCs are about to enter Vallaki, read the following:

Two signs greet you at an intersection of the road. One reads “Village of Barovia” with a hand pointing to the east, while another hand points the opposite way showing the direction to “Krezk.” Atop both signs is a placard that reads “VALLAKI” in large, black letters. Red and orange ribbons, colors of the harvest season, adorn the poles on which the signs are hung. The scent of bonfires and the prospect of rowdy celebrations greet you as you enter this quiet town.

October 26, 757: Heart of the Balinoks

This adventure assumes that the PCs have entered Vallaki sometime during October 26, although they could arrive anytime between this date and the morning of October 28.

Vallaki is a small Barovian fishing town south of the shores of Lake Zarovich, tucked away within the Balinok Mountains, and is a

popular holiday destination among Barovian merchants and nobles during the balmy summer months. The town is regarded by many to be the true gateway to the grandeur of the untamed Balinok wilderness, thus earning quite a popular reputation among many travelers from around the Core. The Old Svalich road cuts across town from Krezk far to the west to the tiny village of Barovia a few miles east.

Vallaki (small town): Conventional; AL N; 1,000 gp limit; Assets 74,000 gp; Population 2,000; Isolated (human 97%, other 3%).

Authority Figures: Mikhail Martov (burgomeister and justice of the peace), male human Ari3/Ftr7.

Important Characters: Ernst Turagdon (bookshop keeper), male human Ari4/Psi7; Mr. Pann (barkeeper/innkeeper), Exp7; Dmitri Kulchivec (cleric of the Morninglord), male human Clr6; Malcolm Harrison (doctor), male human Rog1/Exp6; Druinor d’Yantra (commune Primus), male human Rog2/Ftr6; Maegan Rumwall (commune leader), female half-elf Rog7; Megan Llewelyn (Halan hospice attendant), female human Clr7.

Revelers to the Samhaina festival have begun trickling into Vallaki as early as October the 20th. The influx of visitors to this small town will slightly increase its normal population by around 500 during Samhaina itself, and many of these outsiders would have rented the town’s log cottages that are usually leased out to visitors during the summer months. A Barovian woman named Ms. Eevee Biederbecke rents out cottages (maximum 6 people per cottage) at the following prices.

Cottages (1 each available)	Cost (per cottage)
Fish Packing District Cottage, near the Tavern	5 gp/day; 12 gp/3 days; 25 gp/week
Svalich Road Cottage, near the Church	8 gp/day; 20 gp/3 days; 40 gp/week
Lake View Cottage, on road to Lake Zarovich	10 gp/day; 25 gp/3 days; 50 gp/week

By October the 30th, all the log cottages would have been occupied. Revelers who don’t have the coin to rent out a cottage (or came too

late to find all cottages full) have taken lodgings at the Malodorous Goat Tavern, described below.

The Malodorous Goat Tavern

Just across the street from the Vallaki Bookshop is a large two-story building made entirely of Barovian cedar logs, which serves as both the town's main drinking hole and an inn for thrifty guests. The sign hanging over the street shows the red outline of a goat's head surrounded by three ale mugs. Rowdy Samhaina revelers in garish clothes are seen coming in and out of this building's oakwood doors, many of them already dazed and drunk.

Mr. Pann, the owner of this rowdy Tavern, is a balding middle-aged man with thick spectacles who migrated from Mordent to "bring life" to this hill town. A little bit imposing and ill-tempered, he nevertheless allows guests to enjoy themselves to the fullest within his establishment. Mr. Pann knows that his selection of drinks could get customers rowdy and uncontrollable, so he charges additional for every breakage each guest creates. He also imposes a strict rule of depositing all weapons in a large chest just beside the entrance.

The PCs may most likely use the Malodorous Goat as their base for the duration of their stay in Vallaki. They can get a room within the Malodorous Goat that holds four people for 10 sp a night, or a room that holds six for 15 sp a night. Dinner is served as beef and a tankard of ale, a total of 5 sp. Use the *Player's Handbook* to determine the cost of other drinks, which the Tavern has in good supply.

Mr. Pann does not accept guests in the Tavern after nightfall. By sunset of October the 30th, all the rooms of the Malodorous Goat Tavern would have been occupied, and against the wishes of well-meaning locals, visitors who arrive by this time would have no choice but to camp out.

The Vallaki Bookshop

Although obviously occupied, this two-story building looks like it hasn't been used in years. The red paint that long ago covered its walls is old and chipping away, losing a battle against the elements. A sign over the porch identifies the property simply as "The Bookshop." Opening the door, you are assaulted by the scent of dried leather and glue. As your eyes adjust to the darkness you see books of varying sizes and colors stacked upon shelves hiding half-visible

portraits of old people. Heads of stuffed animals stare down at you from niches on the high ceiling. A worn blood-red carpet beneath your soles muffles your footsteps.

Behind a mahogany desk, a well-dressed man with dark brown hair looks at you intently. After a few moments, he remarks in a hollow voice, "Can you be helped?"

The man introduces himself as Mr. Ernst Turagdon, who along with his staff manages this Bookshop. Ernst would rarely get physically close to anyone; a Sense Motive check (DC 18) reveals a sort of preference for people with an aristocratic flair. Nevertheless, he welcomes anyone to peruse his collection, but warns guests to "take care of the goods."

The Vallaki Bookshop has an extensive collection of books with a wide variety of topics ranging from nobility around the Core to local Barovian plant life. Specific Search checks would reveal the following unique items:

Search DC	Document or Manuscript	Purchase Cost (gp)
18	For Love or Money: A Barovian Folk Tale	12
18	The Cult of Bridjith, Goddess of the Moon	15
18	Magical Alignments of Heaven and Earth	14
20	Burial Customs of the Balinoks	8
20 ¹	<i>The Book of Sacrifices</i>	45
25	Van Richten's Guide to the Ancient Dead	50
32	<i>The Books of S</i> (any single copy except <i>Sacrifices</i>)	(Not for sale)

¹This value applies only on the afternoon of October 31, when Ernst and the rest of his staff are apparently busy "cleaning out" the Bookshop.

Details of what these books may contain are detailed in the DM's Appendix: Book Descriptions.

Successful Search checks in the Bookshop would reveal only one manuscript at any given time a Search is made. Furthermore, Ernst implies that this is a bookshop he runs, not a library; he has no patience for people who extend their reading if they decide not to buy the book that catches their fancy, and he usually ushers people out after staying around half an hour inside the Bookshop. Such an action would make it complicated for a character to take 20 or maybe even 10 on Search checks.

For the whole duration of the adventure, the PCs may visit the Bookshop anytime during

daylight hours, and every sunset Ernst asks visitors to leave for the night.

If the PCs decide to visit the Bookshop anytime on October 31, go immediately to Mr. Turagdon's Inventory in Chapter 4.

The Graveyard

A thin Mist begins to blanket the dry earth as the PCs enter this solemn place. A Search check (DC 21) would reveal two graves that share a roughly-split limestone tombstone; the Difficulty Check is decreased by 4 if any PC has purchased *Burial Customs of the Balinoks* from the Vallaki Bookshop. Clearly written in Balok on the left half of the tombstone is the name "Mara Perlova," but the right tombstone is too eroded to recognize any writing on it.

Both graves would nevertheless be covered in the weeds that blanket the whole graveyard, but a Knowledge (nature) check (DC 18) would reveal a slight depression in Mara's grave, suggesting that it was dug up sometime in the distant past. If the PCs go so far as to dig up and inspect Mara's remains, they find no trace of either a coffin or a body; however, such extreme actions increase the PCs' Outcast Ratings among Vallaki folk by 1. If they attempt to dig under cover of night, a watchman catches them in the act, and the PCs still receive the Outcast Rating.

A separate Search check (DC 21) reveals the Heitmeyer mausoleum at the far end of the graveyard. A small number of other mausoleums exist in this area, but the PCs need not break into the Heitmeyer mausoleum—its gate has for reasons unknown been pried open some time in the distant past. Inside are four old niches with names—Martina, Gallan, Balthazar and Lester—but only three are occupied. The copper plaque beside Gallan's empty niche reads "**Gallan Heitmeyer: Born January 6, 653, Died October 27, 699.**" Save for cobwebs and a badly-eroded stone relief of a face within the empty niche (Spot DC 17), there is nothing more of interest within the mausoleum. Before its erosion to seeping water, the stone relief was actually a replica of the iron mask Gallan wore as a mark for his murders, as written in *Burial Customs of the Balinoks*, but the PCs at this point may not know of the significance of this due to the stone face's bad condition.

Nighttime within the graveyard would be a perfect time and place to play on the fears of the PCs. Every snap of a branch underfoot, hoot of an owl above, and sight of the occasional exposed skull could conjure the PCs' superstitious fears. At any time during the night,

all characters must make Fear saves (DC 15) for every thirty minutes they linger in the graveyard. For Barovians, the Difficulty Check is increased by 5.

The Seventh Heart

A few minutes before midnight on the night of the 26th, Gallan Heitmeyer harvests the seventh heart.

If the PC's arrived in Vallaki anytime before the following events, they are assumed to have took to their lodgings and would most likely have no idea of what would happen next.

Cozy within the warm confines of your room, you could feel the cold Barovian autumn air slink its way from the high Balinok peaks to your window. Here at the heart of the world, you could feel yourself slowly drift off to the world of dreams.

Just as you finally close your eyes however, a shrill, terrified cry pierces the quiet Vallaki night!

Harboring an inherent superstitious fear of the night, Barovian characters must make a Fear save (DC 12) in reaction to the spine-chilling scream, which is heard all over Vallaki.

If the PCs are in the Malodorous Goat and they decide to investigate the matter at this hour, they would have to contend with the burly innkeeper Mr. Pann, who would try his best to stop anyone from going out into the Barovian night. If anyone of his clients insists on leaving the safe confines of the Malodorous Goat, Mr. Pann would eventually allow them out in a gruff manner, but keeps his word as to not let anyone into his establishment until sunrise; this policy stands for almost all Vallaki establishments and private residences for the rest of the adventure.

Unless the PCs somehow get to the murder area first, around fifteen minutes after the scream was first heard, a town guard would eventually find the bloodied corpse of a man behind the Church of the Morninglord, with a gaping hole on the corpse's chest where his heart used to be. Witnessing this grisly scene is cause for a Horror save (DC 14). Casting *speak with dead* on the corpse conjures absolute horror and horrible pain on the part of the victim, a vague reference to a "walking shadow," and nothing else.

A Spot check (DC 19) would reveal a torn piece of faded blue leather with a faint amount of fresh blood just ten feet away from the

corpse, hanging from the rusty nail of an empty wine barrel. The guards would not notice this unless prompted by the PCs, upon which they confiscate the leather for examination. No other odd evidence would be present in the area.

The town guard would take custody of the body (which would be taken to the Town Hall), and would not let anyone without proper access from the burgomeister to examine the corpse. Only the undertaker and the local doctor have free access to examine the murder victim at this point in time.

Casting *detect magic* on the leather would reveal an extremely faint necromantic aura which lasts for a mere 10 seconds, then fades entirely. An appropriate Knowledge skill

check (DC 22) would reveal the leather to be at least a hundred years old, and of Falkovnian craftsmanship. A further Knowledge (history) (DC 12) check or Knowledge (geography) check (DC 10) reveals Falkovnia to be a militaristic nation far northwest of Barovia, detested by all who surround it. Thankfully, Barovia does not share a border with this war-hungry realm.

If the piece of leather was presented to the Vallaki watch, it would take a whole day for them to come up with and release these same findings.

With the exception of howling wolves in the distance (which Barovians would consider as normal), no other untoward incidents would occur for the rest of the night.

Chapter Two

October 27, 757: Around Town



When dawn finally arrives, the doors of the Malodorous Goat finally swing open, and Vallaki is abuzz with stories and speculation about the events of the previous night.

PCs who Gather Information (DC 15) around town get one of the following bits. Vallaki folk at this point are suspicious of strangers wandering around town asking too many questions.

- ◆ Three non-local revelers, all of them male, did not go home to their usual quarters last night and have not been spotted within Vallaki ever since. They each went by the names Gotten, Rymand and Drinnik.
- ◆ Vallaki folk could recall a similar killing fourteen years ago when old man Sasha was found dead behind the stables with his heart cut out. Then again, the murder was also roughly similar to another killing five years ago, when Madame Gertrude's corpse was discovered at the town fountain with her liver missing.
- ◆ All Vallaki folk are accounted for; the victim wasn't a local.
- ◆ The death is the result of harvest spirits, who are angry of revelers who show little respect for the sanctity of Samhaina.
- ◆ Chandra, a barmaid of the Malodorous Goat, choked on a mug of ale when she heard last night's scream. Thankfully she recovered, but has decided to take the day off.
- ◆ All Barovians agree that, although the circumstances of this grisly murder are a bit unusual, the victim was but another unfortunate soul like so many others in the past lost to the horrors of the Barovian night.

Despite their fear of the night and what it brings, Vallaki folk have a sort of fatalistic air around them; beyond the speculation that a potential murderer walks among them, they continue on with their normal lives. "When your time comes, your time comes" is a common

saying among these simple folk. In their own small ways, however, they remain vigilant of what goes on around Vallaki.

The Vallaki Town Hall

Constructed of adobe and thick wooden beams, this one-story building is marked "Town Hall" in Balok. Its stable construction suggests a secure jail within its walls.

At this point, the PCs may be interested in helping in the investigations of last night's murder. For the whole day of the 27th however, pending the release of the doctor's findings, the Vallaki Town Hall is off-limits, with the exception of the burgomeister's office. This situation will again apply the whole day of the 30th, after the murder of Edric Rumwall, and the whole day of the 31st, which of course is a holiday.

Mikhail Martov, the burgomeister of Vallaki, is gracious enough to give some answers to the PCs if they approach him in a respectful manner, but since he has other issues to attend to he would not be talking to them for long. Other Vallaki folk have lined up to refer other town matters to him, such as property disputes, fishermen's quotas, and the like.

The burgomeister could only reveal one bit of information from below for each encounter of the PCs with him, and due to his workload encounters with him could only happen a maximum of once every hour.

- ◆ Nothing of this sort has ever happened within the limits of Vallaki since the start of his tenure as burgomeister in 748.
- ◆ He could vaguely recall reports of a similar murder within Vallaki in 743, but he admits that he was not at Vallaki at the time.
- ◆ Due to the potential profits, Samhaina will not be called off this year.

Once the Town Hall reopens to the public, the PCs may be allowed to research town records. Each research session (an equivalent of one Search check) costs 3 sp; if the PCs remark about this, the burgomeister answers that such a

cost would help the local government maintain a proper archive.

Search DC	Search Result
15	Map of Vallaki, year 756
20	Official Declaration for the Protection of the Vistani in Barovia
23	List of Violent Deaths
25	List of People Executed (from 650 onwards)
28	List of Violent Deaths (murders of year 699 added)
30	Vallaki land boundaries survey, year 680

Details of what these books may contain are detailed in the DM's Appendix: Town Hall Records. As with the Vallaki Bookshop, successful Search checks of the Town Hall records would reveal only one manuscript at any given time a Search is made.

The Vistani Camp

If at any time during the adventure the PC's decide to explore the southern part of town for clues, a simple Spot check (DC 14) would lead them to discover a rough path that tracks south through the forest. Assuming they follow the path, they come upon a Vistani camp.

As you track your way through the towering Barovian pine trees and the wild sights and sounds of the forest, you eventually come upon a small clearing where rests a sturdy wagon decorated with garish ornaments. You recognize this as a Vistani *vardo*.

Two young men are helping to clean up their surroundings and pile things into their *vardo*. It seems obvious to you that they are bent on departing these woods.

The Vistani men would not greet the PCs with hostility, although they make it obvious that they have no time to talk. Eventually the tribe matriarch greets the PCs.

"You *giorgios* come at an inopportune time to talk with Madame Amelia, perhaps?" a calm hypnotic voice bellows from inside the *vardo*. A young woman eventually appears, with pale skin and curly blonde hair running down her shoulders. The kerchief on her head and the shawl on her shoulders are as black as the

darkest night. Though she appears in the summer of her years, the way this unusual youth carries herself seems to transcend the boundaries of time.

Madame Amelia explains that the Vistani must leave this place quickly; if the PCs ask why, she simply remarks that her people are nomadic, and do not tend to linger in one place at any given time for fear of "losing the Sight." A Sense Motive check (DC 15) will reveal this as truth, but a *detect thoughts* spell also reveals that the Vistani must leave Vallaki before a "momentous event" of an unknown nature takes place.

In most likelihood, the PCs may desire a reading of the future from Madame Amelia. She expresses a moment of doubt with this due to her predicament, but eventually invites them all into her *vardo*. Inside the cramped *vardo* are curious items of gypsy craftsmanship, with every inch of space used to store a variety of objects. There is only enough room for a maximum of eight people to sit.

Madame Amelia pulls out from a shelf a box containing a pack of *tarokka* cards covered in red cloth and stitched with glyphs of protection. She shuffles the deck, and arranges five of them in the simple cross pattern found in the *Ravenloft Dungeons Master's Guide*. DM's with no access to that accessory can use the following spread: Card 1 lies at the center, while the rest of the cards are laid out around Card 1 in a clockwise position, with Card 2 at the right side. Furthermore, DM's can substitute *tarokka* cards in this reading with tarot cards or ordinary playing cards mentioned below.

- ♦ **Card 1 – The Focus: The Hangman** (King of Swords/Ace of Diamonds)
"Beware he who defies Fate, for he is your true enemy. Guilt is written on his head, and he is the person you must seek. The patterns of the stars are his greatest ally, and his worst enemy." This card refers to Gallan Heitmeyer, who has defied Fate by returning as a horrific undead creature. Only a proper alignment of the stars can help him attain his vile goal. The PCs may wrongly equate this card with Druinor d'Yantra, a local astrologer from Falkovnia and eventual prime suspect.
- ♦ **Card 2 – The Past: Nine of Coins.** (Nine of Discs/Nine of Diamonds)

“Blood flows like a river from the past. Too much blood has been shed, and too many hearts have been taken. Whatever sacrifice was started must be finished.” This card refers to Gallan’s string of murders in the past.

- ◆ **Card 3 – The Present: Nine of Swords.** (Nine of Swords/Nine of Spades) “He who defies Fate abides his time, hiding in the shadows.” This card simply refers to Gallan waiting for the right time to act.
- ◆ **Card 4 – The Future: Nine of Stars.** (Nine of Wands/Nine of Clubs) “The harvest moon above is but a mirror reflecting the blazing earth below.” This card refers to the great fire that would burn Vallaki on the night of Samhaina, when the moon rises full.
- ◆ **Card 5 – The Outcome: Nine of Glyphs.** (Nine of Cups/Nine of Hearts) “Make haste, for he who defies Fate will soon steal what he desires, that which already rests in peace. The forgotten moon is your ally. On the night of reaping, watch where she casts her light!” This card reveals Gallan’s desire to steal Mara’s soul by harvesting the nine hearts. The last two lines are clues to finding the Crystal Chapel’s location.

Madame Amelia will show astonishment at the frequency of Nines that have appeared in her reading for the PCs, especially the fifth card, but she expresses no surprise; she simply states that the number Nine symbolizes the completion of a great work. Nevertheless, she charges one gold piece for this reading and politely tells the PCs to leave, for she and her caravan need to leave in haste as well.

As soon as the PCs depart from the Vistani camp, they hear the crack of a whip, the departing gallop of horses’ hooves, and the continuous roll of the *vardo*’s wheels. The next time the PCs come back to this clearing, the Vistani are gone. Neither they nor any other Vistani would reappear for the rest of the adventure.

The findings

Late afternoon on the 27th, Malcolm Harrison, the local doctor, releases his findings to the public as revealed below.

- ◆ The victim went by the name of Rymand Berchestone, based on identification found on a patch sewn on the insides of his coat.
- ◆ Berchestone is a surname found only in Mordent, so it is safe to assume that Rymand was Mordentish, and most likely a visitor to the Samhaina revelries.
- ◆ Based on eyewitness accounts, Rymand arrived in Vallaki on October 23.
- ◆ There were no other wounds on his body except for the large hole on his chest, from which his heart was apparently taken out of with unclean precision.
- ◆ Pending arrival of relatives, his remains will stay in Vallaki for the time being.

If the PCs inquire specifically about the tattered leather (assuming they gave the evidence to the Vallaki guard), Dr. Harrison gives the same findings as noted above if the PCs examined the leather for themselves, with the exception of its necromantic aura of which the doctor has no knowledge. Physical evidence discovered and reported to the watch such as this leather piece will not be released to the public.

PCs may make a successful Diplomacy check (DC 22) to glean more information from the doctor about Rymand. If the check succeeds, he reluctantly ushers the PCs aside (when he thinks nobody is looking) and discreetly tells them to meet him outside the Malodorous Goat at midnight.

The Church of the Morninglord

Two onion-domed spires of unequal height welcome you as you approach this place of worship, which looks to be in a slight state of disrepair. Faded murals of a gold-skinned man with a crown of light and dawn-colored robes decorate the temple’s walls and dusty stained-glass windows.

“Welcome to the Church of the Morninglord,” calls an elderly voice, “here, under the eyes of the dawn’s light growth is fostered, and life is renewed. How may we be of service to you?”

Dmitri Kulchivec and two younger acolytes greet the PCs once they enter the church. Dmitri appears visibly old in his rosy-gold garbs yet seemingly retains a youthful enthusiasm for anyone who enters this house of worship. He also prefers to be called “Dawnbringer” instead of “Brother” or any other respectful title.

- ◆ Dawnbringer Dmitri is 83 years old, and is proud to be born in Vallaki. He believes he has lived a life that would make his patron proud.
- ◆ If Dmitri isn’t looking, one of the acolytes would playfully whisper to the PCs of his slight senility and forgetfulness, hence his need for them as assistants.
- ◆ Dmitri doesn’t mind if only a handful of Vallaki folk attend the church’s dawn rituals. For as long as there are people who believe, then the will of the Morninglord will be more than done.
- ◆ PCs who make a rather acute Knowledge (religion) check (DC 25) would notice that some of the church’s murals depict an obscure sun god not in any way connected to the Morninglord. If they refer this to Dmitri, he admits that this temple was co-opted from Andral, a deity abandoned and nearly forgotten long before Dmitri was born.

The PCs at any time may inquire Dmitri about recent events happening in Vallaki. The Dawnbringer will openly say that the Morninglord congregation has expressed its being disturbed by the killing(s). For each other question asked by the PCs, however, the Dawnbringer has to roll for an Intelligence check (DC 15) to reveal any appropriate answer below; the need for a check reflects his senility in old age. Once he forgets an answer, Dmitri could not recall it again for 1d6 hours.

- ◆ The murder(s) would most likely bring out the town’s xenophobia, making everyone suspicious of everybody else.
- ◆ It seems rather terrifyingly interesting to Dmitri that the murder(s) are similar to what happened in 743, when unfortunate souls were found all over Vallaki, their hearts ripped from their bloody corpses.

- ◆ If the PCs haven’t been there yet, Dmitri tells them that the Town Hall may have other answers.

If the PCs present *For Love or Money: A Barovian Folk Tale* to Dmitri, no Intelligence check from him is necessary to reveal the answers below.

- ◆ Dmitri could recall a long-dead murderer by the name of Gallan, who was hanged for murdering a pair of lovers.
- ◆ The lovers’ names were Mara and Diego; Mara was a local seamstress, while Diego was a priest. At that time, no one knew that Mara and Diego were in love.
- ◆ Gallan was a rich merchant who believed he could buy anything, including love. He forcibly took Mara as his bride-to-be.
- ◆ Mara was supposed to be wed to Gallan, but on the night before the wedding she took off and fled to Diego’s temple, where they both consummated their illicit love. Gallan followed her and went into a killing frenzy within the temple when he caught them both in each other’s arms.
- ◆ Diego was no ordinary cleric; he was known in his time as the last priest of the moon goddess in Vallaki. When Diego died, so did his religion around these parts.

If the PCs present *Van Richten’s Guide to the Ancient Dead* to Dmitri, no Intelligence check from him is necessary to reveal the answers below.

- ◆ Dmitri has suspicions that the death (or deaths, if October 29 has passed) may have supernatural origins.
- ◆ If the Dawnbringer’s instincts are correct, Gallan Heitmeyer has indeed returned back from the dead, although Dmitri has no idea why or for what purpose.

A separate Diplomacy check (DC 25) from the PCs would allow Dmitri to reveal the following crucial bit of information, but only if the PCs have referred *Van Richten’s Guide to the Ancient Dead* to him.

- ◆ Dmitri was once a hunter of undead horrors during his younger days; if

indeed Gallan has returned back from the living he would destroy Gallan himself were it not for his age. He is too old, while his acolytes (monster hunters in secret training) are too young.

Once Dmitri reveals his secret life to the PCs present, he remarks that the doors of his church remain open to them even after dusk. The Church of the Morninglord offers them solace and shelter in the long Barovian night.

As the sun sinks in the harvest-orange skies of the western horizon, and as an almost full moon rises angrily over the Balinoks, Vallaki becomes somber. A pall now looms over joyous Samhaina; last night's mysterious murder has put everyone on edge, and a bit suspicious of each other.

October 28, 757: The Witch-Goddess

If the PCs agree to meet Dr. Harrison at his appointed time and place (midnight across the Malodorous Goat Tavern), he ushers them aside to a quiet location away from the Tavern and discreetly reveals the following:

- ◆ While examining Rymand's belongings, he recovered a small disk from a secret coat pocket. Etched on the disc is a stylized ring of thirteen snakes devouring each other's tails. The doctor knows that this is the holy symbol of the secretive Church of Hala.
- ◆ Around the time the doctor was revealing his findings to the public, Rymand's body was secretly taken away from the Town Hall to a Halan temple just a few dozen yards outside Vallaki to the east.
- ◆ Dr. Harrison is wary of Halans, believing that they practice "witchery" and perform strange rituals in dark wilderness areas.
- ◆ Only he, the burgomeister and a few of the Vallaki watch know of Rymand's religious affiliation.

A Knowledge (religion) check (DC 14) reveals the Church of Hala to be a mystery religion that indeed practices witchcraft, but not as ghastly and despicable as most would see it. The doctor is immediately wary and suspicious of any PC Halans who reveal themselves as

such, and only a Diplomacy check (DC 20) by that same character would calm his nerves.

Dr. Harrison would be open to showing the wooden disk to the PCs, but only if they ask. The wooden disk is the size of a coin, painted green and etched in gold with the symbol of Hala. No magic radiates from this item.

The Hospice

A large circular cottage emerges from the tall trees that hide the Balinoks from sight. The fragrant scent of therapeutic oils greets you as you walk the red cobblestone path to this place. A young woman with jet-black hair and a crown of autumn-hued leaves stops from picking herbs in front of the cottage and coolly greets you in a strange yet delicate tongue.

Megan Llewelyn, a Halan witch, administers this hospice outside Vallaki. The PC's may decide to come to the hospice to investigate Rymand's remains, assuming that the PC's know that the victim was Halan and was brought here by the Vallaki guard.

- ◆ Megan is proud of her heritage as a witch, and does not find shame in being called as such. Although her faith does not go out of its way to seek followers, she nevertheless aids anyone who seeks her help.
- ◆ The burgomeister had decided that it was only fitting for Megan and her covey to conduct the final rituals befitting a fellow Halan, and thus had the corpse brought here on the afternoon of the 27th.
- ◆ In keeping with Halan traditions, the Halans had the corpse blessed, cremated in a quiet ceremony on the night of the 27th, and the ashes kept in an urn, pending the arrival of related kin.
- ◆ Megan is a bit wary of how most people treat Samhaina, which is supposed to be a holy day of thanksgiving for a bountiful harvest.
- ◆ Unlike the rest, Megan and the other attendants would celebrate Samhaina in a solemn manner within the quiet confines of the Hospice, away from the revelries in Vallaki.

The urn is made of purple porphyry stone and is kept on the main altar. No amount of persuasion would let Megan allow the inspection

of the ashes, for fear of “desecration” and “disturbing the rest of the dead.” PC’s sneaky enough to successfully inspect the urn and the ashes within however would find nothing unusual in or around the vessel.

Apart from the information above, Megan will in all kindness say that she could not tally around and has research to do. A Diplomacy check (DC 21) towards her about that research reveals the following.

- ◆ Megan is intrigued by the variety of forgotten religions in Barovia, particularly of a secret cult of moon-worshippers in Vallaki that apparently died out only half a century ago.
- ◆ Megan knows only as much as the PCs do about the cult of Bridjith if the PCs refer to *The Cult of Bridjith: Goddess of the Moon*.

- ◆ Based on her research, the ruins of an ancient temple to Bridjith still exist somewhere within or around Vallaki, but she is not quite sure where it is exactly. If she could somehow locate this structure she would with her own effort restore it and consecrate it as a healing sanctuary.

October 29, 757

Nothing else unusual happens for the rest of October 28 and 29, except for a short speech by a few guests at the Malodorous Goat, which coaxes revelers not to be intimidated by any murder; the celebration of Samhaina must continue.

Chapter Three

October 30, 757: The Eighth Heart



allan takes his eighth heart just after midnight on this date. This time, his victim is a brash youth from outside the borders of Vallaki.

Just before dawn on October the 30th, an urgent but discreet call for help puts the Vallaki guard into immediate action. Only those PCs who choose to stay at the Malodorous Goat Tavern, the Lake View Cottage, the Fish Packing District Cottage, or those who decide to stay outdoors for the night, would witness the following encounter.

Sleeping PCs can try a Listen check (DC 17) at a –4 penalty to awake and hear the fast gallop of horses' hooves.

A frantic yell breaks the stillness of the Vallaki morning. From the road up north towards Lake Zarovich a hooded man on a gray horse appears, calling for help. "You must come quickly," he says as he meets one of the Vallaki guards, "one of the Celestines is dead!"

A Bardic Knowledge check (DC 16) or an appropriate Knowledge check (DC 21) reveals the Celestines to be a benign cult of star-worshippers who fancy themselves as astrologers. PCs have the option of following the guards to Midway Haven, which is north of Vallaki.

If the PCs decide not to follow the guards to the Celestines, they can walk around town the next morning to receive the following information from Vallaki natives (Gather Information DC 15).

- ◆ The Celestines worship the stars and are generally mistrusted, because star worship was a practice done by the barbarian Tergs who long ago occupied this region of Barovia.
- ◆ Gotten and Drinnik are still missing from Vallaki.
- ◆ Once again, the locals thank Fate that not one of them was harmed the previous night. It was better for a Celestine (or any outsider for the matter as circumstances now dictate) to perish at the hands of the "spirits" rather than to have a Vallakian die.

The Midway Haven Observatory

It will take three hours on foot and an hour on horseback to get to the Celestines' commune. This place, known as the Midway Haven Alchemical Observatory, encompasses an acre of lightly forested land, and is situated on a hill by the southeast edge of Lake Zarovich off Svalich Road, midway between the fishing town of Vallaki and Barovia village (hence the name). Wood and stone fences, some engraved with mystical warding glyphs, encircle the compound.

Three main structures make up the main Midway Haven site: two large houses made in the design of what many may call "Tudor," and a brick tower that stretches like a finger 500 feet high into the sky. The two houses are built perpendicularly on a slope, so one house is higher in elevation than the other. Connecting the highest floor of the lower house and the ground floor of the second house is a walkway forty feet long, which also serves as a balcony.

Visitors to Midway Haven must climb a broad flight of stone steps to get to the ornate oak doors of the Lower House. If PCs follow the Vallaki guard before dawn, they eventually find 1d10+3 people on these steps, some of them weeping, all of them distraught. This small crowd includes two people named Gotten Grabmal and Drinnik Shoehorn—the same people who were thought missing on the night of Rymand's murder.

This lower structure is made up of two floors; the lower floor is made up of a receiving area, a sitting room, a simple bar and four recuperating rooms. Eight more rooms occupy the second floor.

- ◆ PCs who arrive with the Vallaki guard find a rather regal-looking half-elf woman weeping over the bloody remains of a young male human whose heart has been carved out of his chest. The tall man who alerted the guards to Midway Haven eventually comforts her, tears flowing from his own eyes. The half-elf, who briefly introduces herself as Ms. Rumwall if asked politely (Diplomacy check DC 18), is invited by the Vallaki guard to join her dead brother Edric back to town, for which she agrees. A few other Celestines go with her.

- ◆ The tall man, who goes by the name Fritz Winterboone, found the body along with another person named Druinor d'Yantra at a small acorn grove within the premises. It was Fritz who rushed into town to alert the Vallaki watch.
- ◆ Gotten and Drinnik remark that they were brought to Midway Haven by Mr. d'Yantra. Apparently according to him they were both rather incapacitated by too much liquor and were outdoors on the night of the 26th, so he had no choice but to take them here. The place was rather "rustic" so they both decided to stay here without telling their colleagues back in town.
- ◆ According to Fritz and the other Celestines, Edric had a rather wordy fight with Druinor the previous night.

Druinor d'Yantra, the Primus (leader) of the Celestines, will wander the grounds around the Lower House for the whole day, his mood a mixture of frustration, grief and anger. The Primus is a clean-shaven man in his early 30's, who prefers to wear the fashions of the northern Core but roughs them up to give him a rugged look. When Druinor faces the PCs, characters may be astonished to see the insignia of a falcon's head branded on his forehead, identifying him as a Falkovnian. PCs who come from the nations of the Treaty of Four Towers (Borca, Dementlieu, Mordent, Richemulot) may be immediately hostile towards Druinor upon seeing this mark. Additionally, PCs who previously visited Madame Amelia may (wrongly) interpret this as the "mark of Guilt" in her *tarokka* reading. As with Ms. Rumwall, Druinor will not be inclined to talk much unless the PCs make a Diplomacy check (DC 18).

- ◆ Primus d'Yantra is Vallaki's most prominent Falkovnian. He found himself in Barovia in 748 BC and has since renounced his allegiances to Falkovnia and its inhuman regime.
- ◆ For the past five nights Druinor was away from Midway Haven, wandering inconspicuously around Vallaki to watch out for the safety of revelers. PCs may make an Intelligence check (DC 14) to recall recent memories of Druinor around town to confirm this.
- ◆ Druinor indeed had a fight with Edric the previous night, due to the latter's

insistence to attend Samhaina celebrations without proper protection and preparation.

- ◆ Having seen so many people he knew die in his life, Druinor claims he only wanted to look out for Edric's safety. Maegan agrees with Druinor.
- ◆ Both Druinor and Fritz heard Edric's scream coming from outdoors a few hours past midnight. Druinor arrived at his body first, followed by Fritz a minute later.
- ◆ Druinor emphatically professes his innocence to the murder. Although the Celestines agree with him, visitors to the Haven and the Vallaki folk might think otherwise.
- ◆ The Upper House is off limits to non-Celestines, but PCs who explore the Lower House (Spot DC 12) will find a blue leather jacket of Falkovnian craftsmanship hanging near the fireplace. This is indeed owned by Druinor, but PCs must be clever enough to discover that the jacket is not torn.

Maegan returns back to the Haven from Vallaki at mid-afternoon of October the 30th, still distraught. If the PC's stay within Midway Haven, they witness the Vallaki guard arrest Druinor at sunset of the 30th. A wagon stops in front of the stairs leading to the Lower House, and three Vallaki guards emerge to walk briskly up the stairway towards the Haven.

Maegan replies to a fierce knock on the oak door. She stands startled, for standing in the doorway are three gruff men wearing the insignia of the Vallaki guard.

"By order of the burgomeister," the tallest of them says in a firm manner, "we have a warrant for the arrest of Primus Druinor d'Yantra for the murders of Rymand Berchestone and Edric Rumwall."

With nary a polite gesture to the fey-born maiden in front of them, they force themselves into the compound towards Druinor. He resists for a moment, then allows himself to be manacled, his face contorted with anger, yet betraying a hint of despair.

You and Maegan follow Druinor as the guardsmen escort him to the wagon. Before the wagon doors shut down on him, Druinor looks back to you, then to Maegan, then remarks with a

firm yet calm voice, "I didn't do it." The wagon soon rumbles away back south to Vallaki.

Seeing this, the PCs may be forced to rush back to Vallaki's Town Hall. If the PCs ask questions as to why the Vallaki watch has taken Druinor, the burgomeister simply points to Druinor's disappearance during the nights of the murders, and as a Falkovnian, his "instinctive propensity to commit acts of violence." A Sense Motive check (DC 20) would reveal his own doubts about Druinor's guilt. With a gray mood over Vallaki due to the murders, the burgomeister does not want to further dampen Samhaina celebrations, and does not want revelers to suspect each other without someone to point a finger to.

If the PCs have kept the piece of blue leather all this time and have now decided to reveal it to the burgomeister, he immediately

confiscates it for examination by Dr. Harrison, which would take a whole day starting tomorrow morning. The burgomeister emphasizes that until new evidence could prove otherwise, Primus Druinor d'Yantra is considered a prime suspect in the murders. Furthermore, the burgomeister will not allow visitors to Druinor's cell.

PCs who choose to stay with the distraught Maegan have her gratitude, although she shows no inclination to speak extensively at the moment. She allows any PC to stay for the night at the Lower House free of charge, while she returns to the Upper House to allow herself to grieve in private.

A few hours before midnight, the body of Edric Rumwall would be returned to Midway Haven. A private burial ceremony exclusive to the Celestines would be performed at the acorn grove at midnight.

Chapter four

October 31, 757: Harvest Moon Rising



Samhain finally dawns, and Vallaki is brimming with revelers. There is a steep sense of anticipation around town as visitors and locals alike prepare for the Harvest Moon festival that begins at sunset.

Back in Midway Haven, Maegan Rumwall does not appear in the Lower House until mid-afternoon. When she finally emerges from seclusion she is in better spirits, and feels relatively confident enough to resume her work in the Haven.

- ♦ Maegan will freely tell the PCs that she needs to continue studying the track of the full moon, as such a track alignment happens only once every fourteen years. She got this information from Celestines who no longer reside in Midway Haven.
- ♦ This alignment is rather spectacular as it gives the moon a reddish glow for one whole night due a strange refraction of the sun's light.
- ♦ If any PC asks, the moon shines brightest at an hour before midnight.
- ♦ Unlike most Vallaki folk, Maegan scoffs at superstition; although she is amused by it, she finds no divine significance between Samhain and this celestial event. To her it is but coincidence.

If the PCs present *Magical Alignments of Heaven and Earth* to Maegan, she reveals the following information.

- ♦ Maegan explains that according to the old Celestines there is a heavily wooded hill outside Vallaki that seemed to magically harness the light of the full moon during the exact hour of this strange alignment.
- ♦ Although she may be wrong, Maegan theorizes that this could be a simple reflection of light rather than a magical magnification of it. An ancient structure made of reflective material (such as glass) could exist on that hill, but no Celestine has been really able to find out the truth of that strange

phenomenon; Maegan will hopefully have the opportunity to study it tonight.

- ♦ Maegan admits that she could not find a record of where this hill might be, although she is convinced it is just a few miles somewhere outside Vallaki.

Mr. Turagdon's Inventory

On October 31, PCs who visit the Bookshop find Ernst and his staff pulling various books down from their shelves and packing some of them into crates. If any PCs inquire on the matter, Ernst would simply respond that he is rushing an inventory report, and the Bookshop is in need of "cleaning out." When the Bookshop closes at sunset, Ernst immediately orders everyone not among the shop's staff out. Soon after the PCs finally get thrown out and Ernst locks the doors of the Bookshop shut, go immediately to "The Burning of Vallaki."

It is highly likely that the PCs will gain a copy of the *Book of Sacrifices* during their visit to the Bookshop this day; when they open the Book they eventually stumble upon the Rite of Soulcalling (see DM's Appendix)—and will in all hope put the pieces of the mystery together.

The Burning of Vallaki

As evening falls, a blood-red sun sinks in the western horizon. To the east a large full moon begins to rise from the Balinoks like an eye towards the earth. The skies tonight are clear, with nary a cloud in sight.

At this point, the PCs could be anywhere in and/or around Vallaki: with the Halans, with the Celestines, looking for the Vistani caravan, or simply out with the revelers, who have begun drinking in the streets, ignoring the Vallaki sunset. Mr. Pann's policy of not accepting anyone into the Malodorous Goat after nightfall still stands.

As the swollen Harvest Moon climbs into the sky, the Samhain revelries become wilder by the hour and twilight celebrations quickly turn into one giant drinking binge. Bards among the crowd have churned up the crowd of over 400 into a frenzied mass of hedonistic merrymaking.

Then the unimaginable happens.

At three hours past sunset, amid the din of Samhaina, a series of three large explosions rends the already cacophonous twilight. Within seconds, flames begin engulfing the town, and the orgiastic screams of merriment turn into frantic screams of absolute horror.

As the fire rages, the PCs' senses are assaulted by screams, smoke and people running in all directions. Any character inside a burning building is subject to any heat danger as mentioned in p.303 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Every fifteen minutes there is a 25% chance that a person is trapped within any burning building anywhere in Vallaki. The PCs have the option of helping out anyone in dire need of aid, but they have a short span of time of helping before Gallan completes the Rite of Soulcalling an hour before midnight.

Every Vallaki local is immediately utilized to help put out the fire and help the injured. Thirty minutes after the explosions, Megan and two other Halans arrive from their hospice to give aid. Seven Celestines arrive on horseback within an hour of the explosions. Megan Llewelyn, Maegan Rumwall and Fritz Winterboone each have one *potion of cure moderate wounds* and a healing kit, while the rest of their respective coterie each have two *potions of cure light wounds* ready.

Any PC who enters the burning Malodorous Goat witnesses the following.

Across from you, amid the burning wood and the smoke, a hooded figure looms shadowy and unfazed by the fire. From its face of iron it stares at you with hollow eyes, and an aura of dread envelopes you for a split second as it disappears in a swirling pattern within the blaze.

A Spot check (DC 18) will reveal an inscription on the forehead of the specter's iron mask: the Balok word for "Murder," as proscribed in *Burial Customs of the Balinoks*. As soon as this bizarre vision ends, any PC can make another Spot check (DC 16) behind the bar of the Malodorous Goat to reveal a corpse. A Spot skill success of 4 or more ranks above this DC reveals that the corpse has its chest mangled: Gallan Heitmeyer has finally reaped the ninth

and final heart for him to complete the ritual at midnight.

Gallan has inadvertently left a faint trail of burnt leaves and twigs that leads to the Crystal Chapel northeast, deep within the Barovian wilderness. A successful Search check (DC 20) or the Track feat (Survival check DC 15) reveals this, and hopefully leads the PCs to his hideout.

The mask on Gallan's face is a *mask of guilt*, described in the DM's Appendix

The Crystal Chapel

No roads exist leading to the ruins of this ancient structure. Though the Crystal Chapel is only two miles away, the terrain is densely wooded with massive Barovian evergreens, and the journey could take longer than usual. Light undergrowth creeps up from the earth below, and the orange moon above casts strange shadows all around. From far away, PCs can hear the screams of those still in Vallaki.

A clearing in the wood brings them to the ancient Crystal Chapel, described below.

A white granite archway overgrown with creeping vines marks the entrance to this large circular ruin of a domed building that rises fifty feet into the Barovian night. Once in the past its empty walls would have been covered entirely in glass, but what remains of these beautiful panes now crack underfoot as you approach the ruin.

A Search check (DC 19) around the granite arch reveals a small beige statuette of a naked woman with tiny emeralds for eyes and a crescent on her forehead. A successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 15) allows any PC to identify the deity, but by now the PCs may already recognize this as Bridjith, the forgotten moon goddess. *Detect magic* reveals faint transmutation on the statuette, which is an *icon of humble virtue* as described in Appendix: Magic Items.

Any PC who makes a Spot check (DC 15) towards the Crystal Chapel itself would see a faint swirling mass of blue light emerging from within the ruined dome. This is actually necromantic magic at work; Gallan's decades-old dark ritual has effectively turned the once-hallowed Crystal Chapel into a Rank 2 Sinkhole of Evil.

LOWER SECTION

The lower section of the ruined building once contained the living quarters of Bridjith's priests; from the collapsed entrance a main hallway branches out into four rooms, two to the left and two to the right. Each of these rooms contains rotting, age-eaten mundane goods that are beyond any form of recovery. Pieces of broken stained glass litter the floor, and the sinister sound of slinking could be heard all over.

- ◆ **Zombies (7):** hp 15 each; see *Monster Manual*.
- ◆ **Dire Rats (12):** hp 4 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Each room is in the form of a quadrant that supports the dome above. Regardless of where the PCs go, the last room they enter contains a nearly-collapsed flight of stairs that leads to Gallan's lair above; the pulse of dark supernatural powers is hard to resist, even among those who value virtue and honor.

UPPER SECTION

As you emerge, the moon above gazes maliciously down at you as blue and orange light dance together, refracted within the ruined dome's remaining glass shards. The tall Barovian evergreens that surround the building cast baleful shadows around you, and they seem to come alive of their own volition. The floor seems to harbor the remains of a once-lovely mosaic pattern of white and green tiles.

At the center of this decay stands a long, squat table, upon which lies a long figure covered by a thick shroud. Surrounding the figure are nine clear vessels connected by a single tube of silver, each containing fresh hearts, and each glowing with a bluish light coming from within.

Above this grim display stands a figure dressed in rot, a death mask cast in iron covering its face, the word "Murder" clearly yet roughly etched on its forehead. From beneath the hollows of its iron eyes, you feel the chill of something supernatural, something terribly wrong.

Beneath the harvest moon, in a temple of glass that was once deemed holy, Gallan is ready to call Mara back from the dead. The dome of the Crystal Chapel is eighty feet in diameter, supported by four pillars situated at the four cardinal directions. Hollows carefully carved out seven feet from the base of these pillars contain statuettes similar to the one the PCs discovered

outside; as expected these also are *icons of humble virtue*.

On the altar are the strange implements of the Rite of Soulcalling: nine hearts, supernaturally preserved in transparent vessels, with a tube of silver running through each of these containers. Underneath the thick shroud, Mara Perlova's earthly remains lie dormant.

It only takes one minute of chanting on Gallan's part to complete the Rite of Soulcalling. Careful timing is crucial at this phase; an hour before midnight, the harvest moon finally glows a deep orange close to red, and an invisible circle surrounding the desecrated altar glows, mirroring the moon's light above. In a quick three rounds after the circle emerges, a powerful wailing shadow emerges from beneath the Crystal Chapel, and shards of glass begin to levitate and shatter all around. This is Mara's soul being forced to return to her rotten form, and this is what the PCs must prevent from happening.

Tactics: Gallan continues to read from the *Book of Sacrifices* even if he is being attacked; as an unliving creature he knows fairly well that mundane weapons could barely harm him, let alone kill him. If reduced to half his full hit points, he uses his supernatural fear to his advantage, then inflicts his mummy rot ability on those who are helpless, among other abilities he possesses. Shadow creatures drawn to the Rite also emerge from beneath, and attack any living creature within the ruined dome.

- ◆ **Gallan Heitmeyer:** see DM's Appendix.
- ◆ **Shadows (6):** hp 19 each; see *Monster Manual*.

Conclusion

THE PCs FAIL

As Mara Perlova is animated as an ancient dead, shards of glass begin spinning around the Crystal Chapel, posing an immediate danger to any living being within. Gallan takes his slave-bride into the shadows, and both disappear in the cold Vallaki night. The Crystal Chapel begins to heave under its own failing weight and starts to collapse as the PCs ponder on the possibility of facing not one but two ancient undead creatures in the future. Worse still, the mystical repercussions of these events may draw the attention of the ruler of the land himself, Count Strahd von Zarovich.

Without any convincing evidence of his innocence, Primus d'Yantra is tried and sentenced to be stoned to death. However, the

Celestines somehow appeal his case and he is instead set free after three months. He emerges a bitter, brooding man with no faith in justice. In April of 758, Druinor disappears from Barovia altogether, leaving a similarly-bitter Maegan Rumwall to take over Midway Haven.

The full effects of Megan Llewelyn's lycanthropy emerge with the next full moon, without a proper place to heal herself of the dreaded curse. Within the next few months, she terrorizes the folk of Vallaki before a band of Vistani finally tracks her down and ruthlessly butchers her.

THE PCs SUCCEED

Gallan's true death effectively releases his hold on Mara's soul; side-by-side with the spirit of Diego, her spirit manifests briefly within the Crystal Chapel's ruins before dissolving in the light of the moon, both their faces filled with contentment. Gallan's pure spirit manifests as well, swirling in sorrowful fashion from his remains. Although the people of Vallaki would remain skeptical if the adventurers declare it so, Gallan's supernatural gruesomeness would threaten this small town no more.

The corpse from the Tavern, the Crystal Chapel and the implements of the soulcalling ritual are evidence enough to prove the Primus's innocence to the Vallaki guards, aside from the tattered blue leather piece. If the heroes could present any two of these (apart from the leather) to the local authorities as proof of Druinor's innocence, he would be set free after three days. The PC's would have then gained valuable allies through the Midway Haven Observatory and its contacts throughout the Core. A month after Druinor's release, he and Maegan announce their engagement to each other and invite the PCs to their wedding the coming spring.

After two months of work, Megan the witch eliminates the evil taint of the Crystal Chapel. The glass temple is restored and eventually dedicated as a true Halan hospice.

Further Adventures

If the characters achieve the main goals of this adventure (foiling Gallan's plan to turn Mara into an undead horror), there may still be loose ends they could tie up.

A thorough investigation of the fire reveals that it started in the Bookshop. The fire was deliberate, and Mr. Turagdon and the other owners are nowhere to be found within Vallaki. A Search check among the bookshop's ruins (DC 25) reveals a sooty dagger with the word

"Kargat" emblazoned on the blade. An appropriate check would reveal the Kargat to be a secret police force based in Darkon, far to the North. What business do the Kargat have in a land so distant from their base?

Pages from the still-incomplete *Book of Storms* lie scattered across the breadth of Vallaki. Though this tome may never be completed (and thus would never see its true potential), its individual pages may still harbor magical power that no mere mortal should ever wield. The task of gathering these pages up is daunting, as Samhaina revelers have picked up a few pages as souvenirs; many have already left town. Curiously, for some reason not even the visitors could understand, many of them have departed west, to the city of Ste. Ronges in Richemulot.

DM's Appendix

Experience Points Rewards

Aside from the standard XP rewards brought about by the destruction of Gallan Heitmeyer and the creatures of the Crystal Chapel, reward the XP values below to each of the PCs.

- ◆ Respecting Mr. Pann's house rules on weapons – 50 XP
- ◆ Purchasing unique books from the Vallaki Bookshop – 25 XP per book
- ◆ Reaching the corpse of Gallan's first victim before the guards do – 50 XP
- ◆ Examining the piece of blue leather near Ryland's corpse – 25 XP
- ◆ Finding Mara's tomb without the aid of *Burial Customs of the Balinoks* – 25 XP
- ◆ Locating Mara's tomb with the aid of *Burial Customs of the Balinoks* – 75 XP
- ◆ Exploring the Heitmeyer mausoleum – 25 XP
- ◆ Researching in the Vallaki Town Hall – 50 XP
- ◆ Visiting Madame Amelia – 50 XP
- ◆ Learning of Rymand's Halan connections from Dr. Harrison – 50 XP
- ◆ Referring *For Love or Money: A Barovian Folk Tale* to Dmitri – 50 XP
- ◆ Referring *Van Richten's Guide to the Ancient Dead* to Dmitri – 50 XP
- ◆ Learning of Dmitri's secret life as a hunter of undead creatures – 50 XP
- ◆ Respecting Megan's wishes not to touch Rymand's urn – 50 XP
- ◆ Referring *The Cult of Bridjith: Goddess of the Moon* to Megan – 50 XP
- ◆ Going along with Fritz and the Vallaki guards to Midway Haven at dawn – 50 XP
- ◆ Discovering that Druinor's blue jacket is not torn – 50 XP
- ◆ Referring *Magical Alignments of Heaven and Earth* to Maegan the Celestine – 50 XP
- ◆ Preventing the corpse of Gallan's ninth victim from burning – 50 XP
- ◆ Helping to extinguish the fire – 300 XP
- ◆ Proving Primus d'Yantra's innocence by presenting evidence – 75 XP per evidence presented
- ◆ Reporting the Crystal Chapel's location to Megan – 75 XP
- ◆ Ad hoc roleplaying XP – 0-300 XP

Total possible experience points gained: 2025 XP.

Book Descriptions

For Love or Money: A Barovian Folk Tale. This sordid potboiler is about a young unnamed Barovian woman torn apart between the affections of a merchant and a cleric, both also unnamed. The merchant promises the woman all the riches of the world, while the cleric promises her otherworldly sensations. In the end, torn mad by love and complicated choices, the young woman kills herself. Her last requests are that her heart be split into two, to be given to the two men in her life, so she could be with them both.

A Bardic Knowledge check (DC 14) or a Knowledge (history) check (DC 15) would reveal that this torrid yet tragic love story is somehow based on historical fact, as are almost all folk tales.

The Cult of Bridjith, Goddess of the Moon. According to this document by one Freda Velushka, the benevolent moon goddess was long ago widely worshipped in Barovia and Borca. Circular temples of glass were erected in honor of Bridjith, and in Her name priests and priestesses performed wondrous miracles such as healing the sick, granting youth to the aged, and in rare cases bringing life back to the dead. The religion began to die out, however, when Mists swept across the land and the gods of old began to slowly fall silent. Bridjith endured, but only in secret; Freda records the last known glass temple to Bridjith being abandoned somewhere near Mt. Gries in Borca in 727 BC.

Magical Alignments of Heaven and Earth. This treatise from the mystical anchorites of Dementlieu suggests that certain alignments of celestial bodies with geological landmarks could tap into

hidden energies and, with the proper rituals, magnify magical undertakings by as much as a hundred fold. A given example would be the primitive Swincuttle stones in Forlorn, where every six years during Shrovetide, druids from all over gather within the circle to witness both the moon and the sun rise from the apex of the highest stone.

Burial Customs of the Balinoks. This lengthy series of compilations is yellowed and in need of binding. Nevertheless, the writings inside are clear and concise. According to Barovian funeral customs, when two illicit lovers die together on the same night, they must share a single tombstone split into two halves. This way, it is said, the love that was denied them in this world would be shared in the next, and their souls would never part from each other.

Another entry reveals that when a criminal shows no remorse for his deeds even at the time of his execution, his corpse is interred with an iron mask covering his face. The crime he committed is engraved on his forehead.

Van Richten's Guide to the Ancient Dead. The intrepid hunter of the night Rudolph van Richten penned this Guide in the year 740, right before the Great Upheaval. It details how certain funerary rites, combined with enduring memories of the deceased, could call the dead back as mummies. Van Richten then details the strengths (like the ability to create others of its kind) and weaknesses (like certain allergens that keep them at bay) such undead horrors possess. Further details on the Ancient Dead can be found in Chapter 5 of the *Ravenloft Player's Handbook*.

The Books of S. These are actually magical tomes; see below.

Town Hall Records

Map of Vallaki, year 756. This large map simply shows Vallaki and its immediate environs, drawn the previous year by Jamis Ilwich, a cartographer from Immol.

Official Declaration for the Protection of the Vistani in Barovia. Under a law put into effect in the year 470 by the von Zaroviches, rulers of the land, all Vistani are granted official protection by the Count himself whenever they travel within the borders of Barovia. Criminal penalties for harming Vistani within Barovian borders are severe, ranging from a 5-year jail sentence to death by stoning (amended from death by hanging in 720).

List of Violent Deaths. The Town Hall stores a disturbing record of strange and unusual deaths for Vallaki folk; DMs are encouraged to create a list of names and causes of death for each victim starting from 725 onwards, with an average of two deaths a year. Incorporate the following into the list of violent deaths:

Date of Discovery of Deaths	Name, Age and Corpse Condition
October 27, 699*	Mara Perlova, 24, found at Chapel with stab wound on the heart.
October 27, 699*	Diego Rastoska, 29, found at Chapel with multiple stab wounds around body.
August 14, 727	Julian deHumet, 36, found with massive head wound at town square.
November 1, 729	Martina Rusovich, 40, found behind smithy with heart cut out.
November 1, 729	Kamal Grigori Meshkev, 16, found behind church with chest wounds, heart missing.
November 1, 729	Bartholomew Pereyev, 61, found beside Berek house, beheaded, with heart cut out.
July 30, 737	Martin Taermak, 47, found behind Biederbecke Cottage, corpse mangled and gnawed upon.
October 22, 743	(unknown male), found floating at Lake Zarovich, heart and left eye missing.
October 25, 743	Marianne d'Ghouille, 33, found strangled at Gaston Cottage, with heart missing.
November 1, 743	Sasha Kyrgyzdanya, 73, found behind stables with heart cut out.
December 1, 743	Bertha Yrnika Rusovich, 52, found outside Vallaki tied to a tree, mouth stitched shut.
March 22, 750	Iago Karloff, 21, found outside Vallaki with throat wound.
May 7, 752	Gertrude Yuri, 45, found at town square with liver missing.
October 26, 757**	Ryland Berchestone, 30, found behind church with heart missing.
October 28, 757***	Edric Rumwall, 19, found at Midway Haven with heart cut out.

*added on a Search DC 28.

**added on October 27, 757.

***added on October 29, 757.

List of People Executed (from 650 onwards). Criminals executed for serious crimes are seemingly rare in Vallaki according to this record; the law has seen it fit to execute only five people from 650 onwards.

Date of Execution	People Executed, Crime
July 1, 673	Alexei Rudenko, hanged for the murder of the Tepesh family.
October 27, 699	Gallan Heitmeyer, hanged for the twin murders of Mara Perlova and Diego Rastoska.
February 8, 710	Patrick "Black Knife" Ivanov, hanged for the murder of Mishella Padonavich.
August 19, 727	Ashton deHumet, stoned for the gruesome murder of Julian deHumet.
March 31, 750	Olaf Kapesch, stoned for the murder of Iago Karloff.

Vallaki Land Boundaries Survey, year 680. A minor dispute between the village of Barovia and Vallaki for ownership of fish stocks in Lake Zarovich forced the von Zaroviches to order a land boundaries survey for both settlements in the year 680, hence this document. The papers show a rather faded political map of the town, with seemingly larger areas under local government control than as of the present. Compared to the current map of Vallaki, the following landmarks were included in the survey:

Landmark	Location
Crystal Chapel	Two miles northeast of Vallaki (no road leading)
Perolyev Foxhunting Grove	Half a mile southwest of Vallaki
Golga Manor	One mile west on Old Svalich Road
Well of Stars	Half a mile east of Vallaki

The Book of Sacrifices: The Rite of Soulcalling

The Rite of Soulcalling

So you mayest call back the soul of one departed, a sacrifice of nine human hearts is needed, harvested within a tenday before the pregnant harvest moon.

Find the corpse of that which shall be called back, for the soul needs a mortal vessel to be sustained in the material world.

Locate then a place of worship abandoned and desecrated by its faithful—the lingering divine forces within shall channel your rite. Once enshrined you shall not take the hearts out of the place of worship, lest you choose the ritual to miserably fail.

On the night of the harvest, on the hour of the shining and bloated moon, inscribe the mystic circle of power and stand in its center with the corpse of that which shall be called back. Carve the runes upon both your forms, and chant the words of power. In this way the soul shall be pulled from its slumber and be infused on its dead form. Verily then before you shall rise ensouled that which you have called.

Know then that if a sacrifice of nine hearts is not complete, the rite of soulcalling shall remain undone.

Magic Items

Books of S: These thick, large books are bound in black leather and lined with silver thread, with a red jewel embedded on each cover. No one knows when these editions first emerged; although the keepers of the Vallaki bookshop insists they were made fairly recently, the overall aged conditions of the tomes (with the exception of the *Book of Storms*) suggest otherwise. Multiple copies of each volume are known to exist and circulate around the world.

Depending on each edition, the parchment pages of each of the Books contain complex rituals that harness great yet maddening powers over the energies that make up the Dread Realms. Anyone without at least 10 ranks of the Knowledge (Ravenloft) skill who even attempts to read from any of these books must make a Madness save (DC 15); any who attempt to perform any of the rituals within must make a powers check.

- ◆ **Book of Sacrifices.** This book describes gruesome rituals to enable a person without sufficient magical abilities to harness necromantic magic.
- ◆ **Book of Secrets.** This book describes occult incantations that harness the ability to activate innate supernatural powers that mimic psionic abilities.

- ◆ **Book of Shadows.** This book holds the archaic secrets of transmuting oneself into a being of pure shadow, and how as a creature of shadow one can be free to do anything in the world of substance that he or she desires.
- ◆ **Book of Sorrows.** This book contains mystical writings that enable anyone regardless of magical or supernatural experience to enchant any man or woman, and control their hearts and minds as the reader sees fit.
- ◆ **Book of Souls.** This book describes arcane instructions on how a person without any magical aptitude can conjure fearsome creatures from the Mists and take them under his or her absolute command.
- ◆ **Book of Storms.** Unlike the other *Books of S*, this tome is rather new, unfinished, and crudely bound. Ernst Turgadon confesses that this tome is but an experimental design to mimic the rest of the *Books of S*. However, its pages already radiate weak evocation magic that can affect the cyclic patterns of nature.

Mask of Guilt: This iron mask is carefully molded to mimic a human face, with holes for eyes and nostrils. A person who wears the mask immediately starts to experience an acutely heightened sense of guilt, vividly recalling any event where he or she acted in a rather bad manner. This sense of guilt gives the Mask's wearer a -2 morale penalty on initiative rolls and all Charisma-related skill checks. Only a *remove curse* spell or similar magic can take off the Mask from the wearer's face, and the character must *atone* within 1d3 days of its removal or the mask returns in his or her possession.

Moderate necromancy; *Caster level:* 6th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, Jaded, *bestow curse*, *suggestion*; *Market Price:* 7,100 gp; *Weight:* 1lb.

Icon of Humble Virtue: This small yet intricately-designed statuette is warm to the touch. For as long as any good-aligned character stays within a 40-foot radius of the icon, the character is granted *virtue* by the icon, which loses its power if it is ever taken away from the holy site where it was meant to be enshrined.

Faint transmutation; *Caster Level:* 3rd; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *virtue*; *Market Price:* 700 gp; *Weight:* 2 lb.

Dramatis Personae

GALLAN HEITMEYER

Male 3rd-Rank Ancient Dead Mummy: CR 11; Size M (6 ft. tall); HD 9d12+9 (83 hp); Init +5 (+5 Dex); Spd 40 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 25 (+5 Dex, +10 natural); Attack slam +7/+2 melee (1d6+6); SA Animate Objects, Fear, Mummy Rot, Rejuvenation; SQ DR 10/+1, Electricity Vulnerability, Fire Immunity, Passage, Resistant to Blows, Turn Resistance; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +9; AL NE; Str 22, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Bluff +14, Climb +16, Concentration +9, Craft +5, Diplomacy +4, Handle Animal +13, Hide +14, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +13, Move Silently +22, Open Lock +9, Sleight of Hand +10, Spellcraft +5, Spot +15, Survival +13; Alertness, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Intimidate), Skill Focus (Move Silently), Toughness.

Special Attacks: *Animate Objects (Su):* Gallan can *animate objects* once a day. This takes effect as if cast by a 9th-level sorcerer and lasts for three hours.

Fear (Su): Gallan can impose a supernatural fear on those who see him. Those viewing Gallan must make a Fear save (DC 17) or be paralyzed for 3x1d4 rounds.

Mummy Rot (Su): Gallan can inflict mummy rot with his slam attack. Mummy rot is described under the "Mummy" entry in the *Monster's Manual*.

Rejuvenation (Su): Gallan can heal damage at a rate of 12 hp/hour, but he must lie inert for 1 day before rejuvenation can occur, and must rest for 1 more hour after rejuvenation is complete. During rejuvenation Gallan is incapable of any action and cannot perceive his surroundings.

Special Qualities: *Passage (Su):* Gallan can create passages through stone, earth, wood or similar materials as the spell *phase door* cast by a 9th-level sorcerer. He can create 9 passages per hour.

Resistant to Blows (Ex): Physical attacks do only half damage to Gallan, applied before damage reduction.

Turn Resistance (Ex): Gallan has +4 turn resistance.

DRUINOR D'YANTRA

Primus, Midway Haven Observatory

Male human Rog2/Ftr6: CR 8; Size M (6 ft. tall); HD 2d6+8 + 6d10+24 (70 hp); Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+4 Dex, +4 chain shirt); Attack +10/+5 melee, +11/+6 ranged; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +3; AL NG; Str 17, Dex 19, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Languages Spoken: Balok, Darkonese, Falkovnian.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Craft (alchemy) +7, Craft (stoneworking) +4, Handle Animal +8, Hide +6, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (Ravenloft) +4, Open Lock +4, Ride +7, Sleight of Hand +7, Survival +6, Swim +11; Ambidexterity, Courage, Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (nunchaku), Expertise, Improved Initiative, Quick Draw.

MAEGAN RUMWALL

Administrator, Midway Haven Observatory

Female half-elf Rog7: CR 7; Size M (5 ft., 7 in. tall); HD 7d6+14 (38 hp); Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex, +3 leather armor); Attack +6 melee, +9 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +6; AL NG; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 19, Cha 18.

Languages Spoken: Balok, Mordentish, Sithican.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +8, Bluff +8, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +6, Disguise +8, Forgery +6, Gather Information +7, Hide +10, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (government) +7, Knowledge (Ravenloft) +3, Listen +7, Move Silently +14, Open Lock +11, Search +9, Spot +5, Use Magic Device +8; Combat Reflexes, Evasion, Improved Initiative, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (shuriken).

FRITZ WINTERBOONE

Celestine

Male human Ftr4/Pal4: CR 8; Size M (6 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 4d10+12 + 4d10+12 (85 hp); Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Attack +12/+7 melee, +9/+4 ranged; SV Fort +14, Ref +10, Will +7; AL LG; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 19.

Languages Spoken: Balok, Darkonese, Lamordian, Mordentish.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +5, Craft (painting) +7, Diplomacy +10, Gather Information +6, Handle Animal +7, Hide +4, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (Ravenloft) +2, Knowledge (religion) +9, Listen +5, Move

Silently +4, Ride +8, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +5, Spot +3, Swim +6; Alertness, Combat Expertise, Lightning Reflexes, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge.

MIKHAIL MARTOV

Burgomeister of Vallaki

Male Ari3/Ftr7: CR 9; Size M (5 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 3d8+3 + 7d10+7 (68 hp); Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+4 Dex, +1 padded armor); Attack +14/+9 melee, +13/+8 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +8; AL LN; Str 20, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +4, Balance +5, Climb +9, Craft +10, Diplomacy +12, Handle Animal +9, Hide +4, Jump +10, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (history) +3, Listen +1, Perform +7, Profession +17, Ride +14, Spot +8, Swim +4, Use Rope +6; Dodge, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Jaded, Leadership, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Knowledge: geography), Weapon Focus (dagger).

ERNST TURAGDON

Vallaki Bookshop Keeper

Male Ari4/Psi7 (Telepath): CR 11; Size M (5 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 4d8+4 + 7d4+7 (53 hp); Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +7/+2 melee; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +11; AL LE; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 19.

Languages Spoken: Balok, Darkonese, Falkovnian, Gnomish, Lamordian, Luktar, Mordentish.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +8, Bluff +5, Concentration +6, Craft +9, Diplomacy +11, Hide +4, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (psionics) +11, Listen +10, Move Silently +4, Profession +11, Psicraft +9, Remote View +7, Sense Motive +9, Speak Language +4, Spot +4, Survival +7; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Psionic Focus (Telepathy), Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Sense Motive).

Psionic Combat Modes: Ego Whip, Id Insinuation, Intellect Fortress, Mental Barrier, Mind Blast, Psychic Crush, Thought Shield, Tower of Iron Will.

Psionic Powers Known (32 PP/Day; 4/3/2/1): 0—Control Shadow, Detect Psionics, Distract, Far Hand, My Light, Missive, Telepathic Projection. 1st—Call Weaponry, Charm Person, Conceal Thoughts, Demoralize, Hammer, Steadfast Gaze. 2nd—Brain Lock,

Detect Thoughts, Inflict Pain, Suggestion. 3rd—Crisis of Breath, False Sensory Input, Schism, Ubiquitous Vision.

DMITRI KULCHIVEC

Dawnbringer of the Morninglord

Male Clr6: CR 6; Size M (5 ft., 3 in. tall); HD 6d8+6 (39 hp); Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +6 melee, +8 ranged; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +9; AL CG; Str 15, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 19, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +2, Concentration +10, Hide +4, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Profession +10, Sense Motive +5, Spot +4; Dodge, Great Fortitude, Scribe Scroll, Still Spell.

Cleric Domains: Good, Sun.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 5/4+1/4+1/3+1.

MALCOLM HARRISON

Local Doctor

Male Rog1/Exp6: CR 6; Size M (5 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 1d6 + 6d6 (38 hp); Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Attack +3 melee; SV Fort +3, Ref +10, Will +8; AL LN; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +10, Bluff +3, Craft (alchemy) +5, Disable Device +6, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +4, Gather Information +9, Hide +7, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +5, Move Silently +3, Open Lock +7, Perform +5, Profession +12, Search +11, Sleight of Hand +6, Spot +5, Swim +3, Tumble +4 Use Rope +5; Alertness, Deft Hands, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness.

MADAME AMELIA VORONAEV

Female Zarovan Vistani Wiz5: CR 5; Size M (5 ft., 5 in. tall); HD 5d4+5 (15 hp); Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +3 melee, or +3 ranged; SA Evil Eye; SQ Vistani Traits; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +7; AL N; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 19, Wis 17, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +10, Concentration +8, Craft (alchemy) +12, Hide +6, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (Ravenloft) +7, Knowledge (religion) +9, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Profession +9, Sleight of Hand +3, Spellcraft +8, Spot +6; Brew Potion, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Divination), Voice of Wrath.

Wizard Spells Known (4/4/3/2): 0—Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect

Magic, Detect Poison, Disrupt Undead, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic, Resistance. 1st—Change Self, Charm Person, Chill Touch, Identify, Protection from Chaos, Shocking Grasp, Sleep. 2nd—Alter Self, Blindness/Deafness, Knock, Melf's Acid Arrow, Mirror Image. 3rd—Haste, Sepia Snake Sigil.

Evil Eye (Ex): Madame Amelia can invoke this unique Vistani power three times a day, treated as a gaze attack. All saves against Madame Amelia's Evil Eye are against DC 17. Full descriptions of the Evil Eye's powers are detailed under "Vistani" in the *Ravenloft Player's Handbook*.

Vistani Traits: Madame Amelia possesses all the traits of the Vistani (Mist Navigation, The Sight, Static Burn and Tracking Magic) detailed under "Vistani" in the *Ravenloft Player's Handbook*.

MEGAN LLEWELYN

Halan Witch

Female human/infected werewolf Clr7: CR 9; Size M (5 ft. tall); HD 7d8+7 (40 hp); Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural); Attack claw +9 melee (1d6+4), +7 ranged; SQ DR 5/silver, Fast Healing, Low-Light Vision, Scent, Wolfsbane Chemical Bane; OR 2; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +11; AL NG (CE in hybrid or wolf form); Str 18, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 19, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +8, Control Shape +4, Craft +8, Heal +9, Hide +2, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (nature) +7, Knowledge (religion) +9, Listen +4, Move Silently +2, Profession +8, Spellcraft +8, Spot +4, Survival +4; Brew Potion, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Still Spell, Track.

Cleric Domains: Plant, Magic.

Cleric Spells Per Day: 6/5+1/4+1/3+1/2+1.

Wolfsbane Chemical Bane (Ex): Wolfsbane is a substance that acts as poison for Megan (Ingested DC 20, Init 1d6 Con, Sec 2d6 Con).